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## NEARBY



Over 3,800 fresh COVID cases reported in Delhi

NEW DELHI

As many as 3,816 fresh COVID-19 cases were reported in the city in the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 2,53,075, said a health bulletin released by the Delhi government. Also, 37 more deaths were reported, pushing the toll to 5,051.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Police put Umar Khalid in 'centre' of riots plot

NEW DELHI

The Special Cell of Delhi Police in its chargesheet has kept former Jawaharlal Nehru University student Umar Khalid at the centre of the north-east Delhi riots conspiracy and claimed that the plot was hatched by the activist "and his associates".

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

Akali rebels approach EC to register new party

CHANDIGARH

Shiromani Akali Dal rebels, led by Rajya Sabha MP Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, have approached the Election Commission to register their new political outfit, Shiromani Akali Dal (Democratic). Mr. Sukhdev Dhindsa and his son were expelled from the Akali Dal for "anti-party" activities.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 5

## Opposition parties walk out of both Houses of Parliament

BSP, BJD break ranks; suspended MPs end their sit-in but refuse to apologise

SOBHA NAIR

NEW DELHI

Opposition parties boycotted Parliament on Tuesday, first walking out of the Rajya Sabha in the morning and later from the Lok Sabha around 4 p.m., protesting against the flawed passage of the two farm Bills in the Upper House on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the eight suspended Rajya Sabha members, who had staged an all night sit-in under the Mahatma Gandhi statue inside Parliament, ended their protest.

Parliament is expected to adjourn *sine die* on Wednesday.

MPs from the Congress, the Trinamool Congress, the DMK, the TRS, the AAP, the RJD, the NCP, the CPI(M), the CPI and other smaller parties boycotted the proceedings in both Houses. However, the Bahujan Samaj Party, the Biju Janata Dal and the YSR Congress did not participate in the boycott. Though BSP MPs did walk out of the Lok Sabha, they distanced themselves from the rest of the Opposition. A senior leader said the party walked out urging the government to make legal provisions to implement the MSP.

In the Rajya Sabha, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said the suspension of the MPs could be



No takers: Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh, right, waiting with tea for the suspended MPs on the premises of Parliament on Tuesday morning. ■ PTI

revoked if they expressed regret. However, this was not accepted by the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad said no one was happy with what transpired in the House over the past two days. "Day before yesterday was the last straw that broke the camel's back. Bills don't go to the standing committee or the select committee. I don't approve of the fight – breaking the microphones, standing on the tables. But it was the last straw," he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGE 9

## Protesting MPs rebuff Harivansh's 'tea-plomacy'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh tried to bring down the simmering tempers of Opposition MPs by bringing morning tea for the eight suspended MPs, who were on an all-night protest on the Parliament premises.

He also later wrote a letter to President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu, which was made public, announcing a 24-hour fast.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Venkaiah Naidu, which was made public, announcing a 24-hour fast.

However, the Opposition was none too impressed with Mr. Harivansh's olive branch, and the protesting members refused to have the tea on offer even as ANI and Rajya Sabha TV captured the entire dramatic episode.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Army talks positive but no headway on de-escalation

India, China agree to stop sending more troops to frontline

DINAKAR PERI

NEW DELHI

In a joint statement issued on Tuesday on the sixth round of Corps Commanders talks, India and China said both sides had agreed to "stop sending more troops to the frontline" and "refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the ground" while agreeing to hold more talks to resolve the standoff.

"They agreed to earnestly implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries,

strengthen communication on the ground, avoid misunderstandings and misjudgements, stop sending more troops to the frontline, refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the ground, and avoid taking any actions that may complicate the situation," the joint statement said on the senior military commander-level talks held on Monday.

The two sides had candid and in-depth exchanges on stabilising the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), it stated.

A defence source said while the disengagement is yet to be agreed upon, the recent talks will ensure there is no further build-up along the LAC. The two sides also agreed to hold the 7th round of military commander-level talks as soon as possible,



Close watch: An IAF jet flying over Ladakh amid the tensions on the India-China border. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"take practical measures to properly solve problems on the ground, and jointly safeguard peace and tranquillity in the border area", the statement added.

The talks, which went on for 14 hours, were quite positive despite lack of apparent result, the source said. The talks were held in line with the five-point plan agreed between the two Foreign Ministers in Moscow early this month, another source said.

India has pressed for a road map for complete disengagement and de-induction of Chinese troops from all friction points and along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), it stated. A defence source said while the disengagement is yet to be agreed upon, the recent talks will ensure there is no further build-up along the LAC. The two sides also agreed to hold the 7th round of military commander-level talks as soon as possible,

The situation on the ground remains quiet since

the Foreign Ministers met, the second source added.

Officials had stated that for India, mutual disengagement would not be acceptable, and China would have to pull back its troops from the standoff areas.

### Shift in objectives

A new strategic report has said that China had doubled air bases and defensive positions near the Indian border in three years.

The 2017 Doklam crisis appears to have shifted Beijing's "strategic objectives", with China more than doubling its air bases, air defence positions and heliports near the Indian border over the past three years, according to the latest report from geopolitical intelligence platform, Stratfor.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Freshers to start university classes from November 1

Classes likely to run six days a week

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Students entering colleges and universities for their first year will begin classes from November 1 with the new academic session getting off to a delayed start, according to the University Grants Commission's calendar for 2020-21, which Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank tweeted on Tuesday.

Holiday breaks will be curtailed and classes are likely to run six days a week to compensate for the time lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UGC approved the guidelines for first year students of both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at its meeting on Monday, according to Ministry officials.

Admissions got delayed

as schools and colleges were shut in March due to the lockdown, and board examinations as well as entrance tests for professional courses have been postponed multiple times.

### Refunds order

The delays have also caused admission cancellations and migration of students. The Education Minister has issued directions that full refunds will be given in such cases, until November 30.

To avoid financial hardship being faced by the parents due to lockdown and related factors, a full refund of fees will be made on account of all cancellation of admissions/ migration of students, up to 30.11.2020, for this very session as a special case," he tweeted.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## In search of work



The wait begins: Migrants from Uttar Pradesh waiting in a queue for the rapid antigen test outside the Thane railway station on Tuesday. The Thane Municipal Corporation has decided to test each and every migrant returning to the city. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

## Leh's People's Movement to boycott elections

Polls to LAHDC-Leh scheduled for Oct. 16; group wants Sixth Schedule for Ladakh

PEERZADA ASHIQ

SRINAGAR

The People's Movement, a platform representing various politicians, religious and social organisations campaigning for the Sixth Schedule for Ladakh, on Tuesday announced a boycott of the upcoming elections to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council-Leh, scheduled for October 16.

Announcing the decision at a press conference in Leh, former BJP leader Thupstan Chhewang, who is a member of the group, said, "We have decided not to participate in the LAHDC-Leh polls. No party will file any nomination as part of the boycott. Unless the Sixth Schedule is granted to Ladakh, and LAHDC-Leh and Kargil are granted councils on the lines

of the Bodo council [Bodo Territorial Council], we will not allow such polls."

The People's Movement has the backing of most of the regional parties in Leh, including the influential Ladakh Buddhist Association. The announcement comes weeks after the BJP supported timely elections to the LAHDC-Leh, which will complete its term in October.

### The signatories

The group's resolution was also signed by former Rajya Sabha Member Skyabje Thiksey Khampo Rinpoche, former Minister Chhering Dorje Lakrook, former Minister and president of Ladakh Congress Nawang Rigit Jora, district president of BJP Nawang Samstan and convenor of Aam Aadmi Party, Leh, T. Phustog.

The All Ladakh Gompa Association, Anjuman Imamiya Ashraf Ali Barcha, Anjuman Moin-ul-Islam and Christian Community have also supported the boycott call.

Rigzin Spalbar, former chairman of the LAHDC-Leh, said in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic it was expected that the elections to constitute the 6th LAHDC-Leh would be postponed. "Besides the pandemic, the entire Ladakh is in a state of uncertainty over the preservation of its unique tribal identity, habitats and ecosystem. The elections to LAHDC-Leh, without extending the relevant provisions of the Sixth Schedule of our Constitution, which empowers the councils by vesting them with legislative powers, is meaningless," he said.

## EPCA chief asks Punjab, Haryana to act against stubble burning

Chief Secretaries told to set up control room to tackle issue

NIKHIL M BABU

NEW DELHI

Ladakh was carved out as a Union Territory on August 5 last year, but it is without a legislature. Instead, two councils – LAHDC-Leh and LAHDC-Kargil – have been allowed to govern micro issues.

"The democratically elected council, representing the popular will of the people of Ladakh, cannot continue to be a toothless and irrelevant ostentatious body like it was made to be in the wake of the formation of UT Ladakh," Mr. Spalbar said.

However, Kargil is yet to support the demand for the Sixth Schedule. "We have always been demanding restoration of statehood. Kargil will not support Leh's demand," said Sajjad Kargili, a local leader who contested the previous general election.

Ladakh was carved out as a Union Territory on August 5 last year, but it is without a legislature. Instead, two councils – LAHDC-Leh and LAHDC-Kargil – have been allowed to govern micro issues.

"The democratically elected council, representing the popular will of the people of Ladakh, cannot continue to be a toothless and irrelevant ostentatious body like it was made to be in the wake of the formation of UT Ladakh," Mr. Spalbar said.

EPCA Chairman Bhure Lal, in letters sent to the two bureaucrats, wrote: "It has been brought to EPCA's notice that early burning of crop residue is taking place in Punjab. According to a SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research under the Central government) estimate, based on harmonising the INSAT-3, 3D and NASA satellite, the fire counts were around 42 on September 21, 2020. The fire counts were around 20 on September 20 and nil on September 15."

### Matter of urgency

Mr. Lal said the government has lost time because of COVID-19, but since the winter season is fast approaching, the issue has to be tackled with "urgency". "We would request you to set up a control room in which directions can be issued and action taken, both for ensuring that the machineries are within the reach of the farmers as well as ensuring enforcement of the non-com-

pliance that is reported from the field," wrote Mr. Lal.

The letter stated that the effect of stubble burning will be less in Delhi for the next three days because of the wind direction. According to SAFAR, the predominant wind direction is north-eastern and it doesn't support the transport and accumulation of the effect of stubble burning to Delhi. The AQI of Delhi was in the 'moderate' category on Tuesday.

Last year, about 9.8 million tonnes of the total estimated crop residue of 20 million tonnes were burnt in Punjab, according to official figures. Similarly, in Haryana, of the total 7 million tonnes, 1.24 million tonnes of stubble were burnt.

## Festival crowds could pose a threat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Jayamkondam. Dr. Balasubramanian, who said he was a long-standing customer of the bank, showed some property documents to the manager for consideration of surety for the loan. However, the manager reportedly asked him whether he knew Hindi and allegedly refused to entertain his application as he couldn't speak Hindi. The incident triggered strong reactions from political leaders in Tamil Nadu, who condemned the alleged actions of the manager Vishal Kamble.

However, the bank authorities claimed that the loan application was rejected in view of the advanced age of the customer. Miffed at his reply, Mr. Balasubramanian has sought an explanation from the bank authorities for invoking "language [as an] issue" while processing a loan application.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

AN-NDNE

## FB moves SC against summons

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Facebook has moved the Supreme Court challenging the summons issued by the Delhi Assembly's Committee of Peace and Harmony to appear before it in connection with "allegations" linked to the Delhi riots.

The petition was jointly filed by Ajit Mohan, vice-president and managing director of Facebook India Online Services Pvt. Ltd.; Facebook India Online Services Pvt. Ltd.; and Facebook, Inc., based in the U.S. The respondents are the Legislative Assembly, the National Capital Territory of Delhi, and the Union of India.

The petition said the issue comes within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Union. Mr. Mohan has been summoned to appear before the House committee on September 23. The petition asked whether the privileges of the Assembly "include the power to compel the appearance of non-members to express their views or subject them to examination".

# Police put Khalid in 'centre' of riots plot

In a pre-recorded video, former JNU student said the police were attributing false statements to him

HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

The Special Cell of Delhi Police, in its chargesheet, has kept former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student Umar Khalid at the centre of the riots conspiracy and claimed that the plot was hatched by the activist "and his associates".

In a pre-recorded video made before his arrest, Mr. Khalid said the police were attributing false statements to him. "They had been trying to arrest me for the last few months and attributing false statements to me," he said in the video.

While seeking prosecution sanction under sedition and other sections, the police stated as 'brief facts': "Communal riots incidents of February 23-25 2020 were pre-planned and were hatched by Umar Khalid, a student of JNU and his associates, all linked with different - 2 groups [sic]."

The police also attached the transcript of Mr. Khalid's alleged speech, in court documents titled *Transcription of Speech of Umar Khalid shown on YouTube by Republic World allegedly on 17 Feb 2020 at Amravati, Maharashtra*. In it, Mr. Khalid is quoted as saying that US President Donald Trump is coming to India on February 24 and "he will be informed that the government of India is dividing its people".



People walking past a riot-affected area in north-east Delhi.  
• FILE PHOTO



They [the police] are trying to put everyone who criticises the government behind bars  
UMAR KHALID  
Former JNU student

Dated Chandigarh, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2020.

### Government of Haryana Chief Secretary's Office Department of Administrative Reforms ORDER

No. 7/8/2011-3AR,  
The Governor of Haryana is pleased to constitute a committee to search suitable candidates for appointment as Chief Commissioner in the Haryana Right to Service Commission under the Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014.

The Search Committee shall comprise of the following:-

(a) Sh. Vijai Vardhan, IAS  
Additional Chief Secretary to Govt. Haryana and Financial Commissioner, Revenue and Disaster Management and Consolidation Department.

Chairman

(b) Sh. T.V.S.N. Prasad, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary to Govt. Haryana, Finance and Planning Department.

Member

(c) Dr. B.K. Kuthiala, Chairperson, Haryana State Higher Education Council

Member

2. The Search Committee shall make recommendation to the Statutory Committee as per sub-section (1) of section 13 of the Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014 for appointment of Chief Commissioner pertaining to the Haryana Right to Service Commission.

3. The Search Committee shall function subject to the following:-

(i) The Chairman and the Member(s) shall enjoy the privilege of being as such till the pleasure of the Government.

(ii) The Search Committee of the day shall devise its own principles while arriving at the procedure and criterion adopted by it while making suitable recommendations and furnishing requisite details/materials supporting the suitability of the recommended candidates to be placed before the Committee competent to make recommendations in terms of the Act for its consideration.

(iii) The Search Committee may recommend three times as many names as the vacancies to be considered for being filled up.

(iv) The Committee competent to make recommendations in terms of the Act shall be at liberty to select as many persons as it deems suitable for being recommended to be appointed as Chief Commissioner out of the recommendations so received from the Search Committee and shall not be bound to make all the requisite recommendations out of the recommendations so received from the Search Committee. The Committee competent to make recommendations in terms of the Act may, if it deems so, shall be at liberty to adopt more or less than the requisite number of vacancies as notified to the Search Committee as fit to be recommended by it for being appointed as Chief Commissioner out of the recommendations received from the Search Committee.

(v) The Committee competent to make recommendations in terms of the Act or the Government, may, if it deems it to be fit, require the Search Committee to revisit the principles, procedure and criterion adopted by it and may require the Search Committee to decide, include or vary them as suggested by it and adherence to such suggestions shall be binding on the Search Committee.

(vi) The Committee competent to make recommendations in terms of the Act or the Government, shall retain the prerogative to forward names of persons to be considered by the Search Committee as candidates in the process of making its recommendations and the Search Committee shall consider all such names on their own merits.

(vii) The Government shall have the competence to change or vary any/all the conditions constituting these procedures as its discretion and at any time.

(viii) The Government shall finalize a panel of names, after considering the names submitted by the Search Committee, for consideration of the Statutory Committee. The names, alongwith bio-data and other relevant information, of the persons on the panel shall form part of the agenda forwarded to the members of the Statutory Committee, not less than 7 days, in advance of its meeting.

(ix) The Office of the Chief Secretary, in Administrative Reforms Department or any other office/officer appointed by the Chief Secretary shall provide Secretarial assistance to the Search Committee.

Keshni Anand Arora,  
Chief Secretary to Government Haryana,

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,  
SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL, SKIMS MC&H, BEMINA & SKIMS ,SOURA, SRINAGAR.  
Tel: 0194-2402617 Ext: 2159, email:mechanicalskims@gmail.com**

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

#### Gist of e-NIT NO.36 OF 2020-21 Dated.21.09.2020

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir State, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar, invites e-tenders from OEM or his authorized representative / Authorized Dealers or Registered / reputed / experienced firms having expertise as detailed in the tender document for the following works.

S.No. Name of the Work :- Estimated Cost (Rs.in Lacs)

1 Supply, Installation, Testing, and Commissioning of Independent Heat Pump based HVAC system to newly constructed Engineering Block at SKIMS Soura 85.00

The complete tender document is available at website <http://jkttenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders/tenderers may view, download the e-bid document, seek clarifications and submit their bids online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Specifications, Bills of Quantities, & Terms and conditions of the contract and other relevant details.

i) Date and time of downloading/Sale of tender documents (Starting Date) 23.09.2020 from 11:00 Hours.

ii) Date & Time of Bidding Queries/clarification/Pre-bid meet 29.09.2020 at 11:00 Hours

iii) Last Date & Time of Bid Uploading 13.10.2020 up to 16:00 Hours

iv) Date of Submission of hard copies (only original EMD/DD for document fee) 14.10.2020 up to 14:00 Hours

v) Date & Time of Commercial/technical Bid (Cover-I) opening 15.10.2020 11:00 Hours ( or next convenient day).

vi) Date & Time of Financial Bid(Cover-II) Opening of the qualifying Bidders Shall be intimated separately

vii) Cost of e-bid Document Rs.4500/- ( Rupees Four Thousand five Hundred only).

viii) Amount of Earnest Money Deposit(CDR/FDR) Rs. 170000 (Rupees one lac & Seventy thousand only)

ix) Completion Time Three (03) months from the date of issue of LOI or Allotment Order.

x) Budget Head Ongoing works for the year 2020-21

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
Mechanical, SKIMS

No-SIMS 139 EX/MECH/2020-21/514/20-2183-92-5320-5323,  
No-SIMS 5322, Dated:- 22.09.2020

CM  
YK

### Tender Notice No. 8/ 2020-2021

The Tenders are invites online by Executive Engineer Panchayat (R&B) Division, Vadodara. Pin code No. 390001 Phone No. (0265-2432643) for the 3054-CR, MMGSY, Suvidhpath, SCSP, Ayojan Mandal, 4236-C & F, CDP-5 & Deposit work (Total-64 Tender) work for Road. Which Estimated cost ranging up to Rs.648.25 lakh by E-Tendering from the eligible and Approved Registered Contractor by Government of Gujarat. For Further particulars contact of above office. The details of the E-Tender can be seen from the website <https://nprocure.com>, and tender are to be submitted online. Only notice will be available on the web site State Government [www.stateetenders.com](http://www.stateetenders.com). Any changes / modifications of work will be seen online.

### : TIME SCHEDULE OF E-TENDERING :

Online down load Tender last date Dt. 30/09/2020 18:00 Hrs  
Work 1 to 13

On line Opening Tender date Dt. 01/10/2020 12:00 Hrs  
Work 1 to 13

Online down load Tender last date Dt. 07/10/2020 18:00 Hrs  
Work 14 to 37

On line Opening Tender date Dt. 08/10/2020 12:00 Hrs  
Work 14 to 37

Online down load Tender last date Dt. 21/10/2020 18:00 Hrs  
Work 38 to 64

On line Opening Tender date Dt. 22/10/2020 12:00 Hrs  
Work 38 to 64

Tender Fee & EMD and other document shall be submitted in electronic format only through online & all the necessary documents shall be send to Executive Engineer's Office in 7 days by R.P.A.D / Speed Post from tender opening.

(INF-VAD-660-2020-21)

### IN BRIEF

#### Traders hail decline in import of Chinese goods

NEW DELHI

The Confederation of All India Traders on Tuesday welcomed the decline in imports from China to India by 27.63%, calling it a vital step in liberating Indian trade from China. The traders have been campaigning for the boycott of Chinese products. CAIT secretary general Praveen Khandelwal said imports will be further impacted if boycott continues during festivals.

#### Air Quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi 115 Gurugram 139

Ghaziabad 118 Faridabad 136

Noida 118 Greater Noida 119

Good Satisfactory Moderate

0-50 51-100 101-200

Poor Very Poor Severe

201-300 301-400 >400

Air Quality Index at 4 p.m. yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) | Source: CPCB

#### DDA sealing drive in South Patel Nagar

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Development Authority on Tuesday conducted a sealing operation in South Patel Nagar by removing encroachments in 14 residential-cum-commercial properties and premises. The sealing followed a court order asking the occupants to vacate the property and empowered the DDA to get the property physically evicted by force.

# Woman held in luxury hotel gang-rape case

Two of five accused still absconding

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The police on Tuesday arrested a woman, who was also present in the room when a 27-year-old woman was allegedly gangraped by five men in a luxury hotel located on Ashoka Road in Lutyens' Delhi, a senior officer said.

The officer said that the three accused identified as Sanjay Chaudhary, Manoj Sharma and Jagdeep Singh were arrested on Monday.

Two more accused who were from Andhra Pradesh are absconding.

"The woman identified as Anushka, from Patiala in Punjab was arrested on Tuesday. She was pursuing a foreign language course from an institute in South Delhi. She was living in Delhi for around one year," said the police officer.

The motive, the police further claimed, was to go to "any extent possible", including "instigation of riots" to "execute a secessionist movement in the country by propagating an armed rebellion against the lawfully constituted government of the day". "The main target was to uproot the government," the document read.

declared a no-parking zone," the report said.

With regard to Jhilmil area, the report directed that boards be put up at all vacant plots to show ownership and who is responsible if waste is found there. It asked the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to write to the DSIIDC and the EDMC to identify such lands ensure compliance by the next date of review.

The EPCA report further said that Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar is one of the major transport hub and caters to about 10,000-12,000 trucks everyday, but the facility is working without proper infrastructure.

There is no proper road, parking area and movement of vehicle emits clouds of dust, it said.

On construction and demolition waste being dumped in Dwarka, the EPCA said that the DPCC will take up the matter with SDMC, DDA and Flood and Irrigation Department.

"The DPCC will work with these agencies to come up with a long-term plan for protection of land so that waste is not dumped," the report said.

# Cong. accuses Centre of plot to ruin farmers

'Early notice on MSP is blackmail bid'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee spokesperson Ved Prakash Vidrohi has accused the Narendra Modi government of abuse of power to clear the controversial farm bills and hatching a "conspiracy" to ruin farmers financially and socially and make them slaves of big corporate houses.

He also termed the announcement of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for rabi crop a month earlier than usual an attempt to "emotionally blackmail" the farmers.

Mr. Vidrohi, in a press statement on Tuesday, said the Modi government had, on the one hand, tried to "cheat" the farmers by clearing the farm bills with abuse of power and, on the other, played a cruel joke on them by announcing a paltry 2.5-6% hike in the MSP for rabi.

Mr. Vidrohi also president "Gramin Bharat", an NGO, demanded that the BJP government, instead of making false promises, should come clean on the matter and bring a law to make the purchase of crops at MSP mandatory.

Timings  
DELHI

|                      |
|----------------------|
| WEDNESDAY, SEP. 23   |
| RISE 06:10 SET 18:16 |
| RISE 12:24 SET 22:59 |
| THURSDAY, SEP. 24    |
| RISE 06:11 SET 18:15 |
| RISE 13:26 SET 23:54 |
| FRIDAY, SEP. 25      |
| RISE 06:11 SET 18:14 |
| RISE 14:22 SET 00:00 |

Delhi Weather  
max min  
Delhi City 37 28  
Safdarjung 37 28  
Palam 37 28

Delhi Palam Today  
34°C Few spell of light rain or thunderstorm may occur at some places with cloudy sky and moderate gusty winds.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow  
35°C Weather would be warm and dry with partly cloudy sky and gentle winds.

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THE HINDU

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## Bills to double farmers' income: BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Farmers' Bills introduced by the Centre and passed by Parliament had paved the way for doubling the income of farmers, the Delhi BJP said here on Tuesday. It also alleged that the Delhi government stood with middlemen instead of farmers.

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri announced that the party would protest against the 'anti-farmer Kejriwal government' along with thousands of farmers outside the Chief Minister's house.

"There is a big question mark on the Delhi government; why has it not yet given the status of farmer to those who cultivate 50,000 hectares of land? Why it has not given any facility to them? Why does it not have any Ministry to solve their problems? The Kejriwal government is anti-farmer," he alleged.

He argued that in Haryana, the BJP government gives free electricity to farmers while the Kejriwal government provides electricity at rates ranging from ₹1.50/unit to ₹8/unit in addition to a fixed charge of ₹125/unit per month.

# Over 3,800 cases in 24 hours; 55% beds vacant

With 37 fresh fatalities, death toll in Capital rises to 5,051

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

As many as 3,816 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours taking the tally to 2,53,075, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Tuesday.

Also, 37 more deaths have been reported in a single day, taking the toll 5,051.

Of the total cases, 2,16,401 people have recovered and there are 31,623 active cases.

Out of the total 14,652 beds available for COVID-19 treatment in the city, 55.3% are vacant, as per government data on Thursday. But 62.9% of the ICU beds with ventilators are occupied and 68.7% of the ICU beds without ventilators are occupied.

The positivity rate (percentage of people testing positive for every 100 tests done) has dropped to 6.4%, from 7.5% on Monday.



A woman gets tested for the virus in the city on Tuesday.

■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The number of containment zones in Delhi jumped from 1,889 on Monday to 1,937 on Tuesday – the highest till date.

The Delhi government has significantly ramped up testing in the past few days. The number of tests conducted and corresponding fresh cases reported, ranged from 24,198 (2,312) on September 1 to 61,973 (4,071) on

September 19. On Tuesday, 59,013 tests were conducted, compared to 33,733 on Monday. The number of tests done per million now stands at over 1.38 lakh while the total number of tests done stands at over 26.37 lakh.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain also took a meeting with medical directors and medical superintendents of all Delhi government hospitals.

## Virus death toll in G.B. Nagar rises to 50

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar recorded one more fatality linked to COVID-19 that pushed the district's death toll from the

pandemic to 50 on Tuesday, official data showed.

The district also recorded 244 new COVID-19 patients and its tally of cases reached 11,663, while the number of active cases climbed to

1,623, according to the data released by the UP Health Department for a 24-hour period.

On the brighter side, 198 more patients got discharged during the period.

The association, in its plea filed through advocate Sa-

# Court stays govt. order to reserve 80% ICU beds in private hospitals

Bench says order 'arbitrary'; AAP govt. to challenge stay today

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The High Court on Tuesday stayed the Delhi government's order directing 33 big private hospitals here to reserve 80% of ICU beds for COVID-19 patients.

Justice Navin Chawla said the Delhi government's September 13 order was prima facie arbitrary, unreasonable and violative of fundamental rights of citizens guaranteed under the Constitution.

The court also issued notices to the Delhi government and the Centre on a plea by 'Association of Healthcare Providers' to quash the order. It said the operation of the order shall remain stayed till the next date of the hearing on October 16.

Reacting to the development, the Delhi government said, "It is extremely important to reserve ICU beds in private hospitals to deal with increasing virus cases. We are challenging this order tomorrow [Wednesday]."

Before the High court, the Delhi government defended its decision saying it is only for 33 hospitals and 20% ICU beds remain for non-COVID-19 patients and it has been done keeping in view the sudden spike in virus cases.

nyam Khetarpal, said that private hospitals routinely get patients suffering heart attacks, grievous injuries, acute pulmonary disorders, complex fractures, and even other conditions like cancer, transplant and cardiac patients, which require urgent intervention and critical care.

**Denial of urgent care**  
"Reserving 80% of beds in the ICU will deny urgent care to seriously ill patients, requiring vital surgical interventions and critical care."

The petition also claimed that government hospitals such as Lok Nayak have vacant capacity exceeding up to 40% of the ICU beds earmarked for COVID-19 treatment. It said that the capacity available in government hospital ought to have been exhausted before directing private hospitals to reserve ICU beds.

IYC protests against rising unemployment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) on Tuesday protested outside Parliament House against the rising unemployment among the youth and "anti-farmer" bills but were soon detained by the Delhi Police.

The IYC alleged that the government in the Centre is anti-youth, anti-farmer and was suppressing the voice of people. National president of IYC, Srinivas B.V., said: "If these anti-peoples laws are not withdrawn, there will be fierce protest and Satyagraha on the streets. Today we have surrounded the Parliament to awaken this dumb and deaf government."

He also said: "The Centre gets votes from the youth, but when the youth asks for employment, then they get beaten with sticks."

**AAP govt. not paying CBSE exam fees'**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Tuesday alleged that the Delhi government was going back on its promise of paying examination fee of the CBSE students.

Delhi Congress chief Anil Kumar said the Kejriwal government had promised that it would deposit the registration and exam fees of 3.15 lakh students for their 10 and 12 CBSE exams, but has not done so citing "no funds".

"Each student will now have to deposit ₹2,450-2,950... The Kejriwal government had no financial crunch in spending ₹151 crore for its self-promotion publicity," Mr. Kumar said.

## Ram with mask, contact-free abduction of Sita may mark Ramlila 2020

Organisers prepare for low-key festivities with a downsized audience, social distancing and sanitisation; Centre's nod awaited

JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

The epic battle between good and evil amid the pandemic will be contact-free and unfold between socially-distanced, face-masked Lord Ram and Demon King Ravan, each armed with sanitised weaponry and minimal warriors from their mythical armies during the staging of Delhi's Ramlilas.

of Goddess Sita, are among a slew of suggestions that have poured in from organisers to ensure a COVID-free festival.

### Highlights of this year

"Not only in terms of tradition but also given developments related to the Ram Temple, the bhoomi pujan – which was done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself –, make this year doubly significant in terms of staging Ramlilas. We expect the Centre to give a positive decision on the issue and guidelines within this week," said Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri.

On Monday, Mr. Bidhuri and Ashok Goel Devraha, General Secretary of the Delhi Dharmik Sangh – an umbrella body which



A performance of Ramlila in New Delhi.

■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

discussion between the organising committees and the Delhi Dharmik Sangh about how the events can and should be staged this year. The audience at Ramlila events can be limited to 500 and its members will be sanitised before both entering as well as exiting the venue. Masks will be compulsory both off and on stage," he said.

### No-contact battles

"Similarly, we will limit the number of artists on the stage – for example, smaller armies engaging in battle from either side. There will also be no contact during battle scenes. We will make collar mics mandatory and the conflict will be more audio-based – like it used to be in movies earlier with sound effects connoting punches etc," he explained.

Given the significance of social distancing due to the circumstances, organisers would also, seemingly, have to rely on their audience's willing suspension of disbelief as the effectiveness of handheld smoke guns. These would play a crucial role when it came to one of the most significant events in the epic – the abduction of Sita, said Mr. Goel.

"Traditionally, there is slight contact between Ravan and Sita when she is forced onto the Pushpak Viman and flown off to Lanka by him. This time, it has been suggested that we utilise smoke guns to mask a deliberate dash by the artist playing the Goddess onto the Pushpak Viman herself before the smoke clears as part of the abduction scene," he added.

## Isn't English ads on farm Bills making fun of farmers, asks AAP

It says BJP created 'false propaganda'

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday said that the BJP has created a record of "false propaganda" in reference to the Farmers Bills.

"Modi government at the Centre has made a unique record of false propaganda in this country," AAP national spokesperson Raghav Chadha said about advertisements by the Central government in English language newspapers on Farm Bills and Minimum Support Price (MSP).

"Which farmer in the country will read English advertisement along with his morning cup of cappuccino to understand MSP and public procurement and public distribution?" the AAP leader asked.

"On one hand, many agencies under the BJP are not able to pay salaries of doctors and nurses and on the other hand, the BJP government is spending lakhs and crores of rupees to give English advertisements. I want to ask the Modi go-



Ashok Gehlot  
Chief Minister, Rajasthan



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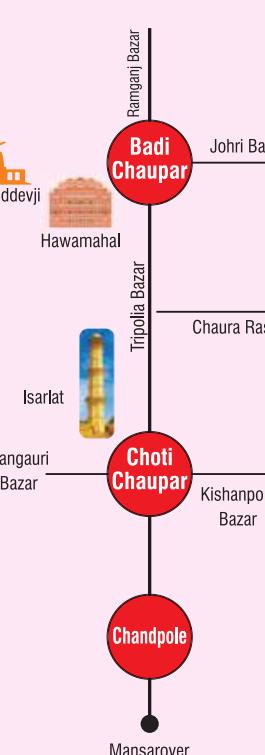
Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation Limited



Government of Rajasthan



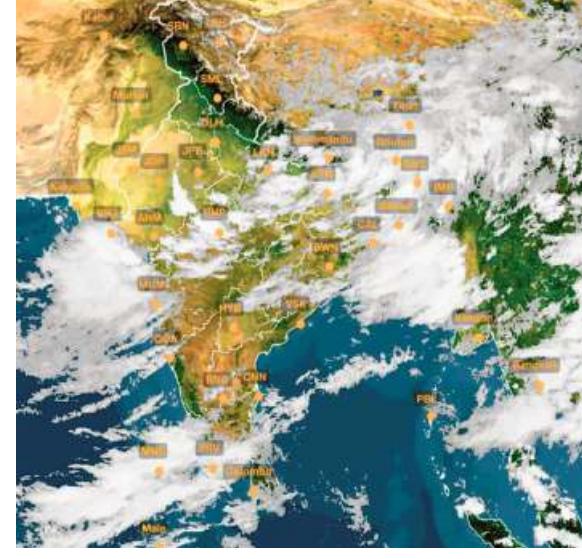
#राजस्थान\_सतर्क है





**WEATHER WATCH**

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 14.30 HRS)

**Forecast for Wednesday:** Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal

| CITY        | RAIN     | MAX     | MIN  | CITY               | RAIN     | MAX     | MIN  |
|-------------|----------|---------|------|--------------------|----------|---------|------|
| Agartala    | 18.3...  | 30.2... | 26.0 | Kozhikode          | 9.2...   | 32.2... | 24.2 |
| Ahmedabad   | 36.7...  | 36.7... | 28.2 | Kurnool            | 0.2...   | 31.7... | 24.1 |
| Aizawl      | 37.2...  | 26.9... | 20.9 | Lucknow            | ...      | 34.4... | 27.2 |
| Altahabad   | 1.2...   | 30.8... | 27.0 | Madurai            | 35.6...  | 26.8    | 23.8 |
| Bengaluru   | 0.1...   | 25.5... | 20.0 | Mangaluru          | 35.9...  | 27.9... | 23.4 |
| Bhopal      | ...      | 33.0... | 25.6 | Mumbai             | 23.4...  | 27.5... | 25.0 |
| Bhubaneswar | ...      | 31.0... | 24.4 | Mysuru             | ...      | 27.0... | 20.0 |
| Chandigarh  | ...      | 36.6... | 27.5 | New Delhi          | ...      | 37.1... | 27.5 |
| Chennai     | ...      | 35.4... | 26.2 | Patna              | 26.8...  | 29.6... | 26.2 |
| Coimbatore  | 0.1...   | 32.0... | 23.6 | Poona Blair        | 44.5...  | 31.1... | 23.8 |
| Dehradun    | 4.2...   | 34.0... | 23.4 | Puducherry         | ...      | 36.3... | 25.6 |
| Gangtok     | 55.8...  | 19.4... | 17.9 | Pune               | 32.8...  | 30.3... | 21.6 |
| Goa         | 173.3... | 29.0... | 24.0 | Rajpur             | ...      | 30.8... | 24.7 |
| Guwahati    | 59.8...  | 26.5... | 23.8 | Ranchi             | 6...     | 27.6... | 23.1 |
| Hubballi    | ...      | 24.0... | 21.0 | Shillong           | 134.3... | 19.6... | 17.4 |
| Hyderabad   | ...      | 31.0... | 23.1 | Shimla             | 5.6...   | 26.5... | 19.9 |
| Imphal      | 17.6...  | 29.0... | 20.7 | Srinagar           | ...      | 29.1... | 11.5 |
| Jaipur      | ...      | 35.4... | 27.6 | Thiruvananthapuram | 35.6...  | 26.6... | 23.4 |
| Kochi       | 9.2...   | 29.4... | 24.4 | Tiruchi            | ...      | 36.7... | 25.6 |
| Kohima      | 5.8...   | 26.3... | 17.5 | Vijayawada         | ...      | 31.6... | 26.0 |
| Kolkata     | 14.5...  | 32.2... | 26.1 | Visakhapatnam      | 1.4...   | 31.1... | 26.8 |

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday**

| CITIES        | SO <sub>2</sub> | NO <sub>x</sub> | CO  | PM <sub>2.5</sub> | PM <sub>10</sub> | CODE   |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----|-------------------|------------------|--------|
| Ahmedabad     | 26              | 40              | 53  | 53                | 75               | ██████ |
| Bengaluru     | 10              | 22              | 70  | 89                | 55               | ██████ |
| Chennai       | 54              | 17              | 31  | 120               | 100              | ██████ |
| Delhi         | 18              | 29              | 25  | 117               | 131              | ██████ |
| Hyderabad     | .5              | 43              | 12  | 19                | 18               | ██████ |
| Kolkata       | .6              | 69              | 15  | 25                | 25               | ██████ |
| Lucknow       | .6              | 40              | 49  | 82                | 137              | ██████ |
| Mumbai        | 21              | 8               | 53  | 78                | 100              | ██████ |
| Pune          | ...             | ...             | ... | ...               | ...              | ██████ |
| Visakhapatnam | 11              | 45              | 17  | 37                | 64               | ██████ |

Air Quality Code: ■ Red ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
**SO<sub>2</sub>:** 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<sub>x</sub>:** 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.  
**PM<sub>2.5</sub> & PM<sub>10</sub>:** 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

# Death toll in Bhiwandi building collapse rises to 20; search on

Dead include nine children; number of those rescued reaches 25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
THANE

The death toll in the Bhiwandi building collapse rose to 20 on Tuesday, with the recovery of seven more bodies overnight, the police said.

Bodies of a two-and-a-half-year-old boy and a young couple were recovered 24 hours after the crash. The number of those rescued has gone up to 25, with five more people being pulled out from under the debris.

The dead include nine children, among them two toddlers, an official said. Those rescued are being treated at hospitals in Bhiwandi and Thane.

The 43-year-old Jilani building collapsed at 3.40 a.m. on Monday. Two civic officials have been suspended in connection with the collapse and an offence has been registered against the building owner, an official said.

The building in the powerloom town – which is around 10 km from Thane – had 40 flats and around 150

## Panvel civic body issues notices to 281 buildings

RAINA ASSAINAR  
NAVI MUMBAI

Nearly a month after the Mahad building collapse, the Panvel Municipal Corporation has issued notices to 281 buildings for conducting a structural audit.

The civic body had conducted an inspection and found the buildings in a dilapidated condition. It had asked the residents to either vacate or conduct a structural audit and submit a report to the corporation. However, residents of some of the buildings have asked the corporation to provide them the

proof of their buildings being dilapidated.

"The residents need to prove that their building is strong and for that they need to conduct an audit. But residents are responding by asking us to provide documents of proof. Of the 281 societies, around 12 have responded till now, and no one has yet conducted an audit and provided us the report," Deputy Municipal Commissioner Vitthal Dake said. The corporation had conducted the survey by visiting buildings and looking for the damage to the columns.

residents lived there, an official said.

The building, located at Narpoli's Patel Compound near Dhamankar Naka, col-

lapse while the residents were asleep. Teams of the National Disaster Response Force and personnel of the Thane Disaster Response

Force are still at the spot as the search operation continues, he said.

The building was not in the list of dilapidated structures of the Bhiwandi-Nizampur Municipal Corporation (BNMC), he said.

Bhiwandi DCP Rajkumar Shinde said offences under Sections 337,338,304 (2) of the Indian Penal Code were registered against the owner of building, Sayyed Ahmed Jilani, after a complaint by civic officials. Mr. Jilani is yet to be arrested, he said.

The BNMC suspended two senior officials. An inquiry committee has also been set up and will include the assistant town planner, he said.

Meanwhile, a building resident said most residents of the building were tenants and included autorickshaw drivers, vendors and labourers. A civic official said the building was served two notices, one in 2019 and another in February, over alleged irregularities, but the residents did not leave as the rent was very low.

## MGNREGA workers to get benefits on completion of 90 days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

Workers engaged in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) in Rajasthan will get the construction labourer cards on completion of 90 days of work in a year. The cards will enable them to get the benefits of various social security schemes.

The department has preferred giving the individual beneficiary works, such as land improvement or 'Apna Khet Apna Kaam', construction of cattle sheds, goat sheds, poultry sheds and piggeries and the Pradhan Mantri Grameen Awas Yojana tasks during the pandemic.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said on Tuesday that the recent decision to give work at MGNREGA sites on demand had provided a major relief to the rural populace during the pandemic. The workers will now get the benefits such as accident insurance, free medical treatment and social security pension through the cards.

With about 54 lakh labourers engaged under MGNREGA in June this year, Rajasthan had occupied the first rank in the country in providing jobs to migrant workers returning to their native villages during the lockdown.

The construction labourers in the State are governed

## HC impleads Sanjay Raut, BMC officer in actor Kangana's plea

BMC seeks time to file a reply to actor's rejoinder

SONAM SAIGAL  
MUMBAI

from the civic body.

Senior advocate Birendra Saraf appearing for the actor submitted a DVD to the court that contained statements by Mr. Raut. To which the court said, "If you are going to rely on the DVD, then he [Mr. Raut] needs to be added as a party."

The Bench said it wanted both the advocates to address the circular issued by the BMC in 2012 on unauthorised construction. The court also directed Mr. Chhoy to keep the Executive Officers of the BMC present online for the proceedings.

Advocate Saraf said he

would argue on the malice of law. The court impleaded Mr. Raut and Bhagyawant Late, Designated Officer, H West Ward, to be added as a party in the case and posted the matter to be heard on Wednesday. Mr. Raut tweeted: "Case by an actress in Hon. High Court is about demolition of illegal structure by BMC which is an independent body & Demand is 2 make RS MP SanjayRaut a party! From Babri case 2 standing for Marathi pride, I have faced several cases! This wouldn't deter me from fighting for d pride of my city & my Maharashtra."

She was in Satara for the shooting of a Marathi TV serial.

## Veteran actor Ashalata dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SATARA

Veteran actress Ashalata Wabgaonkar, who acted in a number of Marathi and Hindi films, died early on Tuesday morning at a private hospital here after battling COVID-19, according to hospital authorities. She was 79.

Ashalata was also a noted Marathi theatre personality and had featured in several plays. She had tested positive for COVID-19 and was admitted to a private hospital on September 17 where she was diagnosed with bilateral pneumonia, a senior doctor said.

She was in Satara for the shooting of a Marathi TV serial.

allowed to any paddy, rice dealer, miller, trader for export of the basmati paddyrice," it added.

The announcement was made by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh in response to a proposal of the Punjab Mandi Board, made after thorough examination of the representations received from the Punjab Rice Millers and Exporters Association and the Punjab Basmati Rice Millers and Exporter Association.

They had submitted that the disparity in fees and other charges among the basmati producing States would be around 4%, making Punjab's rice industry economically unviable.

## Punjab govt. reduces levies on basmati rice

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

To provide a level playing field for basmati rice traders and millers from within and outside Punjab, especially in the light of the provisions of the new agriculture Bills, the Punjab government on Tuesday announced reduction in the Market Development Fee and the Rural Development Fee rates from 2% to 1% each.

The move, which will also help keep Punjab basmati competitive in the international markets, will provide relief to the tune of ₹100 crore to basmati traders-millers, according to an official statement. "The change comes with the caveat that no refund of any fee will be

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## A new world order

The permanent members of the UNSC must support the reform process of the UN

**A**t a special session marking 75 years of the United Nations on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for reform of its “outdated structures”, pointing out that in the absence of comprehensive changes, the world body today faces a “crisis of confidence”. While the words appear harsh given the occasion, they can hardly be faulted. India has been at the forefront of demanding reform in the UN, particularly its principal organ, the Security Council, for decades, staking its claim as one of the world’s largest economies and most populous countries, with a track record in promoting a rules-based international order, and contributing to peacekeeping through UN forces. The UN was born in the crisis of the World War era, and the realities of that time can hardly be compared to the present. The UNSC’s permanent, veto-carrying members, chosen by virtue of being “winners” of World War II – the U.S., the U.K., France, Russia and later China – can hardly claim adequate representation of the world’s leadership today. The UNSC does not include a permanent member from the African, Australian and South American continents, and the pillars of the multilateral order, such as the G-4 group of Brazil, India, Germany and Japan, have been ignored for long. Other, more representative options exist, and that has been the crux of the battle for change. Also, there is a deep polarisation within the UN’s membership, so decisions are either not taken, or not needed. Frequent divisions within the UNSC P-5 end up blocking key decisions. These issues are underlined in a year where the coronavirus pandemic has brought the world to a standstill; yet, the UN, the UNSC, and WHO have failed to play an effective role in helping nations deal with the spread.

For India, what has been most frustrating is that despite the dysfunctional power balance that prevails, the UN’s reform process, held through Inter Governmental Negotiations (IGN) has not made progress over decades, despite commitments. The UN has chosen to “rollover” the discussions of the IGN, which are looking at five major issues: enlarging the Security Council, categories of membership, the question of the veto that five Permanent members of the UNSC wield, regional representation, and redistributing the Security Council-General Assembly power balance. It is some comfort that the UN’s 75th anniversary declaration passed by all member countries this week pledges to “upgrade the United Nations” with a commitment to “instil new life in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council”. Those words can only be realised if the UNSC’s permanent members recognise the deep peril the UN faces and support the reform process, an act that will require looking beyond their own interests for the greater good of the world and its peace-building architecture.

## Precarious houses

To prevent building collapses, governments should offer incentives for repairs

**B**hiwandi, a suburban town in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, has witnessed a building collapse in the receding weeks of the monsoon, killing at least 20 people including minors, and exposing once again, the precarious condition of many dwellings in one of India’s more prosperous States. Many more hapless residents and workers of a powerloom unit operating in the aging three-storeyed building were trapped under the debris. Legal liability and responsibility for the disaster have inevitably fallen on the owner of the structure and some municipal officials, for failing to abide by pre-monsoon safety audits. The monsoon has brought such disasters unfailingly to coastal Maharashtra, including Mumbai, for years now. In July, seven people died in the commercial capital, when two chawl buildings in densely populated working class areas crashed after heavy rain. Another incident in Mahad, in the rain-drenched Raigad district, killed many in August. These traumatic calamities, similar to many others in recent years, point to a worrying trend. Coastal Maharashtra has often received a staggering quantum of monsoon rainfall, and Thane district, where Bhiwandi is located, recorded 320 cm three years ago, over the average of about 240 cm. This is an alarm signal to the government. Flimsy buildings, particularly those constructed in the 1970s, are in danger of collapse, while their owners and residents are unable to fund their maintenance. A weaker economy in the post-COVID-19 phase will render expensive repairs even less feasible.

Ending the tragic episodes of building collapses will require Maharashtra to raise the bar for municipal services, beginning with safety audits. It is true that Mumbai’s municipal government has been identifying and classifying buildings based on hazard levels for some time now, and last year found 499 to be in a dangerous state. This programme must now include suburban local bodies such as the Bhiwandi Nizampur City Municipal Corporation, which lack the capacity and resources to carry out a comprehensive check. On the other hand, building owners must be incentivised to carry out safety repairs, with support from the Centre and the State, making such certified expenditure tax-deductible. Mumbai’s municipal engineers have, in the past, complained of political interference in the enforcement of safety norms, but as Monday’s accident makes clear, safety depends on quality. A more profound question is whether purely market-led approaches to housing can support Mumbai’s ambitions for growth, when its poorly-housed workers might be better served by a hybrid solution that includes decent, affordable social accommodation. The immediate priority for Maharashtra is to understand the scale of the problem, identify the weakest structures and launch a plan to prevent disasters.

# E-learning in India, a case of bad education

In poorly performing educational systems as in the country, online learning may not usher in a revolution



ROHIT DHANKAR

**E**quality of opportunity to all is one of the basic principles of our Constitution. From an educational point of view, John Dewey, American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer, strongly argued that “[A]n environment in which some are limited will always in reaction create conditions that prevent the full development even of those who fancy they enjoy complete freedom for unhindered growth.” Another point he makes equally strongly is that for good education, one must lead the child’s current interests and abilities organically to logically organised human knowledge. This second point is an indicator of the quality of education.

### The key issues

Our education system was never very efficient even in the best of times. The COVID-19 pandemic has rendered it extremely biased and faulty. The main thrust of providing learning opportunities while schools are shut is online teaching. There are several sets of guidelines and plans issued by the government, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for this purpose. The internet space is teeming with learning schemes, teaching videos, sites and portals for learning opportunities. The content of all government sites and schemes is primarily the NCERT-issued Alternative Academic Calendar (<https://bit.ly/3kE5NCN>), videos of teaching, digital editions of textbooks, and links to other such material.

There are three pertinent issues in this whole effort of online education and schemes that need se-

rious consideration. One, an exacerbation of inequality; two, the pedagogical issues leading to bad quality education; and three, an unwarranted thrust on online education, post-COVID-19.

### Exacerbation of inequality

It is worth repeating a truism that calamities, be they natural or man-made, affect the underprivileged the hardest; COVID-19 is no exception. The plight of millions of migrant labourers, many of who walked thousands of kilometres right in the beginning of the lockdown, proved the point adequately. A similar but less noticed deprivation is being visited to children of the same people, which may push the next generation in a direction of even greater comparative disadvantage.

In our society there is no large movement that may generate any hope of an improved situation in terms of equality and social justice. Therefore, any positive change that might come about will be a cumulative result of the development of capabilities and grit in individuals. The COVID-19 shutdown has affected this opportunity for the poor even harder than their counterparts from well-to-do sections of society. The government began plans for students with no online access only by the end of August. The plans themselves were the usual glib talk always served to the poor. These plans assume semi-literate or illiterate parents teaching children, community involvement, mobile pools, and so on. Anyone with an understanding of rural India will immediately note these to be imaginary. As a result, whatever online or digital education is available is for students with only online access. Thus, digital India may become even more unequal and divided than it already is.

Even if one takes it as an emergency measure (that ‘something is better than nothing’) and also accept ‘for some is better than no one’ despite it being against the principle of equal opportunity, the



quality of online teaching-learning leaves much to be desired. The NCERT declares in its Learning Enhancement Guidelines (<https://bit.ly/3iWdxWD>), or LEG that 60-70% students, teachers and parents consider learning satisfactory. However, its survey asks a single question on the feeling of students using the criteria of ‘joyful to burdensome’. The happiness or otherwise of the student while learning is, of course, important, but it says nothing about the quantum and depth of learning.

Listening to lectures on the mobile phone, copying from the board where the teacher is writing, frequent disconnections and/or having blurred video/audio can hardly and organically connect the child’s present understanding with the logically organised bodies of human knowledge.

### No focus on concepts

If one sees videos of teaching mathematics, science, history, and the English language, one can hardly avoid noticing problems with them. In the science and mathematics videos, in particular, there are many misconceptions and ambiguities. The emphasis is more on ‘tricks’ to remember for success in an examination than laying the stress on conceptual understanding.

The government of Delhi also uses videos by the Khan Academy (“a nonprofit with a mission to provide a free, world-class education to anyone, anywhere”). Many American educators have questioned the quality of teaching and have pointed out inadequate or plainly wrong concepts, particularly in mathematics. To quote an

article in *The Washington Post*, “Khan Academy: The revolution that isn’t” (July 23, 2012 - <https://wapo.st/3mJU4dV>): “teachers... are concerned that... the guy who’s delivered over 170 million lessons to students around the world... considers the precise explanation of mathematical concepts to be mere ‘nitpicking’.”

The secondary students are in a better position still because of their relative independence in learning and possible self-discipline. The beginners in the lower primary can get nothing at all from this mode of teaching. An example of assumptions in the NCERT’s planning in LEG can be instructive; it is glibly pronounced that “for a child in grade I, the learning outcome – associates words with pictures – can be easily taught with the use of resources available from or at home such as newspapers, food packets, things at home, TV programmes, nature, etc. All that will be needed is guidance to the parents.” Well, if we’re all that simple, then why are our children not learning to read and write?

Education does not happen in chance encounters with print. As Michael Joseph Oakeshott who also wrote on education would say, it requires well-connected, regular efforts that are incrementally building to help the child focus his attention and to provoke him to distinguish and to discriminate, and develop a habit of staying on task. And this requires help from someone who knows the child as well as understands the objective of education. Food packets and newspapers in the hands of even ‘guided’ semi-literate parents will be good enough to present a plan on paper, but will be completely useless for the child’s learning.

### The thrust, post-COVID-19

IT has been presented as a harbinger of a revolution in education for more than three decades now. However, all reliable studies seem to indicate that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the classroom helps in already

well functioning systems, and either has no benefits or negative impact in poorly performing systems. That does not indicate much hope from IT in our education system.

The NCERT’s LEG states that “COVID-19 has created a situation which demands transformation in school education... the transaction mechanisms in school education may go through a drastic change. Therefore, even if the pandemic will get over, its traces will be there and school education needs to remodel itself....” It recommends that “alternative modes of education for the whole academic session including Internet-based, radio, podcast, community radio, IVRS, TV DTH Channels, etc.” should be developed. This transformation of schools in the current understanding of pedagogy, suitability of learning material and quality of learning provided through IT will further devastate the already inadequate system of school education in the country. Of course, IT can be used in a balanced manner where it can help, but it should not be seen as a silver bullet to remedy all ills in the education system.

### Institutional environment

The importance of an institutional environment cannot be overemphasised when one thinks of online teaching. Even when the institutions function sub-optimally, students themselves create an environment that supports their growth morally, socially and intellectually in conversations and interactions with each other. The online mode of teaching completely forecloses this opportunity.

In conclusion, our democracy and public education system have, as usual, left the neediest in the lurch and are providing bad education to those who matter.

Rohit Dhankar is Professor, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, and Founder Secretary, Digantar, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The views expressed are personal

## Making the language of the law comprehensible

The demand for greater availability of laws and public records in the 22 languages in the Schedule VIII is not a big ask



PRASHANT REDDY T.

**T**he recent litigation over the language in which the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification 2020 should be published has brought much needed attention to the issue of official languages used by the central government in its functioning. The trigger for this debate has been litigation by citizens, who protested against the publication of the draft EIA notification in only English and Hindi, on the grounds that such a policy excludes a large number of Indians who do not speak Hindi or English from participating in the public consultation process.

While two High Courts have asked the government to publish the notification in all 22 languages mentioned in Schedule VIII to the Constitution, the central government is pushing back against this order, arguing that it is not required by the law to publish these notifications in the 22 languages mentioned in Schedule VIII.

One of the other reasons offered by the central government to resist the translation of the notification into 22 languages is that translations may result “in the meaning of the words being obfuscated and often even lost”, thereby leading

to greater legal uncertainty. It is incredible for the government of the world’s largest democracy to make such a claim because there exists a central law called the Authoritative Texts (Central Laws) Act, 1973 (<https://bit.ly/35WkfP>) which creates a legal mechanism to recognise authoritative translations of all central laws into languages mentioned in the Schedule VIII to the Constitution of India. This law extends to rules and delegated legislation issued under central laws. The Legislative Department of the Law Ministry hosts these translations on its website.

Separate from the question of accuracy of translations is the larger policy question regarding the languages used by the central government for communicating with the public. The Official Languages Act, 1963 (<https://bit.ly/3mHWmu>) requires the publication of the law in only English and Hindi. As a result, the central government, de facto, ends up excluding non-English and non-Hindi speaking citizens from the law-making process only because of their linguistic identity.

**Language politics**  
Surprisingly, this issue is yet to garner the political attention it deserves despite the fact that since Independence, language has been one of the main markers of political identity in India. The reorganisation of Indian States on linguistic lines in 1956 took place because of the agitations that followed the death of Potti Sreeramulu in 1952



after his 56-day long fast demanding the creation of a State for the Telugu-speaking people of the Madras Presidency. Ever since, language has played a key role in shaping Indian politics. The rise and success of several regional political parties such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the Telugu Desam Party and the Shiv Sena have been associated with linguistic pride, which sometimes can boil into language chauvinism against other linguistic minorities. Language, therefore, is a powerful marker of political identity in India.

Despite the importance of language to Indian politics, the key political parties which owe their existence to their politics around language, appear to be weak and inadequate in convincing Parliament or the central government in ensuring that all 22 languages recognised in the Schedule VIII to the Constitution are used by all institutions of the central government while communicating or interfacing with the public.

At the very least, an inclusive language policy must be integral to the law-making and enforcement process. This should include mandatorily publishing all parliamentary debates and associated re-

cords such as reports of parliamentary committees, the entire record of the *Gazette of India*, all legislation and delegated legislation of the central government in all 22 languages that are incorporated in the Schedule VIII. Similarly, central government offices such as the passport office, dealing with citizens across the country should give citizens the option to engage with the government in a language of their choosing. So far, only the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) which runs the Aadhaar digital identity programme has an inclusive language policy allowing citizens to get identity cards in languages other than English and Hindi.

### Translations as legal right

In many of the cases outlined above, especially with regard to legislative enactments, it is reasonable to argue that citizens are not bound by laws that are not made available to them in their local language. The Supreme Court of India in the past (*Harla v. State of Rajasthan*, 1951) has ruled that citizens are not bound by laws which have not been published and publicised. The Court stated in pertinent part: “Natural justice requires that before a law can become operative it must be promulgated or published. It must be broadcast in some recognisable way so that all men may know what it is; or, at the very least, there must be some special rule or regulation or customary channel

by or through which such knowledge can be acquired with the exercise of due and reasonable diligence.”

It does not take much to extend this reasoning to argue that Indians are not bound by central laws unless Parliament makes its laws available in languages understood by all Indians.

### In the European Union

The demand for greater availability of laws and public records of the central government in the 22 languages in the Schedule VIII is not a big ask. In other multi-linguistic jurisdictions such as the European Union (EU), all EU-level official documents are made available in all 24 official languages of member States (<https://bit.ly/33SK4Xp>) because the EU has a policy in place to respect the linguistic diversity of its member nations. This policy allows all EU nationals to communicate with EU institutions in any of the 24 official languages and these institutions are required to respond in the same language.

It is appalling that the Government of India does not have a similar policy in place. It is not too late to put in place such a policy but this is unlikely to happen unless political parties such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam make it a national issue like they did in 1965 when the Official Languages Act was amended to make Hindi the sole official language of the central government.

Prashant Reddy T. is a lawyer

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### In the Rajya Sabha

Whatever be the reasons given, the unruly manner in which some members of the Rajya Sabha reportedly behaved in the House left much to be desired (Page 1, “8 Opposition MPs suspended from RS for ‘unruly behaviour’”, September 22). We have seen similar incidents in Parliament in the past. Unless order is maintained in the House, valuable debating and discussion time on important Bills would be lost. With the whole country, especially the younger generation, watching these proceedings

live on television, such reckless incidents within the temple of our great democracy could set a bad example ahead. Sometimes it becomes necessary for the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker to initiate strict action against some members who blatantly flout the rules of the House, in the interests of maintaining decorum and in ensuring normal proceedings. Parliament runs on the tax payer’s hard earned money and every minute wasted is unacceptable.

A. MOHAN,

Chennai

■ A lack of sanctity in the law-making process and politics was evident during the debate and passage of the two agriculture Bills in the Rajya Sabha and the fallout. There are two important factors in the law-making process. In the first, it is essential to scrutinise the subject. And, importantly, in the second, there must be robust and extensive debate on the floor of Parliament. There is no doubt that the culture of a deliberative and consultative process of law making has to be restored.

VENU G.S.,

Kalluvathukkal, Kollam, Kerala

### On the frontline

Between 1961 and 1963, I was one of the early recruits by the UPSC for the Border Roads Organisation as a Class 1 officer (engineering) and posted to No.10 BRTF (Border Roads Task Force) on the Hindustan-Tibet road, from Topri (Kinnur district, Himachal Pradesh) to Shipkila at the Tibet border. Our commander was Col. N.S. Kumar, a task master. A major was in command at one of the sites. After a few months he met with an accident due to a rockfall and sustained severe head injuries. He was evacuated to a military hospital and did

not return. I was asked to take over the unit, soon after, in October 1962, when the Chinese invaded India at many points. In our sector, called the ‘sugar sector’ (a translation of ‘Chini’ from Hindi), we waited for orders from above. The terrain was a very difficult one and the Indian Army was poorly equipped with World War vintage .303 rifles and two old jeeps which broke down frequently. Some Army personnel who had rushed in from Travancore, Mysore and Rajastan had yet to be acclimated. I had the opportunity of providing them our new Nissan

vehicles to transport them up to the border and our drivers and other staff worked tirelessly to get the mission completed. The roads under construction were dangerous – just 10 feet wide, no parapet wall, and with steep curves and gradients on the sides. One wrong move would have sent a vehicle plunging hundreds of feet below into the Sutlej river. It is a pity that the political class did little to improve the situation at the border from 1962 to 1975. K. SUNDARARAJAN, Chennai

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



# Recovery from COVID-19 can be a struggle

It is becoming evident that cardiovascular, neurological and psychological effects are real post-COVID



LANCELOT PINTO & NIKITA MEHRA

'When will I feel normal again?' This is a question every clinician gets asked daily. In most instances, historical narratives, research studies, guidelines and personal experiences equip us to provide an informed answer. Most research on COVID-19, however, has so far focused on reducing deaths, shortening hospital stays, and arresting the spread of the disease. With the cohort of COVID survivors getting larger, we are now cognisant of the fact that a significant proportion of patients who survive the illness suffer from sequelae that may not be short-lived. Support groups have mushroomed online of thousands of individuals reporting persistent symptoms months after recovering from the illness. A recent study from Italy reported that at an average of two months post-hospitalisation, only 12.6% individuals were free of any symptoms. The most common symptom reported in over half of all patients was fatigue. Unexpectedly, a significant proportion of individuals with 'mild' illness are also reporting long-standing symptoms.

#### Effects of COVID-19

SARS-CoV-2 belongs to a family of single-stranded RNA viruses called coronaviruses. Viruses in this family have been known for their far-reaching effects, affecting the respiratory, neurological, cardiovascular (heart and blood vessels), hepatic (liver), and enteric (gut) systems. The focus of the present pandemic has been on the respiratory effects of the virus, which have been the most common manifestation and cause of morbidity and mortality. As many as 97% of all individuals with symptomatic disease have been reported to demonstrate abnormalities on a CT scan of the chest. In addition to the viral infection and the immune response to it, the use of oxygen and being on a ventilator can also cause injury to the lungs. Corticosteroids, the only drugs with a proven mortality benefit in COVID-19, have the potential to



REUTERS

help reduce lung injury. However, their prolonged use can have ill-effects affecting multiple systems in the body. In the study mentioned above, 43% individuals reported shortness of breath two months after discharge.

The involvement of the cardiovascular system has been a prominent feature of this pandemic, as reflected both by clinical and autopsy studies. Individuals have gone to hospital with inflammation of the muscle fibres of the heart, limiting the functioning of the heart and mimicking heart attacks, and clots in the blood vessels of the lungs, brain and veins. These have been attributed to the direct effects of the virus (the heart muscle has an abundance of the same receptors that the virus binds to in the lungs, the ACE2 receptors) as well as abnormalities in the clotting pathways secondary to a dysfunctional and exuberant immune response to the virus. A fifth of all hospitalised patients have blood markers that reflect dying heart muscle cells. A subset of individuals report persistent palpitations and have an elevated resting heart rate, chest pain and exercise intolerance months after the illness. Structural damage to the heart and damage to the nerve transmission that regulates the functioning of the heart and the tone of blood vessels have been hypothesised to cause these effects.

The myelin sheath is a layer that covers nerves, facilitating transmission of signals along nerve fibres. Loss of this sheath, seen in demyelinating illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, is associated with severe fatigue and loss of muscle strength. Coronaviruses have been postulated to cause demyelinating disease through the direct effect on oligoden-

drocytes (cells in the nervous system), and through immune mechanisms in which similarities between the virus and myelin lead to T-cells attacking the body's own myelin. The loss of smell that has been reported in COVID-19 is believed to be a result of the virus entering the brain through the olfactory bulb, and the presence of the virus has been demonstrated in the fluid surrounding the brain. The persistence of fatigue, 'brain fog', short-term memory loss, loss of smell and taste, and headaches are all being reported for months following the illness. These are possibly sequelae of the virus invading the nervous system. SARS-CoV-2 may have the potential for resulting in a cohort of individuals with progressive neurological disease, and long-haulers with such symptoms need to be followed-up closely.

Survivors of SARS infection reported post-traumatic stress disorder, and a range of mental illnesses including increased suicidality in the months' post-infection. In the three years following the SARS epidemic, 59% survivors reported a psychiatric disorder at some point. A study published in *Sleep Medicine* revealed very high rates of clinically significant insomnia (20%), acute stress (15.8%), anxiety (18.5%), and depression (24.5%). The isolation from family and friends during the period of hospitalisation, stigma associated with the disease, and anxiety because of lockdowns are all likely to contribute to mental illness after being infected. Especially in those admitted with the illness, it would be naïve to assume that a discharge from the hospital would lead to a return to normalcy. Whether the effects of the virus on the brain are responsible for the psychiatric

long-term effects, or these are a consequence of the milieu in which we live, is unknown, but needs close monitoring.

#### What can be done?

So, what do we tell patients who ask us the question? What we know is that other viral illnesses have been known to cause a post-viral fatigue syndrome too. Persistent viral fragments leading to a constant immune response have been thought to play a role. What makes COVID-19 relatively unique though is that these symptoms are being reported in individuals who have had a mild illness and are often young and had been healthy prior to the illness. What is reassuring is that our experience with other viral illnesses suggests that most individuals return to a normal life, and only a small fraction have symptoms which persist. For long-haulers, the limited experience that present survivors offer is that rest helps; trying to push through the pain can be counter-productive, especially if one attempts vigorous exercise too soon. A recent guideline published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* has warned against exercising during the illness (might increase viral replication within the heart, causing long-term damage, and can also cause sudden cardiac death), and has suggested a detailed assessment before return to sport in individuals with symptoms. Close monitoring is key, as is the control of co-morbidities, nutritional deficiencies and illnesses such as endocrine disorders. A graded rehabilitation which includes building physical endurance and addressing mental health issues is crucial to a holistic recovery.

Empathy is key, and research is needed to codify the illness and prevent the stigma that such individuals report having to face from their peers. It is becoming evident that post-COVID effects are real. We owe it to our patients to help them understand it better, and study ways in which we can alter its course.

*Dr. Lancelot Pinto is a Consultant Pulmonologist and Epidemiologist at P.D. Hinduja National Hospital, Mumbai. Dr. Nikita Mehra is an Assistant Professor of Medical Oncology and Researcher in Molecular Oncology at Adyar Cancer Institute, Chennai. Views are personal*

# Uniting to combat COVID-19

The South Asian region could leverage its existing institutional framework under the umbrella of SAARC



SYED MUNIR KHASRU

With the pandemic showing no signs of abating, growth prospects for the world's fastest-growing region, South Asia, appear grim. In April, the World Bank predicted that growth in the region would be 1.8%-2.8% this year.

Governments in South Asian countries have responded in varying degrees to counter the health and economic crises. India resumed its economic activities on a limited scale following a strict lockdown imposed in late March and lasting through April. Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka did the same after an extended lockdown. Bhutan and the Maldives have managed to largely contain community transmission and avoid prolonged lockdowns due to a higher testing rate. This is consistent with the hypothesis that countries that have conducted more tests have been more successful in containing the pandemic. According to Worldometer, in South Asia, the Maldives has the highest number of tests per million population followed by Bhutan. Countries facing a surge in cases, such as India, could have flattened the curve by increasing the number of tests.

#### Low mortality

India has the second largest number of COVID-19 cases in the world (over 55 lakh) after the U.S. Bangladesh has around 3.5 lakh cases. Surprisingly, unlike other regions, South Asian countries are experiencing a lower mortality rate despite having a higher infection rate. Many have suggested that this could be due to the region's tropical climate, protection offered by a tuberculosis vaccine (BCG), exposure to malaria, and a weaker strain of the virus. However, epidemiological studies and the World Health Organization's reviews have been sceptical about the hypotheses which leave out one plausible explanation – the concern over data reliability. Many have suggested that in a region that houses one-fourth of the global population and one-third of the global poor, many COVID-19 deaths might have gone unnoticed, unreported or even under-reported.

While India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Maldives have unveiled stimulus packages, the rest are yet to announce any concrete support for their low income and lower-middle income population still suffering from the economic fallout of the crisis. In late March, India announced a \$22.5 billion relief

package to ensure food security and cash transfers to save the livelihoods of an estimated 800 million people living in poverty. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) slashed the repo and reverse repo rate to create liquidity for businesses. In early April, Bangladesh announced a stimulus package worth about \$8 billion in addition to an earlier \$595 million incentive package for export-oriented industries. In late March, Pakistan unveiled a comprehensive fiscal stimulus package of \$6.76 billion. Its central bank also slashed the interest rate. In late April, the Maldives government mobilised a \$161.8 million emergency fund. It also announced a short-term financing facility for the tourism industry. Sri Lanka signed an agreement with the RBI for a currency swap worth \$400 million to support domestic financial stability. In late February, the Afghan government allocated about \$25 million to fight COVID-19. In addition, a \$100.4 million grant was approved by the World Bank in April to Afghanistan.

Although countries like India and Bangladesh announced financial and material stimulus packages, distribution concerns remain unaddressed. For instance, the Open Market Sale in Bangladesh appears ineffective as there is no physical distancing and, in some instances, there is political tampering and poor governance. In India, the announcement of the lockdown gave citizens less than four hours to prepare. Hoarding of supplies caused a shortage in the market. The lockdown disrupted supply chains. It was a similar situation in Nepal and Pakistan.

#### A coordinated response mechanism

Since this crisis is likely to result in prolonged economic setbacks in South Asia, leaders of the region need to look beyond narrow geopolitical rivalry and come together to work towards a well-coordinated response mechanism. A SAARC COVID-19 fund was created following Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to South Asian leaders, but governments are yet to decide on its modus operandi. The region could leverage its existing institutional framework under the umbrella of SAARC to effectively respond to the crisis. For instance, SAARC Food Banks could be activated to tackle the imminent regional food crisis, and the SAARC Finance Forum can be activated to formulate a regional economic policy response. If leaders of the region can't rise to the occasion even when faced with a common problem that is claiming lives, putting millions out of jobs and crippling economies, when will they?

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## Needless Booker brouhaha

The obsession with the Booker Prize is in tandem with India's fixation for foreign awards

#### KUNAL RAY

Like every year, the Booker Prize shortlist has garnered a lot of attention in India. We also have an Indian-born author on the shortlist. Regardless, Booker Prize announcements are awaited with keen interest primarily by a minority community in the country largely comprising English language publishers, booksellers, critics, academics and readers. The Booker Prize-winning work is then translated into multiple Indian languages which is a pure economic decision rather than an artistic choice.

#### A kind of neo-colonialism

The obsession with the Booker is in

tandem with our fixation for foreign awards and nominations. A kind of

neo-colonialism or an imperialism of

the mind is established when books

and authors are considered impor-

tant only vis-à-vis their mentions in

the foreign press and nominations

for 'prestigious' foreign awards.

Many authors from the erstwhile Com-

monwealth clamour to

write for the foreign

press and gain entry into the exclusive club

of a privileged few. If

you win it, even better.

There is very little at-

tempt to discuss the

winning title for its

own merit. The awards

create blinders. A slav-

ish attitude is perpet-

uated through awards

and longlists that refuse to read or re-

cognise literature beyond honorifics or quotable quotes.

Lest it be forgotten it should per-

haps be said that awards are always a

reflection of a handful or a jury com-

prising certain individuals and their

likes and dislikes. That is the case

with all jury and awards. This lack of

criticality around the award is farci-

cal. Also, how has the Booker really

helped the reading or writing sphere

in this country? It has encouraged a

class of writers who write to win

awards. Their writing, however, has

to qualify for the pre-determined cat-

egories as to how the East or the rest

of the world is imagined by the West.

That debate is still not dated. Gender,

colour, caste, conflict have been re-



duced to writerly templates and plot points to tick off the list of essentials a work of fiction from this part of the world must contain.

The Booker Prize or any big award so to speak has done precious little to improve the Indian readership rather than creating momentary interest in the work or the author. There are some who attain permanent celebrity status based on the laurels of the award. This award-obsessed culture is a trap to jettison conversation about reading and writing and further drown us in the cult of the celebrity, a permanent fetish. We refuse to look beyond the individual. His or her writing becomes secondary and gradually of marginal interest.

#### Books in India

There are several awards in various Indian languages which regularly honour and recognise literary talent. Those awards barely find a mention in the mainstream media. We have to wait for translations to bridge that gap. While translations from Indian

languages into English have peaked over the years, only a certain kind of writing is chosen or curated; writing that mainstream, metropolitan India might want to read from the provinces. This is a major limitation that we have to find ways to address.

While we look away from our own, we constantly strive to understand the foreign, the different. There is a lot of glib talk about the role of literature in expanding the horizon but it shouldn't be done at the cost of ignoring local knowledge systems and writing cultures. We often talk about building bridges through literature. While that is surely welcome, it should not hold our imagination hostage to foreign awards and juries which do precious little to improve our lives as readers and thinkers especially in a country known for its widely varied and constantly evolving literary cultures beyond the English speaking and writing sphere.

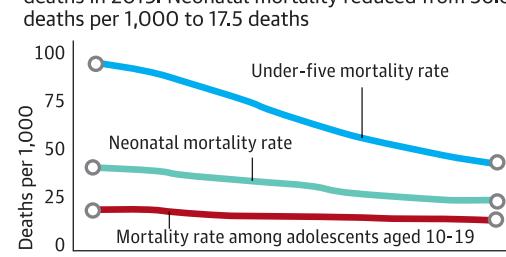
Kunal Ray teaches literary and cultural studies at FLAME University, Pune



#### DATA POINT

## Lower child mortality

RAPID PROGRESS | Global under-five mortality dropped from 93 deaths per 1,000 live births to 38 deaths in 2019. Neonatal mortality reduced from 36.6 deaths per 1,000 to 17.5 deaths

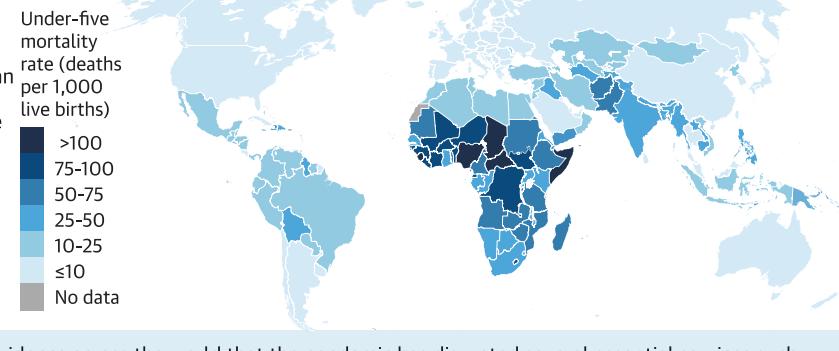


#### GEOGRAPHICAL DISPARITIES REMAIN

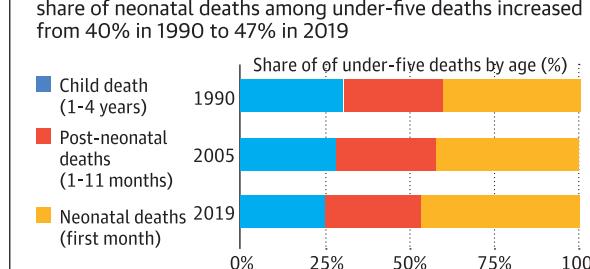
More than 80% of under-five deaths occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia in 2019. The map shows the under-five mortality rate in 2019. The darker the shade, the higher the mortality. In India, under-five mortality stood at 34.3 deaths per 1,000 live births. Nigeria has the highest under-five mortality rate (17.1 deaths per 1,000 births).

**COVID-19 threat** | There is evidence across the world that the pandemic has disrupted several essential services such as access to healthcare and immunisation. A recent paper\* published in *The Lancet* estimates that the number of under-five child deaths will increase by 2.5 lakh-11.5 lakh in 118 low-income and middle-income countries if disruptions (reduction of workforce, reduction of services, etc.) continue for six months

Source: World Bank Data Blogs, \*Early estimates of the indirect effects..., Timothy Robertson et al, *The Lancet*



NEONATAL RISK | The rate of decline in neonatal mortality has been slower than that of under-five mortality. So, the share of neonatal deaths among under-five deaths increased from 40% in 1990 to 47% in 2019



#### A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 23, 1920

## The Brussels Conference

(From an editorial)

The international conference, to be held under the auspices of the League of Nations to consider and devise means to stabilise international credit, is to meet at Brussels shortly. On its decisions will largely depend the economic future of the world and it is to be hoped that the Conference, bearing this point in mind, will approach the problems faced before it in that spirit of good will, tolerance and large-heartedness which alone will enable to rehabilitate the economic position of the shattered countries, enemy or allied, where now nothing but gloom and chaos obtain in matters industrial and financial. The problem, of course, is not easy of solution; were it easy, no international conference under such high auspices would have been necessary to solve it. The present economic chaos has resulted in something like a deplorable economic deadlock. On the one hand, industrial nations, whether belligerent or neutral, are just now experiencing a trade slump on a very large scale. It would appear that the decline in business has grown to such proportions that the mills have had to work short time which means unemployment on a considerable scale, labour unrest and business failures.

FROM PAGE ONE

## Opposition parties walk out of both Houses

The Congress leader also allowed invoked late BJP leader Arun Jaitley, who has said in 2016 that the government becomes illegitimate if a division of votes is denied.

DMK's Tiruchi Siva, SP's Ramgopal Yadav, Keshava Rao of the TRS, NCP's Praful Patel spoke on the issue, before staging a walkout. Mr. Siva said the events of Sunday were triggered by the treatment meted out to the Opposition parties.

Even before Lok Sabha was convened, the Opposition parties had decided that to stage a similar boycott. As soon as the House convened, the Opposition benches raised issues of personal safety of MPs who were protesting against the three farm sector Bills passed by Parliament.

Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu said he and fellow MPs Santokh Singh Chaudhary and Gurdeep Singh Aujla were physically assaulted by the Delhi police near Parliament House on Monday night as they sought to light candles in

protest at Vijay Chowk. Speaker Om Birla assured the members of an enquiry into the incident. This was followed by Congress Legislature Party leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Choudhary stating that the farm Bills needed to incorporate the provision for Minimum Support Prices (MSP) and pointed out that the MSP hike for Rabi crops announced on Monday was the lowest in 11 years.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar insisted that the amendments would help the farmers.

He added, "₹ lakh infra development fund has been allocated, direct cash transfers are being made to the farmers. I am surprised over the Congress leaders' protests, given that it had promised to implement the same."

At this Mr. Chowdhary declared that the Opposition would be boycotting the House till the end of the Session unless the government withdraws the farm Bills.

## Protesting MPs rebuff Harivansh's 'tea-plomacy'

"Harivansh ji claimed that it is a personal visit; he came in his own car. [But] Within minutes of his visit, Prime Minister Modi tweeted praising him. It is very clear that BJP and their ally JD(U) realise that they are getting alienated from the people because of the draconian law. This tea trip was aimed at Bihar Assembly elections," CPI (M) MP K.K. Raghav, one of the suspended lawmakers on protest, said.

AAP MP Sanjay Singh said the protest was not about tea and the MPs were not on a sit-in to form personal relationships.

Minutes after his visit to the protest site, a letter written by Mr. Harivansh to President Kovind and Mr. Naidu was made public. In the letter, he expressed deep anguish at the alleged attempts to "intimidate" him by "violent" behaviour by some members. He also announced a 24-hour fast.

## Talks positive but no headway on de-escalation

Since the Doklam crisis, China has started constructing at least 13 entirely new military positions near its borders with India, including three air bases, five permanent air defence positions and five heliports, the report said.

"Construction on four of those new heliports started only after the onset of the current Ladakh crisis in May," the report authored by Sim Tack, Senior Analyst at Stratfor said.

Stating that once finished, this infrastructure will provide support for an even greater intensity of Chinese operations, the report observed, "The timing of the Chinese build-up of military facilities along the border with India just prior to the ongoing Ladakh stan-

doff suggests these border tensions are part of a much larger effort by China to assert control over its border regions."

The report observed that this approach is similar to China's strategy in the South China Sea, where a build up of permanent defence facilities supports Chinese localised military superiority and significantly raises the "potential cost of military opposition" to Beijing's maritime claims in the region.

He was part of a team that identified locations to plant the bombs that fatal day in the city, claim senior officials.

"He has been taken into CCB custody and further interrogation on his role in the blasts and his later activities is on," a senior CCB official said.

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## Freshers to start varsity classes from November 1

The admissions process will now be completed by the end of October, although institutions will have one more month to fill up any remaining vacant seats.

Classes for the first semester will begin on November 1 and run till the end of February 2021 without any winter break.

The teaching-learning process will continue in offline, online or blended mode as is currently happening for second and third year students, depending on continuing COVID res-

trictions.

Students will then get one week off to prepare for first semester exams, which are due to be held from March 8-26.

Following a one-week vacation, the second semester will begin on April 5 and continue till the end of July. Second semester examinations will be held from August 9 to 21, and the rest of that month will serve as a shortened summer break. The next academic year for this batch will begin from August 30, 2021.

Everyone was even fearing to allow others nearby.

"All of them are labourers from other States and do not

## Testing level, cases in A.P. ahead of other States

State adds over 7,500 cases; over 2,100 test positive in Telangana; Kerala has 4,125 new cases; no dent in Bengaluru curve

STAFF REPORTER  
HYDERABAD

Telangana's testing level for COVID-19 on Monday stood at 53,960 samples, and the State reported 2,166 more positive cases. The death toll touched 1,052, with 10 more fatalities.

Around 300 fresh cases continued to be detected in Greater Hyderabad per day. Apart from the capital, the new cases included 166 from

### COVID-19

Rangareddy, 147 from Medchal Malkajgiri, 127 from Karimnagar, 113 from Nalgonda, 95 from Warangal Urban, 90 each from Mahabubabad and Nizamabad.

Of the total cases in Telangana, 29,649 were active, the Health department said.

Andhra Pradesh reported 7,553 new coronavirus infections and 51 deaths on Tuesday, an official bulletin said.

## CM convenes meet to end Church row

STAFF REPORTER  
KOTTAYAM

The Kerala government is slated to convene another round of discussions between the Jacobite and Orthodox factions to find an amicable settlement to the raging dispute in the Malankara Church.

The talk, scheduled on October 5, will be mediated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

As against the first round, in which the two factions attended the discussions separately, the two groups are slated to attend the discussion jointly this time.

While the Jacobite faction pressed the demand for a referendum in individual parishes, the Orthodox faction wanted the Supreme Court verdict of July 3, 2017 to be implemented.

Three proposals were put forward by Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac at a meeting of office-bearers of employees and teachers unions through videoconferencing on Tuesday.

Instead of depositing the deducted salary from April to August this year in the Provident Fund account on April 1, 2021, the employees will be allowed to take loan for the deducted

Testing covered 68,829 samples with a positivity rate of 10.97%, while the overall positivity rate for 52.29 lakh samples tested till date stood at 12.22%.

The tests per million ratio stood at 97,931, while the confirmed cases per million was put at 11,972.

East Godavari was the only district with over 1,000 new infections. It reported 1,166 new cases and four deaths.

Cases in Guntur crossed the 50,000-mark and in Kadapa, the 40,000-mark.

Kerala reported 4,125 new cases on Tuesday. The State tested 38,574 samples, indicating a test positivity rate of 10.6%.

The number of patients being treated in the State's hospitals stood at 40,382.

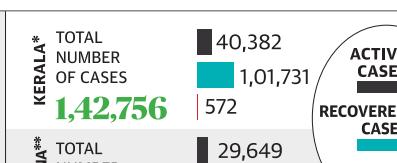
The death toll rose by 19 on Tuesday to touch 572. These were deaths recorded between August 25 and September 21. Of the 19 CO-

### Health matters

Civic workers have been spraying disinfectants in public places and crowded areas to contain the spread of the virus. The graph shows the spread of the pandemic in the southern States.



**Keeping it clean:** A sanitation worker disinfecting the premises as people wait to get tested in Vijayawada on Tuesday ■ K.V.S. GIRI



\*Kerala has a mismatch of 71 cases due to unaccounted deaths, missing persons | \*\*Telangana numbers are as of 8 p.m. on Monday | \*\*\*Karnataka has 19 non-COVID deaths

were 83 new deaths.

In all, 55,707 tests were conducted. This included 15,186 rapid antigen tests.

Tamil Nadu's tally of COVID-19 cases reached 5,52,674 as another 5,337 persons tested positive for the infection on Tuesday. The State's toll rose to 8,947 with the death of 76 more persons.

As many as 5,406 persons were discharged following treatment, taking the total number of persons discharged till date to 4,97,377. Presently, the State has 46,350 active cases. This includes 10,012 persons in Chennai and 4,559 in Coimbatore.

Of the 76 persons who succumbed, 19 persons died in Chennai and 11 in Salem. There were four deaths each in Coimbatore and Erode.

(With inputs from Vijayawada, Thiruvananthapuram, Bengaluru and Chennai bureaus)

VID-19 deaths, 11 were in Thiruvananthapuram, two each in Kollam and Malappuram and one each in Thrissur, Palakkad, Ernakulam and Kannur.

Bengaluru Urban district breached the two lakh mark on Tuesday with 3,082 new cases. With a total of 2,00,728 positive cases, Bengaluru became the third city after Pune and Delhi recording over two lakh cases.

With 26 new deaths on Tuesday, the toll in the district rose to 2,715, nearly 33% of the State total.

New cases in Karnataka as a whole reduced marginally on Tuesday at 6,974. There

## Kerala mooting new proposals for salary cut, repayment

Aim is to raise funds in the wake of COVID-induced crisis

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government has come up with new proposals on salary deduction and repayment of deducted salary of government employees and teachers to raise funds in the wake of COVID-19-induced financial crisis.

Three proposals were put forward by Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac at a meeting of office-bearers of employees and teachers unions through videoconferencing on Tuesday.

Instead of depositing the deducted salary from April to August this year in the Provident Fund account on April 1, 2021, the employees will be allowed to take loan for the deducted

amount from banks and financial institutions in October. The government will repay the loan amount with interest and offer guarantee to the loan, provided they agreed to the new deduction proposal.

The other proposal was to deduct five days' salary ev-

ery month for six months from September. Those availing themselves of the offer will get more time for repayment of Provident Fund loan taken by them and Onam festival advance of ₹15,000.

Deducting one month's salary through three days every month from September to March 2021 was the third proposal.

In the salary cut initiative from September, to be known as COVID-19 Income Support Scheme, the employees and teachers will get 9% annual interest till it is deposited in the PF on April 1, 2021.

Pro-UDF unions said they would go on strike if the government moved ahead with the salary cut.

## SC expresses shock at 'honour killing' in T.N.

Case refers to killing of Dalit in 2015

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A Supreme Court Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde expressed shock at the "honour killing" of a Dalit youth Gokuraj in 2015 in Tamil Nadu while refusing to even consider the question of bail for the prime accused.

"For you it is jail," Chief Justice Bobde, heading a three-judge Bench, told senior advocate S. Nagamuthu, appearing for S. Yuvaraj, the prime accused and the founder of Theeran Chinnamalai Gounder Peravai, on Tuesday.

Chief Justice Bobde shot back, asking "what offence was committed against you? You have obliterated somebody from the face of the earth ... Why should such people get bail?"

Gokuraj's body was found on the rail track near Pallipalayam on June 24, 2015.

His mother alleged that he was murdered for being in a relationship with a Caste Hindu girl.

## Arrested blasts case accused identified sites to plant bombs'

He was held at Thiruvananthapuram airport on Monday

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

The accused in the 2008 Bengaluru serial blasts case, Shoaib, 31, who was arrested by the Central Crime Branch at Thiruvananthapuram airport on Monday evening, is suspected to have played a key role in the procurement of explosives.

He was part of a team that identified locations to plant the bombs that fatal day in the city, claim senior officials.

"He has been taken into CCB custody and further interrogation on his role in the blasts and his later activities is on," a senior CCB official said.

Efforts to nab all the absconding accused in the case have been constantly on.

With the inputs received and help from Central agencies, we tracked down Shoaib. A Red Corner Notice was issued in October 2019, following which he was detained in Dubai by the local authorities. After a prolonged legal process, he was deported to his home State, Kerala, on Monday, where we arrested him," said Sandeep Patil, Joint Director (Crime).

Of the 32 named as accused in the case, 22 were arrested earlier.

Four were killed in an encounter in Kashmir by the Central forces.

With the arrest of Shoaib, five accused still remain elusive and efforts are on to track them down, sources said.

Four were killed in an encounter in Kashmir by the Central forces. With the arrest of Shoaib, five accused still remain elusive and efforts are on to track them down, sources said.

## Sanitary napkin scheme halted for want of funds

No allocation in Karnataka budget

AFSHAN YASMEEN  
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government that is busy tackling the COVID-19 pandemic has silently buried a vital hygiene scheme for adolescent girls. Distribution of sanitary napkins has come to a halt as no funds have been allocated this year for the "Suchi" scheme, a menstrual hygiene project.

The budget presented by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa on March 5, just before the first COVID-19 case was detected in the State, had not made allocation for "Suchi", which is now affecting over 17 lakh school and college girls.

The scheme, started in 2013-14, was initially a Cen-

trally-sponsored one. However, the Centre asked States to take over the scheme from 2015-16. Every year, the State has been spending a little over ₹49 crore on the scheme. It was aimed at instilling awareness about menstrual hygiene even among girls in rural areas.

Admitting that the scheme had come to a halt, V. Veena, Deputy Director, Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram, also in charge of the Suchi scheme, said the department was submitting a proposal to the government for funds. "We are aware that halting of the scheme has hit adolescent girls and are working on restarting it," she said.





## IN BRIEF



Mallya case: court issues letter of request to U.S.

MUMBAI A special CBI court in Mumbai has issued a Letter of Request (LoR) to the U.S. for aiding the CBI in its probe into a multi-crore bank fraud case against Vijay Mallya. Special court judge Jayendra C. Jagdale issued the LoR on Monday after the CBI filed an application for it.

## Rhea Chakraborty's judicial custody extended

MUMBAI A special Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act court on Tuesday extended the judicial custody of actor Rhea Chakraborty in a case registered against her by the Narcotics Control Bureau till October 6. The actor filed a plea for bail in the Bombay High Court. Her brother Showik has also sought bail through advocate Satish Maneshinde and the matter will be heard on Wednesday by a single Bench of Justice S.V. Kotwal.

## 'NCB may summon Deepika Padukone'

MUMBAI The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), probing the alleged drug nexus in Bollywood, might summon actor Deepika Padukone if needed, an official said on Tuesday. NCB sources said certain WhatsApp conversations purportedly discussing drugs are on the radar of the agency. Some of these chats were allegedly between Ms. Padukone's manager, Karishma Prakash, and one "D", they said. The official said the NCB might also summon actors Rakul Preet Singh and Sara Ali Khan, and designer Simone Khambatta this week.

## Arms dropped by drone found in Jammu

Srinagar Security forces on Tuesday recovered a consignment of arms and ammunition in the Akhnoor area of Jammu district. One Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militant was killed in a night-long operation in central Kashmir's Budgam on Tuesday. An official said that while recovering the consignment, noise from a drone was heard. But the drone was not visible due to the dark. The arms recovered included two AK-47 assault rifles, two AK magazines and 90 rounds.

## India counters Pakistan's references to J&amp;K

'We reject the malicious reference'

## SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

WASHINGTON DC

Exercising its right of reply, India countered on Monday references that Pakistan had made to Jammu and Kashmir during remarks delivered via video by Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the UN's 75th Anniversary Commemoration.

"Our delegation had hoped that during this solemn commemoration of a shared global milestone, the General Assembly would be spared another repetition of the baseless falsehoods that have now become a trademark of Pakistan's interventions on such platforms," First Secretary at India's Permanent Mission to the UN Vidisha Maitra said.

India had, via Ms. Maitra, responded to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's general debate remarks last September as well. On Monday, Mr. Qureshi had said that the Jammu & Kashmir and Palestine disputes were the UN's "most glaring and long-standing" disputes. The Minister said the people of Jammu and Kashmir were waiting for the UN to "grant them their right to self-determination".

Pakistan, working at times in concert with permanent UN Security Council (UNSC) member China has repeatedly tried formally raising the government's

## 'A vaccine must have at least 50% efficacy'

Draft guidelines say it must prevent infection or disease

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A potential COVID-19 vaccine ought to confer at least 50% protection and be able to either prevent infection or disease – but not necessarily both – according to draft guidelines issued by the Central Drugs and Standards Control Organisation, the apex regulator of drug and vaccine trials.

These guidelines are similar to standards set by the World Health Organization (WHO) as well as peer international regulatory organisations such as the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA).

Early tests on monkeys of the AstraZeneca-Oxford University candidate vaccine had shown that while some animals that got the vaccine contracted infection, they did not contract a lung infection or other severe manifestations of the disease. The same vaccine candidate is now being tested in Phase 3 clinical trials in several countries, including by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India.

The Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech Limited, which is also developing a vaccine candidate, Covaxin, based on an inactivated virus, reported that its tests on animals showed no presence of the virus.



Vaccines for respiratory viruses are not 100% effective.

In animal trials, all animals are deliberately infected with SARS-CoV-2 and the responses of the vaccinated and unvaccinated group are compared.

Because such deliberate infections are not allowed in people, trial designers deploy statistical techniques to decide on whether the administration of the vaccine has a protective effect.

## Statistical boundaries

"To ensure that a widely deployed COVID-19 vaccine is effective, the primary efficacy endpoint point estimate for a placebo-controlled efficacy trial should be at least 50%", the guidelines released late on Monday note.

They also specify a probability range that results must be confined to, and it's these statistical boundaries that

determine how many volunteers must be recruited to get reliable estimates of the vaccine's efficacy.

"All vaccines for respiratory viruses are not always 100% effective," said Balram Bhargava, Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), at a press conference on Tuesday, "The WHO says for a vaccine that safety, immunogenicity and efficacy are the three criteria. We are aiming for 100% efficacy but that's unlikely being respiratory infection, and so the target is 50% and above."

AstraZeneca in its publicly released trial protocol last week said that there would have to be 150 people ill with confirmed coronavirus among participants who were vaccinated or received placebo shots to determine whether the vaccine was good enough.

As per the USFDA guidelines, it would also evaluate the number of those ill and those not in vaccinated and placebo groups when there were 75 confirmed cases, and this could be a basis for early completion of trials.

U.S. biotech firms Moderna and Pfizer have also released such trial protocol though such details have not yet been given by Indian companies.

## Festival crowds could pose a threat'

NITI Aayog member stresses on safety norms in the 'crucial' months to follow

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog member (health) V.K. Paul on Tuesday warned that India could see an explosion of COVID-19 cases during the festival season which starts next month if people do not follow COVID-appropriate behaviour.

He added that until a vaccine was found, "wearing a mask, following social distancing norms etc. is our best safety mechanism against the virus."

"We have to remember that this pandemic has to be controlled and deaths due to COVID kept at minimum and for this people have to wear the mask as a service to society and the country. It has to become a social movement. Crowding during the festival season can lead to an explosive situation," Dr. Paul said at a Health Ministry press briefing.

**Seasonal threat** Dr. Paul added that the next two or three months are going to be very crucial. "We have seen that respiratory problems increase during the winter months and we appeal to all to continue wearing the mask because there is evidence that shows that mask wearing can reduce cases by 50%. It is everyone's responsibility to work towards breaking the transmission," he said.

Stating that India for the first time since May had registered more recoveries than new cases, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, addressing the briefing, said the country, aided by increased number of tests, is able to catch and isolate cases early. The number of tests has gone from one crore in July to over 6 crore currently, he said.



# A sportier avatar



SAUMIL SHAH

For long now, the Duster's strong points remained its tough build, tractable diesel engine and its ability to smother broken sections of roads, though newer competition over the years has seen it get relegated to the sidelines. So, can the addition of the new and powerful turbo-petrol bring back interest in the Duster?

Co-developed by the Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi alliance and Daimler, this 1.3-litre, four-cylinder turbo-petrol unit features state-of-the-art technologies, like bore-spray coating, centrally-mounted six-hole injectors running at pressures as high as 250bar, an e-wastegate turbocharger and more.

Right from the get-go, the motor feels smooth and relaxed, with a good on-tap response. Power delivery is strong albeit linear, but performance on offer is aplenty, and the build-up of speed is simply effortless.



## SPECIFICATIONS

**TYPE** 1330cc, 4-cyls, turbocharged, gasoline direct injection

**MAX POWER (HP @ RPM)** 156hp at 5500rpm

**MAX TORQUE (NM @ RPM)** 254Nm at 1600rpm

**GEARBOX** 7-step CVT

**TYRES (FIR)** 215/60 R17

**WHEELBASE (MM)** 2673mm

**FRONT TRACK (MM)** 1560mm

**REAR TRACK (MM)** 1567mm

**GROUND CLEARANCE (MM)** 205mm

**BOOT CAPACITY (LTS)** 475 litres

**Road reckoner** The Duster retains its ability to sail over bad roads ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



tion via the gear lever, simulating seven gear ratios, and rowing through it is particularly enjoyable. It responds quickly to taps, and it will even downshift aggressively when you require strong engine braking. In our tests, the Duster trailed the Selots and Creta turbo-petrols in the sprint to 100kph by 1.2 and 1.1 seconds respectively.

The Duster simply sails through bad and broken sections of roads. Its brakes play a huge role in boosting driver confidence and the hydraulic steering

does offer decent feel and feedback.

## Cosmetic touches

Renault has given the Duster Turbo cosmetic touches – splashes of red on the grill, in the fog lamp housings and wheel centre caps, convey its sportier pretensions.



The new, 17-inch 'Forza' diamond-cut wheels look stunning and the roof rails and number plate applique get red Duster lettering. The notable addition to the interior is the engine stop/start switch placed beside the front 12V power socket. The Duster's interiors feel robust, the driving position is commanding,

and the visibility all around is good. However, the touch-screen feels basic, and there is no place to securely stow your smartphone in the front.

The Duster's equipment list is the same as the 2019 facelift meaning that you do miss out on kit offered by the competition such as rain-sensing wipers, a sunroof, keyless entry and go, and more.

However, the performance is a massive step-up compared to the naturally aspirated petrol engine and this force-fed motor is strong, refined and feels zippy enough to occupy the middle ground between the 1.5 petrol engine and the now-discontinued diesel engine.

That said, when seen against its naturally aspirated sibling, which is available in the exact same trims, the roughly ₹2 lakh premium for the Turbo is a lot, and the CVT automatic is even pricier.

However, turbo-petrols are not cheap, and the Renault comes across as a value-for-money proposition. So, if you have always loved the Duster's tough construction, its ability to tackle bad roads, and its solid fundamentals, then this one with the turbo engine is something to look forward to.

## AUTO SNIPS



### Skoda Rapid automatic launched

Skoda has expanded its Rapid mid-size sedan line-up, with the introduction of a new automatic gearbox option. Priced from ₹9.49-13.29 lakh (ex-showroom, India), the Rapid TSI automatic is available in a choice of five trims – Ryder Plus, Ambition, Onyx, Style, and Monte Carlo. The biggest talking point about the car is the automatic gearbox – a new 6-speed torque converter unit. As with the manual Rapid, the unit is paired with the 1.0-litre turbo-petrol engine that puts out 110hp and 175Nm of torque. Rivals for the Rapid include the Honda City, Hyundai Verna, Maruti Suzuki Ciaz, Toyota Yaris and the Volkswagen Vento, all of which are available in automatic form.



### Royal Enfield hikes prices

Royal Enfield has hiked the prices of its entire portfolio of motorcycles ranging from the Classic 350 to the Interceptor and Continental GT 650s. The manufacturer had previously hiked prices in May 2020. The Bullet 350, the company's most affordable model, has seen a price hike of around ₹2,800. The price of the Bullet 350 now ranges from ₹1.27 lakh to ₹1.42 lakh (electric-start equipped version). The Himalayan too has received a price hike in the region of ₹1,800 with prices now between ₹1.91 lakh and ₹1.95 lakh, depending on the variant. The flagship offerings, the Interceptor 650 and Continental GT 650, also see a price rise by around ₹1,800.



### KTM 250 Adventure, Husqvarna 401 to launch by October-end

KTM and Husqvarna are set to launch new models in India by the end of October. KTM is set to launch the new 250 Adventure sometime next month along with new colour options for the RC 125 and RC 200. Husqvarna, on the other hand, is expected to launch the larger siblings to the 250 twins, the Svartpilen 401 and Vitpilen 401. The 250 Adventure was revealed at the same time as the EICMA 2019 event, but it was never displayed at the show. The bike looks similar to the larger 390 Adventure and shares the same fuel tank, radiator shroud, belly pan and tail section.

## Q AND A WITH HORMAZD



### Is this a fair price?

My friend wants to sell his 2017 Maruti Ciaz ZDi SHVS, a model I've always wanted but couldn't buy since it was discontinued. His car is in good condition, has covered about 49,000 km and he's asking about ₹8 lakh for it. Is the price reasonable?

**Ranjithkumar R**

• The selling price of pre-owned cars differs across the country, and it could vary depending on the condition of the car. Still, try and knock another lakh off the asking price. Do enquire with used car dealers to get a fair price of a 2017 diesel Ciaz in your region.

### The best tyre?

Which would be the best tyre for a 2018 Hyundai Elite i20? Should I upsize from 195/55 R16 to 205/55 R16?

**Ankit, Pathankot**

• The best choice for upsizing tyres depends on the driving conditions. If you use the car primarily in the city, it's best to stick to the same size. If your running is more on the highways, the 205/55-R16 would give you better grip and stability at high speeds. You can opt for Michelin, Pirelli or Goodyear; they are good options for the i20.

Hormazd Sorabjee is the editor of Autocar India. Mail your feedback and queries to [roadshow@thehindu.co.in](mailto:roadshow@thehindu.co.in)

CM YK

## RISHABH BHASKAR

The Fascino 125 has a big task ahead as Yamaha is pinning hopes on this new 125cc scooter platform for a boost to its scooter fortunes in India.

Yamaha seems to have used the previous Fascino's design as the basis for the new Fascino 125, and that is not a bad thing.

Some elements that stand out include the inverted triangle-style headlamp, chrome embellishments on the apron and the flowing tail section.

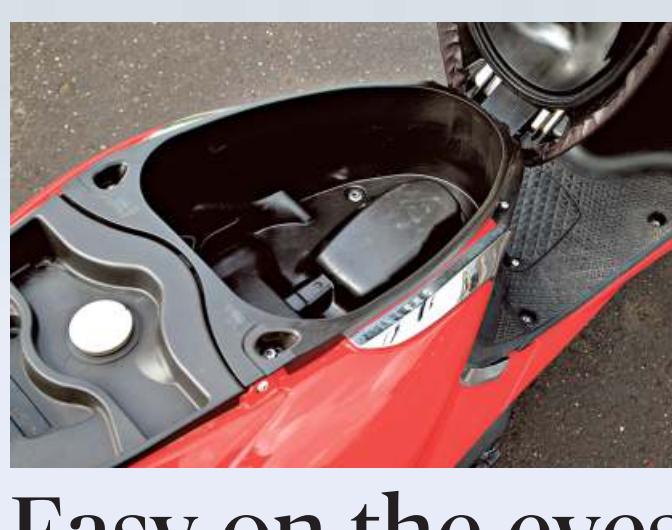
The body panels and switches are neatly put together, but while there are a lot of plastic panels, the front fender is a metal unit.

However, the downside of form winning over function is that the ergonomics are slightly flawed.

The footboard has an aggressive upward sweep that makes it difficult to comfortably accommodate big feet. The relatively low-set handlebar grazes your knee while taking tight turns, if you are anything above 5ft 8in tall. Also, the seat squab is tad too soft for longish stints, resulting in a sore backside after half an hour of saddle time.

### Brisk performance

The Yamaha Fascino does not disappoint on the road ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



## Easy on the eyes

The Yamaha Fascino brings performance, efficiency and promise of Japanese reliability

There are no LED lamps, and the instrument cluster is so basic it does not even get a trip meter.

Thankfully, the Yamaha's engine makes up for all this.

### Engine and performance

Along with developing a brand-new chassis, Yamaha also developed a new 125cc engine with a nifty starter-motor generator for a silent start.

The fuel-injected engine's power and torque figures (8.2hp and 9.7Nm) are nothing to write home about. Where the Yamaha pulls an ace out of its sleeve is in the power-to-weight ratio and that is down to 99kg kerb weight.

As expected, the 82.82hp/tonne power-to-weight ratio translates to brisk performance, and the Fascino 125 is right up there with the competition. In the sprint from 0-60kph, the Fascino clocked 8.41sec, 0.33sec slower than the Suzuki Access 125.

The engine is responsive as well, which is apparent in its roll-on acceleration times (20-50kph in 4.57sec and 30-70kph in

## SPECIFICATIONS

**ENGINE:** 125cc, single-cylinder, SOHC, air-cooled

**MAX POWER:** 8.2hp at 6500rpm

**MAX TORQUE:** 9.7Nm at 5000rpm

**OVERALL LENGTH X WIDTH X HEIGHT:** 1,920 x 685 x 1,150 mm

**SEAT HEIGHT:** 780mm

**WHEELBASE:** 1280mm

**MINIMUM GROUND CLEARANCE:** 145mm

**KERB WEIGHT (WITH OIL & A FULL FUEL TANK):** 99kg

**FUEL TANK CAPACITY:** 5.2 litres

**UNDERSEAT STORAGE:** 21 litres

**SUSPENSION TYPE(FRONT/REAR):** Telescopic fork/Unit swing

**TYRE SIZE (FIR):** 90/90-12 | 110/90-10

**BRAKE TYPE (FRONT):** Disc (190mm)/Drum

**BRAKE TYPE (REAR):** Drum

at sedate city speeds or flat out on the Mumbai-Pune highway, there were hardly any perceptible vibrations to speak of.

The other advantage of the low kerb weight is the fuel economy. The Fascino returned 57.08kpl in the city and 64.2kpl on the highway, making it the among the most fuel-efficient BS6 125cc models we have tested.

The Fascino's engine stop/start feature does help in extracting a little more fuel economy, but the system is slow to respond and the engine takes a little over a second to turn on after you have opened the throttle.

The new Fascino 125 is lacking in its low-speed ride. The telescopic fork and monoshock is set up on the firm side of the scale, resulting in a low-speed ride that is not exactly harsh, but it is not what you would call comfy either.

Pick up the pace and there is a noticeable improvement in the ride quality. High-speed stability and handling are both perfectly acceptable, but not segment-leading. The braking performance offered by the Yamaha Fascino's front disc is also decent, though the optional front disc lacks some bite.

### Verdict

Yamaha intends to snatch some of the 125cc market share from the competition and that is evident in its aggressive pricing. Starting at ₹68,730 for the drum brake variant and ₹71,230 for the disc brake one, the Fascino undercuts some of its 125cc competition.

Those who buy the Fascino for its looks won't get segment-best comfort, dynamics or features, but will enjoy its performance, efficiency and promise of Japanese reliability. For many, that will be enough.

All prices, ex-showroom, Delhi



10.52sec), and that makes the Fascino an effortless city commuter. But what impresses is the engine's refinement. Whether it was riding

N.D.N.D.

Saloni Gaur's videos and various avatars raise awareness on things that matter with a pinch of humour

NEERAJA MURTHY

It is hard not to miss Saloni Gaur's alter ego – Nazma *aapi* and her rants on social media. Wrapped in a black shawl, wearing a deadpan expression and sporting an Old Delhi accent, she comments on political and current issues in her videos with a pinch of humour.

She takes pot shots at trending topics – from double standards in society to fake news. A Delhi University student, Saloni as a comedian has built a loyal following with over two lakh followers on Twitter and five lakh on Instagram. Saloni's other funny avatars – *desi* aunties, *adarsh bahu* (inspired by an '*adarsh bahu*' character from a daily soap that her mother used to watch; confined to the kitchen, the '*bahu*' spoke of her ideal life) and impersonations of Kangana Ranaut deliver much-needed laughs.

#### Student-turned-comedian

Having recently written her Delhi University BA final year exams online in August, Saloni returned to her home-town Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh to live with her parents and



## One laugh at a time with SALONI GAUR



**C**I feel there are certain issues that we should speak up about. If I feel many people are not aware of a current issue, I make a video

SALONI GAUR

brother. A born performer, she says, "I just needed four friends and would begin to entertain them by mimicking the principal or teachers. I can't sit quiet; I have to make them laugh." Nevertheless, she adds that her success was a surprise.

Over the phone, she explains how she had originally decided to work in a bank ("my mother wanted me to be a banker so she

didn't have to wait in queues to update her passbook") and make comedy an alternative career. She did not want to struggle like some stand-up comedians do, for work. "Fortunately that didn't happen," she adds.

She began her Instagram and Snapchat journey in 2017 with her first character Pinky Dogra, created using a Snapchat filter and a random name. Pinky would rant about everything that Saloni observed in Delhi. Her other characters Kumkum and Asha *behenji* too were fun, but did not have a story of their own

**Prolific** Saloni has created 11 personas over three years, including (below) the popular Nagma *aapi*

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

unlike Nagma *aapi*.

"I was clear about Nagma *aapi*'s character sketch," recalls Saloni, who used to wander around Old Delhi and picked up a few words there. She then prepared a background story for Nagma *aapi* – she lives with her husband and their two kids. Nagma's persona is not inspired by anyone, but when the character and her rants became famous, Saloni got to know later that it is the Begumati dialect spoken in Old Delhi.

Nagma *aapi* has so far ranted on around 40 subjects, including NEET and JEE, protests in the US, violence against doctors during COVID-19, opening of liquor shops and Arnab versus Sonia Gandhi. Being a student of Political Science and Economics, Saloni says she cannot ignore things happening around her. "I feel there are certain issues that we should speak up about. If I feel many people are not aware of a current issue, I make a video. When I talk about them with a dash of humour, they understand it better," she adds.

#### Ups and downs

Not all her posts are welcomed by social media users: Saloni also had to get used to being trolled. "My brother calls them keyboard warriors who try to pull people down. I have learnt to ignore and deal with them by not dealing with them at all," she says.

Saloni's mother is excited with her social media status. "She doesn't understand the numbers, but reads all comments posted to my videos and even wants to reply to them," she says with a laugh.

Saloni has created 11 characters and does not follow any set rules to develop new ones. Her latest prop is a moustache when playing male characters, and she is also doing *Maa Ke Haath ka* reviews for Amazon Prime. She signs off with a promise: 'Something new is cooking and will be out soon.'

You can follow Saloni on the "salonayy" YouTube channel or @salonayy Instagram handle

## Have you taken the #UnhookTheBra Challenge?



SUNALINI MATHEW

"If you tell someone this is a video about cancer, most people won't want to watch it," says Neeti Leekha Chhabra, from Delhi. It is the reason they decided to do a dance instead. On September 17, a team of five breast cancer winners ("warrior sounds like you're still battling it; a winner is done with it"), put out challenge on social media, as they held up bras and danced to the song 'Kudi Nu Nachne De', from *Angrezi Medium*.

They called it the #UnhookTheBra Challenge to draw people's attention to many realities: "There are several messages we want to put out – that breast cancer can happen at any age, that there's nothing to be ashamed about, that we must stop being shy when talking about breasts, and that cancer is curable especially if detected," says Neeti, who fought and won against cancer in 2012.

In 2014, she started a not-for-profit called Yes2Life (Yes2life.in) that promotes breast cancer awareness, screening, and patient support (financial, emotional, rehabilitation). As part of their work, the organisation that now has four people and works with volunteers too, gives out what they call a Saathi Kit to women from lower income groups. This contains a prosthesis, two mastectomy bras, a cotton headscarf, and a pair of earrings.

The idea for the video sprung from the mandate of Yes2Life, keeping in mind October is celebrated as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. "We do a lot of talks around breast

Five "breast cancer winners" from Delhi-NCR put out a foot-tapping message about doing a self-exam and early detection, to reiterate that it is curable

cancer, where we broach the subject of inhibitions, and a lot of people say, 'Of course we're open'. And then we ask where they hang the women's underclothes in the house – is it behind the other clothes, on the last line, or is it in the first line along with the men's underwear," says Neeti.

She and the team at LezFly, a company that creates content, came up with the concept, and roped in the others. "I knew Shruti (Sharma) would be game, but I needed to make a few calls to get the others on board," she says, adding that the women who agreed did so immediately, without saying they would think about it, or ask someone at home what they thought.

The women are derived from Happiness Surrounds Us, a breast cancer winner support group that operates on WhatsApp and has about 125 people from across the country on it. All those on the video – Riti Ahluwalia, Sumita Kohli, Sonu Sakseena, besides Shruti and Neeti herself – have overcome the disease in the past decade.

Sumita, who lives in Faridabad, says she has a supportive husband and daughter – who turned 18 recently. She would volunteer once a week at AIIMS in pre-COVID times, to distribute Saathi kits and offer support. "I am always super excited to do stuff like this. There's a satisfaction to know that the message has been sent," she says, talking of her own mastectomy at 33. "I had missed the signs that were so obvious (an inverted nipple), simply because I was so busy taking care of my children. If I hadn't, my breast could have been saved. The more we speak about it, the more awareness we will create."

For details @beyondbreastcancer on Instagram; to be added to the support group, email neeti@yes2life.in

## Snack on some bamboo

Tripura announces the introduction of bamboo cookies, and is set to train local bakeries to make them

PRABALIKA M BORAH

Ever expected a cookie to trend under #vocalforlocal? Tripura's bamboo cookie is doing just that, and twitters are can't seem to get enough of it. After wowing environment lovers with their unique bamboo bottles, the North-Eastern State recently announced these one-of-its-kind muli bamboo cookies.

Yes, that's right, cookies made from

bamboo. Wondering how well it will go down your digestive system? Worry not, the said cookies are not made from bamboo husk or timber. It is the tender bamboo shoot that is used, and not just any shoot. The shoots that used are not more than eight inches from the ground. Abhinav Kant, in charge of Bamboo and Cane Development Institute (BCDI) Tripura, explains over the phone from Agartala, "Any shoot higher than eight inches will have be fibrous, making it difficult to be mixed into dough."

The cookies are named after the unique species of bamboo from which it is made – muli. This bamboo (*Melocanna baccifera*) grows in abundance in the forests of Tripura, and is specific to Tripura alone. "Almost 80% of Tripura's forest is covered with muli bamboo and this shoot is the least bitter, making it ideal to be used in cookies," says Abhinav.

Abhinav says it is as part of the continuous learning and development process that BCDI experimented with



bamboo shoots to be made into cookies. . "Bamboo shoots are consumed only in some regions. A lot of shoots are also wasted because they have very low shelf life and hence incapable

of being transported to different regions of the country. So, we experimented by boiling the tender shoots and making a pulp out of it. This pulp is then mixed with flour or whole



**Sweet of the Earth** (Above) Tender shoots of the muli variety of bamboo, unique to Tripura, are used for the cookies • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

wheat, and baked into cookies. It is a very basic cookie recipe, only the use of bamboo shoots makes it unique," he adds.

Muli cookies have salted, sweet, chocolate and *ajwain* variants, but BCDI initially wants to promote the basic cookies as they want people to appreciate and develop a liking for the taste of bamboo shoot pulp, "which is very very neutral in smell and comes with a hint of bitterness," says Abhinav.

Another reason why BCDI thought of experimenting with bamboo shoots, is for their richness in fibre and other nutrients. "From milk to eggs, everything we eat comes fortified with minerals. Bamboo shoots are rich in minerals and proteins. When we use them in cookies the cookies get fortified naturally, thereby creating a healthy snacking option."

BCDI will train local bakeries and businesses to make them. "It is very simple and anyone with an oven-toaster-grill or OTG can make it at home."

## POOCH CAFE



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



## TIGER



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBES



# Hold China accountable for virus: Trump

U.S. President tells UN that Beijing allowed flights to leave in the early days of the outbreak

**SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN**  
WASHINGTON  
Delivering a campaign style speech to the UN General Assembly's 75th session, U.S. President Donald Trump said China must be held responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Trump also used his video message at the general debate to talk up the U.S.'s work to address the pandemic, his economic record and trade deals.

"We will distribute a vaccine, we will defeat the virus, we will end the pandemic," Mr. Trump said.

#### 'Plague unleashed'

"We must hold accountable the nation which unleashed this plague onto the world: China," Mr. Trump said. "In the earliest days of the virus, China locked down travel domestically, while allowing



**Strong stand:** Donald Trump speaking in a pre-recorded message, which was played at the UN on Tuesday. • AP

flights to leave China, and in fact the world."

Mr. Trump alleged that America was being treated unfairly on its environmental record and called the Paris Climate Accord "one-sided". The Trump administration had with-

punish America. And I will not stand for it."

Mr. Trump said if the UN wanted to be an effective organisation, it would need to focus on the "real problems" of the world which he listed as including, "terrorism, the oppression of women, forced labour, drug trafficking, human and sex trafficking, religious persecution and the ethnic cleansing of religious minorities."

#### Greatest economy

Mr. Trump - who faces an election in November - said that in three years he had built the "greatest economy in history".

The President talked about a peace deal he had facilitated between Serbia and Kosovo and a deal between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to strengthen ties (the "Abraham Ac-

cords", signed last week at the White House).

"We took an approach, and the approach worked. We intend to deliver more peace agreements shortly," Mr. Trump said.

The President said he was putting his country first and urged others to do so. He also implied he would be continuing as President next year.

"As President, I have rejected the failed approaches of the past, and I am proudly putting America first, just as you should be putting your countries first. That's okay. That's what you should be doing. I am supremely confident that next year, when we gather in person, we will be in the midst of one of the greatest years in our history. And frankly, hopefully, in the history of the world," Mr. Trump said.

# Xi defends China's ambitions, warns of 'clash of civilizations'

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
UNITED NATIONS

President Xi Jinping gave a robust defence of China's ambitions on Tuesday in a speech to the UN, warning against the perils of a "clash of civilizations" during a pandemic that has ripped through the world.

In an opening address presaged by a demand by his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump for China to be held "accountable" for the coronavirus outbreak, Mr. Xi said global unity was the only way to overcome the crisis.

The world must "oppose politicisation and stigmatisation" over COVID-19, Mr. Xi said in the pre-recorded address, urging world leaders to embrace the "concept of a



**Xi Jinping**

big family... and avoid falling into the trap of a clash of civilizations".

The U.S. and China are eyeballing each other over a raft of issues: the origins of the coronavirus, trade and tech dominance, security and disputed seas.

The U.S. has called China out over its ambitions to control the strategically pi-

vital South China Sea as well as for its bid to crush democracy movements in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

#### 'No Cold War'

But Mr. Xi reassured world leaders his country had no desire for "hegemony, expansion or sphere of influence".

"China has no intention to enter a Cold War with any country," he said, insisting that Beijing is instead a bulwark of international systems such as the World Trade Organization and a willing partner in the face of diplomatic spats.

"We insist on dialogue to bridge differences and negotiation to resolve disputes," he added.

India had withdrawn Article 370 (special status for

# Resolve Kashmir in line with UN Resolutions

Erdogan raises issue during UN speech

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
WASHINGTON

A day after Pakistan's Foreign Minister brought up Kashmir during a speech at the UN's 75th anniversary commemoration event, the issue was raised again - this time by Turkish President Recep Erdogan during his general debate remarks.

The Kashmir conflict, which is also key to the stability and peace of South Asia, is still a burning issue. Steps taken following the abolition of the special status of Jammu-Kashmir further complicated the problem," Mr. Erdogan said via a recorded video message.

India had withdrawn Article 370 (special status for

Jammu and Kashmir) and reorganised the former State into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

In August, India had called "unwarranted" similar remarks made by a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesperson. In February, Mr. Erdogan, on an official visit to Pakistan, told its Parliament the Kashmir issue was as close to the Pakistani as it was to the Turkish people.

"We are in favour of solving this issue through dialogue, within the framework of the United Nations resolutions and especially in line with the expectations of the people of Kashmir," Mr. Erdogan said on Tuesday.

# Assange 'hears voices' in prison: psychiatrist

'If extradited, his condition will worsen'

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

LONDON

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange complained of hearing imaginary voices and music while detained in a high-security British prison, a psychiatrist who has interviewed him told his extradition hearing on Tuesday.

Michael Kopelman, who has interviewed Mr. Assange around 20 times, said the former hacker would be a "very high" suicide risk if he were extradited to the U.S. for leaking military secrets.

**Severe depression**  
He cited as evidence Mr. Assange's "severe depression" and "psychotic symptoms", which included auditory hallucinations while in solitary confinement in his cell at the high-security Belmarsh Prison in London.

Mr. Kopelman told the Old Bailey court that Mr. As-

sange said he hallucinated music and voices saying "you are dust, you are dead, we are coming to get you".

Mr. Assange's suicidal impulses "arise out of clinical factors... but it is the immensity of extradition that will trigger the attempt", he added, warning that "he will deteriorate substantially" if extradited.

Mr. Assange's partner, Stella Moris, has previously said she feared he would take his own life.

Taiwan's Tsai visits frontline military base

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

PENGHU

President Tsai Ing-wen visited a military base on one of Taiwan's outlying islands on Tuesday in a display of resolve following a recent show of force by China. Ms. Tsai spoke to air force pilots and crew members at the Penghu Magong Air Force base.

Taiwan has the "ability" and "resolve" to safeguard its territory, she said.

"I know that having to face the provocations of the People's Liberation Army surrounding Taiwan, and their actions in disturbing the area's peace, in the situation, everyone's duty at the frontline air defense at Penghu has become heavier," she said.

"But I have faith in every individual, that every one of our well-trained air force brothers and sisters is able to lift this heavy responsibility."



**Julian Assange**

each county assigned quotas. It didn't cite any comparable figures for previous years.

The training schemes aim to instil "work discipline, Chinese language and work ethics", according to a 2019 Chinese government action plan quoted in the report.

**'Eliminate lazy people'**  
A 2018 report by the Nagqu city government also states that the purpose of the labour transfer scheme is to "effectively eliminate lazy people".

Companies that fulfil the hiring quota for workers are offered up to 500,000 yuan (about \$75,000), the report said, while herders and farmers are also encouraged by the scheme to hand over

their livestock and land to large state-run cooperatives.

"In the context of Beijing's increasingly assimilatory ethnic policy, it is likely that these policies will promote a long-term loss of linguistic, cultural and spiritual heritage," wrote the report's author Adrian Zenz, a researcher at the U.S.-based Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation.

The report claims there are similarities with labour schemes in the troubled Xinjiang region. The scale of the Tibetan work scheme is still dwarfed by that of Xinjiang - which trained an average of 1.29 million workers each year between 2014 and 2019, according to a government white paper released last week.

Moves risk a 'loss of cultural heritage' in the politically sensitive region, says report

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

BEIJING

China is forcing Tibetan farmers and herders into labour programmes similar to those used in troubled Xinjiang, a U.S. research institute alleged on Tuesday.

The moves risk a "loss of cultural heritage" in the politically sensitive region, the group's report warned.

Authorities in Tibet, a predominantly Buddhist area, have touted the scheme - which puts rural workers to task in factories - as a tool for poverty alleviation. They say this is in line with President Xi Jinping's goal of eradicating extreme poverty by the end of 2020.

But researchers at the Jamestown Foundation said "militarised vocational train-



A policeman standing guard outside Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region.

"ing" is also a form of ideological indoctrination and assimilation towards ethnic Tibetans, who make up 90% of the remote border region's population.

It said more than 500,000 rural labourers - mainly herders and subsistence farmers - were trained in the first seven months of 2020, with

their livestock and land to large state-run cooperatives.

"In the context of Beijing's increasingly assimilatory ethnic policy, it is likely that these policies will promote a long-term loss of linguistic, cultural and spiritual heritage," wrote the report's author Adrian Zenz, a researcher at the U.S.-based Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation.

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Moves risk a 'loss of cultural heritage' in the politically sensitive region, says report

# Sri Lankan govt. tables 20th Amendment Bill

Opposition members protest against move, raise slogans

**MEERA SRINIVASAN**

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Justice Minister Ali Sabry on Tuesday tabled the contentious 20th Amendment Bill in Parliament, as Opposition members protested by raising slogans against the move.



**Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.**

termed it a "constitutional bombshell".

Calling for resistance, prominent civil society activist Paikiasothy Saravanamuthu wrote "we cannot descend into majoritarian, populist, and authoritarian dynastic rule upon which the militarisation of our society will be set in stone for the foreseeable future and generations to come".

#### 'Path to autocracy'

Other oppositional voices, including from Tamil political parties, have cautioned that the Bill might take Sri Lanka on the path to "autocracy" and "dictatorship".

Sri Lanka's Attorney General, the government's chief legal adviser, has said the draft Bill of the 20th Amendment will not require a referendum, and could be enacted by with a two-thirds parliamentary majority, which the ruling party of the Rajapaksas has comfortably secured after its big win in the August general election.

# Chinese tycoon and Xi critic jailed for 18 years for graft

Ren had questioned the President's pandemic response

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

BEIJING

A Chinese tycoon who called President Xi Jinping a clown and criticised his handling of the coronavirus outbreak was jailed for 18 years on Tuesday for corruption, bribery and embezzlement of public funds.

His outspokenness had earned the former chairman of state-owned property developer Huayuan Group the nickname "Big Cannon".

Tuesday's verdict said Mr. Ren Zhiqiang - once among the ruling Communist Party's inner circle - disappeared from the public eye in March, shortly after penning an essay that lambasted Mr. Xi's pandemic response.

Ren embezzled almost 50 million yuan (\$7.4 million) of public funds and accepted bribes worth 1.25 million yuan, according to a statement from the Beijing No. 2 Intermediate People's Court. It said the 69-year-old "voluntarily and truthfully confessed all his crimes", and would not appeal the court's decision.



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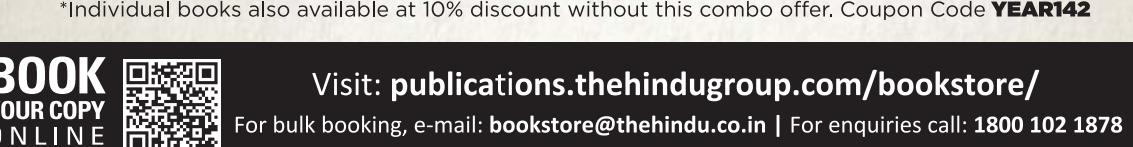
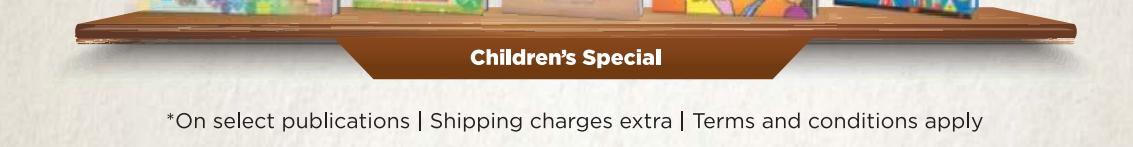
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## MARKET WATCH

|           | 22-09-2020 | % CHANGE |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Sensex    | 37,734     | -0.79    |
| US Dollar | 73.58      | -0.27    |
| Gold      | 51,328     | -2.09    |
| Brent oil | 41.92      | 1.06     |

## NIFTY 50

|                   | PRICE    | CHANGE  |
|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Adani Ports       | 332.30   | -15.55  |
| Asian Paints      | 1937.50  | -35.05  |
| Axist Bank        | 412.00   | -11.35  |
| Bajaj Auto        | 2985.85  | -0.85   |
| Bajaj Finserv     | 5682.30  | -29.95  |
| Bajaj Finance     | 3302.00  | -27.15  |
| Bharti Airtel     | 470.95   | 3.20    |
| BPCL              | 392.15   | -9.30   |
| Britannia Ind     | 3588.00  | -41.30  |
| Cipla             | 777.65   | 9.55    |
| Coal India        | 119.55   | -2.10   |
| Dr Reddys Lab     | 5167.95  | 25.95   |
| Eicher Motors     | 2064.35  | -38.60  |
| GAIL (India)      | 84.15    | -4.05   |
| Grasim Ind        | 729.10   | 12.25   |
| HCL Tech          | 821.00   | 18.40   |
| HDPC              | 1674.85  | -33.30  |
| HDPC Bank         | 1035.40  | -13.90  |
| HDPC Life         | 579.40   | 0.05    |
| Hero MotoCorp     | 3000.15  | -55.20  |
| Hindustan         | 163.45   | -3.70   |
| Hind Unilever     | 2026.80  | -11.00  |
| ICICI Bank        | 354.40   | 3.70    |
| IndusInd Bank     | 544.00   | -16.60  |
| Bharti Infratel   | 180.40   | -8.35   |
| Infosys           | 1007.50  | -2.40   |
| Indian Oil Corp   | 76.15    | -1.55   |
| ITC               | 174.20   | -1.55   |
| JSW Steel         | 271.90   | 0.60    |
| Kotak Bank        | 1270.55  | -17.30  |
| L&T               | 856.50   | -25.35  |
| M&M               | 615.80   | -6.65   |
| Maruti Suzuki     | 6440.55  | -186.40 |
| Nestle India Ltd. | 15199.25 | -231.50 |
| NTPC              | 87.70    | -0.60   |
| ONGC              | 69.50    | -1.65   |
| PowerGrid Corp    | 168.80   | -1.70   |
| Reliance Ind      | 2211.15  | -44.70  |
| State Bank        | 186.20   | 0.40    |
| Shree Cement      | 18982.45 | 78.75   |
| Sun Pharma        | 508.85   | 5.20    |
| Tata Motors       | 133.10   | -4.35   |
| Tata Steel        | 374.15   | 0.75    |
| TCS               | 2522.95  | 57.65   |
| Tech Mahindra     | 800.45   | 13.20   |
| Titan             | 1104.45  | -15.45  |
| UltraTech Cement  | 3883.15  | 4.25    |
| UPL               | 529.15   | -3.05   |
| Wipro             | 312.25   | 0.35    |
| Zee Entertainment | 197.10   | -13.60  |

## EXCHANGE RATES

| CURRENCY           | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar.....     | 73.38  | 73.70   |
| Euro.....          | 86.29  | 86.67   |
| British Pound      | 94.28  | 94.70   |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 70.23  | 70.55   |
| Chinese Yuan       | 10.83  | 10.88   |
| Swiss Franc        | 80.23  | 80.58   |
| Singapore Dollar   | 53.89  | 54.13   |
| Canadian Dollar    | 55.18  | 55.42   |
| Malaysian Ringgit  | 17.74  | 17.84   |
| Australian Dollar  | 53.02  | 53.25   |

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



Jio unveils post-paid plans with Netflix, data NEW DELHI After unleashing a price war in mobile tariffs and fibre broadband services, Reliance Jio on Tuesday unveiled post-paid plans, bundling up to 500 GB of data and subscription to Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney + Hotstar. JioPostPaid Plus for mobile customers will have a monthly tariff from ₹399 to ₹1,499 with different benefits, the company said in a statement. PTI

Hindustan Zinc to raise up to ₹4,000 crore NEW DELHI Vedanta Group firm Hindustan Zinc Ltd. said its board-constituted panel has approved raising up to ₹4,000 crore through debentures. "The duly authorised committee of directors approved offering for subscription, up to 40,000 unsecured, rated, listed, redeemable, non-convertible debentures of a face value ₹10,00,000 each," it said in a filing. PTI

Strides gets FDA nod for tension headache pills BENGALURU

Strides Pharma Science Ltd. on Tuesday said its step-down wholly owned subsidiary, Strides Pharma Global Pte. Ltd., Singapore, had received approval from the United States Food and Drug Administration for Butalbital, Acetaminophen, and Caffeine tablets USP, in strengths of 50 mg/325 mg/40 mg, indicated for relief of "symptom complex of tension headache".

SEBI ups penalty to ₹1 cr. on ICRA, 2 others NEW DELHI

SEBI enhanced the penalty to ₹1 crore each on ICRA, CARE and India Ratings, in connection with lapses while assigning credit rating to the non-convertible debentures of IL&FS. The regulator, in December 2019, imposed a fine of ₹25 lakh each saying the default by IL&FS occurred due to "lethargic indifference and needless procrastination and laxity" of these rating agencies. PTI

# SEBI mulls stress tests, swing pricing for MFs

Move to ensure liquidity in debt mutual funds, committee to work on measures, says Chairman Tyagi

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is contemplating policy measures such as stress-testing, minimum asset allocation in liquid assets, and a swing pricing like mechanism to address liquidity issues in debt mutual funds (MFs), said Chairman Ajay Tyagi.

Addressing the 25th AGM of AMFI on Tuesday, Mr. Tyagi said one of the areas for improvement was to enhance the liquidity of the portfolio of open-ended debt MF schemes.

He said SEBI was facilitating the setting up of an expert committee to frame a stress testing methodology, encompassing liquidity, credit and market risks, for all open-ended debt oriented mutual fund schemes.



SEBI will be stipulating a minimum holding of liquid assets by all debt-oriented schemes, says Mr. Tyagi. ■ SHASH ASHWAL

The committee would also design a framework to determine the minimum asset allocation required in liquid assets, taking into account the nature of the scheme's assets, the type of investors, outcome of stress-testing, and minimum redemption

requirement during gating.

In the interim, SEBI would be stipulating a minimum holding of liquid assets by all debt-oriented schemes.

Mr. Tyagi said the proposed committee would examine liquidity risk management tools such as swing

pricing or anti-dilution levy for passing on transaction costs to the transacting investors. The tools will apply to both the incoming and outgoing investors, thereby protecting the interests of existing investors.

SEBI was pursuing a multitude of measures to not only increase liquidity in secondary markets, but also to enable greater issuances of paper rated below AAA, Mr. Tyagi said.

## Repo trading

SEBI was also deliberating on a limited purpose central clearing corporation for guaranteed settlement of tripartite repo trades in all investment grade corporate bonds, including those below AAA rated, to boost repo trading in corporate bonds.

"As major holders of cor-

porate bonds, the MFs, who regularly have buying/selling needs, would be one of the biggest beneficiaries of a liquid market," the chairman said. "Issuers will also be significant beneficiaries of a liquid and stable market in terms of lower borrowing costs," he added.

The markets regulator is also examining setting up a backstop facility which can trade in relatively illiquid investment grade corporate bonds and be readily available in times of stress to buy such bonds from various market participants in the secondary market.

Debt MFs should not act like banks while dealing with investors' money and need to remember that there was a difference between 'investing' and 'lending', Mr. Tyagi remarked.

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

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# Samson's six-hitting clinic, Archer's cameo leave CSK in a daze

Batting first, Rajasthan piles up a massive total of 216 before restricting the Chennai side to 200 in a match that witnesses a record-equalling 33 sixes

## IPL 2020

### SPORTS BUREAU

Rajasthan Royals, riding on brilliant knocks from Sanju Samson and skipper Steve Smith, began its IPL campaign with a 16-run win over Chennai Super Kings at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Tuesday.

Chasing 217 for victory, Super Kings started well, scoring 53 in the PowerPlay overs. Shane Watson looked good during his knock of 33 before Rahul Tewatia castled him. Shreyas Gopal accounted for M. Vijay in the next over.

Tewatia had Sam Curran and debutant Ruturaj Gaikwad stumped off successive deliveries, reducing CSK to 78 for four in the ninth over.

Faf du Plessis, who made only 17 off his first 18 balls, switched gears to score 44 off the next 12 with six sixes and a four. His 72 (37b, 1x4, 7x6) and M.S. Dhoni's three consecutive sixes in the final over off Tom Curran reduced the margin of defeat. The CSK skipper remained unbeaten on 29 off 17 deliveries.

CSK missed the services of Ambati Rayudu, the star of



**Raining sixes:** Sanju Samson and Faf du Plessis treated themselves to 16 maximums. ■ BCCI/IPL

the opening match, who was not 100% fit. Ruturaj, who had recovered from COVID-19 just a few days back, earned a call-up.

Earlier, after being invited to bat, Samson and Smith, who promoted himself as

opener, demolished the CSK bowlers at the start before Jofra Archer slammed four sixes in the final over to power Royals to 216 for 7.

Electing to bowl, Deepak Chahar struck early, removing debutant Yeshasvi Jaiswal, before Samson took centrestage.

The Kerala batsman got into his groove straightaway, stroking Sam Curran for a four and six and pulling Chahar for a six in the next over.

Samson turned his attention to Ravindra Jadeja, smashing the left-arm spinner for two sixes straight down the ground and launching into Piyush Chawla. The leg-spinner saw the ball disappear into the stands four times in his first



## SCOREBOARD

### RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Yashasvi Jaiswal c & b Chahar 6 (6b, 1x4), Steve Smith c Jadhav b Sam Curran 69 (47b, 4x4, 4x6), Sanju Samson c Chahar b Ngidi 74 (32b, 1x4, 9x6), David Miller run out 0 (0b), Robin Uthappa c du Plessis b Chawla 5 (9b), Rahul Tewatia lbw b Sam Curran 10 (8b, 1x4), Ryan Parag c Dhoni b Sam Curran 6 (4b, 1x4), Tom Curran (not out) 10 (9b, 1x4), Jofra Archer (not out) 27 (28b, 4x6); Extras (b-1, w-3, nb-1): 9; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 216.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-56 (Watson, 6.4 overs), 2-58 (Vijay, 7.3), 3-77 (Sam Curran, 8.5), 4-77 (Ruturaj, 8.6), 5-114 (Jadhav, 13.4), 6-179 (du Plessis, 18.2).

### ROYALS BOWLING

Unadkat 4-0-44-0, Archer 4-0-26-1, Shreyas 4-0-38-1, Tom Curran 4-0-54-1, Tewatia 4-0-37-3.

**Toss:** CSK. **MoM:** Sanju Samson.

### CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

M. Vijay c Tom Curran b Shreyas 21 (21b, 3x4), Shane Watson b Tewatia 33 (21b, 1x4, 4x6), Faf du Plessis c Samson b Archer 72 (37b, 1x4, 7x6), Sam Curran st. Samson b Tewatia 17 (6b, 1x4, 2x6), Ruturaj Gaikwad st. Samson b Tewatia 0 (1b), Kedar Jadhav c Samson b Tom Curran 22 (16b, 3x4), M.S. Dhoni (not out) 29 (17b, 3x6), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 1 (2b); Extras (lb-1, w-3, nb-1): 5; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 200.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-56 (Watson, 6.4 overs), 2-58 (Vijay, 7.3), 3-77 (Sam Curran, 8.5), 4-77 (Ruturaj, 8.6), 5-114 (Jadhav, 13.4), 6-179 (du Plessis, 18.2).

### SUPER KINGS BOWLING

Chahar 4-0-31-1, Sam Curran 4-0-33-3, Ngidi 4-0-56-1, Jadeja 4-0-40-0, Chawla 4-0-55-1

over – Samson hit three sixes and Smith one – as he conceded 28 runs.

### Blazing away

Samson, who raced to his half-century off just 19 deliveries, added 121 with Smith

| Innings scan |       | CSK   |
|--------------|-------|-------|
| RR           | Dots  | 35    |
| 34           | Fours | 9     |
| 9            | Sixes | 16    |
| 17           | PP    | 53/0  |
| 54/1         | RR    | 10.00 |

### Next assignment

**CSK:** Sept. 25 vs. DC

Dubai, 7.30 p.m. IST

**RR:** Sept. 27 vs. KXIP

Sharjah, 7.30 p.m. IST

getting run out without even facing a ball.

CSK kept chipping away at the Royals line-up as Curran came back strongly, picking up three crucial wickets, including that of Smith (69). Curran had dropped the Australian at long-off when the latter was on 52.

Just when CSK thought it could keep Royals to less than 200, Archer launched into Ngidi in the final over, smashing the South African pacer for four sixes.

The match witnessed 33 sixes (Royals 17, CSK 16), equalling the record for most maximums set in 2018 in the contest between RCB and CSK at Bengaluru.

## It will be a battle of big hitters as MI takes on KKR

Rohit's men look to bounce back after losing against CSK while Karthik's team eyes a perfect start



### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Grace and strength will be on one side while poise and killer instinct on the other when a revamped Kolkata Knight Riders takes on Mumbai Indians on Wednesday.

MI will be keen to bounce back while KKR would look for a perfect start as it will be a battle between big hitters on both sides on a sluggish Abu Dhabi track.

It will be Shubman Gill's third IPL, the one where he would like to make the stage his own with his languid grace and effortless hitting, which he is so capable of. He can hit sixes over extra-cover with grace and care the ball through the covers too.

These are exactly the traits that made Rohit Shar-

ma, the great white ball exponent that he is.

But it's not just grace which makes T20 so appealing. The brute masculinity of power that sends the ball soaring into the orbit is what makes it so special.

Hardik Pandya can unleash his firepower against Sunil Narine and Kuldeep Yadav as well as pacer Pat Cummins. But Hardik will find his match in Andre Russell, easily the most destructive batsman in current T20 cricket.

Russell had openly criticised the team management last year for sending him down the order. But this time, he has been promised a No. 3 slot and this could spell doom for any opposition. KKR has Eoin Morgan, easily the best white ball cap-

tain in international cricket at the moment, who could advise Dinesh Karthik on how to handle the tense moments.

Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah had a rare off-day, leaking 43 runs against CSK and he would like to hit the straps once again.

Andre Russell... ■ TWITTER/KKR

### TODAY'S MATCH



ABU DHABI, 7.30 P.M. IST

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 25

MI 19 | KKR 6

In 2019

Played 2 | MI 1 | KKR 1

STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD)



## 'Gill will exceed all expectations'

Karthik talks up youngster's opening partnership with Narine

### Y.B. SARANGI

#### KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders captain Dinesh Karthik is optimistic that the talented Shubman Gill will exceed everyone's expectations in the IPL.

On the eve of KKR's opener against Mumbai Indians, Karthik, when asked about his opinion on Gill and Sunil Narine forming an opening pair, showered praise on the young Indian.

"I really liked him. I think his uncomplicated batting style with Narine makes things easy for us. Shubman is a quality player and there's a lot of expectations from him around the world as a batter and I'm sure he will exceed all expectations. We are confident about him

as a player and as a person," Karthik said during an online press conference on Tuesday.

### Strength in variety

Karthik sounded confident about KKR's pace attack.

"One of our strengths is the variety we have in our fast bowlers. All four Indian pacers are shaping up really well. You know it's going to be a hard decision to make who's going to start the tournament... but that's a good sign."

Karthik said it was good that KKR was meeting MI early on in the tournament.

Looking at the trend this time, the KKR skipper said 160 looked like a par score. "But there is no reason why a higher total cannot be achieved or a lower total cannot be defended," said Karthik.

England captain Eoin Morgan said the pitches in the UAE looked greener than expected. "So if anything so far in the tournament, I think this will continue to change. They've been more similar to English pitches than any other," said Morgan.

About players like Morgan, Narine, Pat Cummins, Andre Russell and Ali Khan – who played some competitive cricket recently – KKR coach Brendon McCullum said, "There are some guys who have got that [game time] under their belt. But we certainly have no excuses from the preparation point of view."

## I like to take on the big players: Boult

### AMOL KARHADAK

At a time when Mumbai Indians appears to be on the lookout for a reliable death bowler, it will be up against Kolkata Knight Riders on Wednesday, which has Andre Russell, the most destructive finisher in T20s.

Yet, Trent Boult, the left-arm pacer who made his MI debut against Chennai Super Kings on Saturday, appeared undeterred.

In fact, Boult stressed that he looks forward to taking

on the "big players" in the opposition.

"He (Russell) is one of the most destructive batsmen in the game and therein lies the challenge. That's personally why I play the game, I like to take on the big players and look to take wickets."

Russell has enjoyed the upperhand against Boult and Bumrah in their previous battles.

KKR will be banking on the Caribbean to come good again. If Russell gets going, MI could find things extremely difficult.



Casted: Chahal's googly bamboozles Vijay Shankar. ■ BCCI/IPL

### ASHWIN ACHAL

#### BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli praised leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal for his star turn in the 10-run victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad at Dubai. Chahal picked up three wickets, including two in an over to trigger an SRH collapse.

"Yuzvendra comes in, the strike bowler that he's been for us, and changes the game completely in that over. Not

many other spinners got too

much out of the pitch, but tonight he showed that if you have skill in the wrist, you can get purchase on any track," Kohli told host broadcaster Star.

He added that IPL debutant Devdutt Padikkal, who made a classy 56, was "outstanding". Chahal stated that he was encouraged by Kohli to go for wickets.

"Virat told me to bowl attacking deliveries, so I gave the ball flight. When Vijay (Shankar) came in to bat, Virat and A.B. (de Villiers) told me to bowl a googly first ball," Chahal said in an RCB video.

A.B. de Villiers, whose 30-ball 51 took RCB to a respectable 163, stated "my goal when I was batting was to get the team to 160. Anything less would have put us under pressure".

SRH skipper David Warner stated that Mitchell Marsh's ankle injury "doesn't look great", and that the latter cannot put any weight on it.

Tranquillity of mind comes from focusing on the Lord always. Dama is keeping the senses under control. Titiksha is to bear troubles patiently. Dhriti is control over one's tongue and indriyas. Not hurting any form of life and offering protection where needed is daana. Giving up desires is tapas. Saurya means bravery and the Lord says that it means conquering one's evil tendencies. Seeing everyone as equal and being non discriminatory is satya. Rta refers to the pleasing and truthful words of sadhus. Saucha is being unattached to the results of the karmas that one does. What you give to others is dhanya (wealth). The Lord says that He Himself is yajna. Whatever havis is offered in a yaga, it reaches Him. He is yajna svaroopa. Doing pranayama is bala. Serving the Lord is aiswarya. Bhakti towards the Lord is laabha. Knowing that the body and the atma are different is vidya.

## FAITH

### Uddhava's doubts cleared

Srimad Bhagavatam details Lord Krishna's advice to Uddhava. Uddhava asks Lord Krishna a series of questions, which the Lord answers, said P.T. Seshadri in a discourse. Uddhava wants to know the meaning of yama, niyama, sama,

## IN BRIEF



## Kush Maini registers second win of the year

LEICESTERSHIRE  
Hitech GP's championship leader Kush Maini claimed his second win of the year in race three of the British F3 Championship on Tuesday. Maini came out on top of a lap one battle with championship rival Kaylen Frederick to claim his ninth podium in 14 races. With the win, Maini moved up to 296 championship points and is leading by 54 points with 10 races to go. **PTI**

## Ankita overcomes Jovic in qualifying first round

PARIS  
Ankita Raina won her first round qualifying match at the French Open, beating Serbia's Jovana Jovic 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 on Tuesday. She will meet Japan's Kurumi Nara next.

**Vidal completes move to Inter from Barcelona**  
Inter Milan has completed a deal to sign Arturo Vidal from Barcelona for €1 million, the clubs announced on Tuesday. After joining in 2018, he played 96 times for Barca. **AFP**



## Probe into suspected Tour de France doping

MARSEILLE  
A preliminary investigation into suspected doping at this year's Tour de France has been opened, prosecutors said on Monday. According to sources, a search was conducted on riders from the Arkea-Samsic team, including Dayer Quintana, brother and teammate of former Giro d'Italia and Vuelta a Espana winner Nairo Quintana, and members of the medical team. **AFP**

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