



IT rules empowering,
will protect users, says
Ashwini Vaishnaw

Page 8



NIA raids seven
locations in Kashmir,
seizes digital devices

Page 9



Novak Djokovic wins
sixth Wimbledon
title-equalling 20th Slam

Page 13



Lionel Messi's Argentina
beats Brazil to win
Copa America

Page 13

NEARBY



DDMA allows school
assembly halls to open

NEW DELHI
The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Sunday permitted the use of auditoriums and assembly halls in schools and educational institutions for meeting and training purposes. The DDMA said the move was taken owing to considerable decline in COVID-19 cases and overall improvement in the situation.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Kejriwal promises free
power in Uttarakhand

NEW DELHI
Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday promised up to 300 units of free electricity per month to every family in Uttarakhand and free electricity to the farmers of the state. He added that if AAP is voted to power in the 2022 Assembly poll in Uttarakhand, the party would also waive old electricity bills.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

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EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 5

Shuttle to space



Richard Branson and crew are seen on board Virgin Galactic's passenger rocket plane VSS Unity before starting their untethered ascent to the edge of space above Spaceport America. The crew successfully flew to space and returned on Sunday. ■ REUTERS (REPORT ON PAGE 11)

Chinese protest against Dalai Lama's birthday celebrations

VIIJITA SINGH
DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Chinese nationals displayed banners in protest from across Indus river, close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC), when Indian villagers were celebrating the birthday of the Dalai Lama in Demchok in eastern Ladakh.

According to Urgain Tsewang, village head of Koyul (Kakjung), one of the last settlements in the Demchok sector, the Chinese, comprising Army personnel and civilians, came in five vehicles down unpaved roads and raised the banners 200



Causing a stir: Chinese displaying banners from across Indus river, near the LAC in Demchok. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

m from a community centre where the Dalai Lama's birthday was being celebrated around 11 a.m. on July 6 at Dola Tamgo in Koyul village along Indus river.

The incident occurred

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

and 1.7 by 2030, increase modern contraceptive prevalence rate from 31.7% to 45% by 2026 and 52% by 2030. The countries and States which have made efforts in this direction have seen positive results. However, more efforts are needed."

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SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

It has been nearly a year since Ghaziabad resident Anshika Singh enrolled at the Delhi University (DU) for under-graduation. However, with online classes continuing to be the norm due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been difficult for her to gauge how college functions or access the facilities on campus.

For several first-year students like Ms. Singh, who are set to appear for their second-semester examinations next month, a lack of interaction with professors and peers, sans the computer screen, has meant that the "college life" they expected was in dissonance with the reality.

Ms. Singh, a student of Miranda House, said: "After boards, we thought we'll get to go out, explore an independent life which DU offers and meet people coming from different parts of the country. But we lost out on the chance. The exposure that DU offers, including extracurricular activities, is also why you want to join the university. But due to the pandemic, interactions got restricted."

The BA (Programme) student added: "At times attending online classes feel like listening to podcasts. Interaction with teachers

Virtual reality and crash of expectations

First year college students have begun to lament online classes for a range of reasons — from boredom to lack of interactions, exposure and co-curricular activities

also gets restricted and you simply do not get the exposure you hoped for. For many, mental health issues are also on a rise. When there is interaction, you get to learn stuff, which is not present online. We do not even have direct interaction with the administration. The experience for which I joined Miranda House

is still unclear for me. Even for teachers, this is a whole new scenario."

Attending online classes was not equivalent to the "human connect" that you would expect on campus, others added.

Prithit Singh, a Political Science student of Ramjas College, said: "When you join a DU North Cam-

Students at the Delhi University campus. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA AND SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA



It was more stressful during the onslaught of the second wave. "During the second wave, it was even more stressful when professors were also unwell. Everything around us was distraught and gradually the pace of classes was also reduced as several students and teachers were infected. The motivation is slightly slipping away but we don't really have an alternative at the moment," said the Kolkata resident.

Stifled dreams

Stating that the current batch was "extremely unfortunate" due to curtailed dreams of independence and self-discovery, Dhruv Garg, a student of Kirori Mal College (KMC) said, "In order to bond with one has to step out and college is essentially the first time people travel and live by themselves. That is something we missed out on. I have been able to make friends online but for a lot of people it is difficult."

"Last week I met a few of my

online friends for the first time and it did not really feel overwhelming. It was quite normal. I think the transition from online to offline will be okay for me," said Garg, a student of Economics.

Professors at the university also said that the current structure of teaching-learning, brought in due to the ongoing pandemic had an adverse impact on the students.

Practical hurdles

Ramvir Aejaz, professor at Ramjas College, said: "Students have been impacted both academically and socially. Academically a lot of things we do in the classroom like impromptu discussions are missing in online classes. The liveliness and experience of the classroom are not there. This makes a huge difference. A majority of the students often do not have their videos on for several reasons which also make it difficult for the teacher to know if the student is even present."

There are manifold hindrances, he said. "Communication gets distorted online. University is a space that once students enter, they are in a different mind space altogether and there is some purpose. The academic charm is missing in online classes. Teaching-learning within a structured environment is not there and if that ecology is missing then the factors that determine learning also changes. Online students are getting impoverished in terms of learning and knowledge and it is a huge loss for them," said Mr. Aejaz.

Dystopic reality

Speaking of a "dystopian reality" that professors and students are currently experiencing, St. Stephens College professor Nandita Narain said: "There is no sense of a community, class or college. This is not even a pale shadow of what is actually experienced in a college, mostly from each other and to a large extent from teachers. In this virtual reality, most people do not even switch on their videos so one doesn't even know who they are speaking to." "It is to be seen how the current batch copes in the second year as their first year foundation will be shaky," lamented Ms. Narain.

Woman strangulates infant son

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 26-year-old woman was arrested for strangulating her 11-month-old infant to death following a quarrel with her husband in south Delhi's Fatehpur Beri, police said on Sunday.

Accused Jyoti, who hails from Ritoz village in Gurugram, got married in 2011 when she was 16-years-old but did not share cordial relations with her husband, they said.

She told the police that her 11-month-old son was suffering from fever and her husband Satveer Tanwar refused to take him to a doctor, police said.

The woman used du-patta to strangle her infant following the quarrel. The child was then taken to Apex Hospital, Chhatarpur by his father and other relatives where he was declared brought dead, a senior police officer said.

A case of murder was registered and during investigation, both parents levelled allegations against each other for killing the infant. CCTV footage from the village, call records, and statements of witnesses were taken which revealed that Jyoti had committed the murder, the officer said.

"Jyoti has been arrested and the dupatta was also recovered," he said.

"During interrogation, the accused disclosed that she had a quarrel with her husband, Satveer, on July 9 at around 3.30 p.m. as he didn't like her since their marriage. They argued on many things and never shared a cordial relationship. She also stated that her son was suffering from fever and Satveer refused to take him to doctor," the officer said.

390 families apply for COVID relief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Sunday announced that around 390 beneficiaries have applied under the government scheme to provide financial assistance to families who lost their relatives to COVID-19.

Social Welfare Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam said that 220 applications were for a pension of ₹2,500 per month and 170 for ₹50,000 one-time ex-gratia.

The main accused, Raj Kishor Singh, a software engineer based in Gurugram, fell into bad company due to lavish lifestyle, they said.

He opened a spa and recruited women for call girl services. To meet his expenses, he used them to honeytrap rich and wealthy business, shoot intimate pictures or videos and demanded money from them after threatening to upload them if they failed to pay up, they said.

Police said Singh along

3 held for 'honeytrapping' businessman

Techie, his aides demanded ₹1 crore and threatened to upload morphed pictures

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A software engineer and his two associates have been arrested for allegedly honeytrapping a businessman and demanding ₹1 crore from him after threatening to upload his morphed pictures on social media platforms, police said on Sunday.

The main accused, Raj Kishor Singh, a software engineer based in Gurugram, fell into bad company due to lavish lifestyle, they said.

He opened a spa and recruited women for call girl services. To meet his expenses, he used them to honeytrap rich and wealthy business, shoot intimate pictures or videos and demanded money from them after threatening to upload them if they failed to pay up, they said.

Police said Singh along

During the meeting, the woman would place the camera hidden in her handbag discreetly in the room and captured intimate videos and pictures

SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

with Aryan Dixit (28) and another female associate, also a software engineer, would target wealthy business through Tinder. The woman would initiate chats to lure the victim and later fix up a meeting, police said.

"During the meeting, the woman would place the camera hidden in her handbag discreetly in the room and captured intimate videos and pictures. After a few days, the victim would get an

extortion call from Singh, who threatened to upload the videos and pictures on the social media platforms if the demanded money was not paid," a senior police officer said.

The arrests of all the three accused were made by Delhi Police's Crime Branch after it received a complaint from a businessman. In the complaint, the businessman stated that he had received calls from an unknown person who was demanding ₹1 crore from him and threatening to publish his nude and morphed pictures along with a woman on social media sites, according to the police.

Deception, disclosure
DCP (Crime) Manoj C said during investigation, technical surveillance was mounted, manual information was collected and location of the

suspect was identified. "A raid was conducted and one of the suspects identified as Rajkishor Singh was nabbed from Gurugram who disclosed his involvement and revealed names of his two accomplices," the DCP said.

Another raid was conducted at DLF Phase II in Gurugram from where the woman was arrested while her co-accused and friend Dixit was nabbed from south Delhi's Chhatarpur, he said.

During the search, two handbags fitted with spy camera, memory card, USB pen drive, laptop containing videos and pictures of victims, and a mobile phone used to make extortion calls were recovered, he added.

Police said Dixit, who is an MBA graduate, runs an online garment business. Singh was previously arrested in a case registered at Connaught Place station, they added.

HC rejects plea of overweight candidate in IAF recruitment

Court says it cannot dilute the rule by permitting its violation

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected the plea of an overweight candidate seeking recruitment as airman in the Indian Air Force (IAF), noting that he could end up being a liability for the force rather than being of any help in the defence of the country.

A Bench of Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw and Justice Amit Bansal remarked once there is a rule specifying the weight for the particular height, it "has to be abided by and a slight variation even therein cannot be tolerated".

"The court cannot dilute the said rule by permitting violation of the rule, in the name of being minuscule. To direct such a person to be re-



cruited, would amount to burdening the respondents – Indian Air Force – with an overweight airman who would be unfit to do the duties required from him and would end up being a liability for the respondents rather than being of any help in the defence of the country," the Bench remarked.

The High Court's direction came on a plea by one Shivam Kumar, who had ap-

plied for recruitment as airman in IAF. During the medical examination conducted as part of the recruitment process, he was found medically unfit on the ground of being overweight by 2 kg.

Easily manageable

Mr. Kumar challenged the finding of medical unfitness and sought a direction to IAF to conduct re-examination of his medical fitness. In the alternative, he sought a direction for his appointment as an airman on the basis of the medical certificate of fitness issued by a private hospital.

Mr. Kumar argued he was overweight by 2 kg only, "which is nothing and which is easily manageable".

The High Court, however, denied his plea.

Farmer electrocuted at Singhu protest site

Police have ruled out any foul play

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

A 46-year-old farmer died of electrocution at the Singhu border, the site of farmers' agitation, said the police.

Sohan Singh (42), was found dead near an electric transformer late on Saturday night, said Sub-Inspector Shamsher Singh of Kun-dli Police Station in Sonipat. "He died of electrocution. A post-mortem was conducted," he said, adding that the police have ruled out any foul play.

Deep sorrow
Samyukt Kisan Morcha, a coalition of farmer unions spearheading the agitation, issued a press statement ex-

3 held for looting realtor's house in Uttam Nagar

One of the accused was his employee; others nabbed following encounter: police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The police on Sunday arrested three men including the employee of a property dealer for executing an armed robbery of cash worth ₹8 lakh and gold ornaments at his house in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar after holding his family hostage, police said.

The two accused, Ankush (23) and Mukul (24), were arrested following an encounter that took place near Uttam Nagar bus terminal, they said.

When the police team tried to apprehend them, the duo opened fire which hit the bullet-proof jacket of one of the policemen. In retaliation, the police team opened fire which hit Ankush, police said.

Farmers, from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, have been protesting in huge numbers at Delhi's borders since November 2020, demanding the repeal of the three farm laws.

The accused were asked to surrender but they defied and fired upon police team. In retaliation, our team fired back and one of the accused got injured

**SANTOSH KUMAR MEENA
DCP (Dwarka)**

(21), is a resident of Sadar Bazar. He is an employee of property dealer Vinod Lal, at whose house an armed robbery was executed, a senior police officer said.

Deepanshu was also arrested later for providing information to the accused men about the availability of cash and jewellery at Mr. Lal's

house," he said.

The incident took place on July 7 around 1.30 p.m. Four armed men posing as electricians entered Mr. Lal's house in his absence. All of them were carrying weapons and had their faces covered with masks to conceal their identity. While one of them was wearing a helmet, others were wearing a cap. They held the family hostage and fled with ₹8 lakh and gold ornaments, a senior police officer said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said: "Our team had been trailing them and at about 5 a.m. on Sunday, when two of the accused men were spotted near Uttam Nagar bus terminal, the accused were asked to surrender but they

defied and fired upon police team. In retaliation, our team fired back and one of the accused got injured."

Out of danger

He was taken to hospital for treatment and is stated to be out of danger, he said. They also disclosed their involvement in two more robberies including one in Sadar Bazar which they executed on June 26 this year, he said.

The police have recovered a countrymade pistol, three live cartridges, three empty cartridges, a button-actuated knife and a stolen motorcycle. "Efforts are being made to nab the accomplices of the arrested accused and to collect corroborative as well as linking evidence for further investigation," he said.

Five arrested in Bara Hindu Rao firing case

Two pistols with 5 cartridges seized

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Five men, including two contract killers, have been arrested in connection with a firing incident in Bara Hindu Rao area, which left two passers-by dead three days ago, police said on Sunday. Danish, the key conspirator, who is the partner of arrested builder Feroz, too was among the arrested.

Two pistols with five cartridges were seized from Rahul alias Charlie (23) and Himaanshu (21), both from Nand Nagri. The third arrested man is Mehtab, who is a relative of the absconding suspect, said DCP (North) Anto Alphonse. During initial investiga-

tion, it was found that the complainant Haji Naeem and his nephew Munib shared rivalry with other builders of Sadar Bazar and Bara Hindu Rao. Munib had managed to get a stay on the construction of a building at Ahata Kidara, which was later demolished. Upset, the builder conspired with his partner to settle scores.

He then got in touch with Mehtab, the partner's relative, to eliminate Munib and Naeem. Technical surveillance was mounted and sources were deployed to nab the accused. Acting on a tip-off, Rahul was apprehended from Civil Lines and the others were arrested later, police said.

Timings

DELHI

MONDAY, JUL. 12
RISE 05:32 SET 19:22
RISE 07:22 SET 21:22
TUESDAY, JUL. 13
RISE 05:33 SET 19:22
RISE 08:22 SET 21:59
WEDNESDAY, JUL. 14
RISE 05:33 SET 19:22
RISE 09:22 SET 22:34

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	39	29
Safdarjung	39	29
Palam	39	30

Delhi Palam Today
35°C Few spells of Light to moderate rain and thunderstorm likely at some places with cloudy sky and gusty winds.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
34°C Few spells of rain and thundershower likely at many places with mainly overcast sky and gusty winds.

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THE HINDU

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IN BRIEF

BIMTECH holds 3rd edition of Insurtech series

DEHLI

Birla Institute of Management Technology (BIMTECH) in association with India Insurtech Association (IIA) organised the third edition of Insurtech Leadership Talk Series. The chief guest at the event was Mayank Gupta, COO and co-founder at ZOPPER. An integral part of the discussion was about the growing importance of insurance in technology dedicated to the growing intensity in the field of insurance, which has been detailed on aspects such as underwriting and claims settlement.



Anna Nagar JJ cluster residents - who lost houses in July last after a heavy downpour- staying on rent in Vinod Nagar. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

demic. The family faced the same problem during the lockdown last year but they didn't have to bear the rent as they were at their own home last year.

Kamla Devi (58) and her husband Pan Singh are also struggling to make ends meet as their sons who used to previously stay with them now live separately on rent. "We need money. My husband can't walk properly. He works as a security guard outside an ATM," she said. "I hope we don't die waiting for the house".

It's Ms. Savitri daughter's fifth birthday next month and the mother is disheartened because due to financial crisis she won't be able to celebrate it the way her daughter is expecting. She started working as a house help in AshokaNiketan is East Delhi. "I need to first take an e-rickshaw and then a bus to reach the house. Sometimes, I walk the path instead of taking an e-rickshaw to save some money".

Dodged by officials

Her husband Kuber Chand Kotiyal works as a security guard in Old Delhi and rides a cycle to work. He has been to government offices a multiple times to get updates about their house but has been dodged every time.

"In the last one year, I have tried to meet several officials in municipal department and the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board [DUSIB] but they keep telling me that our work will be done. On July 5, along with a member from each affected family, I visited the DUSIB office in West Delhi. They told me to come next month. I told them that if nothing happens till next month, then all the families will come here and stay outside the office".

It has been learnt that survey of this JJ cluster has been conducted by the DUSIB for rehabilitation.

DUSIB member Bipin Rai said that the government body has completed the formalities for rehabilitation of these families. "However, the Central government is intervening and asking the DUSIB to allot houses on rent. The discussion over the matter is ongoing," he said.

whenever the situation improves further. However, schools and other educational institutions shall, however, remain closed and the teaching-learning activities shall continue online.

This decision will give a boost to ongoing education projects of the Delhi government like teacher training in offline mode also in a phased manner, the government said.

Parent-teacher meeting
It is preparing to host a parent-teacher meetings for all government schools between July 19 and July 31.

"These meetings can now provide an opportunity to the schools to get the views of parents on schools reopening and will be conducted using staggered timings," the government said.

A year after deluge, slum victims wait for rehabilitation

Anna Nagar JJ cluster residents, whose houses were swept away in the rain last July, live on rent and struggle to make ends meet as multiple visits to govt. offices fail to bear fruit

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Savitri has not been able to pay house rent - ₹8,000 - for the last two months. She is worried as she doesn't know how she'll manage this month's as well.

A year ago, Savitri and nine other families lost their homes to a natural calamity. A heavy downpour swept away 10 houses in Anna Nagar slums, leaving their lives uprooted in a day.

Nearly a year after, the affected families are now scattered across East and Central Delhi and are living on rent. *The Hindu* met a bunch of families who had to move to VinodNagar and are now struggling to make ends meet while waiting for rehabilitation.

Lived in tents

Along with her two children, Ms. Savitri recalls living in a tent for nearly 15 days, the Delhi government had set up right after the incident. They stayed there opposite to their damaged houses, close to Indraprastha metro station. "It was raining for days even after the incident and we used to lie wet under

the tent. Sometimes, we took refuge at the metro station," she said. With a permanent solution not in hand, the authorities asked the families to move to a school where they lived for a month and a half.

"When the school had to open for an examination, the officials again asked us to move to a rain shelter house at Sarai Kale Khan. It was so dirty, we refused. We were then asked to live with our relatives for a few days and were promised that we'll be allotted houses. However, days passed by and no one even came to look for us," said Janki who lives with her three children, husband and parents in-law in a house where she has to pay ₹4,500 as rent every month.

Space constraint

Of the four families, presently living in VinodNagar, one is 60-year-old Jhima Devi. In a single-room accommodation, she lives with her husband and her 100-year-old mother-in-law. Her two sons and their families who used to live together with them in Anna Nagar, now live in separate rented accommodations because of space constraints.

I haven't paid rent for four months, said Ms. Devi. The COVID-19 induced lockdown only added to her woes.

Ms. Devi's husband, Nand Kishore, works at a hotel in Connaught Place and while he didn't lose his job during the lockdown, he was paid nothing for two months. He was asked to join work only a week ago.

"We have not paid rent for four months. Thankfully, one of my sons who works at a government school has been getting his salary. He helped us with money for food and other essentials," she said, adding that her 100-year-old mother-in-law fell while walking and broke a bone and was had to be hospitalised. "Though the treatment was free of cost, we had to bear the cost of some medicines".

Adding to the woes

Ms. Devi has been getting calls from the landlord to pay up the rent which is now long overdue. "I told him that my husband has just resumed work and will pay up soon".

Adding to the miseries, Ms. Devi's daughter, Manju, also lost her job six months ago due to the pan-

Halls, auditoriums to reopen in educational institutions, says DDMA

Only 50% seating capacity allowed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority on Sunday permitted the use of auditoriums and assembly halls in schools and educational institutions for meeting and training purposes with up to 50% seating capacity.

The DDMA said the move was taken owing to the considerable decline in COVID cases in Delhi. It said there will be strict adherence to standard operating procedures and other guidelines of the government and compliance with COVID-appropriate behaviour.

The government said the notification by the DDMA provides an opportunity to the educational institutions to resume their academic preparation, including training, meetings for reopening

authorities. "These meetings can now provide an opportunity to the schools to get the views of parents on schools reopening and will be conducted using staggered timings," the government said.

Lok Adalat resolves over 7,500 cases in Gurugram

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

More than 7,500 cases were disposed of involving a settlement amount of ₹2.79 crore at the Lok Adalats held in Gurugram on Saturday as part of the second National Lok Adalat this year.

Lalita Patwardhan, Chief Judicial Magistrate and Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Gurugram informed that around 35,000 cases of all categories were taken up and 7,522 were disposed of, according to a press statement by the

authorities. Justice Mr. Rajan Gupta, Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court and Executive Chairman, Haryana State Legal Services Authority and S.P. Singh, District and Sessions Judge, and Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Gurugram, Lok Adalats were held at Gurugram Sessions Court and Sub-Divisions courts at Sohna and Pataudi.

Mr. Singh constituted 14 Benches for the Lok Adalats, including two Benches only for traffic challans.

City sees lowest daily cases since April

Govt. orders closure of part of Sadar Bazar till 10 p.m. on July 13

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded 53 fresh COVID-19 cases and three deaths on Sunday. The number of new cases added is the lowest since April 15, 2020.

The health bulletin released by the Delhi government said 76,823 tests were conducted in the Capital in 24 hours with a positivity rate of 0.07%. Out of the total tests conducted, 53,280 were RT-PCR tests. There are 743 active cases in the city, of which 252 are under home isolation. The Capital has recorded 14,35,083 cases since the pandemic started last year with 25,015 deaths.



A man gets tested for COVID in the city on Sunday.
■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The bulletin added that 79,527 beneficiaries had received the vaccination in 24-hours, of which 52,434 were administered the first dose. The cumulative beneficiaries vaccinated so far stand at 88,96,884.

To ensure that COVID-19

appropriate behavior is being followed in markets across the city, the government continued with its inspection drive. On Sunday, it closed a part of the Sadar Bazar - from Bara Tooti Chowk to Quattu Road - till 10 p.m. on July 13.

"Due to a large football, the market's association and shopkeepers were unable to ensure COVID protocols on 10-07-2021 in the aforesaid market. The guidelines and directions of COVID protocol are being contravened in the above-said market, which may cause spreading of the virus," the Central District Magistrate said.

The Council, in its plea, said shifting DRT to a place 600 km away "ruptures and disturbs the convenience, affording capacity, reach of the litigants". It said shifting DRT Jabalpur to other states is clearly arbitrary, dehorts the provisions of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act (RDBFI Act).

Next hearing
The Council has also sought the appointment of a regular full-time incumbent presiding officer for DRT Jabalpur.

The High Court will hear the case in August.

drinking water in Delhi was wasted due to mismanagement. According to experts, the amount of drinking water that is wasted is more than 30%.

It is a matter of great regret that the Haryana government was facing criticism of the Delhi government despite making positive efforts and following the orders of the Supreme Court.

He said Delhi has a share of 719 cusecs of water at Munak from Yamuna and Ravi Beas waters. In addition to it, 330 cusecs extra Yamuna water is being released by Haryana at Munak, as per compliance of Supreme Court orders pronounced on February 29, 1996.

He said the Upper Yamuna River Board in its 52nd and 54th meetings has already verified this position.

He said Haryana had no role in the water shortage in Delhi.

Water shortage in Delhi due to mismanagement'

Haryana says full share given to Capital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Haryana government on Sunday said the State was facing acute water shortage due to delayed monsoon but was still maintaining water supply to Delhi without any reduction.

Delay in monsoon'

The people of Delhi were facing water scarcity because of delays in monsoon and poor water management, said a press statement issued by the Haryana Public Relations Department attributing it to an official spokesperson.

It further accused the Delhi government of making false political rhetoric to hide its failure, adding the national Capital was being given its full share of water despite 40% less water in the Yamuna.

The official spokesperson said according to the report of the Economic Survey 2017 of the Delhi government, 20% of the

Court seeks Centre's reply on M.P. lawyers' body petition

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed the Centre to respond to a petition by a Madhya Pradesh lawyers' body challenging the transfer of the presiding officer of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT), Jabalpur, to DRT Lucknow.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh issued the notice on the petition by the State Bar Council of Madhya Pradesh.

The Council, in its plea, said shifting DRT to a place 600 km away "ruptures and disturbs the convenience, affording capacity, reach of the litigants". It said shifting DRT Jabalpur to other states is clearly arbitrary, dehorts the provisions of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act (RDBFI Act).

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THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

Farmers break glass of Deputy Speaker's car

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

Agitating farmers allegedly broke the rear windscreen and a window glass of Haryana Deputy Speaker Ranbir Gangwa's official vehicle during a protest against his participation at a party function in Chaudhary Devi Lal University in Sirsa on Sunday.

Mr. Gangwa was coming out from the university in his car escorted by the police when around a hundred farmers carrying black flags blocked his way around 4 p.m. and prevented him from leaving.

"In the ensuing commotion, farmers broke the rear windscreen and a window glass of Mr. Gangwa's vehicle. Some stones were also pelted. But he was safely escorted out of the area," Deputy Superintendent of Police, Sirsa, Sanjay Kumar told *The Hindu* over phone.

Local MP Sunita Duggal was also present at the function inside the university, but she managed to leave from another gate.

However, she was earlier shown black flags at a function in Fatehabad.

Kejriwal promises free power in Uttarakhand

300 units free for every household, old bills will be waived

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday promised up to 300 units of free electricity per month to every family in Uttarakhand and free electricity to the farmers of the State.

Mr. Kejriwal, on a visit to the State, said that if AAP is voted to power in the 2022 Assembly election in Uttarakhand, it would also waive old electricity bills and provide 24 hours of power across the State.

"Uttarakhand has been blessed by abundance of beauty and natural resources. There are rivers, mountains, trees, vegetation, and even herbs in the State. There are great, honest, and hardworking people as well in Uttarakhand. But the leaders and parties here have left no stone unturned to destroy Uttarakhand," he said at a press conference in Dehradun.

Mr. Kejriwal said two parties in the State have been looting it in turns and ques-



AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal addressing a press meet in Dehradun on Sunday. ■ PTI

tioned why a State that generates electricity and even sells it to other States was not providing free or cheap electricity to its people. He added that all-round development was taking place in Delhi and promised to do the same in Uttrakhand if voted to power.

'Series of guarantees'

"Kejriwal does what he says. This is our first guarantee in a series of guarantees. This means I will come again next month to talk about another issue. And then again next month to talk about another

issue. Today I am here to give you a guarantee on the issue of electricity. We will also announce a CM face for the State," he said.

Promising to stop corruption in the State, the AAP convener invited all those who wanted to do good work to join the AAP.

"The politics of Uttarakhand is taking a turn. The politics of Uttarakhand is about to change. All of you who are not being able to do good work in your respective parties can come and join the Aam Aadmi Party," Mr. Kejriwal added.

Haryana govt. allows cinema halls, pools and spas to open

Lockdown extended by another week in the State

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

The Haryana government on Sunday allowed cinema halls, swimming pools and spas to open with certain restrictions in further relaxation in the Covid-induced lockdown in the State. However, the lockdown has been extended for another week till July 19.

Announcing the extension of the lockdown till 5 a.m. on July 19, the Chief Secretary-cum-Chairperson Haryana State Executive Committee, Vijai Vardhan, in a three-page order, allowed the cinema halls to open with maximum 50% seating capacity with strict adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour. Spas are also allowed to open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. with 50% capacity. The order also allowed the swimming pools to open, but only for the athletes and swimmers practising for a competitive event.

The State government also relaxed the restrictions on gatherings in open spaces allowing up to 200 people. The maximum number of people attending wedding, funerals



A vaccination camp in Gurugram. ■ FILE PHOTO: PTI

and cremations has also been increased to 100.

Exams allowed

Similarly, universities, colleges and Industrial Training Institutes are allowed to open for doubt classes, practical classes in laboratories, practical examinations and off-line examinations. Coaching institutions, libraries and training institutes, both private and government, are also allowed to open.

The Vice-Chancellor of National Law University, Delhi, has been allowed to hold Common Law Admission Test on July 23 in the State. The Haryana government

had first imposed a week-end lockdown in nine districts from 10 p.m. of April 30 to 5 a.m. of May 3. The entire State was then brought under lockdown for a week on May 3 and the restrictions are being extended on a weekly basis thereafter.

As per earlier orders, all shops are allowed to open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and shopping malls from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The restaurants and bars, including those in hotels and malls, are allowed to open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. with 50% seating capacity and corporate offices are allowed to run with full capacity.

Curfew in Rajasthan dist. after murder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOTA

A curfew was imposed and internet services suspended for 24 hours in Rajasthan's Baran district following the murder of a teenage boy, police said on Sunday.

Azad, a resident of Shramik Colony in Talab Para area, was allegedly killed on Saturday evening by Hemant Rathore and his accomplices over a one and half-year-old dispute.

'No communal angle'

"The murder is the result of personal enmity and rivalry between two groups with no communal angle," ASP Vijay Swarnkar said.

The victim was shot twice and then attacked using iron rods outside Baran Grain Mandi gate, police said.

A video of the incident was posted on the internet on Saturday night, following which, the district administration imposed a curfew under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and banned internet services for 24 hours till 3 a.m. on Monday.

BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004

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Dy. Chief Design Engineer/Vehicle, BLW, Varanasi acting for and on behalf of President of India, invites EOI for the following works S.No. 1, EOI No- Name of Work: Conversion of HHP Diesel Locomotives into Electric Locomotives, Approximate Cost ₹-, Completion Period:-, EOI Cost ₹-- Earnest Money ₹-, Closing Date & Time: 07.09.2021 till 15:00 hrs. EOI opening Date & Time: 07.09.2021 at 15:30 hrs. Note: The detail of above EOI is available at blw website www.blw.indianrailways.com (Department_Design Department_Expression of Interest) under the link https://blw.indianrailways.gov.in/view_section.jsp?lang=0&id=0,295,798,799. The firms which desire to submit their responses are advised to go themselves on the above website link.

CORRIGENDUM

Notice Publication Date: 09.07.2021, Notice Subject: EOI for Conversion of HHP Diesel Locomotives into Electric Locomotives, Details of Corrigendum: The website of BLW published as www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in should be read as www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in. Dy. Chief Design Engineer/Vehicle P.R/BLW/M-04

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Haryana govt. allows cinema halls, pools and spas to open

Lockdown extended by another week in the State

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

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Announcing the extension of the lockdown till 5 a.m. on July 19, the Chief Secretary-cum-Chairperson Haryana State Executive Committee, Vijai Vardhan, in a three-page order, allowed the cinema halls to open with maximum 50% seating capacity with strict adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour. Spas are also allowed to open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. with 50% capacity. The order also allowed the swimming pools

IN BRIEF



Gehlot sworn in as Karnataka Governor

BENGALURU
Former Union Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot took oath as the 19th Governor of Karnataka on Sunday. He succeeds Vajubhai R. Vala. He was administered the oath of office by Karnataka Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka at a simple ceremony on the Raj Bhavan premises.

Child dies after beetle gets stuck in throat

KASARAGOD
A one-and-a-half-year-old boy in Kasaragod died on Saturday after a beetle got stuck in his throat. The deceased was identified as Anved, son of Satyendran, a native of Nullipadi, Chennikara in Kasaragod. The boy suddenly collapsed while playing and was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead.

Telangana to borrow ₹6,000 cr. from market

HYDERABAD
The Telangana government has decided to raise ₹6,000 crore open market borrowings for the second quarter of the current financial year. The State government had raised total quantum of ₹13,500 crore through open market borrowings for the first quarter as against the ₹8,000 crore it had indicated for the period.

Kerala to set up online portal to pay for liquor

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The Kerala government has initiated steps to mitigate long queues at liquor outlets. The government plans an online portal with a payment gateway for consumers to purchase legal alcohol. There is no home delivery of liquor. Instead, consumers can collect their purchases from a Bevco or Consumer-fed store of their choice.

Telangana police deny entry to A.P. MLA

Udaya Bhanu, stopped from visiting Pulichintala, says Telangana is generating power against norms

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

Amid the raging controversy over the sharing of Krishna river waters, Andhra Pradesh MLA Samineni Udaya Bhanu was stopped by the Telangana police at Muktyala village from visiting the K.L. Rao Sagar Pulichintala Project on Sunday.

Following this, tension prevailed on the border.

The YSRCP MLA and Government Whip in the A.P. Assembly, objected to the "high-handed behaviour of the Telangana police," saying he was going to the multi-purpose project only to see the factual position.



Tensions rise: MLA Samineni Udaya Bhanu talking to the Telangana police at Muktyala village on Sunday.

Mr. Udaya Bhanu could not cross the barricades erected by the Telangana police, who were deployed

in large numbers there ever since tension escalated following the drawal of water (about 75 tmcft) was wasted as Telangana kept drawing

eration allegedly without necessary clearances, including from the Krishna River Management Board (KRB).

Mr. Udaya Bhanu told the media later that Telangana was drawing water to generate 120 MW "in blatant violation of the established protocol," as per which the irrigation requirements in both States were to be met first before utilising the water for power generation.

'Water wasted'

The Jaggaiapet MLA pointed out that massive quantities of surplus river water (about 75 tmcft) was wasted as Telangana kept drawing

by ignoring Andhra Pradesh's "legitimate right to utilise its allocations".

Mr. Udaya Bhanu maintained that both States were bound by the awards of the Bachawat Tribunal.

It was Telangana that benefited the most out of the Krishna river water as former Chief Minister Y.S. Rajashekhar Reddy had built more projects in that region, the MLA said, and demanded that Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao help in reaching an amicable settlement and refrain from making provocative comments on the sensitive issue.

Three more Zika cases take Kerala's tally to 18

Focus on mosquito control & screening of pregnant women

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Three more persons have tested positive for Zika virus (ZIKV) in Kerala, taking the total number of cases reported so far to 18.

So far, lab-confirmed diagnosis of ZIKV has been reported only from Thiruvananthapuram. However, given the high density of Aedes species of mosquitoes across the State, the virus could be in circulation across the State.

ZIKV was confirmed in three of the eight samples sent from a private hospital in the city, from where the first ZIKV case had been reported, to the lab in Coimbatore. Two of the samples are of patients who sought treatment at the private hospital, including that of a 10-month-old infant. The third belongs

to a hospital employee.

Of the 27 samples sent by the State earlier to NIV, Alappuzha, 26 had tested negative. The eight samples, of which three turned out to be positive, were part of the third lot of samples.

Major worry

Senior health officials said the focus of the control measures would be on the screening of all pregnant women with fever and other symptoms as well as initiation of mosquito control measures on a war footing.

As microcephaly (a condition in which a baby's head is smaller in size than normal because of abnormal brain development) caused by ZIKV infection in pregnant women is a major concern, the district administration has sent an alert to

ultrasound scan centres and all gynaecologists that special attention be paid to the foetal biometric parameters at the scan at 6-8 weeks.

Similar symptoms

Sources said fever with rashes, red eyes and joint pain was being reported in the district from several urban locations since the past four or five months. But as all the samples tested negative for both dengue and chikungunya, not much thought had been given to it. "The possibility of ZIKV never struck us. The symptoms overlap with other viral fevers and that unless one specifically tests for ZIKV, we cannot confirm it," an official said.

A six-member team from the Centre held discussions with State officials on the steps to be adopted.

No fresh investments in Kerala, says Kitex chief

Telangana received us royally, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

Managing director of Kitex Garments Limited Sabu M. Jacob has said the group will not make any fresh investments in Kerala.

He was speaking to reporters after returning from Hyderabad here on Sunday. The Telangana government had reached an agreement with the Kerala-based company for an investment of ₹1,000 crore in a garment unit at the Kakatiya Mega Textiles Park in Warangal.

Mr. Jacob, who arrived at the Kochi airport by a private jet sent by the Telangana government, said he was forced to go out of Kerala. He said he was received "royally" by the Telangana government. He said he was not involving himself in a political debate and did not want to counter Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

The Kitex Group and Ker-



Sabu M. Jacob

ala government are at a standstill over "serial raids and inspections" at the company in June. The company said its operations were disrupted and staff were questioned for long durations.

The Labour Department

had found fault with the company on more than 70 counts, the group said.

Mr. Jacob had said earlier that Kitex was withdrawing from plans to invest ₹3,500 crore in an apparel park and three industrial parks in Kerala.

WEATHER WATCH



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)
Forecast for Monday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and heavy rainfall at isolated places over Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, east Rajasthan, Bihar, sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Tamil Nadu

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	72...	34.8...	25.1	Kozhikode	78...	28...	22.4
Ahmedabad	...	37.2...	28.2	Kurnool	...	29.7...	25.4
Aizawl	0.5...	...	20	Lucknow	...	36.5...	28.9
Allahabad	...	30...	28	Madurai	...	32.2...	26.1
Bengaluru	0.6...	26.8...	20.1	Mangaluru	69...	26.6...	22
Bhopal	35.5...	32.9...	23	Mumbai	...	30...	20.6
Bhubaneswar	...	33.2...	26.9	Mysuru	...	27.8...	20.2
Chandigarh	...	37.5...	24.4	New Delhi	...	38.2...	29.2
Chennai	33.5...	32.7...	27.6	Patna	...	34.4...	28.4
Coimbatore	0.5...	30.2...	20.8	Port Blair	62...	28.7...	24.4
Dehradun	52.3...	31.2...	26.5	Puducherry	...	31...	23.8
Gangtok	32...	20.7...	18.4	Pune	...	29.8...	23.5
Goa	44...	28...	24	Raipur	...	32.7...	27
Guwahati	...	31.8...	23.9	Ranchi	...	30...	23.6
Hubballi	...	24...	22	Shillong	10...	23.6...	17.6
Hyderabad	...	26...	24.4	Shimla	13...	27...	20.5
Imphal	3...	21.6...	21.4	Srinagar	...	33.7...	20.9
Jaipur	23...	38.6...	29.6	Thiruvananthapuram	13...	30.6...	21.7
Kochi	47...	27.8...	22.8	Tiruchi	...	33.7...	25.6
Kohima	...	27.2...	18.2	Vijayawada	...	32.4...	26.2
Kolkata	33.5...	32.6...	28.3	Visakhapatnam	13...	32.4...	26.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 170 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 13

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Ahmedabad... 11 .18 117 .145 .127 ...■

Bengaluru... 10 .28 .19 ... 24 ... 60 ...■

Chennai... 4 .28 .93 ... 20 ... 42 ...■

Delhi... 8 .19 .75 112 .247 ...■

Hyderabad... 63 .18 ... 19 ... 21 ...■

Imphal... 11 .18 .16 ... 36 ... 54 ...■

Lucknow... 3 .37 .50 ... 94 ... 111 ...■

Mumbai... 65 .4 ... 14 ... 16 ... 30 ...■

Pune... 131 .15 .48 ... 46 ... 45 ...■

Visakhapatnam... 14 .54 .39 ... 44 ... 62 ...■

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

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

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

THE HINDU

EDUCATION PLUS

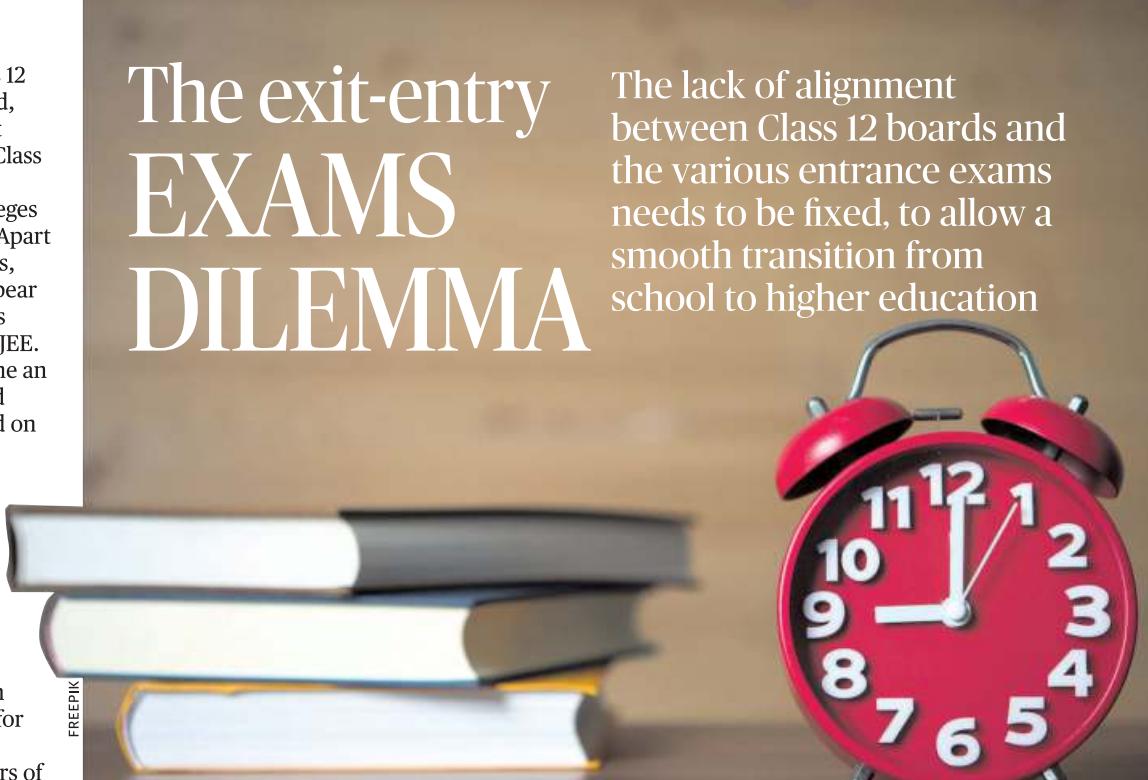
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The exit-entry EXAMS DILEMMA



skills, IIT-JEE assesses problem-solving abilities based on quantitative problems.

Though the scope of the question paper remains within the prescribed syllabus, the complexity of the questions is higher than that of the board exam. This leads to enormous pressure among students, as both require a different kind of preparation.

External help

Since the entrance exams act as a gateway to students' dream stream, coaching centres step in, offering help to decipher, drill in and practice these papers.

Ideally, the preparation for their school exit exams should make students competent enough to crack the specialised entrance exams with minimal additional prep

The lack of alignment between Class 12 boards and the various entrance exams needs to be fixed, to allow a smooth transition from school to higher education

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This Q&A column by Nandini Raman, practising counsellor and trainer, may help



OFF THE EDGE

NANDINI RAMAN

I have selected commerce stream for Class 11. I have to choose either Computer Applications, Psychology or Maths as an optional subject. I want to pursue Psychology, but my parents insist I take Maths. I want to be in government service. Which is a better option? - Simran

Dear Simran,

I would agree with your parents that you take either Maths or Computer Application, as these will help for the entrance exams after Class 12. You can always read Psychology side by side now, and engage in short-term

Tapping on the potential of the youth

It is critical that we safeguard young people's well-being because India's welfare hinges on them



POONAM MUTTREJA & DIPA NAG CHOUDHURY

World Population Day is marked on July 11 every year to focus attention on the importance of population-related issues. It was first observed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1989 and aims to raise the discourse on sustainable ways to safeguard each life that adds up to a population.

As flagged by a UNDP report last year, and subsequently in a global study by *The Lancet*, India will stabilise its population 12 years earlier than expected. Therefore, the window India has to leverage its 'demographic dividend' is narrower than we had thought. Fears of a 'population explosion' are misplaced; instead, it is critical that we focus our attention on safeguarding young people's well-being because India's welfare hinges on them.

Impact of the pandemic

At 253 million, India's adolescent population is among the largest. Over 62% of India is aged between 15 and 59 years, and the median age of the population is less than 30 years. India's 'demographic dividend' represents the potential for economic growth based on the age structure of the population. However, transforming this potential into reality requires adolescents and the youth to be healthy and well-educated.

Even before COVID-19 caused country-wide school closures, India's underfunded education system was inadequately equipped to provide the skills young people need to take advantage of emerging employment opportunities. According to the World Bank, public expenditure on education constituted 4.4% of GDP in 2019 and only 3.4% of GDP in 2020. Another report revealed that India stands 62nd in terms of public expenditure per student, and fares badly in quality of education measures such as student-teacher ratios. Coupled with the impact of COVID-19, this paints a bleak picture of the state of education today.



MURALI KUMAR K.

In India, more than 32 crore students have been affected by the nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19. Of these, about 15.8 crore are female. The number of schoolgirls who are impacted is 158 million and many of those who have dropped out are unlikely to go back to school. Schools have remained closed even in remote areas where the effect of the pandemic has been minimal. Studies show that school closures have a serious impact on the lives and mental well-being of children.

The impact of the pandemic on adolescents has been severe. A survey by the International Labour Organization reveals that 65% of adolescents worldwide reported having learnt less during the pandemic, and 51% felt that their learning would be further delayed. It also highlighted that adolescent mental well-being has taken a big blow, with 17% of young people likely to be suffering from anxiety and depression.

It is important, therefore, for policymakers to balance the risks of transmission through children with the harm of prolonged school closures. By prioritising the vaccination of teachers and school support staff and also allowing a decentralised approach where district-level officials may reopen schools based on local COVID-19 transmission rates, schools could be opened in a safe and phased manner. In Odisha, for example, community schools have re-opened in some areas. Students wear face masks and sit physically distanced from each other outdoors under sheds or tents. With some innovation and creativity, opening schools with a mix of online and offline options

could be an important step to addressing the learning needs and mental well-being of adolescents.

Increased poverty levels during the pandemic may well have led to a worrying spurt in early marriages of girls in India. As demographers like Shireen Jejeebhoy note, while child marriage as a strategy to address household poverty has been noted in India in general, it has registered an alarming rise during the pandemic. This is linked with increases in gender-based violence. Adolescent girls are at high risk during times like these, given their vulnerability to abuse and trafficking, especially if primary caregivers fall ill or die. Restricted mobility due to lockdowns puts girls at risk of violence at home at the hands of caregivers or partners.

The impact of the crisis on adolescents, especially girls, is of gigantic proportions, but the problem is not irredeemable, provided we dis-

play firm commitment to implementing quick and effective strategies to overcome the challenges.

The way forward

We are living through a global crisis and the road ahead is uncertain. This will have long-standing effects on adolescents and youth. Recognising that COVID-19 has affected all dimensions of the lives of youth, collaborative actions by key ministries, government agencies, and civil society will be central to developing a holistic and meaningful solution. It is imperative that we have in place mechanisms for better inter-sectoral collaboration as we move to safeguard the futures of our adolescents. School mid-day meals, for example,

exemplify how improved nutrition benefits learning. Not only do they provide an incentive for parents to send their children to school on the assurance of one nutritious meal; they also provide the calorie intake required to stay alert in the classroom. Studies have established strong links between nutrition and cognitive scores among teenagers. Coordination across departments can enable better solutions and greater efficiencies in tackling the crisis that our adolescents face.

Much could be gained if the Ministry of Education took steps to ensure that adolescents, especially girls, continue their education during the pandemic. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare must collaborate with the Education Ministry to disseminate key information to help adolescents safeguard their health and ability to learn.

Given that school closures have impacted access to schemes such as the delivery of menstrual hygiene products to adolescents, teachers can work as volunteers for collaborating with frontline health workers to distribute sanitary napkins to girls. To address the mental health of adolescents, the Health and Education Ministries should strengthen outreach via existing helplines and by enabling conversations on critical issues regarding their reproductive and sexual health.

There is enough academic research to demonstrate how the demographic dividend contributed to growth in other countries, especially during East Asia's economic miracle of 1965-1990. During that period, East Asia's working age population grew at a faster rate than its dependent population, thereby expanding the per capita productivity of these economies. This occurred because East Asian countries developed social, economic, and political institutions and policies that allowed them to realise the growth potential created by the transition.

Improving the lives of our adolescents in mission mode would lift their lives, but also generate a virtuous cycle with healthier and educated young adults contributing substantially to securing India's future.

Poonam Muttreja is Executive Director and Dipa Nag Choudhury is Director of Programmes, Population Foundation of India

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Secrecy is a weapon

Journalists are forced to rely on sources and form an opinion based on conjectures



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

In 2014, when writer Perumal Murugan was forced to go silent for a period due to the excesses of a caste-based vigilante group with the backing of the district administration, there was justifiable outrage among writers and artists. There were protest meetings across Tamil Nadu. In one such meeting, a group of young artists came up with numerous posters that demanded that the freedom of expression be upheld. After the meeting, I was presented with a set of posters which were based on the poems by the modern Tamil poet, Atmanam. These posters adorn my office and constantly remind me not to take free speech for granted.

Right to free speech

In journalism, we talk about two forms of censorship: one imposed by external forces and the other imposed by us on ourselves due to fear. Though Mr. Murugan was granted relief by the High Court, legal scholar Gautam Bhatia, in his article "The fault in our speech" (July 7, 2016), pointed out the limitations in the court's approach. The judgment was based on three rather restrictive arguments: "First, that the book has won many prizes, and has gained critical acclaim; second, that Indian culture had always celebrated sexuality until the Victorian British suppressed it; and third, that read as a whole, the book is not intended to titillate or eroticise, but instead, to make a broader point about how social pressures can impact individual lives."

Mr. Bhatia rightly argued that "for speech to be truly free, the judiciary must stop asking literature to justify its aesthetic or its politics before the Bar, whether mediated by an awards jury or not". Throughout South Asia, writers, poets and journalists often invoke the legendary Faiz Ahmad Faiz to defend our right to express ourselves fully. His poetry 'Bol (Speak)' galvanised many for decades to fight for the fundamental right to free speech. He wrote: "Speak, for your lips are free; speak, for your tongue is still yours. Your upright body belongs to you; speak, for your soul still is yours".

What unites a legal mind like Mr. Bhatia and a cultural icon like Mr. Faiz is their un-

ending quest to secure rights for everyone. Mr. Faiz wrote the Report of the 1968 Standing Committee on Art and Culture, which was forgotten not only in Pakistan but across South Asia. It is important for courts and the governments to listen to Mr. Faiz. He wrote: "Culture is lived and evolved by the whole community... The arts are not a luxury. They are an important factor in a nation's mental and moral health and productive efficiency."

There is a body of literature about freedom of expression and freedom of the press. Such works talk about the excesses of governments and the legal recourse. But there are no clues in literature on how to deal with a government which makes its decisions in total secrecy. James Madison, author of the Bill of Rights in the U.S., once said that "a popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to farce or a tragedy or perhaps both". In India, now there is very little credible popular information. Journalists are forced to rely on sources and form an opinion based on conjectures.

Official silence

On July 7, Prime Minister Narendra Modi effected a major reshuffle in his Cabinet. Beyond headline management by the government, citizens know very little about the factors that led to this change. The strap line that accompanied the reshuffle story on the front page of this newspaper read: "Move aimed at bringing in qualified professionals and balancing regional and community aspirations in the run-up to upcoming elections".

I was intrigued by two sentences in the story. One read: "Government sources termed it an effort by Mr. Modi to strike a balance between political messaging of including MPs from various regional centres as well as from marginalised communities and beefing up the skill set of the ministries with professionally and educationally qualified additions." And the other said: "Several ministries have been clubbed together, sources say, to increase synergy." Why should journalists rely on sources for such perfectly legitimate and democratically valid reasons? Why was there no official briefing? Journalists are forced to cite sources because of the official silence. How do we address this important democratic deficit? The government is aware that secrecy is a potent weapon. It is no longer a prologue to farce or tragedy. It is tragedy.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

A ride to safety

Uber and UNESCO are coming together to offer a 'Free rides for teachers' vaccination' campaign

ERIC FALT

The world is not yet out of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to take a high toll on populations and economies. This unprecedented health crisis has also severely impacted the gains made in the education sector over the last few years. In India alone, 1.5 million schools shut down in 2020, affecting 320 million learners and impacting their education, protection and well-being.

Throughout this pandemic, the exceptional effort undertaken by teachers must be highlighted. Using the resources available to them, Indian teachers mobilised as one and have remained on the front-lines of education to ensure continuity of learning, often against formidable odds, even though the pandemic claimed the lives of many of them.

As the country steps up its efforts to tackle the devastating effects of the second wave of COVID-19, the national vaccination campaign has assumed greater importance than ever before, so that we can finally move to a 'new normal'. There is an urgent need to better recognise teachers as front-line workers and prioritise them in the vaccination campaign.

While this has already been done by many State governments, the model should be replicated nationwide. This will not only speed up the reopening of schools so that students can get back to 'in person' learning, but will also provide safety.

Barriers to vaccination

Mass vaccination campaigns do not solely depend on the availability of vaccines. Such efforts are always hindered by a lack of suitable transport facilities, and difficult or prolonged travel time to the vaccination sites.

Teachers, like anyone else, may be worried about travelling long distances to the vaccination centres for fear of contracting the virus on public transport and may not be able to access other means of conveyance.

Keeping these limitations in mind and to support the process of swift vaccination for teachers initiated by the government, the ride-sharing company Uber and UNESCO are coming together to offer a 'Free rides for teachers' vaccination' campaign

to provide teachers with the means to travel to the vaccination centres in a safe manner while offsetting the costs of traveling long distances.

The initiative offers 1,00,000 rides to 25,000 teachers to and from vaccination centres to get the two vaccine doses. The offer will be implemented in Chennai, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu. The rides will be made available via a promotional code communicated to the teachers with a detailed pictorial brochure to help them download the application and use the code.

Global partnerships

The impact of the pandemic across the globe necessitates a coordinated response. Last year, UNESCO launched the Global Education Coalition (GEC), a platform for collaboration to protect the right to education during the pandemic and beyond.

The coalition brings together more than 175 members from the UN family, civil society, academia, and the private sector focusing on three key issues, namely connectivity, teachers, and gender to ensure continuous access to education for all.

As we now begin to re-imagine education in a post-COVID-19 world, we must remember that renewed cooperation between governments and the private sector can go a long way in combating this crisis. Through our partnership with Uber, we wish to acknowledge the continued commitment of teachers to their students and their critical role in contributing to the achievement of the 2030 targets under Sustainable Development Goal 4.

In this crisis, teachers have shown great leadership and innovation in ensuring that #LearningNeverStops, and that no learner is left behind. They have also helped in communicating measures that prevent the spread of the virus and providing assistance to ensure the mental well-being of all children. An accelerated vaccination process will enable them to stand fully ready when schools reopen.

Eric Falt is the Director and Representative of the UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office covering Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

DATA POINT

Vaccination rate slows down

The rate of daily COVID-19 vaccinations in India decreased in the first 10 days of July compared to the last 10 days of June when the new vaccination policy was introduced. However, the rate in July was still higher than the daily inoculation rate recorded before the new policy came into force. Between July 1 and 10, 4.03 million doses were administered on average daily in the country, which is significantly lower than the average of 5.57 million doses administered daily between June 21 and 30. The seven-day rolling average of shots administered per day fell to 3.54 million by July 10. The average number of daily inoculations fell in most major States in July, with Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat registering the highest drops. U.P., Punjab and Bihar recorded marginal increases. By The Hindu Data Team

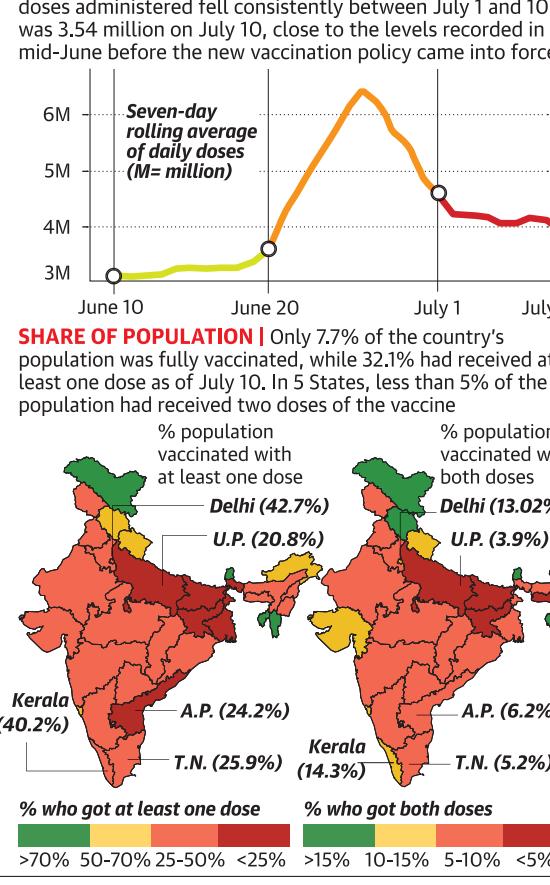
PACE DROPS

From July 1 to 10, 4.03 million doses were administered daily on average. To vaccinate all adults by December 31, 8.65 million doses need to be administered daily on average in the remaining days



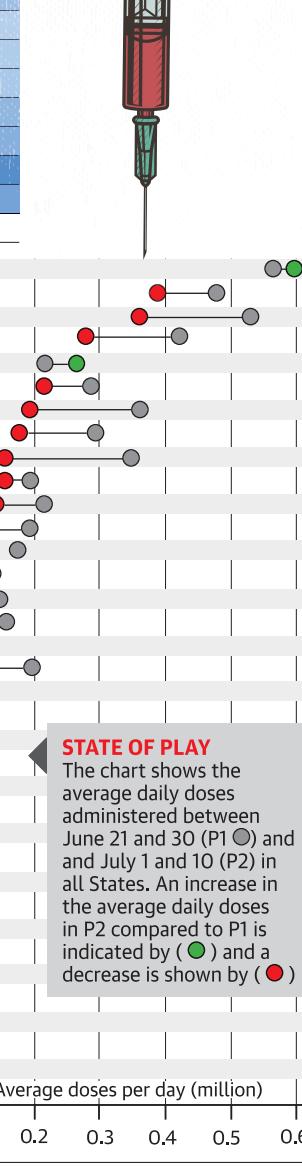
Phases	Doses / day (mn)	Total doses by Dec. 31 (mn)
Phase 1 pace (Jan 16 - Feb 27)	0.34	119.18
Phase 2 pace (Mar 1 - Mar 10)	1.14	363.78
Phase 2 pace (Mar 11 - Mar 20)	1.89	587.57
Phase 2 pace (Mar 21 - Mar 30)	1.85	574.13
Phase 3 pace (Apr 1 - Apr 10)	3.65	1,071.89
Phase 3 pace (Apr 11 - Apr 20)	2.85	860.34
Phase 3 pace (Apr 21 - Apr 30)	2.49	766.80
Phase 4 pace (May 1 - May 10)	1.77	590.91
Phase 4 pace (May 11 - May 20)	1.92	625.11
Phase 4 pace (May 21 - May 30)	2.13	672.69
Phase 4 pace (June 1 - June 10)	3.00	861.89
Phase 4 pace (June 11 - June 20)	3.40	942.09
Phase 5 pace (June 21 - June 30)	5.57	1,365.78
Phase 5 pace (July 1 - July 10)	4.03	1,081.28
Target pace (July 11 - Dec 31)	8.65	1,889.41

SUSTAINED FALL | The seven-day rolling average of daily doses administered fell consistently between July 1 and 10. It was 3.54 million on July 10, close to the levels recorded in mid-June before the new vaccination policy came into force



STATE OF PLAY

The chart shows the average daily doses administered between June 21 and 30 (P1) and July 1 and 10 (P2) in all States. An increase in the average daily doses in P2 compared to P1 is indicated by (●) and a decrease is shown by (○). Average doses per day (million)



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 12, 1971

Struggle for Bangla Desh
(From an Editorial)

Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan, Mr. Sadaq Ali, President of the Congress (O), Mr. Krishna Menon and other leading politicians continue to call for the immediate recognition of Bangla Desh. The demand has also been pressed by some members in the Lok Sabha and the Jan Sangh plans to take the issue to the streets next month. Though the Government's sympathies are fully with the Bangla Desh movement there are good reasons for not acceding diplomatic recognition at this stage. There would be little point in that recognition unless it can be followed up with massive supply of arms to the freedom fighters. This would be treated as an act of war by Pakistan and provide grist for Pakistan's propaganda mill which has been trying to tell the world that India promoted a secessionist movement in East Pakistan and that the Awami League is

FROM PAGE ONE

Chinese protest against Indian celebration

"We don't understand Mandarin. They had scribbled something on the banner. They stood there for about half an hour," Mr. Tsewang told *The Hindu*.

"The land where they stood and protested on the Dalai Lama's birthday is our land. It belongs to India," he stated.

Videos shared by Mr. Tsewang showed a group of men holding a long banner in red with words on it. They are also seen carrying the Chinese flag.

When contacted, Army authorities chose not to comment on the Chinese action. Mr. Tsewang stated that 10 days ago, the Chinese also protested when the locals were setting up a solar pump.

Last Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted the Dalai Lama in a phone call on the occasion of his 86th birthday.

This is the first time Mr. Modi has publicly confirmed speaking with the Dalai Lama since he took over.

er as PM in 2014.

The developments come against the backdrop of a continuing deadlock in the talks at various levels to resolve the ongoing military stand-off in eastern Ladakh.

While the first phase of disengagement at Pangong Tso was completed in February, efforts to work out an agreement for the second phase of disengagement at Gogra and Hot Springs have been held up. Other friction areas at Demchok and Depsang still remain.

2019 incident

A similar incident had occurred in the area in 2019 as well. In July 2019, as villagers held a local festival to celebrate the Dalai Lama's birthday, at least 11 Chinese men in civilian clothing came close to the LAC and raised banners from across the river bank which read, "Ban all activity to split Tibet".

The LAC in the area runs along the Indus river.

Dhami holds off on Kanwar yatra decision

This is also the concern of the medical officers tasked with controlling the pandemic on the ground. "There was complete panic among the people during the second wave, with a shortage of oxygen, ventilators and ICU beds. We are taking steps to ensure all these facilities are there in the event of a third wave. But people must also follow the COVID protocols," said Ajay Kumar Nagarkar, additional chief medical officer for Haridwar, who initially handled oxygen management in the district's COVID control room before he himself tested positive near the end of April, along with his entire family.

Any decision regarding the Kanwar Yatra will be taken at the policy and administration level, he insisted.

He added that the COVID care centres and hospitals will have to set up booths to cater to the three crore plus pilgrims expected, apart from the local population.

"Staffing such booths is a challenge with our manpower. Increased testing will be needed, but our testing capacity is limited," he said, noting that about 3,000 people are currently tested on a random sampling basis at the district's border points.

Uttarakhand is also facing a shortage of vaccines.

'High command will decide on CM change'

Mr. Baghel, who played a key role in overseeing the Congress' campaign in the recent Assam Assembly, is likely to be given major responsibility for the U.P. elections as well. Congress treasurer Pawan Kumar Bansal and senior leader from U.P., Rajeev Shukla, were also part of the hour-long meeting at 10 Janpath on Sunday.

In April, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister's parliamentary advisor, Rajesh Tiwari, who played a key role in

First report on compliance from Twitter

These persons have to be residents in India.

Twitter has already appointed an interim chief compliance officer and is expected to appoint a nodal officer soon.

In its compliance report, titled "India Transparency Report", Twitter has provided data on the different categories of complaints from users and action taken on them as well as provided information on its proactive monitoring efforts. Between May 26, 2021 and June 25, 2021, Twitter received a total of 38 complaints, which resulted in action against

133 URLs. Of these, the largest number of complaints pertained to defamation (20), followed by abuse or harassment (6) and sensitive adult content (4).

Twitter also processed 56 grievances appealing for suspension of user accounts, of which seven were overturned and remaining suspended.

The social media giant has also said that proactive monitoring of user content led to suspension of 18,385 accounts for child sexual exploitation and 4,179 accounts for terrorism related activities globally.

Shah launches projects in Gandhinagar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Amit Shah, on a two-day visit to Gujarat and his parliamentary constituency Gandhinagar, launched several development works on Sunday and praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for "creating systems" for uninterrupted development in the State

and the country. He laid the foundation stone of projects worth ₹244 crore in Ahmedabad and surrounding areas, which are part of his constituency. The Minister is scheduled to attend the Gujarat Forensic Science University convocation, visit the Lord Jagannath temple during Rath Yatra apart from touring constituency.

New IT rules are empowering and will protect users: Minister

They will ensure a safer and more responsible social media ecosystem in India'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Information Technology and Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Sunday said the new information technology rules were empowering and protecting users.

The new IT rules will ensure a safer and more responsible social media ecosystem in India, the Minister said.

"Reviewed the implementation and compliance of Information Technology Rules, 2021 along with my colleague Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar ji. These guidelines are empowering and protecting users and will ensure a safer and responsible social media ecosystem in

India," Mr. Vaishnaw said in a post on the Koo platform, Twitter's Indian competitor.

The new rules, which came into effect from May 25, mandate social media companies to establish a grievance redress mechanism for resolving complaints from the users or victims.

All significant social media companies with a user

dents of India.

However, Facebook-owned WhatsApp has challenged the new IT rules for social media intermediaries requiring the messaging app to trace chats and make provisions to identify the first originator of information, saying they violate the right to privacy and are unconstitutional.

WhatsApp further alleged the requirement of intermediaries enabling the identification of the first originator of information in India upon government or court order puts end-to-end encryption and its benefits "at risk".

Some of the media houses have also challenged the new IT rules and the matter is sub judice.

All of them should be resi-

Naqvi slams critics of U.P.'s population policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

Hitting out at those critical of the Yogi Adityanath government's steps aimed at stabilising the population in Uttar Pradesh, Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Sunday said the people doing politics or giving communal colour to such efforts were "enemies" of the State and the country.

While addressing the newly elected representatives of panchayats on his two-day visit to Rampur, the BJP leader said population control is the need of the hour and it is heartening that the campaign for population control is being started from the local self-government, the draft says.

Ration card units would be limited to four members of a family.

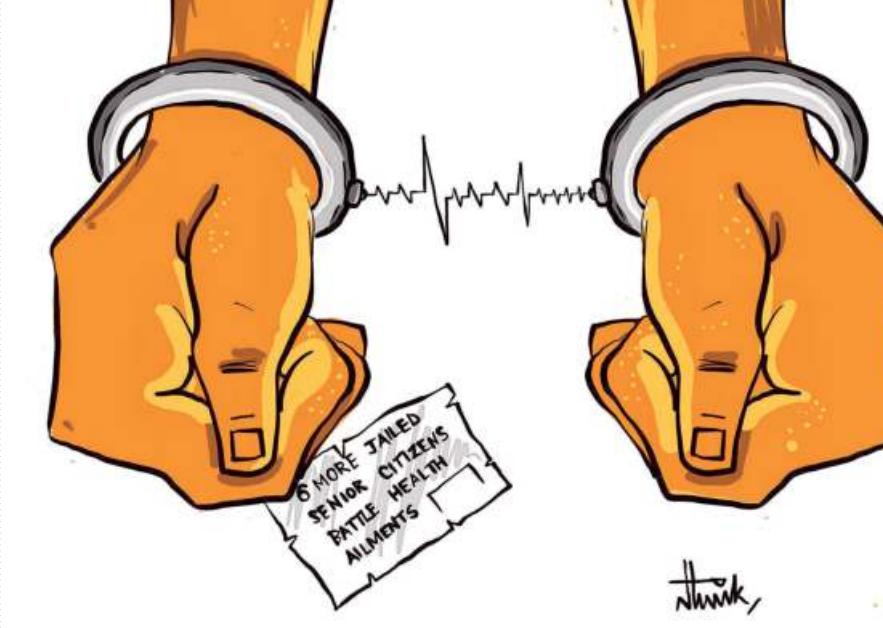
which is India's most populous State.

The policy comes at a time when the Uttar Pradesh State Law Commission has prepared the proposed draft Bill under which a two-child norm would be implemented and promoted.

A person who will have more than two children after the law comes into force would be debarred from several benefits such as government sponsored welfare schemes and from contesting elections to local authority or any body of the local self-government, the draft says.

Ration card units would be limited to four members of a family.

On the draw



HAL set to deliver first batch of 3 LCH

These are part of 15 Limited Series Production copters approved for Army, IAF

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is gearing up to deliver the first batch of three Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) to the Indian Air Force (IAF) once acceptance tests are completed. These are part of the 15 Limited Series Production (LSP) helicopters approved for the Army and the IAF.

"HAL has received Letter of Intent for five Air Force and five Army LCH for delivery pending contract finalisation of 15 Limited Series Production (LSP) LCH. HAL has produced and signalled out three LSP LCH for the IAF. Same will be subjected to customer acceptance and training shortly," a HAL source said.

On the remaining helicopters of the LSP series, the source added, "In the current year we are producing four LCH for Army and two for the Air Force. Remaining six LCH will be produced



Dominating the sky: A file photo of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's indigenous Light Combat Helicopter.

next year."

The deal for the 15 LCH was expected to have been signed in the first quarter of 2021 but has been delayed due to the second wave of the pandemic.

The IAF has put forward a requirement for 65 LCH and the Army for 114 helicopters. Of the 15 LSP helicopters, 10 are for the IAF and five for the Army. The LCH, the lightest attack helicopter in the world weighing 5.5 tonnes, has been designed and developed by the HAL to meet

the specific and unique requirements of the Indian armed forces and can operate at heights of 12,000 feet.

The Army Aviation operates smaller utility helicopters but does not have attack helicopters in its fleet and has for sometime pitched for attack helicopters of its own to operate with its strike Corps. The attack helicopter fleet is operated by the Air Force which provides close air support to the Army.

The IAF operates the older Mi-25 and Mi-35 Russian

attack helicopters which are in the process of being phased out and has inducted 22 AH-64E Apache attack helicopters from the U.S. The Army will also start receiving the Apache attack helicopters from early 2023 onwards, six of which have been contracted under an estimated \$800-mn deal from the U.S. in February 2020.

Presently, the Army has 90 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) and 75 Rudra, weaponised ALH, helicopters in service which are indigenously designed and developed by the HAL in addition to around 160 older Cheetah and Chetak utility helicopters which are in need of urgent replacement.

Last August, amid the ongoing standoff with China in Eastern Ladakh, two LCH were deployed for operations at high altitude in Leh at short notice to support IAF missions, validating their capability.

Bihar's Kesaria Buddha stupa waterlogged

Floods reported in some parts of the district after rainfall in the catchment areas

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

The world-famous Kesaria Buddha stupa in east Champaran district of Bihar was waterlogged following floods in some parts of the district after heavy rainfall in the catchment areas of river Gandak in neighbouring Nepal.

East and West Champaran districts share their borders with Nepal at many places.

Issue of concern

"Since it is waterlogged from all sides, it is feared that it may suffer damage. But, even last year too the stupa was waterlogged," said an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) official in Patna over phone.

"It is indeed an issue of serious concern," he added



Cause for concern: Buildings surrounded by flood water in East Champaran, Bihar. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tion of the nationally protected stupa is dated to the 3rd century BCE.

It is regarded as the largest Buddhist stupa in the world and has been drawing tourists from across several

Buddhist countries.

The stupa's exploration had started in the early 19th century after its discovery by Colonel Mackenzie in 1814. Later, it was excavated by General Cunningham in 1861-62 and in 1998 an ASI team led by archaeologist K.K. Muhammad had excavated the site properly.

The original Kesaria stupa is said to date back to the time of emperor Ashoka (circa 250 BCE) as the remains of an Ashokan pillar was discovered there. The local people call the stupa "devayaya," meaning "house of gods".

The ASI has declared it a protected monument.

However, a larger part of the stupa is yet to be developed as it remains under thick vegetation.

Psychoanalysis test done on blast accused

Police say two are telling 'partial truth'

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Results of the psychoanalysis test of four students arrested from Ladakh in connection with a blast near the Israel Embassy in New Delhi in January found that two of them were telling "partial truth", a senior police officer said on Sunday.

The police said that Nazir Hussain, 26, Zulfikar Ali Wazir, 25, Ajaz Hussain, 28 and Muzammil Hussain, 25, all from Thang village in Kargil district of Ladakh, were arrested from Kargil and brought to Delhi on transit remand on June 24.

After detailed investigation, they were taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences for a psychoanalysis test by a panel of expert doctors.

"The test result shared by doctors mentioned that two of them were telling 'partial truth' regarding their role in the blast outside the Israel Embassy," the officer said.

"We are going through the test report to find out what's the 'partial truth' the accused are hiding from the police. If required, we will take the help of experts and question them again," the officer added.

The police said all four accused had been in Delhi on the day of the blast and their phones were found to have been switched off. Five mobile phones had been recovered from them.

A minor IED (improvised explosive device) blast took place outside the embassy on January 29. There were no casualties.

Two held for plotting attacks in U.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The police on Sunday arrested two persons on suspicion that they were allegedly planning to carry out terror attacks in parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Lucknow ahead of Independence Day.

The Anti-Terror Squad, which made the arrests from two locations here, claimed to have recovered explosives from the two suspects. The police claimed the men were working for a local module of terror outfit Al-Qaeda.

The two were identified as Minhz Ahmad and Maseeruddin.

Prisoners wait for SC's bail order to arrive by post

Convicts have spent 14-20 years in jail

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GAZIABAD

It has been three days since the Supreme Court granted immediate interim bail to 13 convicts lodged in the Agra Central Jail but the inmates are yet to walk free as jail authorities are waiting to receive the order by post. The convicts have spent between 14 and 20 years in prison despite being juveniles at the time of committing the crime.

V.K. Singh, Senior Superintendent of Agra Central Jail, said they were waiting for the certified copy of the SC's order. "We will follow the due process. After the top court's order, they will surely be released but only after receiving the physical copy of the order," Mr. Singh told *The Hindu*. "It has been dispatched and it should reach us any time." A source in the prison said the order was expected to reach them on Monday. "The SC took only a week to pass the order in favour of the petitioners but it seems it will take another week to get them released from a Central Jail in Uttar Pradesh," said lawyer Rishi Malhotra, who represented the convicts.

According to the Juvenile Justice Act 2000, the maximum sentence for juvenile offenders is three years in a juvenile correction home.

He said the convicts had spent a good part of their lives behind bars because of ignorance and a lack of good legal aid at the trial stage. "The 13 prisoners had not taken the defence of juvenility during the trial stage," he said. In 2012, the Allahabad High Court directed the Juvenile Justice Board to determine the ages of prisoners, following which 13 were found to be juvenile offenders. "All of them were convicted for murder and were given life terms," said Mr. Malhotra.

According to the Juvenile Justice Act 2000, the maximum sentence for juvenile offenders is three years in a juvenile correction home.

"On one hand, jail authorities complain that the jails are overpopulated and on the other, they perpetuate red-tapism," Mr. Malhotra said.

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"

'Stan Swamy's death cannot be justified'

STAFF REPORTER
PUNE

Launching a broadside at the Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government over the death of Father Stan Swamy, Shiv Sena MP and party spokesperson Sanjay Raut on Sunday said that the "murder" of the octogenarian tribal rights activist in prison could not be justified, while comparing the Modi regime with that of the fascist governments of Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler.

In his column *Rokhthok* in the Sena's mouthpiece *Saamana*, Mr. Raut questioned whether India's foundations had become so weak that the Modi government feared its overthrow by an 84-year-old Jesuit priest and activist. Mr. Raut said the death of the "disabled and helpless Father Swamy" in prison could not be justified even if Maoists and Naxals were more dangerous than Kashmiri separatists.

'Both UPA, NDA misused probe agencies'

STAFF REPORTER
PUNE

Both the erstwhile United Progressive Alliance and the current National Democratic Alliance government have misused the Central probe agencies to settle political scores, said Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray on Sunday, commenting on the recent spate of Enforcement Directorate actions against the leadership of the ruling 'Maha Vikas Aghadi' government.

"The ED is not some tool in the hands of the Central government that it can use to topple whosoever it did not like," he said.

The MNS president was responding to questions on the ED's questioning of NCP leader Eknath Khadse and the agency's arrest of his son-in-law in a money laundering case related to a dubious land deal in Pune's Bhosari area.

Nadda chairs meet with BJP secretaries

Party prepares for upcoming elections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

BJP president J.P. Nadda chaired a meeting with the party's national secretaries on Sunday, where he reviewed the organisational activities and the preparations for the upcoming Assembly elections in five States.

They later called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his official residence here and briefed him.

This was Mr. Nadda's first physical meeting with these BJP office-bearers following their appointment last year.

A party leader noted that the BJP general secretaries also called on Mr. Modi after their first physical meeting with Mr. Nadda.

At the secretaries' meeting with Mr. Nadda, the on-

Kandahar evacuation is temporary, says MEA

Consulate-General hasn't been closed, says Ministry

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI



Afghan security personnel on duty in Kandahar amid growing fighting.

Hindu reported that India has closed diplomatic operations at Kandahar temporarily. The Indian personnel were seen on Saturday leaving the premises of the mission in a cavalcade of official vehicles.

"The Consulate continues to operate through our local staff members. Arrangements are being made to ensure continued delivery of visa and consular services through our Embassy in Kabul," said Mr. Bagchi. The diplomatic mission in Kandahar

serves as an important coordinating centre for the large number of medical tourists who seek treatment in India and obstructions and delays in visa acquisition can create challenges for Afghan citizens intending to visit Indian hospitals.

The security situation in Kandahar continues to remain grim with fierce fighting going on in the suburbs and in nearby areas that have been taken over by the Taliban fighters. Taliban fighters on Friday attacked the jail in Kandahar that holds a large number of veterans of the Taliban movement.

Indian missions in Afghanistan were targeted by terrorists in the past and Saturday's evacuation is, therefore, being interpreted as a measure to ensure the safety and security of the people employed at the Indian Consulate-General.

Pressure fuse points to Pakistani hand'

Sources say LeT may have got help from the ISI or the Army in fabricating IEDs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAMMU/NEW DELHI



Security concerns: On June 27, bombs were dropped by drones at the IAF base in Jammu. ■ PTI

The second one was on the ground. Notably, of late, Pakistan has been procuring armed drones from China and Turkey.

The sources said drones could fly up to three hours and could be monitored and manoeuvred remotely through the Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. The aerial distance from the Jammu airport to the International Border is 14 km.

In September last year, five Lok Sabha members from the YSR Congress had asked whether the government had issued any guidelines in light of the possibility of drones being used as weapons of attack on high-security installations.

The then Minister of State for Home, G.K. Reddy, had stated, "In order to counter the threat of drones in the country, necessary guidelines have been issued, which include measures to be taken by the Central and the State governments in consultation with the security agencies."

and that is why they do not explode in the air but on impact, they explained.

Director-General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh had said earlier that Pakistan-based terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba were suspected to be behind the bombing of the IAF station.

However, in these sophisticated IEDs, the 'pressure fuse' had been deployed at the nose of the bombs so that they trigger with a force after falling on the ground, the sources said. Most of the artillery shells and mortar bombs have this type of fuse,

and that is why they do not explode in the air but on impact, they explained.

Director-General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh had said earlier that Pakistan-based terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba were suspected to be behind the bombing of the IAF station.

Two IAF personnel were injured in the explosions that took place within six minutes of each other. The first blast ripped off the roof of a single-storey building in the technical area of the airport manned by the IAF in Satwari on the outskirts of Jammu.

NIA raids seven locations in Kashmir, seizes digital devices

Case pertains to alleged 'online radicalisation' by ISIS

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR



One of the locations raided by the NIA on Sunday in Kashmir. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Sunday raided multiple locations in the Kashmir valley, questioned locals and seized digital devices in a case regarding online radicalisation by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in India.

"The NIA conducted simultaneous searches in Srinagar and Anantnag at seven locations. During the searches, a large number of incriminating documents and digital devices such as mobile phones, tablets, laptops, hard disks and T-Shirts having ISIS logo were recovered and seized," said an NIA spokesman.

A case was registered by the NIA on June 29, 2021, under the Indian Penal Code and the UAPA in connection with the alleged conspiracy

of ISIS to radicalise and recruit impressionable youth in India and wage violent jihad against India.

"An investigation in the case continues," the spokesman said.

According to the NIA, in order to execute the plan, a campaign has been launched over cyberspace, which is supplemented by on-ground terror financing activities.

"ISIS terrorists operating from various conflict zones along with ISIS cadres in India, by assuming pseudo-online identities, have created a network wherein ISIS-related propaganda material is disseminated for radicalising and recruiting members to the fold of ISIS," the NIA said.

RSS assigns Arun Kumar to coordinate with the BJP

He replaces Krishna Gopal ahead of elections next year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In an ongoing meeting of the full-time pracharakas of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) at Chitrakoot in Madhya Pradesh, a significant organisational change was introduced by replacing joint general secretary Krishna Gopal with Arun Kumar, another joint general secretary, as its coordinator on political issues and with the BJP.

The position is considered sensitive as it involves coordinating with the BJP-led government and the party on political issues, and assumes more importance by the fact that Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand are to go to Assembly elections next year. One joint general

secretary (organisation) is also likely to be seconded to the BJP, said sources.

RSS prachar pramukh Sunil Ambekar confirmed the change that Mr. Kumar, recently made joint general secretary in the RSS, was to hold the coordinator's position, but maintained that this was a routine organisational shuffle.

Mr. Kumar's taking charge of the post was considered imminent after he was elevated to the joint general secretary post. Earlier in the year, Dattatreya Hosabale was made second-in-command of the RSS or the general secretary.

The last time such a change had taken place, that is when Mr. Krishna Gopal was appointed coordinator,

was around 2014-15, when the Modi government had just taken over.

RSS sources said more changes in kshetra pracharakas, or areas in-charge, were also being firmed up at the three-day meet, including moving around personnel from West Bengal, where the BJP lost the Assembly polls, and in Rajasthan as well, say sources.

In an annual report released earlier in the day, the RSS said that 39,454 of its shakhas were operating across the country and that it will undertake a nationwide training of its workers to do aid work for the possible third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the aim was to reach 2.5 lakh spots with this aid work.

NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINATIONS IN MEDICAL SCIENCES
(Autonomous body of the M/o. Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
NAMS Building, Medical Enclave, Ansari Nagar,
New Delhi – 110029

DNB/DrNB FINAL THEORY EXAMINATION – JUNE 2021

NOTICE

National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) shall conduct the next DNB/DrNB Final Theory Examinations on 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th August 2021.

Please refer to the Information Bulletin at NBEMS website www.natboard.edu.in for eligibility criteria, fee structure, scheme of examination and other details.

Important Dates

Availability of Information Bulletin	12 th July 2021 Onwards
Online Submission of the Application Form	12 th July to 31 st July 2021
Date of Examination	24 th , 25 th , 26 th and 27 th August 2021

Candidate Care Support: 011-45593000/ 022-61087595
Web Portal: <https://exam.natboard.edu.in/communication.php>

ODISHA JOINT ENTRANCE EXAMINATION-2021 (OJEE-2021)

No: OJEE / 230

DATE : 09.07.2021

NOTICE REGARDING EXTENSION OF LAST DATE OF APPLICATION

The revised dates of the Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE - 2021) will be notified, on assessment of the situation, in another two weeks. Meanwhile, the last date for submission of online application forms for all the courses (except B. Tech.) under OJEE 2021, which started with effect from 14.04.2021 and has been extended a number of times, is again extended up to 26.07.2021 (11.59 PM) and last date for fee payment up to 28.07.2021 (11.59 PM).

The interested candidates may kindly note that these dates are final and there will not be any more extension of these dates.

Sd/-
CHAIRMAN, OJEE, Odisha

OJPR-14020/11/0005/2122

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Sunday hit out at the Central government over reports of a steep fall in infrastructure expenditure and a dip in vaccination rates, saying that a "bulky Cabinet" is of no use if public investments are not higher. In a series of tweets, CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said that the

Bulky Cabinet of no use if public spending is not higher: CPI(M)

Narendra Modi government must spend more to build infrastructure-generating jobs and demand. "Change of faces and a bulky cabinet is of no use: stop the 'thank you' ad-gimmicks and spend allocated money on vaccines. This is disastrous. When higher public investments are needed to revive the economy and secure livelihoods, government expenditure falls sharply by 41.6 per cent," he said, asking

the government where the money was being spent. Attaching a report showing that India is among the countries with the lowest share of people who have received at least one dose of vaccine, Mr. Yechury said a new Cabinet is of no use if vaccines are not provided.

"This is where India stands thanks to the complete mismanagement and hubris of this government," he said.

TOURISM CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED (TCGL)
(A Government of Gujarat Undertaking)
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Gandhinagar-382011
Phone: +91-79-2397721

TENDER NOTICE

Bids are invited from the reputed and experienced parties for "Request for Proposal (RFP) for Creating and Operating Audio Guide for Adalaj ni Vav (Stepwell), Gandhinagar, Gujarat". The project requirements, technical specification, eligibility criteria, selection process, etc. are available in the Tender documents published on the websites: www.nprocure.com & [https://www.gujarattourism.com/tcgl/tender/latest-tender](http://www.gujarattourism.com/tcgl/tender/latest-tender). The last date for submission of the Financial Bid is 09/08/2021 upto 3:00 p.m. and Technical Bid is 11/08/2021 upto 3:00 p.m. The Financial Bid shall be uploaded on n-procure website only.

Managing Director

h-11:

'Current weather could add to virus symptoms'

Public must follow COVID-appropriate behaviour: doctors

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

The lingering second COVID-19 wave and the current weather – a combination of high heat and humidity prevailing across some parts of India – have prompted doctors to caution the general public to strictly follow COVID-appropriate behaviour to ensure that places with common air conditioning and poor ventilation do not prove to be superspreader zones.

The effect of worsened weather on an ongoing illness contributed in terms of aggravated symptoms, said Anurag Aggarwal, associate consultant, internal medicine, QRG Health City, Faridabad, who added that there was no proven research on how the virus responded to weather conditions.

Bhagwan Mantri, consultant, pulmonology, Moolchand Hospital, noted that lower relative humidity aided airborne transmission of water droplets and aerosols.



Taking measures: People waiting to take a test for COVID-19 in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

"When we cough, sneeze, talk or sing, water droplets and smaller water particles [aerosols] containing living viruses disperse into the air. Droplets and aerosols tend to stay afloat longer and travel farther in the air with lower relative humidity. Virus-containing aerosols, in particular, can penetrate more deeply into the lungs to increase the possibility of transmission," he said.

"When moisture levels are insufficient, viral particles have a greater 'docking' potential at airway receptor sites, which can lead to an increased risk of infection. Low relative humidity has a drying effect on the cells and mucous linings of our airways. These cells act as a defence against viral particles and other invading foreign substances. Drying out airway linings impairs their ability to function properly," Mr. Mantri added.

However, he said adherence to COVID-appropriate behaviour was the only way to reduce the transmission risk in any atmospheric condition.

Curfew has also been imposed in Puri from Sunday to Tuesday.

People have been advised to stock up on essential goods as all shops will remain closed till Tuesday.

To prevent any devotees from entering Grand Road, the police blocked every lane and bylane leading to the venue.

Tourists have also been asked to vacate guest houses and hotels in the town to ensure that no outsiders

Puri decked up for annual Rath Yatra

Curfew imposed; second year that the event is being conducted without devotees

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

A day before the annual Rath Yatra, decorated chariots of Lord Balabhadra, Lord Jagannath and Devi Subhadra were positioned in Bada Danda (Grand Road) in front of the 12th century Shree Jagannath Temple at Puri, Odisha, on Sunday.

Colourful chariots – Taladhwaja of Lord Balabhadra, Nandighosa of Lord Jagannath and Debadalan of Devi Subhadra – were pulled by the sevayats (traditional priests of the temple).

This was the second successive year that the world-famous Rath Yatra was being conducted without devotees in view of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

Lanes blocked

To prevent any devotees from entering Grand Road, the police blocked every lane and bylane leading to the venue.

Curfew has also been imposed in Puri from Sunday to Tuesday.

People have been advised to stock up on essential goods as all shops will remain closed till Tuesday.



Muted celebrations: Wooden chariots at the Shree Jagannath temple. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

reached the Rath Yatra venue.

The three chariots were constructed by traditional carpenters at a place called Ratha Khala where no outsiders were allowed. As a precautionary step, all of the carpenters were vaccinated and tested.

The servitors testing negative for COVID-19 will be allowed to pull chariots. Similarly, the sevayats, who

perform complex rituals inside the Jagannath Temple and carry massive wooden idols to the chariots, had already undergone RT-PCR tests.

Except Puri, nowhere else has the Rath Yatra been allowed. Though priests and other devotees had moved the Supreme Court to allow the celebration of the Rath Yatra in other areas, the court refused to entertain it.

PM appeals for Padma award nominations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged the public to nominate individuals who are doing exceptional work at the grassroots for the Padma awards.

Mr. Modi said India had many talented individuals doing exceptional work at the grassroots, but they were often not known.

"India has many talented people who are doing exceptional work at the grassroots. Often, we don't see or hear much of them. Do you know such inspiring people? You can nominate them for the #PeoplesPadma. Nominations are open till 15th September. http://padmaawards.gov.in," the Prime Minister tweeted, sharing a link of the website.

The Padma awards – Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri – are amongst the highest civilian awards in the country.

These awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.

Scheme for widows in Assam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam government on Sunday launched a scheme entailing a one-time financial assistance of ₹2.5 lakh to women who lost their husbands to COVID-19 since March-April 2020.

The Chief Minister's COVID-19 Widows Support Scheme is for women from low-income families with a total annual income of up to ₹5 lakh.

"Our government, in its bid to provide a little support at this testing time, has decided to assuage the sufferings of the family members of the deceased with financial support," Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

He added that the scheme had been launched to help the beneficiaries lead a life of dignity.

Launching the scheme, he handed over a cheque of ₹2.5 lakh each to 176 beneficiaries belonging to eight districts. Officials said 883 women were eligible for the scheme so far. The cheques of the remaining beneficiaries would be handed over by the guardian Ministers, each in charge of a few districts.

"We have already launched the Sishu Seva Scheme to secure the academic future of the children who have lost both their parents to COVID-19," Dr. Sarma said.

Railways focus on paediatric facilities

Ministry calls for preparedness to ensure testing, tracking and treating of patients

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

The Ministry of Railways has called for full preparedness to ensure testing, tracking and treating of patients amid the gradual lifting of lockdown in many States and a strong apprehension on the future course of COVID-19.

Chief Medical Directors of the Zonal Railways have been told to ensure availability of adequate infrastructure, especially for paediatric patients, and act immediately upon any change in the demographic profile of the patients or increase in the number of new infections.

The Railways, which transports millions of passengers every day, will enforce COVID-appropriate behaviour and also vaccinate all employees/beneficiaries in its premises. In an advisory, the Railway Board said, "There is a strong apprehension of future course of the pandemic, which may be in the



In preparation: A worker preparing a train coach that was converted into a COVID-19 isolation ward. ■ PTI

current form of virus or in a mutated version. The problem of Delta Plus variant is already causing concern. The situation calls for immediate action."

Vulnerable group

The most vulnerable group could be unvaccinated individuals, particularly those below the age of 18. While most of the Railway hospitals have been provided with sufficient facilities for oxygen supply by way of enhanced

number of cylinders, concentrators and Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) plants, the advisory asked senior medical officers to review the availability of adequate stock of medicines/consumables, besides sensitising doctors/paramedical staff on the future course of the pandemic.

General Managers of the Zonal Railways/production units were told to arrange vaccination for all beneficiaries, including porters, con-

tractors and others, by the end of July. Additional centres could be opened to meet the target and also give priority to those due for the second dose of the vaccine.

One of the serious impediments in achieving the target of vaccination was the willingness of the beneficiaries to come forward to take the shot. Besides deploying staff of the Personnel Department to persuade workers to volunteer for vaccination, the best practices of divisions/workshops should be showcased to motivate others lagging in achieving targets/reducing wastage of vaccines.

"It has also been decided to suitably reward divisions/zones who follow the best practice of achieving laid down targets of vaccination/reducing waste of vaccines. Similar reward schemes may also be initiated so that the staff remains motivated to face the challenges," the Railway Board said.

More than 20 such encounters had taken place, he added.

"Assam Chief Minister stated in a police conference that police should shoot at alleged criminals at legs which are permitted by law... Police are staging fake encounters with impunity," Mr. Jwadder said.

In 2020-21, Childline intervened for 758 children in Bhubaneswar alone.

In past three months since April, Childline has intervened for 196 children, and 51 children had to be rescued.

Four minors rescued in Bhubaneswar

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

Four children, all below the age of 10, sitting helplessly and seeking food under a tree on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar in Odisha after being abandoned by their parents, were rescued on Saturday.

Childline, an NGO working with disadvantaged children, said their mother had left them to fend for themselves eight months ago. The father, a laterite stonecutter, used to get food for the three girls and a boy. However, three days ago, the father disappeared.

The rescued children were put up in childcare institutions after the Child Welfare Committee saw them through videoconferencing.

"With sources of income for people in the low-income groups drying up due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the vulnerability of children has been further exacerbated. Children are exposed to hunger and are becoming malnourished," said Benudhar Senapati, Director of the Childline facility, on Sunday.

In 2020-21, Childline intervened for 758 children in Bhubaneswar alone.

In past three months since April, Childline has intervened for 196 children, and 51 children had to be rescued.

The Kerala connection to the Wimbledon semis

Yoga trainer helps German player

MINI MURINGATHERI
THRISSUR

A yoga trainer from Kerala had something to cheer about when German tennis player Angelique Kerber reached the semi-final of the Wimbledon championship, on Sunday.

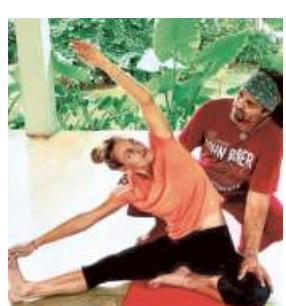
Ms. Kerber, former world number one and winner of three grand slam titles, had gone through a prolonged bad patch after winning the 2018 Wimbledon, defeating Serena Williams in the final. (Ms. Kerber had won the 2016 Australian Open and 2016 US Open championships. She was also the silver medallist at the 2016 Rio Olympics.)

She had faced many disappointing losses in the past three years. The 33-year-old had even considered retirement after her first-round exits in major tournaments. Her ranking had fallen to 28.

Ms. Kerber was struggling to regain her form when she met P.R. Binoy, a yoga trainer from Irinjalakuda, near Thrissur, who has been conducting yoga training sessions in Europe since 2014. Mr. Binoy was introduced to Ms. Kerber in Germany by her friends. Since then, yoga has become part of Ms. Kerber's fitness regime, he says.

Down to earth

"She has been dedicatedly practising yoga since 2019. I go again next month," he said.



Recovery mode: T.R. Binoy training German tennis player Angelique Kerber in yoga. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

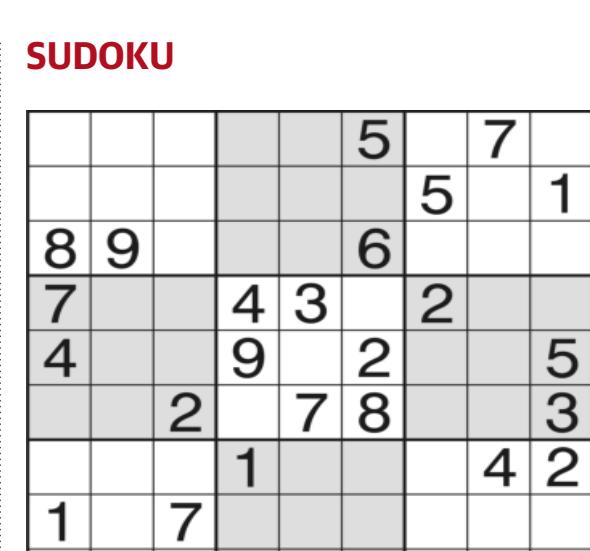
felt great pride and pleasure when a tennis player of her stature approached me for training. She is very systematic and punctual. Very down to earth too, despite being once ranked No. 1 in the world. I too learned a lot from her," Mr. Binoy recalls.

Ms. Kerber declared her resurgence this year by winning the Bad Homburg Open 2021.

On July 8, she played the semi-final at Wimbledon, losing to eventual winner and world No. 1 Ashleigh Barty.

Mr. Binoy has conducted yoga training programmes in 18 countries, including New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and Poland. "COVID has restricted many training programmes. I visited Germany last February. If restrictions are relaxed, I plan to go again next month," he said.

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★

No. SSS135 Date: 13 July 2021 www.mightyfingers.com

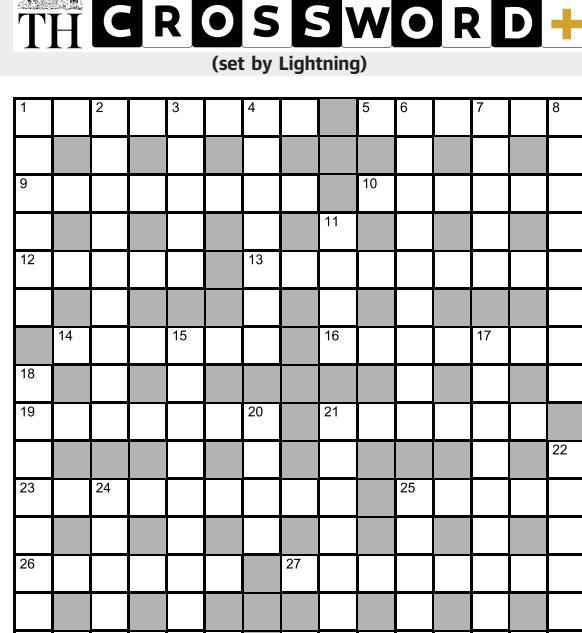
2	9	1	3	4	7	5	8	6
8	4	7	1	6	5	3	9	2
7	4	3	2					
4	9	2					5	
2	7	8					3	
1	7							
8	2						4	2

Solution to puzzle 13297

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

TH CROSSWORD + 13297

(set by Lightning)



ACROSS

- 1 Part I'm cooking without recipe and cut beef (8)
- 5 Release both ends of entertainer's cloak (6)
- 9 Obstacle in short journey crossed regularly (8)
- 10 Bitcoin sister held for demand (6)
- 12 Relative's fine absorbing energy (5)
- 13 Sailor with leader returning after opening – it's a crime (9)
- 14 Forward movement outside ordinary sitting room (6)

The Hindu Crossword 13296, published on July 10, was a repeat of Lightning's THC 1327, which was run on June 15. We apologise for the inadvertency, hope you enjoyed the second solve nonetheless, and assure you that Lightning will not strike twice again!

FAITH

Advent of Alavandar

It was indicated through divine will that Nathamuni that his grandson would preserve and propagate the Vaishnava tradition that was entrusted in his custody. At the time of his death, Nathamuni asked his disciples to bequeath this inheritance to his grandson and name him Yamunai Thuraivar. The term 'Alavandar' means 'One who has come to reign,' and his advent is seen as a landmark event in Vaishnava tradition, pointed out Asuri Sri Madhavachariar in a discourse.

Born as a precocious child, he gained extraordinary proficiency in the sastras at a young age. An event in his early life proved his ability to engage in intellectual debates with felicity. Once Akki Azhwari, the court scholar, presuming himself to be the greatest scholar, insisted that all other scholars should pay him tribute in the form of dues. When this demand was sent to Alavandar's preceptor Maha Bashya Bhattar, the disciple asked his preceptor to ignore it. Learning that a young boy had dared to defy the royal scholar, the king was curious to meet him. So he invited him to the court.

Much impressed by his effulgence and demeanour, the king promised him a share in the kingdom if he won in the debate with Akki Azhwari. The queen was sure that the boy would

Kabul airport gets anti-missile system

Amid Taliban onslaught, NATO keen to secure vital exit route for foreign diplomats and aid workers

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KABUL

Afghan authorities said on Sunday they have installed an anti-missile system at Kabul airport to counter incoming rockets, as the Taliban pressed on with a blistering offensive across the country.

Washington and its allies are due to end their military mission in Afghanistan at the end of August, even as the insurgents say they now control 85% of the country – a claim that could not be independently verified and is disputed by the government.

The Islamic fundamentalist group's rapid gains in recent weeks have raised fears about the security of the capital and its airport, with NATO keen to secure a vital exit route to the outside world for foreign diplomats and aid workers.

"The newly installed air defence system has been operational in Kabul since 2



Growing conflict: Armed Afghan militias patrolling the outskirts of Takhar province on Sunday. ■ REUTERS

a.m. on Sunday," the Interior Ministry said in a statement. "The system has proven useful in the world in repelling rocket and missile attacks."

Security forces spokesman Ajmal Omar Shinwari said the system was given by "our foreign friends".

"It has very complicated technology. For now our foreign friends are operating

while we are trying to build the capacity to use it," Mr. Shinwari said, adding that in the past week 1,177 Taliban fighters were killed in fighting with government forces.

Regular attacks

The Taliban have regularly launched rockets and mortars at government forces across the countryside, with

Australia pulls out last troops

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SYDNEY

Australia's Defence Minister on Sunday confirmed the end of his country's involvement in the 20-year Afghanistan war, saying the troop withdrawal had taken place "in recent weeks".

Defence Minister Peter Dutton said the last 80 support personnel had left Afghanistan "in recent

weeks". "That doesn't mean we won't be a part of campaigns with the United States... where we deem that to be in our national interest or in the interest of our allies," he added.

Australia had deployed 39,000 troops over the past 20 years as part of U.S. and NATO-led operations against the Taliban and terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

cial and media reports said.

Turkey has promised to provide security for Kabul airport once the U.S. and NATO troops leave next month. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday said Turkey and the United States had agreed on the "scope" of how the airport would be managed under the control of Turkish forces.

U.S. alarmed as Saudi lawsuits threaten to expose secrets

Cases centre on graft allegations against a former spymaster

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Riyadh

Two lawsuits pitting Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler against a former intelligence czar threaten to expose highly sensitive U.S. government secrets, prompting Washington to consider a rare judicial intervention, documents show.

The cases in U.S. and Canadian courts centre on corruption allegations levelled by state-owned Saudi companies against Saad Aljabri, a former spymaster who long worked closely with American officials on covert

counterterrorism operations.

That marks the latest twist in a long-running feud between Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) and Mr. Aljabri.

Mr. Aljabri's patron, Prince Mohammed bin Nayef (MBN), is currently in Saudi detention after being deposed as heir to the throne in a 2017 palace coup.

The legal drama sheds light on Shakespearean rivalries in the top echelons of the Saudi royal family, but Washington fears that a bit-

ter courtroom showdown risks exposing sensitive information related to its covert operations.

A rare U.S. Justice Department filing in a Massachusetts court in April noted Mr. Aljabri's intention to "describe information concerning alleged national security activities".

"The (U.S.) government is considering whether and how to participate in this action, including if necessary and applicable,

through an assertion of appropriate governmental privileges," the filing said, without elaborating.

HK pro-democracy group downsizes over safety fears

It lets go of staff amid crackdown

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

HONG KONG

One of Hong Kong's most established pro-democracy civic organisations said it is letting go its paid staff and halving the size of its steering committee after Beijing stepped up its crackdown on opposition activity in the semi-autonomous Chinese city.

The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China is best known for organising an annual rally and candlelight vigil remembering those killed in the bloody 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Beijing.

ing's Tiananmen Square. The group said in a statement on Saturday that seven of its 14 remaining steering committee members had decided to step down in the face of "growing political and legal risks".

Of the seven members remaining, three are currently in jail for protest-related activities.

While the 32-year-old group said the changes would affect its operations, it vowed that "regardless of whatever difficulties or challenges we face, the alliance will continue to grit our teeth and move onwards one step at a time".

Abiy Ahmed wins huge majority in Ethiopia poll

Victory comes amid Tigray conflict

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ADDIS ABABA

Ethiopia's ruling party won a landslide in a landmark parliamentary poll, results showed on Saturday, ensuring a new five-year term for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed despite a brutal war in the northern region of Tigray.

Mr. Abiy hailed the outcome of what he described as a "historic" election – the first time he faced voters since being appointed Prime Minister in 2018 following several years of anti-government protests.

The winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize had hoped to frame victory at the ballot box as a mandate for political and economic reforms and military operations. But the poll was held in the midst of the grueling conflict in Tigray that has battered Mr. Abiy's global reputation and raised fears of widespread famine.



Abiy Ahmed

His Prosperity Party won 410 seats in the federal Parliament out of 436 where elections were held, according to results issued by the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), which said there would be a rerun in 10 constituencies.

June's vote, which had been postponed twice due to the COVID-19 pandemic and logistical issues, was largely peaceful but Opposition parties decried harassment and intimidation. No voting was held in the Tigray region.

Woman infected with two variants at the same time

90-year-old died in Belgium hospital

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS

A 90-year-old woman who died after falling ill with COVID-19 was infected with both the Alpha and Beta variants of the coronavirus at the same time, researchers in Belgium said on Sunday, adding that the rare phenomenon may be underestimated.

The unvaccinated woman was admitted to a hospital in the Belgian city of Aalst after a spate of falls in March and tested positive for COVID-19 the same day. While her oxygen levels were initially good, her condition deteriorated rapidly and she died five days later.

When medical staff tested for the presence of any variants of concern they found that she was carrying both strains. "Both these variants were circulating in Belgium at the time, so it is likely that the lady was co-infected

with different viruses from two different people," said molecular biologist Anne Vankeerberghen from the OLV Hospital who led the research.

Dr. Vankeerberghen said it was difficult to say whether the co-infection played a role in the fast deterioration of the patient. The research, which has not yet been submitted to a medical journal for publication, is being presented at the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases.

Lawrence Young, a virologist and Professor of Molecular Oncology at the University of Warwick, said, "This study does highlight the need for more studies to determine whether infection with multiple variants of concern affects the clinical course of COVID-19 and whether this in any way compromises the efficacy of vaccination."

Hospitalised wife of slain Haitian leader denounces enemies

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PORT-AU-PRINCE

The hospitalised wife of Haiti's assassinated President Jovenel Moïse has given her first public statement since being wounded in the attack that killed him, accusing enemies of wanting "to kill his dream, his vision, his ideology".

Martine Moïse issued the recorded statement in Creole from the Miami hospital where she was being treated for wounds suffered in the attack early on Wednesday, and also posted a version on her Twitter account.

"I'm alive, thanks to God," she said in the recording, which also played on local radio stations. "But I love my husband Jovenel. We fought

together for more than 25 years. During all these years, love radiated within the home. But suddenly, the mercenaries came and pelted my husband with bullets."

"You have to be a notorious criminal without guts to assassinate a President like Jovenel Moïse with impunity without giving him the chance to speak," she ad-

ded. "You knew who the President was fighting against. These people hired mercenaries to kill the President and his family because of the projects of roads, electricity, drinking water supply, organisation of the referendum and elections..."

"The mercenaries who assassinated the President are currently behind bars," she added, "but other mercenaries currently want to kill his dream, his vision, his ideology." The police say they have arrested more than a dozen people – most of them retired Colombian soldiers – and are searching for more, but it remained unclear who had hired the team that attacked the President's house, or why.

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Richard Branson takes off first in space tourism race

Bandla becomes third Indian-origin woman to fly into space

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES



Escaping gravity: Passenger rocket plane VSS Unity starts its ascent to the edge of space on Sunday. ■ REUTERS

age 77 in 1998.) With about 500 people watching, including Mr. Branson's family, a twin-fuselage aircraft with his space plane attached underneath took off in the first stage of the flight. The space plane then detached from the mother ship at an altitude of about 13 kilometres and fired its engine, reaching more than Mach 3, or three times the speed of sound, as it pierced the edge of space. The crowd cheered as it touched down on the runway.

Mr. Bandla became the third Indian-origin woman to fly into space after Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams. Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma is the only Indian citizen to travel in space.

The brief, up-and-down flight – the rocket ship's portion took only about 15 minutes, or about as long as Alan Shepard's first U.S. spaceflight in 1961 – was intended as a confidence-boosting plug for Virgin Galactic, which plans to start taking paying customers on joyrides next year.

Mr. Branson became the first person to blast off in his own spaceship, beating Mr. Bezos by nine days. He also became only the second septuagenarian to depart for space. (Astronaut John Glenn flew on the shuttle at

One of Mr. Branson's chief rivals in the space-tourism race among the world's richest men, SpaceX's Elon Musk, arrived in New Mexico to witness the flight, wishing Mr. Branson via Twitter, "Godspeed!"

Mr. Bezos likewise sent his wishes for a safe and suc-



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VIDYA BALA

Q. I am 28 years old, working in the private sector, and want to start planning for my retirement. Assuming I want to retire at the age of 60, and want to have a corpus of ₹2 crore, what is the amount I should have after 32 years that will be equivalent to ₹2 crore considering all factors like inflation, etc. Besides that, I would also like to have a fixed monthly income equivalent to 1 lakh in value today. What are the best suited options/financial instruments I should start investing in to ensure this? Are NPS and PPF better since they come with sovereign guarantee? Also, which instrument is wise considering tax implications, both today as well as at the time of withdrawal.

KARAN SHARMA

A. It is not clear whether you want ₹1 lakh per month post retirement or right away. We will assume it is post retirement. When you plan for your retirement, it is best you decide how much monthly income you want then, rather than fixing a lumpsum you wish to have, without knowing if that lumpsum will last. If ₹2 crore is the amount you want after 32 years, then ₹10,000 per month if it earns 9% on an average for the next 32 years, should comfortably take you there.

However, if you wish to have ₹1 lakh per month of income starting retirement (in today's value) then it will be ₹3.5 lakh per month 32 years hence, assuming inflation at just 4%. That means your corpus requirement will jump to ₹6.9 crore to be built in these 32 years. That also means you will need about ₹31,000 pf savings per month generating at least 9% per annum for the next 32 years. You can use a combination of NPS, PPF and equity index funds to invest for your retirement. You could consider using NS more for your debt allocation and use the equity index funds for equity exposure. Of course, NPS is not fully tax-free on retirement as the pension is taxable. You will seldom get options which are tax-free at all stages. So, instead of focusing on tax efficiency, please focus on what will lead you to your goal.

(*Vidya Bala is co-founder, primeinvestor.in*)

Q. Can you suggest some good mutual fund companies because these days it's hard to distinguish between the fake and genuine company. Please suggest the procedure for investing through mutual funds, the minimum investment, the average rate of return and the risks involved. I can search for these things on the Internet or YouTube, but I cannot trust everything I read or see there, that's why I am asking you.

IRFAN

Aarati Krishnan replies: It is good that you are keen to identify regulated investment options and to invest in them after seeking detailed information, instead of simply going by what you read online. All mutual funds are required to register with SEBI before launching products for investors. You can check the list of registered mutual funds at the SEBI website here: <https://www.sebi.gov.in/sebiweb/other/OtherAction.do?doRecognisedFpi=yes&intmld=23>

There are four key routes for investing in mutual funds. You can invest through mutual fund distributors who are registered with the Association of Mutual Funds of India, who will facilitate your transaction. To check if the distributor is registered, you can ask for his or her ARN (AMFI registration number). You can invest through brokerages and platforms offered by banks and brokers, in the 'regular' plans of mutual funds. When you use these routes, you incur commission to compensate these intermediaries, which is included in your fund's costs. You can also invest in mutual funds through their 'direct' plans where you save on this commission. This can be done by either directly registering on each fund's website and investing online or through platforms offering direct investments such as Kuvera, Groww and Zerodha Coin. While you save on costs with direct investments, you will need to select your asset classes and funds on your own. You can also engage the services of a registered investment adviser who can advise you what funds to buy for a flat fee. Mutual funds allow minimum investments as low as ₹500. You usually get to choose between lumpsum investments (investing a sum at one go) and Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs), where you can set up auto-debits to invest a regular amount every month in chosen mutual funds. This allows you to build a sizeable corpus over time. Mutual funds are market-linked products and there are many types of mutual funds. There are mutual funds which invest in company shares, in company bonds, government bonds, money market instruments and even gold. There are also funds that combine one or two of these assets. So it is difficult to tell you what the average rate of return would be across all these types. Generally, you should choose a mutual fund category based on your investment horizon, your ability to handle risks (volatility in your capital value and returns) and your return expectations. It would be good to engage the services of a qualified investment adviser or financial planner who can help you map out your financial goals and start you on your investing journey. You can get a list of RIAs in your location here: <https://www.sebi.gov.in/sebiweb/other/OtherAction.do?doRecognisedFpi=yes&intmld=13>

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

Understanding INVESTMENT RISKS

Systematic and unsystematic risks are part and parcel of the system and there is no way an investor could avoid them

GAURAV MASHRUWALA

Inflation, taxes, government policies, geo-political situations and economic cycles affect all investments. These risks exist in the system. There is no way we can avoid them. Inflation will reduce the real (actual) rate of return from all forms of investment, be it debt or equity or property.

Similarly, taxes eat into the final returns in the hands of an investor. We have touched upon the kinds of risks earlier in this space but here is a detailed look at the hard realities.

In a Communist economy, wealth creation is difficult, irrespective of the risk-taking abilities of an individual. Likewise, if a local currency is revalued, all forms of investments will get impacted. The risk that exists in the system is called 'systematic risk'.

There is absolutely no way to avoid systematic risk. However, by adopting time averaging (popularly known as systematic investment plans) one can re-

duce the impact of systematic risk. The impact of risk is averaged out by investing fixed amounts at fixed intervals.

Since more investment units will be bought at a lower cost and less investment units at a higher cost, over a prolonged period, averaging will start working in the investor's fa-

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Crashing of property prices in Mumbai due to an unfavourable court judgment on a development near the Arabian Sea is an example

Argentina buries ghosts of the past

Beats Brazil to end a 28-year title drought; Di Maria strike proves the difference

COPA AMERICA

ASSOCIATED PRESS
RIO DE JANEIRO
Two long droughts ended on Saturday at the Copa America final: Argentina won its first major title since 1993 after a 1-0 win against Brazil. And Lionel Messi finally lifted his first major trophy for the national team.

Argentina's winning goal at the Maracana Stadium came in the 22nd minute after Rodrigo de Paul made a long pass to Angel di Maria. The 33-year-old veteran striker counted on some sloppy defending from left-back Renan Lodi to take control and lob it past goalkeeper Ederson.

When the match ended, a tearful Messi knelt down and put his hands on his face. Then most of his teammates ran in his direction to celebrate and threw him into the air. Once criticised by Argentina fans for his quietness, he went to the few hundred guests chanting his name at the Maracana and chanted with them. Messi kissed the trophy before lifting it into the air during the presentations.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni made five changes from the starting lineup that beat Colombia on penalties in the semifinal, while Brazil did not make any.

Neymar isolated
The teams were cautious early in the match, barely offering chances. When Argentina opened the scoring in a



Man of the moment: Angel di Maria makes the most of a defensive error to execute a delectable lob over Ederson and net the winner for Argentina against Brazil. ■ GETTY IMAGES

C Before the match I told him (Rodrigo de Paul) that the left-back (Renan Lodi) slept a little in the marking

ANGEL DI MARIA
on his goal

rare Brazil defensive mistake and Di Maria's classy finish, the match became more physical and Argentina successfully stopped the ball from getting to Neymar.

He tried hard with dribbles and passes, but the Selecao barely threatened Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez in the first half. Argentina sat in the back, hoping for counter-attacks.

Brazil coach Tite tried to change the dynamic of the match by replacing defen-

Match Stats

Argentina	Brazil
1	Goals 0
41%	Possession 59%
6	Shots 13
2	Shots on target 2
19	Fouls 22
1	Corners 4
5	Yellow cards 4

sive midfielder Fred for Roberto Firmino, and managed to do so for much of the second half.

Though the Selecao had more ball possession there were few real opportunities.

The result:
Brazil 0 lost to Argentina 1 (Angel di Maria 22).

Messi and Neymar picked as the best

ASSOCIATED PRESS
RIO DE JANEIRO

Argentina's Lionel Messi and Brazil's Neymar were picked as the best players of the Copa America just before they met in the final.

Messi dished up four goals and five assists in six matches.

Neymar delivered two goals and three assists in five games.

Lionel Messi finally sheds tears of joy

Climbs his highest peak yet with a major title for his country

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BUENOS AIRES

Argentina finally made Lionel Messi cry with joy.

After losing four times in finals, early exits in major tournaments and even a decision to retire from the national team, the superstar celebrated a much-awaited title with Argentina on Saturday.

"I needed to remove from myself the thorn of achieving something with the national team," Messi said after celebrating with his teammates.

When Uruguayan referee Esteban Ostojich blew the final whistle, Messi knelt down on the pitch and covered his face with his hands.

After he lifted the Copa America trophy, Messi spoke to his family on the phone. He flicked the golden medal around his neck and shouted "I won, I won!"

The next challenge is to win the World Cup in Qatar next year, which would be the first since Maradona took the team to the title in 1986.

Until Saturday, Messi's titles with Argentina were only the U-20 World Cup title in 2005 and a gold medal at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

Gap closed
On Saturday, Messi kissed the Copa America trophy and lifted it at age 34. The biggest gap in his decorated career is now closed.

His first public words after the title showed how thrilled and relieved he felt.

"What a beautiful mad-

ness!" Messi said in an Instagram post showing him shirtless holding the Copa America trophy at the Maracana's dressing room. "This is unbelievable! Thank you, God! We are the champions!"

Goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez, one of Argentina's key players in the tournament, said Messi "is the one who most deserved" to win the South American title.

Later at a news conference Messi said his happiness was "unexplainable."

"I was sad before, but I knew that at some point it was going to happen," he said. "I feel that God was saving this moment for me, against Brazil in a final and in their country."

Leo has a major trophy, at last!

It was an emotional and unforgettable moment for Messi as he lifted an international trophy for the first time in his career

Messi at major finals

2007 Copa America: Brazil bt Argentina 3-0

2014 World Cup: Germany bt Argentina 1-0

2015 Copa America: Chile bt Argentina 4-1 on penalties (O-O regulation time)

2016 Copa America: Chile bt Argentina 4-2 on penalties (O-O regulation time)

2021 Copa America: Argentina bt Brazil 1-0

1 The first time Neymar and Thiago Silva have lost a final with the Brazilian national team, having won both finals previously

3 Di Maria has now scored three goals in winning causes at major finals (2008 Olympics, 2013-14 Copa Del Rey, 2021 Copa America)

15 Argentina's 15th Copa title, pulling it level with Uruguay

Copa 2021 individual awards

Golden Boot (Top Scorer): Lionel Messi (Argentina)

Golden Glove (Best Goalkeeper): Emiliano Martinez (Argentina)

Golden Ball (Best Player): Lionel Messi (Argentina)

Player of the final: Angel di Maria (Argentina)

COMPILED BY
AYUSH SUDARSHAN



Djokovic makes it 20-all, stands shoulder to shoulder with Federer and Nadal

The Serb surmounts Berrettini's challenge, ties his celebrated rivals in the tally for most Grand Slams after winning his sixth Wimbledon crown

WIMBLEDON

AGENCIES
LONDON

Novak Djokovic had the weight of tennis history on his shoulders and an Italian with dynamite on his racket strings to contend with, but emerged victorious to earn a sixth Wimbledon and a record-levering 20th Grand Slam title on Sunday.

Matteo Berrettini, playing inspired tennis in his first Major final, unleashed everything in his formidable arsenal. But it was not enough, as the Serb pulled through 6-7(4), 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 on what might prove to be a momentous day in the raging argument about the greatest men's player of all time.

"That was more than a battle. He has a true hammer, an Italian hammer and I felt that today," Djokovic, 34, said.

Djokovic is now tied with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on 20 singles Majors and the World No. 1 can become the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to complete the calendar-year Grand Slam at the US Open.



Enduring excellence: Djokovic stayed on course for a calendar Grand Slam by winning his third straight Wimbledon. ■ REUTERS

I have to pay a tribute to Rafa and Roger. They are the two most important players I've ever faced and the reason I am where I am today," Djokovic said.

On Sunday, Berrettini was bidding to become the first Italian to win the Wimbledon singles title.

When he went 2-5 down in the opening set, it looked as though the day might pass him by.

But after surviving an exhausting 11-minute service game, in which he saved a set point, the 25-year-old began to ratchet up the power, with booming serves and powerful forehands.

Djokovic failed to serve out the set at 5-3 as Berrettini chased a dropshot to break.

In the tie-breaker, Berrettini was the aggressor and took the set after firing down a 138mph ace.

The effort of snatching a

71-minute first set took its toll on Berrettini.

Djokovic, though, steamed in time to take a 3-1

lead, survived another tough service game to move 4-2 ahead, and cupped his hand to his ear for the crowd to respond with football-style chanting. Even after Djokovic claimed the third set, Berrettini looked dangerous.

from out wide forced a volley error from the Italian. But Berrettini threatened to break straight back, thumping a forehand winner to reach deuce.

Djokovic struck the early blow at 1-1 in the third, as a net-skimming backhand

faulted on break point in the seventh game of the fourth, his hopes were over and it was time for Djokovic to chew on a blade of grass and soak in the acclaim of 15,000 fans.

But when the Italian double-faulted on break point in the seventh game of the fourth, his hopes were over and it was time for Djokovic to chew on a blade of grass and soak in the acclaim of 15,000 fans.

7x4) and skipper Heather Knight's 30 (28b, 4x4) put England in a solid position before it was restricted to 140 for eight in 20 overs.

Harmanpreet, who promoted herself to No. 3, finally found some form and chipped in along with Deepi (24 off 27). In reply, opener Tammy Beaumont's 59 (50b,

7x4) and skipper Heather Knight's 30 (28b, 4x4) put England in a solid position before it was restricted to 140 for eight in 20 overs.

Poonam Yadav (two for 17) and Deepi Sharma (one for 18) brought India back into

Congrats Novak on your 20th Major. I am proud to have the opportunity to play in a special era of tennis champions

ROGER FEDERER

- 1 Djokovic is the first men's singles player after Rod Laver in 1969 to win the first three Majors of the calendar year
- 1 First French Open-Wimbledon double for Djokovic. He is now the fifth man in the Open Era to achieve the feat, after Laver, Borg, Nadal and Federer
- 1 First grass-court loss for Berrettini after winning the first set. He was 22-0 on the surface before this, out of 27 wins overall
- 7 Djokovic's seventh victory out of 14 Grand Slam finals in which he has lost the first set
- 8 Djokovic has won eight of the last 12 Major titles, with Nadal (3) and Thiem (1) accounting for the other four. It makes the Serb the Open Era leader for most Slams after turning 30. Nadal is next with six

The Grand Slam leaderboard

	Aus Open	French Open	Wimbledon	US Open
Federer	6	1	8	5
Nadal	1	13	2	4
Djokovic	9	2	6	3

THE RESULTS

Finals: Men: 1-Djokovic (Srb) bt 7-Berrettini (Ita) 6-7(4), 6-4, 6-3; **Doubles:** Mektic & Pavic (Cro) bt Granollers (Esp) & Zeballos (Arg) 6-4, 7-6(5), 2-6, 7-5; **Mixed doubles:** 7-Skupski (GBR) & Krawczyk (USA) bt Salisbury & Dart (GBR) 6-2, 7-6(1).

Anand finishes runner-up

CHESS

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
KOZHIKODE

Neither age nor lack of tournament play could stop Viswanathan Anand from finishing runner-up at the Croatia Grand Chess Tour at Zagreb on Sunday. Playing his first event in 16 months, the 51-year-old came up with a superb display to take the second spot in a strong field.

Kuss wins Stage 15

TOUR DE FRANCE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ANDORRA LA VELLA

Defending champion Tadej Pogacar survived a torrid day as the Tour de France hit the Pyrenees on Sunday, the Slovenian holding on to the overall lead despite constant pressure from a clique of Ineos riders.

The gruelling Stage 15 was won by American Sepp Kuss

of the Jumbo Vismara team, who broke on the last of four tough climbs to distance 41-year-old Alejandro Valverde, who was second at the finish line of the tax-haven principality of Andorra.

Kuss became the first American since Tyler Farrar back in 2011 to win a stage on the Tour de France, and his family was present to witness the feat.

Monday is a rest day.

Spinners script incredible win for India

Poonam, Deepi and Sneh hold their nerve as England loses its way

INDIA IN ENG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HOVE

The Indian spinners worked wonders during the final overs as the visitors edged out England by eight runs in the second T20I to level the three-match series here on Sunday.

Batting first, India lost its way after a good start provided by opener Shafali Verma (48, 38b, 8x4, 1x6) and captain Harmanpreet Kaur's 31 (25b, 2x4, 2x6) to finish on 148 for four.

IN BRIEF



Matsuyama to miss British Open

LONDON Masters champion Hideki Matsuyama has withdrawn from the British Open golf championship, beginning on Thursday, following a positive COVID-19 test. The Japanese World No. 18 tested positive on July 2 and has been self-isolating since. He has been replaced by American Harold Varner III. AP

Diksha takes team to Aramco title triumph

LONDON Diksha Dagar carded three birdies on the last four holes for a four-under 69 and combined with captain Olivia Cowan, Sarin Schmidt of Germany and amateur Andrew Kelsey to win the Aramco Team Series title here on Saturday. The team aggregated a 41-under 397 for a three-stroke victory. PTI

Hokkaido to also ban spectators at venues

TOKYO Hokkaido joined Fukushima on Saturday in barring fans from attending Olympic events because of rising coronavirus infections. Earlier, fans had been barred from all venues in Tokyo and three neighbouring prefectures. AP

Benfica chief Vieira under house arrest

LISBON Benfica president Luís Filipe Vieira was placed under house arrest late on Saturday until he pays bail of €3 million. Vieira and three others are being investigated for possible fraud, money laundering and tax evasion. Former star and a club vice-president Rui Costa has taken over its management. AP

Managing the pressure of Olympics well: Neeraj Chopra



Making adjustments: Neeraj is working on his technique to get longer throws. ■ FILE PHOTO

Italy-based Indians to leave for Tokyo on July 17

BOXING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The Indian boxing contingent, which is preparing for the Olympics in Italy, will leave for Tokyo from its training base in Assisi on July 17. Nine pugilists, including four women, have qualified for the Games.

India's qualification performance in boxing this

time was markedly better than the 2016 Rio Games where only three made the tournament-proper, none of them women.

Though athletes travelling from India would be facing added restrictions after arriving in Tokyo, those who would be heading to the Japanese capital from foreign training bases like Europe will get some relaxations on the severity of the quarantine.

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India's qualification performance in boxing this

Bangladesh crushes Zimbabwe by 220 runs

CRICKET

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARARE

Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by 220 runs in their one-off Test on Sunday as the home team was all out for 256 in its second innings on the final day and well short of its target of 477 to win.

Bangladesh spinner Mehidy Hasan picked up four for 66 in the Zimbabwe se-

cond innings for nine wickets in the match.

Resuming on 140 for three, the Zimbabweans had to bat through the entire day with just seven wickets in hand to save the Test, but didn't come close.

The scores: Bangladesh 468 and 284/1 decl. bt Zimbabwe 276 and 256 in 94.4 overs (Brendan Taylor 92, Donald Tiripano 52, Mehidy Hasan 4/66, Taskin Ahmed 4/82). Bangladesh won by 220 runs.

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In shooting, if an athlete/

team is not able to compete due to COVID-19, they will not be disqualified and will be marked as DNS. There will be no change to the format or groupings.

For the mixed team event, in case an athlete can no longer take part in the event, but the NOC has another athlete on-site, the NOC can replace an athlete team member.

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In shooting, if an athlete/

pect to win independent India's first-ever athletics medal at the Olympics, wished he could have got more such events on the road to Tokyo. The Finland meet where Chopra finished third with 86.79m, and which Vetter won with 93.59m, was the only strong meet he did this land.

The Asian Games champion was competing against the best like World No. 1 Johannes Vetter, World champion Anderson Peters and former Olympic champion Keshorn Walcott.

Brightest prospect

Chopra, the brightest pros-

VID-19 situation. I have to plan well so that I'm at my peak in Tokyo. My training is now going well and I'm ready. I'm trying to do my best but it depends on the day. I will try my best to get a medal for the country."

Chopra, who has a personal best of 88.07m, had hoped to do the July 13 Diamond League in Gateshead (England). "But getting the UK visa was difficult, so I had to skip the Diamond League. There is no time for competition now. I'll now have intense training for a week and then will go to Tokyo on July 26," said the 23-year-old, currently No. 4 in the world list

this year.

He is now working on his technique. "I was giving more height in my throws, I want to reduce it a bit so that I'll get longer throws... and I'm improving," he said.

With expectations on him

huge, is Chopra under pressure?

"There was more pressure during the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games. I have learned to handle the pressure of the Olympic Games," he said.

He listens to music, virtually working out the competition in Tokyo in his head, and does a bit of meditation to stay cool.

World Cup begins in Sochi today

Adhiban keen to break third-round jinx

CHESS

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI



B. Adhiban. ■ FILE PHOTO

Wildcard B. Adhiban heads a group of nine well-prepared Indians who begin as first-round favourites to join teammates P. Harikrishna, Vidit Gujrathi and D. Harika in the second round of their respective sections of the chess World Cup.

The action begins in Sochi on Monday. Each round comprises a two-game mini-match on classical time-control.

Tie-breaker

In case of a tie, players will be required to play a pair of games in rapid, blitz formats, followed by an Armageddon game, if necessary.

Nicknamed 'The Beast' for his aggressive, uncompromising play, Adhiban is looking to become the first Indian, after Viswanathan Anand, to go past the third round.

After landing in Sochi, Ad-

- Adhiban starts favourite against Chilesto Chipanga in the campaign-opener
- Each round comprises a two-game mini-match on classical time-control

lucky to get a wildcard.

Also present at the venue is the country's noted coach Grandmaster R.B. Ramesh. Ramesh's presence should be of immense help to three of his students – Aravindh Chithambaram, siblings R. Praggnanandhaa and R. Vaishali.

First-round pairings (involving Indians):

Men: B. Adhiban vs Chilesto Chipanga (Mwi); Aravindh Chithambaram vs Michael Concio Jr. (Phi); Nihal Sarin vs Arthur Ssegwanyi (Uga); R. Praggnanandhaa vs Paulo Beramina (Phi); D. Gukesh vs Pawel Teclaf (Pot); P. Iniyar vs Sebastian Bogner (Swi).

Women: Padmini Rout vs Ulviyya Fataliyeva (Aze); Bhakti Kularki vs Anastasya Paramzina (Rus); R. Vaishali vs Zhou Qiyu (Can).

COVID-19: Sport-Specific Regulations for Olympics

ANI

LAUSANNE

If a participant tests positive for COVID-19 in the final of the boxing event in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics, then the opponent will receive the gold medal, and the COVID-19 participant will be facilitated with the silver medal.

This specification has been made clear in the To-

kyo Olympics' Sport-Specific Regulations (SSR), jointly formed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the international federations (IFs).

If a boxer cannot compete, the athlete will not be disqualified and will be marked as DNS.

In case he/she cannot start the event, it will be treated as walkover once the

competition has started, as per the regulations. The opponent will progress to the next round.

Similarly, if a wrestler has reached the final but is unable to compete due to COVID-19, the grappler who lost against him/her in the semi-finals will fill the vacant place and compete in the final.

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team is not able to compete due to COVID-19, they will not be disqualified and will be marked as DNS. There will be no change to the format or groupings.

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