

More than 1000 days of suffering



SAVE OUR LIVELIHOODS MINING IS OUR LIFE BLOOD

**Livelihood lost for over 3 lac people
Impact worsens due to surge of COVID-19**

**HUMBLE APPEAL, RESUME MINING IN GOA
UNINTERRUPTED PRODUCTION WILL PROTECT PRECIOUS LIVES
GOA PEOPLE NEED YOUR SUPPORT**



South Goa Truck
Owners Association

Goa Mining People's Front

North Goa Truck
Owners Association

Responsible and Sustainable Iron Ore Industry of Goa

#RestartGoaMining

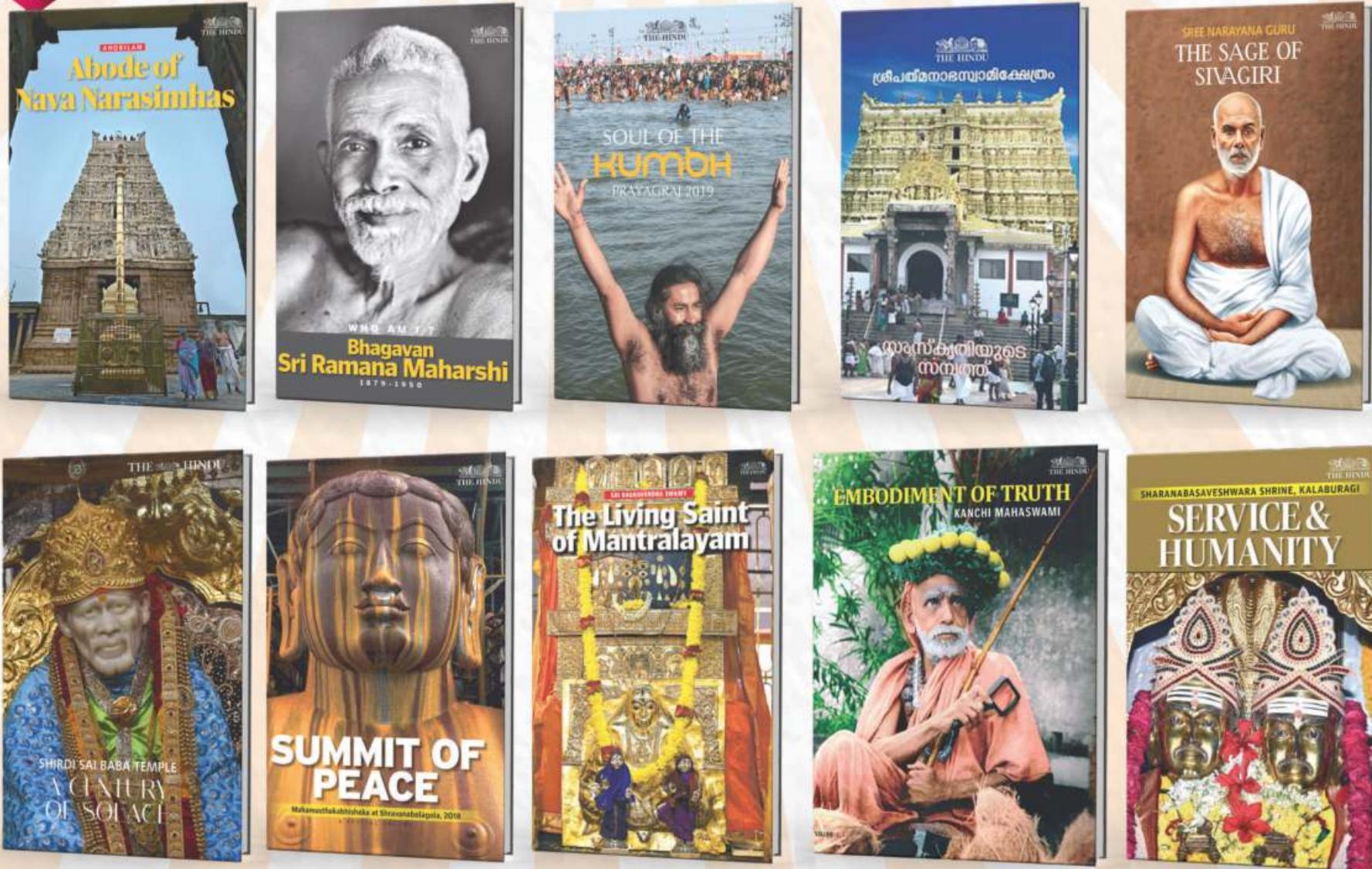


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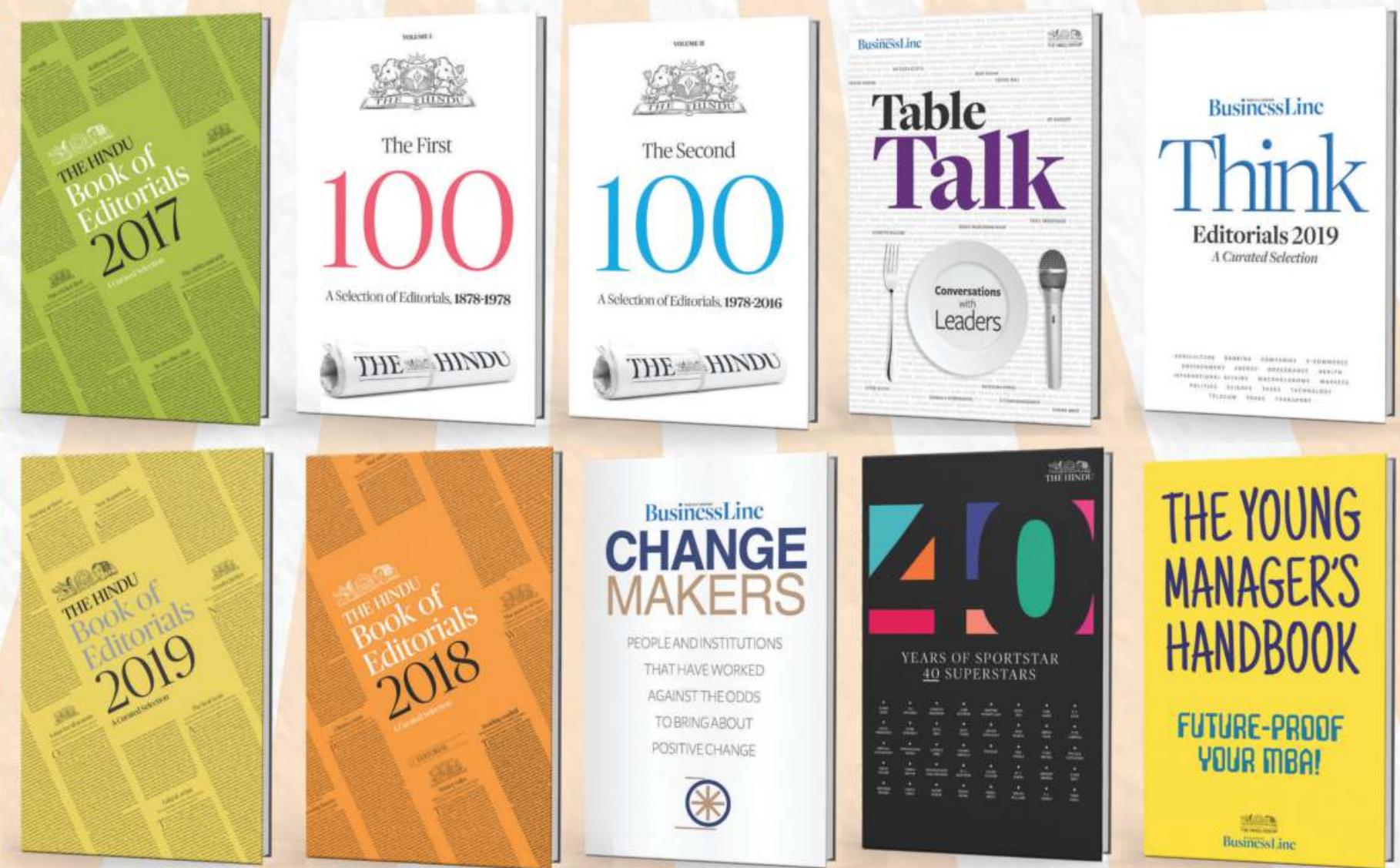
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Anti-incumbency helps
DMK coalition win:
Lokniti-CSDS survey
Pages 7 & 9



PM should take
responsibility for this
mess: Tejaswi Yadav
Page 8



Only a full lockdown
can save human lives,
says Rahul Gandhi
Page 10



U.S. President Biden to raise
refugee quotas after some
back-pedalling
Page 11

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NEARBY



Kejriwal announces free
ration for cardholders

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said the Delhi government will provide free ration to all 72 lakh cardholders in the city for the next two months. He added that the government will also provide financial assistance of ₹5,000 each to every auto and taxi driver in the Capital.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Central BJP leaders may decide next Assam CM

GUWAHATI
Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and BJP's national general secretary, Arun Singh, are expected to reach Guwahati from New Delhi soon to meet the newly elected candidates of the party and decide who will be the next Chief Minister.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

Deaths no less than 'genocide': Allahabad HC

LUCKNOW
Deaths of COVID-19 patients due to lack of supply of oxygen "is a criminal act and not less than a genocide by those who have been entrusted the task to ensure continuous procurement and supply of oxygen", the Allahabad HC said on Tuesday.

NORTH & WEST ▶ PAGE 5

OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 5

IPL-14 postponed indefinitely after virus breaches bubble

Decision comes after Wriddhiman Saha, Amit Mishra test positive for COVID-19

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

The 2021 edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) came to an abrupt halt on Tuesday, with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) deciding to suspend the season midway through the league stage.

The decision was made minutes after it was revealed that two players – Wriddhiman Saha of Sunrisers Hyderabad and Amit Mishra of Delhi Capitals – had contracted COVID-19.

The BCCI, in a statement, said it had unanimously decided to "postpone" the current season of the IPL with immediate effect. "The BCCI does not want to compromise on the safety of the players, support staff and the other participants involved in organising the IPL. The BCCI will do everything in its powers to arrange for the secure and safe passage of all the participants in IPL 2021."

BCCI STATEMENT
The Indian Premier League Governing Council and Board of Control for Cricket in India in an emergency meeting has unanimously decided to postpone IPL 2021 season with immediate effect... The BCCI does not want to compromise on the safety of the players, support staff and the other participants involved in organising the IPL. The BCCI will do everything in its powers to arrange for the secure and safe passage of all the participants in IPL 2021



decided to stop the competition.

It is uncertain whether the remaining 31 games can be played any time soon. With the international calendar packed till the end of the year, the BCCI may struggle to find a window for rescheduling the IPL.

However, a BCCI official, preferring anonymity, said efforts will be made to "create a window immediately after the T20 World

Cup final in November". India is scheduled to host South Africa for a full series after the T20 World Cup in October-November at home. It will be interesting to see if the series is curtailed to make way for the IPL. More importantly, the IPL's suspension has dented India's chances of hosting the 16-nation T20 World Cup.

With the COVID-19 pandemic wreaking havoc across the country, BCCI ap-

pointed tournament director Dhiraj Malhotra recently confirmed United Arab Emirates as a back-up venue to organise the event.

With the bio-secure bubble for the IPL having been breached across multiple locations, the global cricket community and the governing bodies are unlikely to agree to travel to India for the event.

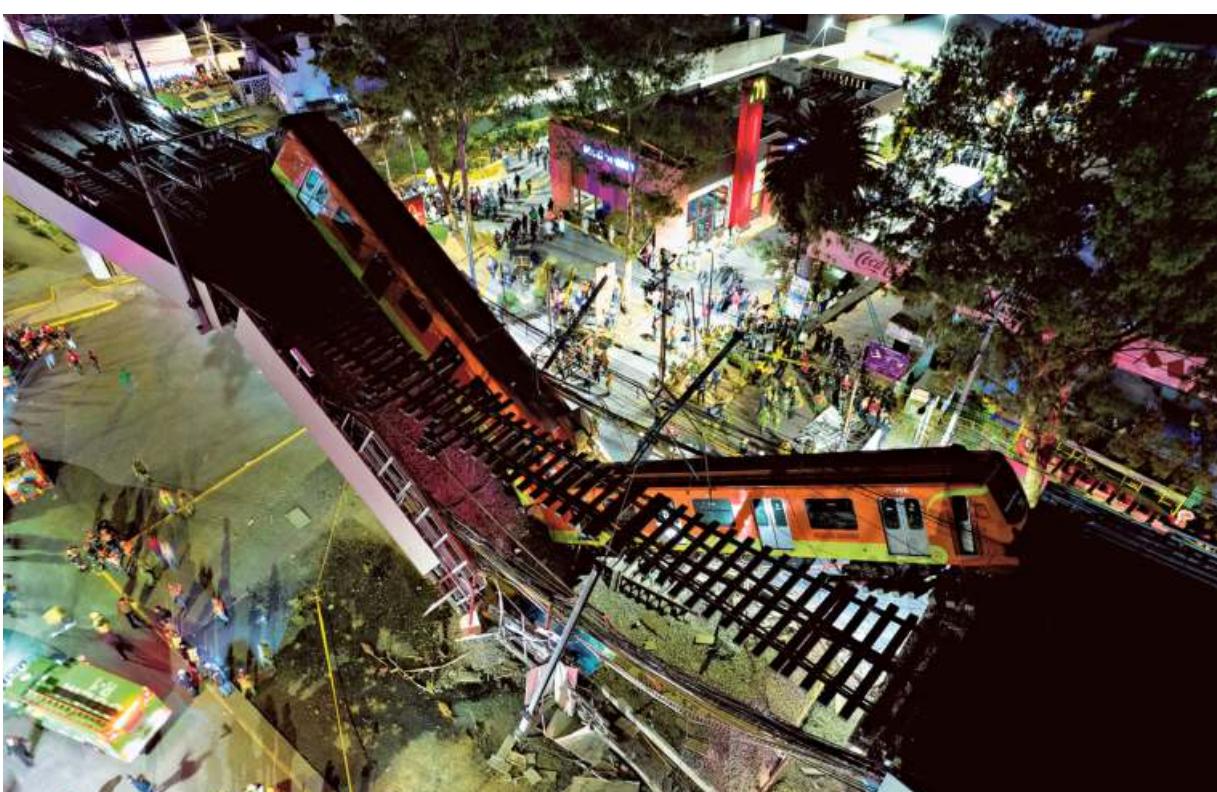
CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

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CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Killer tracks



Left dangling: A view of the damage caused after a railway overpass and a train collapsed onto a busy road in Mexico City on Tuesday, killing 23. One person was pulled out alive from a car but some children were among the dead. ■ REUTERS (REPORT ON PAGE 11)

+ Supply oxygen or face contempt: HC to Centre

Why was SC order ignored, asks Bench

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday directed the Centre to show cause why contempt should not be initiated against it for failing to comply with orders to supply oxygen to Delhi for COVID-19 patients.

"You can put your head in sand like an ostrich, we will not," the court told the Centre. It added that the Supreme Court had already directed, and now the HC is also saying that the Centre will have to supply 700 MT oxygen daily to Delhi right away by whatever means.

"You are part of the city and seeing the situation yourself. No, you don't know. Are you living in ivory towers?" the Bench said.

A Bench of Justices Vinay Sanghi and Rekha Palli also rejected the Centre's submission that Delhi was not

entitled to 700 metric tonnes of medical oxygen in light of existing medical infrastructure. It said the top court's April 30 detailed order directed the Central government to provide 700 MT of oxygen per day to Delhi and not just 490 MT.

"We had told you contempt is the last thing on our mind but it is certainly in our mind and don't drive us to that last point. Enough is enough. We are not going to take no for an answer. There is no way you won't supply 700 MT... There is Supreme Court order and now we are also saying that you will have to supply 700 MT oxygen daily to Delhi right away by whatever means. We will not hear anything except compliance," an annoyed Bench orally observed.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 3

SP, BJP claim victory in U.P. panchayat polls

While elections are not fought on party lines, candidates are backed by parties

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh State Election Commission (SEC) on Tuesday evening directed its district units to not delay issuing of certificates to winning candidates after the Samajwadi Party (SP) alleged that candidates supported by it were not given their certificates.

Strict action will be taken if it receives verified complaints of delay in issuing certificates in any district, the SEC said, adding that the counting process, which started on May 2, had concluded.

Earlier in the day, SP president Akhilesh Yadav had claimed that the party had been the "first preference" of the voters. "The victory of the Samajwadi Party in large numbers is a clear indication



Tight contest: Candidates and their supporters waiting for results as the counting of vote goes on in Prayagraj on Sunday. ■ PTI

that is had acceptability among the farmers, youth and in villages," Mr. Yadav said in a statement.

On Monday evening, the BJP had claimed that it was ahead of the other parties and candidates linked to it had won 918 zilla panchayat member seats while in 557 others they enjoyed a deci-

sive lead. Parties do not issue their symbols for the three-tier panchayat polls but indicate the candidates they support in the zilla panchayat election. The SP did not mention the specific number of candidates supported by it who had won.

Party spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary claimed that

the BJP received a jolt in both Gorakhpur and Varanasi, the political home ground of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, respectively.

The SP also received huge success in Lucknow, said Mr. Chaudhary.

SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 4

May session of JEE (Main) postponed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" announced on Tuesday that the Joint Entrance Examination (Main) for the May session had been postponed, keeping in view the safety of students.

"Students are advised to keep visiting the official website of NTA (National Testing Agency) for further updates," tweeted Dr. Nishank. The session was scheduled for May 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28. Earlier, the April session had been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The session was scheduled for May 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28. Earlier, the April session had been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From this year, the exam is being held four times a year to offer students flexibility and a chance to improve their scores.

Govt. gives nod for 5G trials; Chinese tech giants left out

Telcos tie up with Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung and C-DOT

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on Tuesday gave permission to Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) to conduct trials for the use and application of 5G technology.

This formally leaves out Chinese companies like Huawei and ZTE from the 5G race in India.

"The applicant TSPs include Bharti Airtel Ltd., Reliance JioInfocomm Ltd., Vodafone Idea Ltd. and MTNL. These TSPs have tied up with original equipment manufacturers and technology providers, which are Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung and C-DOT," a statement from the



The trials will have to be conducted in rural and semi-urban settings as well.

Ministry of Communications said.

In addition, Reliance JioInfocomm Ltd. will also be conducting trials using its

own indigenous technology.

The duration of the trials is for six months, which includes a time period of two months for the procurement and setting up of the equipment.

"The permissions have been given by DoT as per the priorities and technology partners identified by the TSPs themselves," it stated.

Each TSP will have to conduct trials in rural and semi-urban settings also, in addition to urban settings, so that the benefit of 5G technology proliferates across the country and is not confined to the urban areas, the statement said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

M ND-NDE

Death and despair as finding ambulances remains an ordeal

Vehicles charge exorbitant amount for transport to hospitals and crematoriums

HEMAMI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

After a 30-year-old resident of Ashok Vihar lost his parents – in a span of a few hours – he had to go through an ordeal arranging for ambulances, said his cousin Kriti Sharma.

Ms. Sharma, from north Delhi, said her 62-year-old aunt's oxygen started dropping in the last week of April and she needed an ambulance to be taken to a hospital. "There were no beds available in any hospital and we had to physically check a few hospitals," she said. A group of eight cousins started gathering information on ambulances on Twitter, Instagram and Google and were frantically dialing numbers.

'Govt. helpline busy'

"We first tried government helpline '108' but it was busy all along. Then we tried private ambulances operators, but they said they need confirmation on the exact drop location. At this point when no hospitals are admitting, how could we tell?" she said.

Eventually, her cousin – the aunt's son – decided to take her to a private nursing home, using his own vehicle. The facility agreed to admit her. However, the facility allegedly told them that they should take her home because she needs an ICU, which they didn't have after which the family arranged a BiPAP machine. But "my aunt died in a couple of hours. Thankfully, the private nursing home where she had been earlier taken arranged for the ambulance to



Ambulances lined up outside a crematorium in Seemapuri on Tuesday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

take her body to cremation ground".

The next morning, when Ms. Sharma's cousin went into his father's room to wake him up, he found that he had died. He died in his sleep, the family believes. But arranging an ambulance to take his body to cremation ground was "unimaginably tough".

Ambulance asks for ₹1L

"While making calls, one of the private ambulance companies asked for ₹1 lakh to transport the body from Ashok Vihar to Punjab Bagh. We were shocked and obviously refused. Most denied us. Finally, one of my father's contacts helped us," she said.

But two women, Ms. Kriti said, got lucky last Thursday when the 108-helpline number responded to their call. The women were transported to hospitals and got admission without any hiccups.

Another 26-year-old resident of south Delhi and member of a citizen support group, who has been trying to arrange resources for people in Delhi, said one of her friend's father from Vasant Kunj was to be transported to Punjab because of the unavailability of beds in city hospitals.

Admission out of city

"Can't remember the number of calls made for this case, but nothing worked.

We are finding it extremely tough to arrange ambulance within city...out of State ambulance became impossible," she said, adding that the friend's father got lucky because one ambulance from the Punjab hospital had come to Delhi after a patient's discharge. "But he had to wait 12 hours for the ambulance to take him. Anything could have happened in that period," she said.

Sharing another experience, she said another friend's father's oxygen levels dropped to 70 and he had to be rushed to a Lok Nayak Hospital, but it took them three hours to find an ambulance. "All the numbers we tried either denied availability or asked more than ₹25,000. Finally, the company – my friend works at – arranged an ambulance at ₹15,000. We agreed to it as he needed to be hospitalised immediately," she said.

After losing his brother, Anil Kumar from Central Delhi was informed by the hospital in Nangloi on Saturday night that they had to move the body from the facility.

"We were clueless on what to do...where would we keep the body all night? The hospital gave us a number of an ambulance driver, who asked for ₹20,000 to keep the body all night. According to guidelines, the hospital has to arrange the disposal of bodies, but they put everything on us," he said.

Eventually, the hospital agreed to keep the body for the night and charged ₹7,000 to transport the body from the hospital to cremation ground. "The ambulance driver took ₹1,000 extra to take the body out of the car and keep it on the pyre," he added.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-West) Gurjeet Singh Sidhu said the accused have been identified as Lalithesh (24), a nurse at Moolchand Hospital, Vipul Verma, record clerk at IHBAS, Vishal Kashyap, and Shubham.

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Acting on a tip-off, a trap was laid near Haiderpur Bus Stand and Vipul was

Moolchand nurse, three others arrested for selling Remdesivir at ₹70K each

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Four persons, including a nurse at Moolchand hospital and another employee at IHBAS, have been arrested for allegedly stealing Remdesivir injections and selling them at ₹70,000 each.

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Timings

DELHI

WEDNESDAY, MAY. 05
RISE 05:38 SET 18:59
RISE 02:14 SET 13:21
THURSDAY, MAY. 06
RISE 05:37 SET 19:00
RISE 02:49 SET 14:17
FRIDAY, MAY. 07
RISE 05:36 SET 19:00
RISE 03:21 SET 15:12

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	42	25
Safdarjung	42	25
Palam	42	26

Delhi Palam Today
40°C A hot day would continue
Light dust storm or thunder-storm may occur at few places.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
39°C Easy morning and hot day with light surface winds.
Thunderstorm with rain may occur at some places with gusty winds.

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IN BRIEF

DTC depots to store oxygen cylinders

NEW DELHI
Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) depots will store oxygen cylinders to be supplied to COVID patients in home isolation as well as in case of an emergency at hospitals in their vicinity, transport department said in an order on Tuesday. As many as 20 cylinders will be stored at a DTC depot in each district to begin with and the number of cylinders will increase over the coming days.

Examine plea on politicians procuring Remdesivir: HC

Court directs police to register FIR if such offences are found

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked the police to examine the instances of politicians allegedly procuring and distributing Remdesivir, used for treating COVID-19 patients, in the national capital and take steps for lodging of FIR in case of offence.

A Bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said the court was not inclined

Getting around 40% of oxygen demanded from Centre: govt.

Instead of 976 MT, Capital was allotted 433 MT on Monday, says oxygen bulletin

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Delhi government said it was getting an average of 40% of the total demand of oxygen for the Capital from the Central government in the first oxygen bulletin that it released on Tuesday.

Aam Aadmi Party MLA Raghav Chadha, releasing the bulletin, said: "We need 976 metric tonnes (MT) of oxygen, while what we received on Monday from the Centre was only 433 MT. This is only 44% of what we need and what we have demanded from them."

He added that over the past seven days, the average oxygen supply received by the city is 393 MT against the demand of 976 MT which is 40% of the total demand.

'By hook or by crook'
Sharing details about how the government was trying to overcome the shortage of oxygen through better management so that no lives are lost, Mr. Chadha said that on Monday, the government responded to 41 SOS calls, which were raised through various mediums, including social media, phone calls, and helplines from hospi-



People with empty cylinders waiting for refill at Bhogal in New Delhi on Tuesday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

tals, and ensured that oxygen was supplied to all of them by "hook or crook".

"We have made a few SOS reserves, through which we supply the oxygen to those hospitals who are on the verge of exhaustion. Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) is supplied through oxygen tankers to large-scale hospitals. In small-scale hospitals, which have fewer than 50 beds and can suffice with oxygen cylinders, we supply the big D-type oxygen cylinder in an adequate amount.

This lets them comfortably overcome the crisis and emergency situation and en-

sure that the proceeding supply is made regular," Mr. Chadha said.

On Monday, he said the 41 hospitals that raised an SOS had 7,142 patients on oxygen support beds and 21.3 MT of oxygen was supplied from emergency reserves.

Utmost transparency
The government, he said, had decided that it was necessary to put out all the figures with utmost transparency in front of the people. "[Like] The amount of oxygen we received in the past week, the number of SOS calls we addressed, and how

we are actually dealing with them on a 24x7 basis through adequate communication, facilitation of oxygen, and successfully tackling the concerns of people," he said, adding that the oxygen bulletin is an attempt to make every detail public.

Mr. Chadha said the gap of 56% between demand and supply in oxygen supply still exists, and the faster we bridge it, the quicker the SOS calls will decrease. He added that the shortage of oxygen in the city was coming in the way of setting up more oxygen beds.

Low oxygen supply and stock continue to cripple hospitals

Supply system must be streamlined, backup required: doctors

NIKHIL M BABU

NEW DELHI

At least three hospitals raised alarms over low oxygen stock on Tuesday while other hospitals too are facing difficulties in getting enough oxygen.

Triton Hospital, which has about 10 babies in the NICU, said at 9.30 a.m. they only have one backup oxygen cylinder left.

"We have 10-12 babies in the NICU and almost all of them require oxygen. Currently, we have only one backup cylinder left, apart from the one connected to the central oxygen system. For the past one week, every day has been like this and we have to send SOS to get oxygen," said Dr. Deepali Gupta.

The hospital later got three type D cylinders from the government, but they were unable to fill their cylinders.

"Right now we have oxygen to last till around 12.30 a.m. We are yet to get more cylinders and we are in touch with the authorities. But we are really hoping that the system of oxygen supply gets streamlined soon," said Ritu Gupta, a hospital official, said at 8.30 p.m.

The oxygen stock of Madhukar Rainbow Children's Hospital will last only till 11 p.m. on Tuesday, as per the hospital.



Civil Defence volunteers at a mini oxygen plant set up at CWG Village. ■ PTI

days, which is actually required," the spokesperson said.

Unceasing troubles

Around 1 a.m. on Tuesday, the Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC) raised an alarm that the lives of 160 COVID-19 patients were at risk.

The hospital later got the oxygen supply at 2 a.m., but by Tuesday evening they were still struggling.

"In the morning, around 9 a.m., we received another oxygen supply, which will finish by 12 in the night. Till now we haven't received any supply. It's a daily struggle to get oxygen," a hospital spokesperson said.

Other hospitals are also facing difficulties but said the condition is slightly better. "We are also facing difficulties and the oxygen supply is not smooth. Sometimes we have to reduce admissions in our hospitals," an official of Max Healthcare said.

At the same time, an oxygen plant donated by France has been installed at the COVID Care Centre in CWG Village, due to which more people were taken in. The current occupancy of patients at the CCC is 175 and the govt. is waiting for more oxygen supply to increase it to 500 beds.

Delhi to get 244 MT more oxygen: Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

May 4. Of the total 382 MT of LMO being delivered by Railways, nearly 244 MT would be meant for Delhi, which is nearly 64% of total load being delivered on Tuesday," it said.

In addition, Telangana received its second oxygen express from Angul carrying 60.23 MT LMO and Lucknow would receive 79 MT from Barakar on Tuesday, it said.

"It is Indian Railways endeavour to deliver as much LMO as possible in the shortest time possible to the requesting States," it said.

DRDO plants at RML Hospital, AIIMS to be ready by today

Plants to start functioning by evening; 3 more to come up

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is setting up Medical Oxygen Plants (MOP) at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and Dr Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital and will be ready by Wednesday evening. These are the first two of the five MOPs to be established in Delhi and Haryana within this week.

"The installation of the MOP at AIIMS and RML Hos-

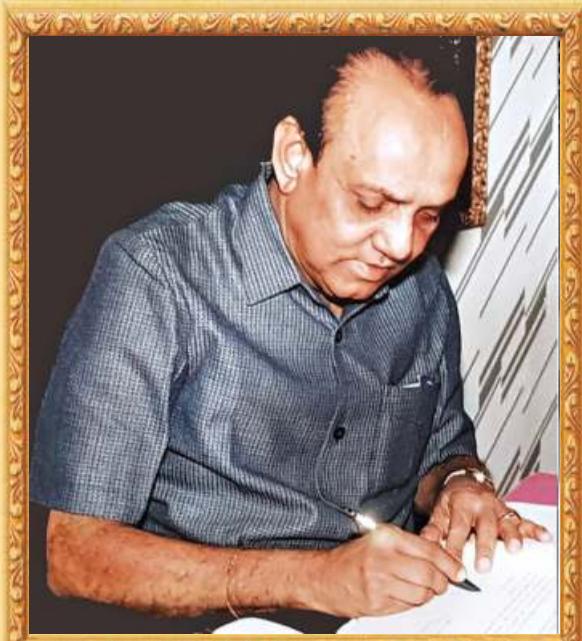
pital has already started and is likely to be completed by tonight [Tuesday night]," a statement by the Press Information Bureau said on Tuesday. With the piping connection and testing of the plant ensured through a dry run scheduled for Wednesday, the two plants will start functioning latest by Wednesday evening, it stated.

The other three plants are being installed at Safdarjung Hospital, Lady Hardinge Medical College and at Al-

IMS, Jhajjar in Haryana.

Last week, DRDO announced that 500 MOPs would be set up across the country under PM-CARES fund within three months. The MOP is based on technology developed for onboard oxygen generation on the Light Combat Aircraft Tejas. It is designed for a flow rate of 1,000 litre per minute (LPM) and can cater to 190 patients at a flow rate of 5 LPM and charge 195 cylinders per day, it added.

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CM announces free ration to cardholders

Financial assistance of ₹5,000 to be provided to 1.56 lakh auto and taxi drivers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday announced that the Delhi government will provide free ration to all the 72 lakh ration cardholders of the Capital for the next two months. He also announced that the government will provide financial assistance of ₹5,000 to every auto and taxi driver in the city like last year, wherein 1.56 lakh drivers had received one-time financial assistance.

During a digital press briefing, he said: "We have taken two major decisions. Firstly, free ration will be provided to the around 72 lakh ration



Arvind Kejriwal •

cardholders of Delhi for the next two months. One should not assume that the lockdown will continue for the next two months. Let us hope that the cases begin to decrease and the lockdown is lifted early."

He harped on the financial implications of the lockdown.

Free ration scheme came too late, says Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Responding to the Delhi government's announcement to give a two-month free ration to cardholders, the Delhi Congress on Tuesday said that the announcement was too little and had come too late.

Delhi Congress chief Ch. Anil Kumar said that the Delhi government's belated announcement to give a two-month free ration to cardholders would keep out more people than those who benefit. He demanded that the Delhi government provide free ration irrespective of any document to those in need. He alleged that in the Capital, only 72 lakh people

have ration cards and that more than 54 lakh people's applications for new ration cards have been pending with the government for the past six years.

Ground reality
He said that the government should understand the ground reality where millions have lost jobs, daily wagers have nothing left to feed their family. "Lakhs of people have been severely affected by the sudden unplanned lockout that was put in place as the government was solely responsible for the lack of planning to deal with the sudden spike in the number of infections," he said.

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Notice

Pursuant to the Notification S.O. 1630 (E) dated 15th April, 2021 wherein the Central Government has declared every Saturday as a Public Holiday for Life Insurance Corporation of India, all policy holders and other stakeholders are informed that w.e.f. 10th May, 2021, all offices of Life Insurance Corporation of India will work from Monday to Friday.

Starting 10th May 2021, Office hours from Monday to Friday would be 10:00 AM to 05:30 PM. For details please visit www.licindia.in.

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Pass must for traffic movement during lockdown in Haryana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

Carrying a departmental I-card or government issued pass was mandatory for traffic movement during the lockdown, said Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on Tuesday, adding that strict ac-

tion would be taken against those who are commuting without it.

Meeting with officers

Mr. Vij said this in a meeting with senior police officers in Chandigarh. He elaborated that the De-

puty Commissioners were asked to issue online traffic passes. For this, interested people can apply online at saralharyana.gov.in. People should not leave their homes unnecessarily and those who are permitted to commute during the lockdown would have

to carry a pass or I-card, he said. The Home Minister also directed to make a roster of grocery stores, pharmacy shops and others in the State. All such shops should not be allowed to open every day, but on rotation basis, said Mr. Vij.

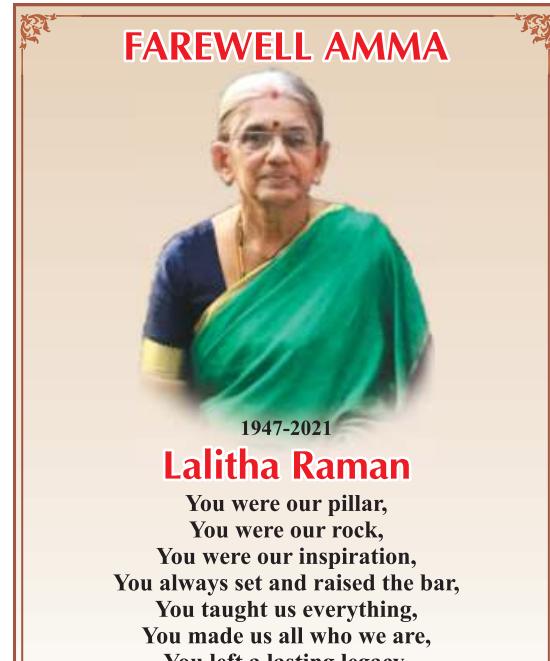
OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH



Shri. G Krishnamoorthy
(DOB 23-Sep-1935), from Cheranadevi, retired HG Postal Assistant, Madras GPO attained Siva Loka Prapthi at Bangalore on 03-May-2021. He is survived by wife Mohana, sons Gurunathan, Balaji, daughters-in-law Srishanthi, Maragatha Meenakshi and grandchildren Karthik, Bhavani and Agneyan. Contact # of son : 9686567685

DEATH



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Sainik School, Amaravathinagar (1969 batch)
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Mobile no - 9884174354

DEATH

T.G. SRINIVASAN 94, RETD Tamil Pandit Hindu High School, Triplicane, Chennai attained Achayran Thiruvadi on 03rd May in Bangalore. +91 9880498448

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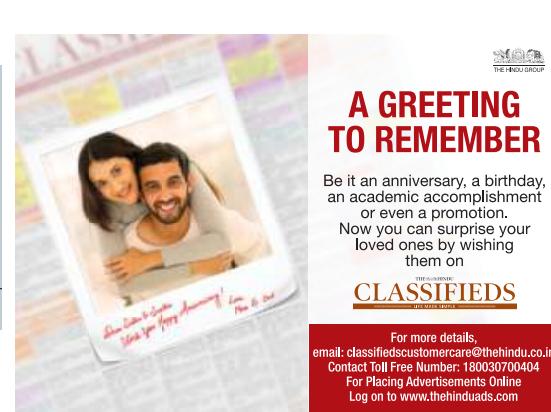
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ENTERPRISE CONNECT

NFL to install Oxygen Plants in four districts

To augment the oxygen availability amidst the acute Covid crises, National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) has ordered 04 Oxygen Plants for installation in Government Hospitals in four districts i.e. one each in Noida, Gorakhpur, Lucknow in U.P. and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. Each plant will have capacity of 20 NM3 / hr i.e. 70 cylinders per day. This initiative aims to equip the Government Hospitals in the districts with uninterrupted oxygen supply to manage the Covid-19 patients and other patients needing such support. With this, each of the Government Hospitals under the project will have a captive oxygen generation facility and will help in strengthening the public health system.

FCI Facilitates allocation of 14.71 Lac Metric tons of foodgrains under Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana.

In order to ameliorate the hardship faced by the poor due to economic disruption caused by the Corona virus, the Govt of India has re-launched the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) for providing free ration to the 79.88 Crore beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) across the country. The above allocation is in addition to the regular monthly allocation under NFSA. Under this scheme, 5 Kg food grains per person (which includes 3 Kg Wheat and 2 Kg Rice) per month is to be distributed additionally to the NFSA beneficiaries for a period of two months, i.e. May and June 2021. Shri Girish Kumar, General Manager, Food Corporation of India, Uttar Pradesh informed that Central Govt. has allotted a total of 14.71 Lac Metric Tonnes of food grains including 8.82 Lac Metric Tonnes Wheat and 5.89 Lac

A Business Initiative

Metric Tonnes Rice amounting to a total of Rs 5172 Crores free of cost under the PMGKAY scheme for distribution in Uttar Pradesh, which is the highest in the country. He said that over 14.71 Crores persons of Uttar Pradesh shall be benefitted through the said scheme. Issue of foodgrains from FCI depots has already started from 28.04.2021 and the entire quantity of foodgrains so allocated by the Govt. of India shall be issued by the Food Corporation of India through over 220 depots operational across U.P. GM, FCI also informed that over 9.92 Lac Metric Tonnes of Wheat has already been procured from 178453 farmers at Minimum Support Price (MSP) in U.P. during Rabi Marketing Season 2021-22 which is almost 2.5 times the quantity procured in the same period last year.

TRIFED joins hands with The LINK Fund to work towards tribal development.

TRIFED, as the nodal agency working for the empowerment of tribals, has been focusing its efforts on finding new ways to improve the lives and the livelihoods of the tribal people. With this objective in mind, TRIFED has now entered into a collaborative project titled "Sustainable Livelihoods For Tribal Households in India" with The LINK Fund, a philanthropic operational foundation headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, which is mandated to implement and scale and business solutions to extreme poverty and climate change. TRIFED and The LINK Fund have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on April 29, 2021 to work together towards Tribal Development and employment generation by providing support to tribals for increasing value addition in their produce and products; Sustainable livelihoods and value addition for increase in income and employment generation through technological intervention for efficiency in value addition for MFPs, produce and crafts diversification, skill training and enhancement of value additions in minor forest produce. The MoU was signed by Shri Pravir Krishna, Managing Director TRIFED, and Tony Kalm, CEO and Co-founder, The LINK Fund and was attended by senior officials of TRIFED and The LINK Fund.

Punjab CM writes to PM Modi, Shah to ensure oxygen supply

Amarinder expresses concern over imminent loss of lives due to shortage

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Tuesday sought the immediate intervention of Prime Minister Narendra and Home Minister Amit Shah in ensuring uninterrupted supply of medical oxygen to the State.

The Chief Minister sent separate letters to Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah, as the number of COVID-19 patients on oxygen support went up to 10,000 in the State.

Expressing concern over the imminent loss of lives due to oxygen shortage, Capt. Amarinder said with a mounting caseload, he was unable to increase the number of Level 2 and Level 3 beds due to oxygen availability constraints.

The State was facing the prospect of shortage of oxygen beds, he said, pointing out that the Government of India had expressed



CM Amarinder Singh

which 90 MT is from Bokaro in eastern India. The remaining 105 MT comes from facilities in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Punjab is not getting its daily allocated quota, said the Chief Minister.

Existing backlog

The existing backlog for Punjab from these facilities is 5.6 MT from Panipat (Haryana), 100 MT from Sela Qui, Dehradun (Uttarakhand) and 10 MT from Roopkot (Uttarakhand), he added.

Pointing out that Punjab had now been able to understand by the Centre that there would be likely disruption of oxygen supply from May 4 from Panipat and Barotiwala, the Chief Minister said this would cause great stress on the already limited availability, thus causing a medical emergency, including risk of loss of life for a large number of patients.

COVID-19: Assam shops to shut by 2 p.m.

Journalists in the State have been deemed as front-line workers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

The Assam Government has issued a fresh set of standard operating procedures (SOPs) in view of the rising cases of COVID-19 in the State. According to the State's Health and Family Welfare Department, 29 people died on Monday and the positivity rate was 8.02%.



Police distributing masks to the poor in Guwahati on Tuesday. • PTI

blishments by 6 p.m. with night curfew from 8 p.m.

Other restrictions include only the religious part of marriages in presence of 20 people at most, a

maximum of five people at a time in religious places, 20 or fewer people for last rites, 50% employees except for officers in government and private offices, and 50% passengers in public vehicles.

The Assam government also announced that journalists in the State would be regarded as front-line workers in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Journalists under 45 years of age have accordingly been made eligible for a symbolic launch of the COVID-19 vaccination on Wednesday. The eligible will get vaccinated at the Gauhati Press Club, the State's Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

He also said the State has received a fresh batch of 1.5 lakh doses of Covaxin from Bharat Biotech.

Mob violence accused wins U.P. panchayat election

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

A Bajrang Dal activist, who is one of the main accused in the 2018 mob violence in Bulandshahr in which a police officer was killed, has been elected as a member in the Zilla panchayat polls.

Yogesh Raj won the Zilla Panchayat election from Ward 5 in Bulandshahr. According to the State Election Commission, he secured 10,351 votes, around 37%.

Police officer Subodh Singh was among two persons killed in mob violence that took place following allegations of cow slaughter in a village in Bulandshahr in December 2018.

Mr. Raj was accused as one of the main instigators of the mob.

Talking to the media after his win, Mr. Raj said he had beaten his nearest opponent by 2,150 votes.

On the criminal allegations against him, he said, "I am accused of only instigating violence not for murder."

In 2019, the Allahabad High Court granted him bail.

Mr. Raj claimed that he was no longer in any outfit as the Bajrang Dal had relieved him of his post of district convenor a year ago.

Rashtriya Lok Dal vice-president Jayant Chaudhary said Mr. Raj's win was a matter of worry. "Voters will have to defeat the politics of hate and frenzy," Mr. Chaudhary tweeted.

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY CORPORATION RE - TENDER NOTICE No. 02 / 2021-2022

The tenderers willing to submit tenders for improving the existing source in River Cauvery to Sustain water supply schemes in Tiruchirappalli City Corporation (3 Works), Revamping of Water Supply Network in RockFort in ABD Area and Construction of Sewerage Treatment Plant with 7.5 MLD capacity on DBOT basis at Panjappur at the cost of Rs. 6131.43 Lakhs to be executed under the Tiruchirappalli Smart City Mission are requested to submit tenders through E-Tendering procedure in <http://tntenders.gov.in> as well as sealed hard copy on or before 03.00 p.m. of 09.06.2021, which will be downloaded and opened at 04.00 p.m. in the same day. If the date of receipt of tender happens to be holiday, then tenders will be received in the succeeding working day at the same time and venue. Pre-bid Meeting will be held on 18.05.2021 at 11.00 AM in Commissioner's Conference Hall.

Tender Conditions are available in the above said website.

Visit us at <http://www.trichy corporation.gov.in> (E4/743/2020(Main))

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Commissioner, Tiruchirappalli City Corporation

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU KASHMIR Office of The Executive Engineer P.H.E Division Budgam H.Q: Budgam.

NOTICE INVITING E – TENDERS:

Short Term e – NIT No: 1/PH/E/Bud/Civil of 2021–22.

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu Kashmir U.T., e-tenders are invited in Single Cover System on 'item rate basis' from Registered/Approved and valid Civil class of contractors/agencies registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments and whose registrations are renewed for current financial year for the following works:

Table - I</div

IN BRIEF



Malayalam actor 'Mela' Reghu is no more

KOCHI Actor Puthenveli Sasidharan, known as 'Mela' Reghu, died here on Tuesday. He was 60. He had collapsed at his home on April 16 following a stroke. A circus artiste by profession, he entered tinsel town on account of his short stature in the movie *Mela* in 1980.

Karnataka postpones II pre-university exams

BENGALURU Second year pre-university (PU) examination, which was to begin this month, have been postponed amid a raging second wave of COVID-19. New dates will be announced later, said Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar at a press conference on Tuesday. First PU students will be promoted without examination.

HC notice to govt. in trespassing case

Petition filed by Jamuna Hatcheries, owned by family of former Minister

MARRI RAMU HYDERABAD

Telangana High Court on Tuesday issued notices to the State government after hearing a writ petition filed by Jamuna Hatcheries, owned by family members of former Minister Eatala Rajender, alleging that authorities trespassed into their lands in Medak district in the name of conducting inquiry into ownership of the lands.

Justice T. Vinod Kumar, who heard the petition, instructed the government to file counter affidavit within four weeks. After hearing the contentions of senior counsel D. Prakash Reddy and Advocate General B.S. Prasad, appearing for the petitioners and government respectively, the judge observed that "there is prima facie violation of principles of natural justice and non-adherence to

provisions of the Telangana Land Revenue Acts" while conducting the inquiry.

No coercive steps

The judge directed Medak District Collector not to interfere with the lands of the Jamuna Hatcheries till further orders. Directors General of Vigilance and Enforcement, and Anti-Corruption Bureau, along with Medak Superintendent of Police, were instructed not to initiate any coercive steps against the petitioners.

The judge noted that Section 153 of Telangana Land Revenue Act mandated that land owner should be put on notice before commencing an inquiry. This was not followed in the present case. Justice T. Vinod Kumar, however, said the authorities were free to take any action against the petitioners if they



Bone of contention: The view of the mega hatchery project of Jamuna Hatcheries Pvt. Ltd. in Medak district. ■ MOHD ARIF

intended to, but that should be done in compliance with principles of natural justice and following due procedure of law.

Mr. Eatala Rajender, who was Minister in the Telangana Cabinet, was stripped of his Medical and Health portfolio four days ago. Immediately after that, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao ordered for an inquiry

into allegations that the lands in Medak district on which a mega hatchery was being established by Jamuna Hatcheries had been acquired illegally.

A day after the inquiry was taken up by teams of Vigilance, Anti-Corruption Bureau and Revenue officials, Mr. Rajender was dropped from the Council of Ministers.

Eatala lashes out at Telangana CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Former Telangana Minister Eatala Rajender, who is facing allegations of encroachment of assignment and endowments lands, has targeted Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao for the second day in a row by stating that even Cabinet members did not get an opportunity to go and meet the Chief Minister in Pragathi Bhavan.

Speaking to newsmen on Tuesday, Mr. Rajender said Mr. Rao was acting with vengeance against him based on wrong suggestions and false reports.

"Instead of targeting me, he could have told me to quit," Mr. Rajender said.

Four feared dead due to snag in oxygen supply in A.P.

State imposes 18-hour curfew till May 18; Karnataka and Kerala add over 81,000 cases; Telangana's 59 deaths a record

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

Four persons died following a disruption in oxygen supply at the Cancer Hospital in Andhra Pradesh's Anantapur district, which has been converted into a COVID-19 hospital connected to the Super Speciality Hospital.



Strict measures: A policeman checking the ID proof of a motorist in Thrissur as part of strengthened vigil. ■ K.K. NAJEEB

This is the third consecutive day that COVID-19 patients have died owing to alleged human error and lack of proper supervision at government hospitals in Anantapur.

Cancer Hospital has a 6 kl liquid medical oxygen unit, but it got emptied at 6 p.m. Supplies arrived only at 7.45 p.m., resulting in the immediate death of four patients, Anantapur Urban MLA Anantha Venkatarami Reddy told presspersons outside the hospital premises. A large posse of policemen was deployed to ensure no untoward incident took place.

Four ambulances went

out, but it was not clear as to how many died.

Andhra Pradesh witnessed 82 deaths and 20,034 infections on Tuesday.

The State will be under an 18-hour curfew between noon and 6 a.m. up to May 18 from Wednesday. Between 6 a.m. and noon, all business activity and public movement would be allowed and Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. would be in force.

Continuing the trend of high incidence of COVID-19, Karnataka on Tuesday reported 44,631 new cases, of which 20,870 were from Bengaluru Urban, and 292 deaths.

The test positivity rate (TPR) for the day stood at 29.03% and 1,53,707 tests were conducted, including 1,40,609 RT-PCR tests.

The Health Department said it had adequate stocks of vaccine, but several centres in Bengaluru put up 'no vacancy' boards.

After the weekend lull, Kerala added 37,190 cases on Tuesday after testing 14,258 samples.

A record number of 57 deaths from the past few days were added to the official toll. COVID-19 patients in hospitals rose to 28,115, and 3,253 were hospitalised on Tuesday.

The surge in daily cases pushed the number of active cases to 1,25,230. As many as 19,112 people were discharged.

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

Telangana recorded 59 COVID-19 deaths on Monday, the State's highest daily toll.

Tamil Nadu's daily tally of COVID-19 cases surged past 21,000 on Tuesday.

A total of 21,228 people tested positive for the infection while 144 people died, taking the case count to 124,9,292 and the toll to 14,612.

The surge in daily cases pushed the number of active cases to 1,25,230. As many as 19,112 people were discharged.

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

Maharashtra's COVID-19 case positivity rate down, says Tope

'Talks on with Sputnik V manufacturer; State expecting 3.5 lakh vials of Remdesivir'

SHOURMOJIT BANERJEE PUNE

Stating that there had been a decline in COVID-19 cases in Maharashtra, Health Minister Rajesh Tope on Tuesday said that the State's case positivity had come down from 27% to 22% without any change in the high number of samples being tested daily.

Mr. Tope said that the State had the highest recovery rate – above 85% – in the country. "While 15 districts, including Mumbai and areas in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region like Thane, are seeing a decrease in daily cases, others like Satara, Kolhapur, and those in Marathwada and Vidarbha are showing an upward trend," he said.

Mr. Tope also said that the State government was in talks with the manufacturer of Russian vaccine Sputnik V to negotiate a purchase price. Commenting that Maharashtra's high sample testing number remained unchanged, the Health Minister said, "Our daily test fi-



Risky gathering: Police personnel try to manage crowd outside a new vaccination centre in Mumbai on Tuesday. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

gures range between 2.5 lakh and 2.8 lakh samples of which RT-PCR (lab technique) accounts for 65% and rapid antigen tests are conducted for the rest."

Mr. Tope said that the shortage of Remdesivir would be addressed soon with the State expecting around 3.5 lakh vials.

"We are also expecting 20,000 oxygen concentrators...it is the Chief Minister's fervent wish that the State be

Kolhapur goes under 10-day lockdown

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PUNE

The Kolhapur district in Maharashtra will go under a stringent 10-day lockdown from May 5 in the wake of rising COVID-19 cases in western Maharashtra, Guardian Minister Satej Patil said on Tuesday.

All shops, grocery stores, business establishments and other enterprises, barring medical stores and milk booths, would remain completely shut in Kolhapur, authorities said.

Meanwhile, a seven-day lockdown began in the neighbouring Satara district on Tuesday, which has been reporting more than 2,000 cases and 40 deaths daily. Police were seen confiscating vehicles of errant citizens.

Deaths no less than 'genocide': Allahabad HC

OMAR RASHID LUCKNOW

Deaths of COVID-19 patients due to lack of supply of oxygen to hospitals "is a criminal act and not less than a genocide by those who have been entrusted the task to ensure continuous procurement and supply chain of the liquid medical oxygen," the Allahabad High Court said on Tuesday while asking the district administration in two districts in Uttar Pradesh to verify reports of shortage of oxygen in hospitals.

"How can we let our peo-

ple die in this way when science is so advanced that even heart transplantation and brain surgery are taking place these days," the court further asked.

A division bench of Justices Siddhartha Varma and Ajit Kumar made the observations while taking note of the death of five patients in the ICU of the new trauma centre of Medical College Meerut last Sunday and reports of two hospitals, one each in Meerut and Lucknow, allegedly taking their hands off the admitted COVID-19 patients only

for the reason that they did not get oxygen supply despite demanding it. "We find these news items showing a quite contrary picture to one claimed by the Government that there was sufficient supply of oxygen," the court said.

The judges also noted the "stories of hoarding of oxygen cylinders and harassment meted out to those poor citizens who were begging for an oxygen cylinder to save the life of their near and dear ones" by the police and district administration.

The court directed the dis-

trict magistrates of Meerut and Lucknow to enquire into the reports within 48 hours and submit their reports on the next day, May 7.

CCTV footage

The court also directed the State Election commission to produce the CCTV footage of the designated counting areas and centres in Agra, Lucknow, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Ghaziabad, Meerut and Gautam Buddha Nagar during the counting for the panchayat polls, which concluded on May 4.

HC seeks medical report of Stan Swamy on May 15

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday directed the Maharashtra government to submit the medical report of Father Stan Swamy, an accused in the Bhima-Koregaon

violence case, on May 15.

A Division Bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and Manish Patil was hearing an appeal filed by Fr. Swamy against the rejection of his bail by the special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court on

March 22 and the rejection of his interim medical bail plea on October 22, 2020.

Senior advocate Mihir Desai, representing Fr. Swamy, told the court that his client had been in jail since October 8, 2020, and that he had

been arrested two years after a raid was conducted in his house in Ranchi. Mr. Desai said even the charges against his client had not been framed yet. The court enquired if all the medical papers had been submitted.

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Chennai Metro Rail Limited entrusted with the implementation of Metro Rail Project requires efficient, experienced and competent person for the under mentioned posts on contract basis:-

Post Code	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Consolidated Pay (Per Month)	Min. Exp. (Yrs.)	Max. Age Limit (Yrs.)	Contract Period (Yrs.)
1	General Manager (Construction)	3	Rs.1,50,000/- to Rs.1,90,000/-	23	50	2
2	Additional General Manager (Safety)	1	Rs.1,20,000/-	17	47	2
3	Additional General Manager (Legal)	1	Rs.1,20,000/-	17	47	2
4	Additional General Manager (QA/QC)	1	Rs.1,20,000/-	17	47	2
5	Deputy General Manager (Finance & Accounts)	2	Rs.90,000/-	13	40	2

Note:

Age, qualification & experience stipulated above should be as on 05.05.2021.

The land of the rising sun

Anti-incumbency and strong support for M.K. Stalin helped the DMK win

Table 1: Level of satisfaction and vote choice

Level of satisfaction with the incumbent government	DMK+	AIADMK+	AMMK+	MNM+	NTK	Others
Satisfied	31	58	2	3	4	4
Dissatisfied	63	18	4	3	9	4
No response	51	32	6	2	6	3
Overall vote share	45	40	3	3	7	3

Note: Figures are percentages. | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys 2021

P. RAMAJAYAM, GLADSTON XAVIER, SANDEEP SHASTRI & JYOTI MISHRA

The Tamil Nadu voter has ushered in a change of guard. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)-led alliance was voted to power after 10 years of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) being the ruling party. In a largely bipolar contest, the gap between the two alliances was six percentage points. The two major alliances secured more than 85% of the votes polled. Nonetheless, the presence of two new alliances – the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK)-led alliance and the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM)-led alliance – secured between themselves 6% of the votes. The CSDS-Lokniti post-poll analysis provides some useful insights to explain the verdict of the Tamil Nadu voter.

Issue-based election?

Tamil Nadu has always seen the impact of the leadership factor in its elections. For the last five decades, the Dravidian politics of the State revolved around stalwarts like C.N. Annadurai, M. Karunaiyudhi, M.G. Ramachandran and Jayalalithaa. Other electoral issues such as unemployment, price rise and the like did not appear to directly determine voting choice in the State. This time around, while four of every 10 respondents (43%) preferred not to reveal the key factor that influenced their voting decision, development and linked issues seemed to be at the back of the mind of at least three of every 10 voters in the State (Table 2). Possibly, the absence of leader-centred politics has given way to issue-awareness.

Two-term fatigue?

While there was no single issue that overwhelmingly ap-

peared to determine voter choice, a strong anti-incumbency sentiment against the ruling AIADMK was visible. This could be garnered from the fact that close to half (49%) the respondents said they did not want to give another chance to the ruling party even as one-third (33%) were in favour of giving another chance to the incumbent government. The last time around (in 2016), the gap between those who wanted to give the ruling party a second chance and those who did not was much narrower (Table 3).

The anti-incumbency sentiment could also be read



from the figures of the level of satisfaction with the incumbent government. The anti-incumbency wave was clearly visible during the 2019 Lok Sabha election. Measures such as the announcement of farmer loan waivers and 10.5% separate reservation for Vanniyars possibly helped to marginally reduce the anti-incumbency sentiment. The AIADMK tactfully chose to ally with the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) in northern Tamil Nadu, which helped strengthen the fight against the DMK-led alliance. As compared to the mood at the time of the last Assembly polls, there is a decrease in the level of satisfaction with the incumbent government. The net satisfaction (fully satisfied minus fully dissatisfied) was four percentage points lower than the last time around (Table 3).

Data from the CSDS-Lokniti post-poll study indicates that among those who were satisfied with the incumbent

government, close to six of every 10 of them voted for the AIADMK-led alliance while three of every 10 gave preference to the DMK-led alliance. On the contrary, among those who were dissatisfied with the government, close to two-thirds (63%) voted for the DMK-led alliance and less than two of every 10 voted for the AIADMK-led alliance (Table 1).

Performance

Voters were also asked to assess the work done by the AIADMK-led government in the last five years. Overall, people gave a mixed opinion on this. On basic infrastructure in the State, the government was rated positively. On the other hand, when it came to the condition of fishing communities, condition of farmers, job opportunities and the law and order situation, the government scored negative marks. People were asked about their opinion on the party that would be best for the betterment of Tamil Nadu on a range of indicators. Respondents preferred the DMK over the AIADMK.

The Lokniti-CSDS post-poll survey has consistently sought to track the vote preference of the swing voters. This time around, more than two-fifths (42%) of the swing voters voted for the DMK-led alliance whereas a little over one-third (36%) of the swing voters voted for the AIADMK-led alliance. In the last Assembly elections, there was more or less an equal divide in the swing voters between the two major alliances (Table 4).

The leadership factor

Leadership appeared to have a limited role this time. The DMK alliance voters saw M.K. Stalin as the true inheritor of Karunanidhi's legacy while in the AIADMK alliance, the outgoing Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami did

Table 2: Factors influencing the decision to vote

Issue	2021	2016
Development	12	2
Vote for M.K. Stalin	5	--
To give BJP a chance	--	5
Poverty	4	4
Change/vote against incumbent	4	10
Government's performance	6	15
Corruption/scam	3	5
Unemployment	2	2
Law and order	3	1
Price rise	1	3
Agricultural crisis	2	3
Other	15	13
Can't say	43	37

Note: Figures are percentages | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys during the 2021 and 2016 Assembly elections

Table 3: Strong feeling of anti-incumbency

Chance to incumbent government	2021	2016
Incumbent government should get another chance	33	41
Incumbent government shouldn't get another chance	49	46
Level of satisfaction with the incumbent government	2021	2016
Fully satisfied	19	22
Somewhat satisfied	35	32
Somewhat dissatisfied	21	20
Fully dissatisfied	20	19

Note: Figures are percentages; the rest of the respondents did not answer the question. | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys during the 2021 and 2016 Assembly elections

Table 4: Party preference of swing voters

	Swing voters	
	2021	2016
Overall share of swing voters	51	50
DMK+	42	37
AIADMK	36	36
DMDK+ / AMMK+	3	8
Others	19	19

Note: Figures are percentages | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys during the 2021 and 2016 Assembly elections

not get the overwhelming support of its voters as represented by the legacy of Jayalalithaa. This could have been one key factor that swayed the trend in favour of the DMK voters of being the true inheritor of his father's legacy.

The election results were not determined by any single electoral issue. Voters were clearly in favour of changing the ruling party. The anti-incumbency sentiment in the State was strongly visible. The rating of the government on various development indicators was not satisfactory. Thus, the victory of the DMK-led alliance had a lot to do

with the anti-incumbency factor, dissatisfaction with the ruling parties' performance, and an endorsement of Mr. Stalin by the DMK voters of being the true inheritor of his father's legacy.

P. Ramajayam is Principal and Assistant Professor at Bharathidasan University Constituent Arts & Science College, Nainital, Thiruvananthapuram; Gladston Xavier teaches at Loyola College, Chennai; Sandeep Shastri is Vice Chancellor, Jagran Lakecity University, Bhopal, and the National Co-ordinator of the Lokniti Network; and Jyoti Mishra is a Research Associate at Lokniti-CSDS

BJP: a liability rather than asset

AIADMK seems to have miscalculated in allying with the BJP

SHREYAS SARDESAI

Apart from the fatigue of two terms and the public's general dissatisfaction with the State government on various counts, one of the major reasons for the AIADMK alliance's disastrous performance seems to have been the presence of the BJP in the alliance. The BJP, it seems, ended up being far more of an electoral liability for the AIADMK+ than an asset, and dragged their seat tally down. Not only does the election result bear this out, given that the AIADMK-led alliance did far worse in the BJP-contested seats than seats contested by its other constituents, the evidence from our post-poll survey also confirms this.

A negative sentiment

According to the Lokniti-CSDS post-poll survey, twice as many voters in the State held a negative sentiment about the BJP than a positive one. On being asked whether the BJP's rise will be detrimental or good for the State's social fabric, four of every 10 said it would be bad and less than two of every 10 said it would be good for the State. Four of every 10 felt it would not make a difference or refused to take a stand on the issue (Table 1). Significantly, not only was this apprehension about the BJP seen among the DMK alliance's voters, but also among AIADMK+ voters. Voters of most other parties and fronts (barring MNM+) held a similar opinion although their degree of opposition to the BJP varied.

The anti-BJP sentiment was also found to be quite widespread across all regions of Tamil Nadu with respondents in the Cauvery delta region expressing the strongest apprehensions about the BJP. The only region where the sentiment against the BJP was less intense was the western region (Table 2). This is also the region where the AIADMK alliance ended up doing much better.

Socio-demographics
The strongest apprehension about the BJP's rise was seen among Christians, followed by Dalits, Thevars and the upper castes. Muslims, however, were found to be

Table 1: Threat to social fabric

	Is the BJP bad or good for TN's social fabric?			
	Bad	Good	Doesn't make a difference either way	No response
DMK+ voters	45	13	28	14
AIADMK+ voters	32	25	31	12
AMMK+ voters	25	12	46	17
MNM+ voters	31	37	22	10
NTK voters	54	7	29	10
Other voters	43	18	28	11
Overall	40	18	29	13

Figures are percentages and may not add up to 100 due to rounding
Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll survey during the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections
DMK: Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam; AIADMK: All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam; AMMK: Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam; MNM: Makkal Needhi Maiam; NTK: Naam Tamilar Kazhagam

Table 2: Anti-BJP sentiment

	Is the BJP bad or good for TN's social fabric?			
	Bad	Good	Doesn't make a difference either way	No response
REGIONS				
Upper North	42	16	21	21
North Central	41	19	24	16
Cauvery Delta	50	17	26	7
West	23	26	47	4
South	44	12	28	15
Down South	45	11	26	18
LANGUAGE				
Tamil speakers	42	18	27	13
Non-Tamil speakers	32	17	37	14
CASTES AND COMMUNITIES				
Upper caste	41	18	20	21
Thevar	44	18	25	13
Edayar	30	17	32	21
Mudaliars	33	30	30	7
Vanniyars	38	26	29	7
Other OBC	38	19	30	12
SC	48	14	27	11
ST	29	17	14	41
Muslim	35	6	45	15
Christian	47	9	25	19
Others	26	13	21	40

Figures are percentages and may not add up to 100 due to rounding
Source: Lokniti-CSDS Post Poll Survey during the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections

FROM PAGE ONE

IPL-14 postponed indefinitely

Meanwhile, the BCCI, after the suspension of IPL-14, has reassured all its participants of a safe return home. The four contingents that are in isolation – Kolkata Knight Riders, Chennai Sup-

er Kings, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals – will have to clear three RT-PCR tests in six days. The Indian players of the remaining teams have started returning to their hometowns.

PM calls Governor over post-poll violence

Speaking to reporters after visiting the families of BJP supporters killed in Kolkata and Sonarpur in South 24 Parganas, Mr. Nadda said, "Those who cannot hear the cries of a wailing mother can only say that the killing of our supporters is a political gimmick. Intolerance, they name is Mamata. I want to assure the BJP workers of West Bengal that crores of BJP workers are with them." BJP supporter Abhijit Sar-

kar was killed at Beleghata in Kolkata, while Horom Adhikari was killed at Sonarpur.

Denying the allegations, Trinamool Congress leader Firhad Hakim said the BJP was trying to spread a false narrative when in certain places it was the Trinamool's supporters who were at the receiving end of the violence. "Three of our supporters have been killed in the violence," he said.

Supply oxygen or face contempt, HC to Centre

The Bench, which heard for nearly five hours the matter relating to the oxygen crisis and other COVID-19 related issues that Delhi was grappling with, said, "We see the grim reality of people not able to secure oxygen or ICU beds in hospitals everyday."

"We, therefore, direct the Central government to show cause why contempt not be initiated for not only non-compliance of our order of May as also of the order of the Supreme Court dated April 30. To answer the said notice, we direct the presence of Piyush Goyal and Sumita Dawra [senior Central government officers] tomorrow," it said.

On the submission of Additional Solicitor-General Chetan Sharma that the compliance affidavit of the April 30 order would be filed in the Supreme Court by tomorrow morning, the Bench said, "We fail to understand what good a compliance affidavit will do when, as a matter of fact, 700 MT of oxygen is not deli-

vered to Delhi. Even the earlier allocated 490 MT and revised 590 MT is not delivered." Mr. Sharma submitted that the apex court had not directed the supply of 700 MT of oxygen per day to Delhi. The court disagreed with him and said a plain reading of the top court's order showed that it had directed the Central government to supply 700 MT of liquid medical oxygen by making good the deficit.

The Bench noted that the apex court's order recorded Delhi government counsel's submission that as against the demand of 700 MT of oxygen per day, manufacturers have been able to supply only 440 MT. It said the apex court noted that Delhi's projected demand in the coming days would be 976 MT of oxygen.

After the court dictated its order, Mr. Sharma said he had taken the order and it may be uploaded tomorrow morning only. To this, the Bench said, "No, we will upload it today itself."

Foreign aid channelled to Central facilities

Also, a shipment from Kuwait arrived in India with 282 oxygen cylinders, 60 oxygen concentrators, ventilators and other medical supplies.

Out of the eight hospitals in Delhi, six that received the aid sent from foreign countries are run by the Central government. Delhi is one of the worst affected States hit by oxygen shortage, with the Central government and the Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi government sparring over the oxygen allocation. Oxygen allocation is being centrally controlled by an empowered group of officers.

The Lady Hardinge Medical College, Safdarjung Hospital, Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), National Institute of Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases in Delhi have

received the foreign aid, the Ministry said.

The 24 categories of items that have been received from foreign countries include BiPAP machines, oxygen concentrators and cylinders, PSA oxygen plants, pulse oximeters, drugs such as Flaviparivir and Remdesivir, PPE coveralls, N-95 masks and gowns, the Ministry said. The States and UTs that have received the items or are in the process of getting them are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, D&N Haveli, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Govt. gives nod for 5G trials

Stating that TSPs are encouraged to conduct trials using 5G technology in addition to the already known 5G technology, the statement said the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) has also approved the 5G technology, which was advocated by India, as it facilitates much larger reach of the 5G towers and radio networks. The 5G technolo-

gy has been developed by the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M), Centre of Excellence in Wireless Technology (CE-WiT) and IIT Hyderabad. With 5G technology data, download rates are expected to be 10 times that of 4G while giving up to three times greater spectrum efficiency. The trials will be on a non-commercial basis.

86 held in Sri Lankan waters

Indians intercepted while trying to enter the island nation: Sri Lankan Navy

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

As many as 86 persons from India, travelling on 11 boats, were on Tuesday caught in Sri Lankan waters as they tried to enter the island nation, possibly fleeing the ragging pandemic, the Sri Lankan Navy said.

"They were intercepted mid-sea and held there by the Navy. We immediately informed the Indian High Commission, asking them to make arrangements for the Indian Coast Guard or the Navy to take them back," Navy spokesperson Captain Invika De Silva told *The Hindu*.

When contacted, an official at the Indian High Commission here said there were "a few boats with Indian fishermen near the IMBL [International Maritime Boundary Line], which were stopped by the Sri Lankan Navy when they inadvertently drifted towards Sri Lanka".

While the Sri Lankan Navy said it prevented "illegal im-



No activity: Fishing boats in Pamban last month. Tamil Nadu is observing an annual 61-day ban on fishing to allow breeding of marine resources in the Palk Strait. ■ L. BALACHANDAR

migrants" from entering Sri Lankan waters, the Indian mission referred to them as "fishermen". "After they were told to return, they have gone back towards India. We continue to believe that the matters related to the fishermen of both countries should be dealt with in a humanitarian manner," the official said.

Details of where the 86 fishermen came from were

not made available. Tamil Nadu is observing the annual 61-day ban on fisheries to allow for breeding in the Palk Strait. During this time, mechanised boats from Tamil Nadu, which are accused of fishing in Sri Lankan waters, are usually off sea.

The Sri Lankan Navy said it has increased patrol along the island's north and north-western coasts to prevent "illegal migration".

The development comes days after two women and two children from India were arrested in Sri Lanka for entering the island nation illegally by boat, Captain De Silva said. "One of them was a Sri Lankan refugee who was living in India, and another was a Sri Lankan woman who was undergoing treatment there." Similar cases of refugees attempting to return to Sri Lanka by boat were also reported during India's first wave of COVID-19 last year.

In the past two weeks, the Sri Lankan Navy apprehended four Indian dhows with 21 people, carrying "smuggled dried turmeric, cardamom, other consumer goods", a press release said. "The Indian nationals and the dhows held in these operations were repatriated back to Indian waters, taking into consideration the prevailing spike in the transmission of COVID-19," according to the media release.



Farmers seen during the protest in New Delhi last month. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

send scores of its member farmers and farm labourers from Amritsar district on May 5.

Several groups of farmers are all set to leave for Delhi on May 5 from Amritsar," KMSC general secretary Sarvan Singh Pandher told *The Hindu* on Tuesday.

Mr. Pandher added that the BJP-led Central government should not remain under any misconception that the agitation would fizzle out.

Virtual conclave on career guidance to be organised

SRMIST, *The Hindu* to hold 15-part series

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) and *The Hindu* have organised a 15-part webinar series – SRM Virtual Conclave for Career Guidance 2021 – focussing on science, engineering and technology courses and their relevance to the 2020s workplace.

The first in the series, 'Helping Students Navigate Uncertainties during the pandemic', will be held on May 8 at noon.

The session will touch upon the anxiety and concerns arising from examinations being cancelled and postponed.

Four panellists

The session will include four panellists – Lakshmi Vijayakumar, founder of Sneha and head, department of psychiatry, Voluntary

Health Services; Nandini Raman, consultant counsellor, corporate trainer and columnist; and Prince Kalyanaraman, deputy director, student affairs, SRMIST.

Register for webinar

Radhika Santhanam, assistant editor, *The Hindu*, will moderate the discussion. To register for the free webinar visit <http://bit.ly/SRM-THE1> or scan the QR code.



INTERVIEW | TEJASHWI YADAV

PM must take responsibility for mess'

States are left begging for oxygen, testing kits & basic medicines, says RJD leader

SOBHANA K. NAIR

Amid the second wave of the pandemic, Tejashwi Yadav, Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly and RJD leader, speaks about the COVID-19 situation in the State, Opposition politics and the return of his father Lalu Prasad from prison.

If we go by the official statistics, the number of active COVID-19 cases and number of deaths in Bihar is lower than in many other States. The ground reports and the recent death of Bihar Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Singh indicate a different story. What is the reality?

■ Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has notoriously under-reported the numbers, be it the number of positive cases or deaths. But even if we were to go by the official statistics, it is alarming. For instance, in April alone 2.4 lakh new cases and 984 deaths have been reported with a TPR (test positivity rate) of 16.1%.

These are not merely numbers. These are 984 precious lives that have been lost due to the lack of proper treatment and medical infrastructure... Into the second year of this pandemic, Bihar is still struggling with the first step in pandemic management – testing. It takes seven to 10 days for the reports to come. We have the lowest percentage of vaccinated people in the country. And all this while, the Chief Minister is busy fudging the numbers.

Many experts have said that today's situation is a result of apathy towards medical infrastructure shown by successive governments. Aren't the Opposition parties, who have been in power in the previous years, equally to be blamed then?

■ This is a fallacious argument. In Bihar, the pandemic has spiralled out of control solely because of the apathetic attitude of the Nitish government. For a moment, even if I were to agree with your hypothesis, Nitish Kumar has been the Chief Minister of Bihar for the last 15 years. Why are the positions of doctors, nurses and other paramedics still vacant? Why don't we have enough beds? What has this government done in the last one year to augment its medical infrastructure?

There was enough warning about the second wave, yet the elections went on in four States and a Union Territory. In October, Bihar also had Assembly polls, where we saw you addressing tightly-packed public meetings. With hindsight, do you think if the Opposition parties had taken a united stand, these public meetings could have been avoided?

■ We were the first and probably the only political party to write to the Election Commission asking them to postpone the Bihar polls. We were mocked by the BJP-JD (U) and a few sections of the media too. Since it was the call of the Election Commission to hold the election, then as the

captain of the ship, he should also take responsibility for this mess. But again in a State like ours, even these limited resources allocated by the Centre have been poorly distributed and managed. The Nitish government has done absolutely nothing to ramp up medical facilities in the State.

It has been over five months now since Nitish Kumar took over for the fourth time as Chief Minister of Bihar. Tension between the ruling side and the Opposition has escalated. Last month, we saw the police entering the Assembly. How is this fourth term different from his previous tenures?

■ This one is an absolutely dictatorial government. What happened in the Patna Assembly is unheard-of. Lawmakers were thrashed and kicked around by the Patna police for peacefully protesting against the passage of the draconian Special Armed Police Bill in the Assembly. For this, they were beaten black and blue at the behest of Nitish Kumar. He is trying to implement the agenda of the RSS by altering the Constitution, which we shall vehemently oppose.

Your father, Lalu Prasad, is out on bail. Will he be returning to Patna and do we expect him to resume political activities?

■ At the moment, he is undergoing treatment at AIIMS and recovering at home. And he will definitely be returning to Patna once we consult his doctors.

Punjab farmers all set to head for Delhi borders

Bid to ensure strength of stir stays intact

VIKAS VASUDEVAN
CHANDIGARH

With wheat harvesting almost over in Punjab, scores of farmers and farm labourers are all set to "march" again to the State borders of Delhi on May 5 in a bid to ensure the momentum of the ongoing agitation against the Centre's farm laws stays intact.

The Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugrahan), one of the largest outfits in Punjab, and the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee (KMSC), a prominent outfit at the forefront of the ongoing farmers' agitation, have announced that farmers and farm labourers from the State will start moving in the coming days towards Delhi so that the number of protesters at the agitation sites keeps growing.

While the BKU (Ugrahan) is planning to send "big batches" of farmers after May 10, the KMSC plans to

'In re: distribution of essential supplies and services during COVID-19' before Justice Sharad A. Bobde had begun by drawing criticism. Senior lawyers went public to say that the Supreme Court's intervention may interfere with the efforts of various High Courts.

Following Justice Bobde's exit, the *suo motu* case went to a new Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud. The court immediately set the record straight by saying that it did not want to interfere with the High Courts' work, but wanted to supplement it.

The following days saw the court put the Centre on a clock. Most important, the Bench warned States of contempt if they tried to punish people for airing grievances.

The court also made it clear to a "hurt" Election Commission that it would not stop the media from reporting judges' oral remarks.

A bureaucrat who refused to be a rubber stamp

Jagmohan was J&K's Governor twice

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Jagmohan Malhotra (1927-2021), who served as bureaucrat and Governor, refused to be a rubber stamp and his two tenures as the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir remained the most controversial.

Widely known by his first name, he is among a very few bureaucrats to witness and work through the different epochs of India – beginning with the Jawaharlal Nehru period, the Indira Gandhi rule, the Sanjay Gandhi 'misrule' and finally Atal Bihari Vajpayee's new idea of India revolving around 'Hindutva', when he served as a Cabinet Minister.

Mr. Jagmohan served Delhi (twice), Goa and Daman and Diu as Lieutenant Governor. He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1971, Padma Bhushan in 1977 and Padma Vibhushan in 2016 for his contributions as a public servant.

However, it was Mr. Jagmohan's stints as the Governor of the erstwhile State of J&K, first in 1984 and then 1990, that till date remains the most enigmatic. He oversaw the toppling of the Farooq Abdullah government in 1984 and the installation of a non-Abdullah regime.

On one hand, the political class of Kashmir disliked him for the 1984 episode, but he earned the people's goodwill by focussing on road connectivity and development projects in 1986.

Mr. Jagmohan later defended his actions in his book *My Frozen Turbulence*

in Kashmir. "Acting in the overall national interest, the ideal Governor must display courage and vision at the time of a crisis. He should not act as a cipher, or as a rubber stamp, or as a foggy old man standing in a corner with a wooden face and stony eyes," he wrote, in the book.

It was this tough approach as a Governor that shortened his second term in J&K to just four months in 1990 under the V.P. Singh regime.

Mr. Jagmohan, however, emerged as a messiah for the cornered community of Kashmiri Pandits as an armed rebellion was escalating in the 1990s. He is believed to have arranged a safe corridor for the Hindu population out of the Valley.

However, this move was seen in Kashmir as a precursor to an all-out war against militants, sympathisers and anti-India protesters. What followed the migration of Pandits was an ugly massacre at Gau Kadal in Srinagar that left over 50 dead, just on the second day of his term in 1990. Similar incidents at Hawal, Zakura, Magharbal Bagh, etc., only resulted in his recall.

The question of leadership

While the leadership factor is generally important in Tamil Nadu, it was not central to this electoral result. When voters were asked about their considerations while voting, two of every 10 respondents said they voted for the chief ministerial candidate of the party compared to one-third (34%) of the voters who kept this factor in mind in the 2016 polls. More than half (53%) this time voted on the basis of the party. Stalin emerged as the chief ministerial choice for 36% of the respondents. A majority of the respondents thought Sasikala took the right decision to withdraw from the contest just before the elections.

Table 1: The true heir to Jayalalithaa's and Karunanidhi's legacy

True heir to Jayalalithaa's legacy	%	True heir to Karunanidhi's legacy	%
Edappadi K. Palaniswami	47	M.K. Stalin	78
O. Panneerselvam	9	M.K. Alagiri	3
T.T.V. Dhinakaran	4	M. Kanimozi	1
V.K. Sasikala	4	Dayanidhi Maran	0
Someone else	1	Someone else	0
No one	25	No one	10
No response	10	No response	8

Note: Figures are percentages. | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys 2021

Table 2: Chief ministerial choice

	CM preference
M.K. Stalin	36
Other DMK+ leaders	1
Edappadi K. Palaniswami	26
Other AIADMK+ leaders	10
Seeman	5
Kamal Haasan	2
T.T.V. Dhinakaran	2
Any other	3
No response	15

Note: Figures are percentages | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys 2021

Table 3: Sasikala's withdrawal from politics

Opinion on V.K. Sasikala's decision to withdraw from politics just before the elections	Overall	Among DMK+ voters	Among AIADMK+ voters	Among AMMK+ voters
Fully right	38	35	37	17
Somewhat right	23	21	29	15
Somewhat wrong	8	11	7	4
Fully wrong	5	5	5	17
Did it under pressure/compulsion	5	6	3	22
No response	21	23	20	25

Note: Figures are percentages | Source: Lokniti-CSDS post-poll surveys 2021

The caste calculus in DMK's win

Dalits, minorities and upper castes played a major role in the alliance's victory

P. RAMAJAYAM
JOYI MISHRA

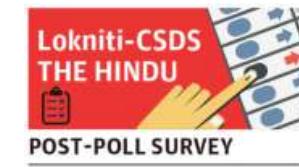
With the DMK-led alliance winning a two-thirds majority in Tamil Nadu, it may be useful to look at the caste calculus in the recently concluded Assembly election. The post-poll survey shows that the support of Dalits, minorities and upper castes played a major role in helping the DMK alliance win.

Dominant backward castes offered only lukewarm support to the DMK alliance. In southern Tamil Nadu, a majority of the Thevar vote (55%) was won by the AIADMK alliance, with only two of every 10 voters supporting the DMK-led front (19%). In the north, the AIADMK alliance, along with the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), secured a majority (54%) of Vanniyar votes.

Vote choice of various castes and communities			
Group	DMK+	AIADMK+	Others
Upper caste	47(12)	30(-17)	23(5)
Thevar	19(-21)	55(7)	26(14)
Udayar	38(-2)	32(-6)	30(8)
Mudaliars	43(3)	52(6)	5(-9)
Vanniyars	39(4)	54(19)	7(-23)
Mutharayar	26(-6)	45(-2)	30(8)
Gounder	35(-16)	59(16)	6(1)
Nadar	50(6)	36(-6)	13(-1)
Viswakarma	41(-1)	57(14)	2(-13)
Other OBCs	38(-4)	36(-6)	26(10)
Arunthathiyan	68(21)	25(-15)	7(-6)
Other Dalits	65(25)	30(-1)	6(-24)
STs	50(13)	40(-23)	10(10)
Muslim	69(20)	24(-18)	7(-3)
Christian	56(6)	38(3)	6(-9)
Others	52(15)	32(2)	16(-17)

Note: Figures are percentages; Change from 2016 in ()

Parts of northern Tamil Nadu also saw a polarisation of the Mudaliar and Vanniyar votes in AIADMK alliance's favour. However, for both social groups, it was not a



sweep for the AIADMK, as the DMK coalition got at least four out of every 10 votes.

The Dalit vote for the DMK-led coalition helped them consolidate in the north and offset the loss of the Vanniyar and Mudaliar support. In the west, the Gounder vote was firmly with the AIADMK front (59%). Here, the support of Arunthathiyan Dalits (68%), for the DMK alliance helped it garner votes and slash the winning margins for the AIADMK front. The support of the Nadars, the Devendrakula Velalars, and Christians helped the DMK-led coalition in the South.

Vote by Social Demography: Gender, Class, Education and Location

	DMK+	AIADMK+	Others
Female	45 (1)	41 (5)	14 (-6)
Male	46 (12)	38 (-7)	16 (-5)
Non-Literate	45 (19)	48 (-10)	7 (-9)
Upto Primary	55 (16)	39 (-7)	6 (-9)
Upto Matric	47 (5)	41 (0)	12 (-5)
College and above	39 (-1)	35 (0)	26 (1)
Rural	45 (4)	44 (4)	11 (-8)
Town	46 (9)	33 (-8)	21 (-1)
City	47 (-2)	43 (7)	10 (-5)
Poor	53 (16)	36 (-2)	11 (-14)
Lower	47 (13)	39 (-14)	14 (1)
Middle	44 (5)	40 (0)	16 (-5)
Rich	36 (-5)	44 (3)	20 (2)

Note: Figures are percentages. Change from 2016 in ()

The impact of social factors

The poor favoured the DMK front

JOYI MISHRA

However, the DMK alliance has improved its vote share among the non-literates and those with limited access to education. The AIADMK alliance was able to hold on to voters who are matric pass and those with access to college education.

Location, economic class
The DMK alliance performed much better in towns, increasing its share by 9% points. There was not much of a difference in the rural votes for both alliances. The AIADMK alliance improved its vote share among voters living in cities by garnering 7% more votes than in 2016.

Women voters
Data indicate that the women vote has shifted from the other towards the AIADMK-led alliance, enhancing its share of women voters despite the absence of Jayalalithaa.

A silent yearning for an alternative force?

Over half the surveyed voters say they want an alternative to the DMK, AIADMK

JOYI MISHRA

Tamil Nadu politics has typically seen a bipolar contest between two major alliances: the DMK-led and AIADMK-led formulations. Since the last Assembly poll in 2016, there has been a silent voice for a third alternative, especially after the passing away of both the political stalwarts of the State, M. Karunanidhi and Jayalalithaa.

During the 2021 Assembly election, the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK), Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) and Naam Ta-

Is there a need for a third political alternative in Tamil Nadu's politics beyond the DMK and AIADMK?

	Agree		Disagree		
	Fully	Somewhat	Somewhat	Fully	NR*
Overall	23	32	7	25	13
DMK+	19	33	8	27	13
AIADMK+	19	33	7	29	12
AMMK+	22	41	2	12	22
MNM+	23	35	3	34	6
NTK	56	18	4	13	9
Others	16	31	9	35	9

Note: Figures are percentages | *No response

milar Katchi (NTK) headed by T.T.V. Dhinakaran, Kamal Haasan and Seeman, respectively, secured close to 11% of the total votes polled in the State. Over half the surveyed voters (55%) agreed with the idea of a political alternative

to the two dominant fronts (23% fully and 32% somewhat).

However, one-third of the voters felt there was no need of a third force. Interestingly, voters who had voted for the NTK overwhelmingly supported the idea of a third alternative (56% fully and 18% somewhat). Six of every 10 of the supporters of AMMK and MNM+ also did so. It remains to be seen whether this sentiment is only a general desire for a wider pool of choices or an implicit warning about the firm bipartisanship within which the Tamil Nadu politics operates.



Incumbent CM Sarbananda Sonowal being welcomed by BJP supporters. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

Bengal BJP veteran targets leadership over loss

Former Meghalaya Governor Tathagata Roy questions candidate selection, role of central observers

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

Tathagata Roy, former Meghalaya Governor and one of most senior BJP leaders in West Bengal, targeted the party leadership on Tuesday through a series of social media posts. He questioned the party's selection process, including its choice of several actors as candidates, and accused the party leaders of not standing by supporters when they are under attack.

While Mr. Roy focused earlier in the day on the decision of the party to field Tollywood actors who were seen in public with a Trinamool Congress leader, he later highlighted the alleged attacks on party supporters by ruling party cadres and

Pointing out that all these actors were defeated, Mr. Roy asked party leaders Kailash Vijayvargiya and Dilip Ghosh why they were given the BJP ticket. Later in the day, he said BJP workers from Canning in South 24 Parganas are calling him to complain about their houses being set on fire and possessions being looted.

ed. "Calling Kailash Vijayvargiya, Shiv Prakash, Arvind Menon. Your duty does not finish as you've lost the elections. Strangely the karyakartas (workers) are asking me to come to their rescue. Not Dilip Ghosh, not any of the General Secretaries," Mr. Roy said on social media, adding that he had no official post currently in the party and was helpless in such a situation. Mr. Roy had expressed his willingness to work for the BJP in West Bengal even when he was Governor of Meghalaya.

While the BJP leadership did not respond to the barbs by the 75-year-old leader, Mr. Ghosh, the State unit chief, said that he would never desert the party supporters.

India reiterates need for global cooperation to beat COVID-19

Narendra Modi, Boris Johnson hold virtual summit

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday reiterated the need for international partnership to deal with the pandemic and called for stronger trade cooperation with the United Kingdom. This intent was expressed during the virtual summit meeting conducted between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Boris Johnson, which came hours after a number of Indian companies, including the Serum Institute of India, pledged major investment in post-Brexit U.K.

"Both leaders emphasised that global cooperation and solidarity are key to fighting the pandemic and achieving sustainable and inclusive recovery. They agreed to expand and enhance the existing U.K.-India vaccines partnership, highlighting the successful collaboration between Oxford

Boris Johnson, left, with Narendra Modi. ■ FILE PHOTO

Scientists see flaws in SUTRA's approach to modelling pandemic

Too many parameters, a constant that was inaccurate and calibration errors may have led to predictions that did not signal the catastrophic second wave

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

With close to 4,00,000 cases being added every day, questions are being raised by some scientists on whether a government-backed model, called SUTRA, to forecast the rise and ebb of the COVID-19 pandemic, may have had an outsize role in creating the perception that a catastrophic second wave of the pandemic was unlikely in India.

An official connected with the COVID-19 management exercise said, on condition of anonymity, that the SUTRA model input was "an important one, but not unique or determining".

The SUTRA group had presented their views to V.K. Paul, who chaired a committee that got inputs from several modellers and sources. "The worst-case predictions from this ensemble were used by the National Empowered Group on Vaccines and the groups headed by Dr. Paul to take measures. However, the surge was several times what any of the mo-

ders had predicted," the official said.

On May 2, the SUTRA group put out a statement, carried by the Press Information Bureau, that the government had solicited its inputs where they said a "second wave" would peak by the third week of April and stay at around 1 lakh cases. "Clearly the model predictions in this instance were incorrect," it noted.

Past its peak

SUTRA (Susceptible, Undetected, Tested (positive), and Removed Approach) first came into public attention when one of its expert members announced in October that India was "past its peak".

After new cases reached 97,000 a day in September, there was a steady decline and one of the scientists associated with the model development, M. Vidyasagar, said at a press conference then that the model showed the COVID burden was ex-



Emergency care: An isolation facility set up in a banquet hall in New Delhi. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

million symptomatic infections by early 2021, with fewer than 50,000 active cases from December. In October, at that time, there were 7.4 million confirmed cases of which about 7,80,000 were active infections.

Computational biologist Mukund Thattai, of the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru, in a Twitter thread on May 1 summarised instances of the SU-

TRA forecasts being far out of bounds of the actual case load.

"The so-called Covid 'supermodel' commissioned by the Govt of India is fundamentally flawed," he tweeted.

"Based on Prof. Agrawal's [Manindra Agrawal of IIT-Kanpur] own posts, it was quite clear that the predictions of the SUTRA model were too variable to guide government policy. Many mo-

dels got things wrong but the question is why the government continued to rely on this model, than consult epidemiologists and public health experts," Mr. Thattai told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Agrawal was among the mathematicians involved in developing the model. In an email to *The Hindu*, Mr. Agrawal said that the model, which had multiple purposes, didn't work well on a me-

tic of "predicting the future under different scenarios".

He said unlike many epidemiological models that extrapolated cases based on the existing number of cases, the behaviour of the virus and manner of spread, the SUTRA model chose a "data centric approach". The equation that gave out estimates of what the number of future infections might be and the likelihood of when a peak might occur, needed certain 'constants'. These numbers kept changing and their values relied on the number of infections being reported at various intervals. However, the equation couldn't tell when a constant changed. A rapid acceleration of cases couldn't be predicted in advance.

Danger of overfitting

Rahul Siddharthan, a computational biologist at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, in an email said no model, without external input from real-world data, could have predicted the se-

cond wave. However, the SUTRA model was problematic as it relied on too many parameters, and recalibrated those parameters whenever its predictions "broke down".

"The more parameters you have, the more you are in danger of 'overfitting'. You can fit any curve over a short time window with 3 or 4 parameters. If you keep resetting those parameters, you can literally fit anything," he said.

According to Mr. Agrawal, the factor by which reported cases differ from actual ones is a parameter in the model that could be estimated from just reported government data (covid19india.org), according to Mr. Agrawal. "I understand it may appear a bit mysterious, but the math shows how. This, in fact, is one of our central contributions," he told *The Hindu*. This has been described in a preprint research paper that has been available online since January.

(With inputs from Shubhadeep Desikan)

infected at that time. "I have strong reasons to believe now that the results of the first survey were not correct (actual infected population was much lower than reported). This calibration led our model to the conclusion that more than 50% population was immune by January. In addition, there is also the possibility that a good percentage of immune population lost immunity with time," Mr. Agrawal said.

In the SUTRA approach, the factor by which reported cases differ from actual ones is a parameter in the model that could be estimated from just reported government data (covid19india.org), according to Mr. Agrawal. "I understand it may appear a bit mysterious, but the math shows how. This, in fact, is one of our central contributions," he told *The Hindu*. This has been described in a preprint research paper that has been available online since January.

(With inputs from Shubhadeep Desikan)

Over 3.6 lakh new infections and 3,454 deaths reported

Maharashtra accounted for 14% of the fresh cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

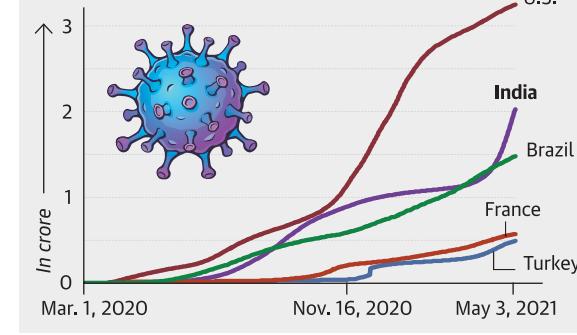
India reported 3,62,238 lakh new COVID-19 cases and 3,454 deaths until 11.30 p.m. on Tuesday. The country has so far reported a total of 2,06,37,870 cases and 2,25,840 deaths.

Maharashtra reported 51,880 infections, accounting for 14% of the new cases, followed by Karnataka (44,631) and Kerala (37,190). Maharashtra also recorded the most number of casualties (891) on Tuesday. Uttar Pradesh followed with 351 new deaths, while Karnataka registered 292 new casualties. As many as 3,15,665 new recoveries were recorded, taking the total to 1,69,16,517.

The figures do not include cases and deaths from Delhi, Sikkim and Ladakh. The data are sourced from the

On the rise

The chart shows the cumulative COVID-19 tally of the five countries with the highest case burden



health bulletins of the respective States and UTs.

India on Monday crossed 2 crore infections, becoming only the second country after the U.S. to cross the mark. On an average, nearly 47% of the world's cases were recorded in India as on

Over 16.6 lakh tests were conducted on Monday (results of which were made available on Tuesday), about 1.6 lakh more samples compared to the previous day.

Over 17 lakh doses were administered in the country in the 24 hours ending 7 a.m. on Tuesday.

Don't repeat RT-PCR tests on those positive: ICMR

It is also against tests simply for inter-State travel

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Citing the increased load on laboratories, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Tuesday issued an advisory on testing during

the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations advise against repeating of RT-PCR tests on those who have tested positive.

RT-PCR testing on healthy individuals undertaking inter-State travel may be completely stopped to reduce the load on laboratories, the ICMR said.

The ICMR recommended that RT-PCR tests should not

be repeated on individuals who have tested positive once through Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) or RT-PCR. It said no testing was required once a COVID-19 patient recovered and is discharged from hospital.

The ICMR suggested that States set up mobile testing systems. The advisory also said RAT should be upscaled to meet the demand and that

States should decide on the payment modalities.

The advisory said all those showing symptoms of fever with or without cough, headache, sore throat, breathlessness, body ache, recent loss of taste or smell, fatigue and diarrhoea during the current wave of COVID-19 should be treated as suspected cases of COVID-19 unless proven otherwise.

Army's Base Hospital faces oxygen shortage

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

The Army's Base Hospital in Delhi Cantonment was running low on oxygen after the Delhi government drastically reduced the allocation, Army sources said on Tuesday.

"Allocation for Base Hospital is done through the

Delhi government. The situation has arisen after the Delhi government cut down the allocation by almost one third," a source said.

Late in the evening, Raghav Chadha, national spokesperson of Aam Aadmi Party, said on Twitter that oxygen cylinders were sent to Base Hospital.

FAITH Born to Devaki

If this world is thought of as a lotus, then the connection between Lord Krishna and the earth may be likened to that between the Sun and a lotus. Krishna's birth took place in the East, the direction in which the Sun rises. So the sun-lotus analogy is apt. In fact, the word used for Krishna's appearance is Avirbhava, which means a manifestation. His birth on the earth was no ordinary occurrence. Bhagavata Purana refers to Krishna as Indu, which means the moon. This too is apt, because Krishna was born in the Lunar dynasty.

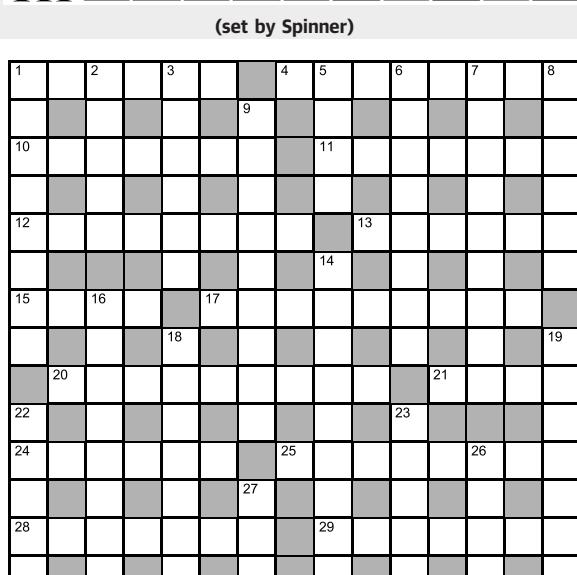
But there is a significance to His birth, over and above all this, and to merely compare His avatara to the appearance of the sun or the moon does not do justice to His intentions. In fact, Vaishnava Acharyas were not happy with seeing Him as just the Sun or Moon, explained M.A.Venkatakrishnan in a discourse. So what were these aims of His which we must pay attention to? Azhvars, while describing His avatara, say He was born. This is to indicate His spending months in Devaki's womb and then being born as any other child is. This was entirely His choice. He decided that it should be this way, and so to say He took an avatara and was like the Sun or Moon does not show His sasikalabha, which caused Him to spend months in the cramped space of a womb.

There was no need for the Supreme One to go through all this, but He went through it of His own accord. He wanted to be like other mortals, going through the same experiences and problems that they faced. In fact, in His case, He faced far more threats than any child ever would. Even when He was an infant, He was targeted by Putana, but killing her was literally child's play to Him. He was born like humans, lived among them, and showed that it was important to keep to dharma.

TH CROSSWORD + 13239

(set by Spinner)

Stay on the grid.
We are digital now. Come solve online!
<https://rgo.page.link/jjpTn>



- ACROSS**
- Unboundedly delighted by margins of election result (6)
 - 4 Auditape from band breaking social order (8)
 - 10 Small instrument basically emitting resonance of a higher frequency (7)
 - 11 Health professionals caught in spot, with first signs of oxygen running short (7)
 - 12 Playing clarion before break of dawn is hard (8)
 - 13 Woman nearly frames betrayer (6)
 - 15 Saw a youngster at heart, on vacation! (4)
 - 17 Increasing pressure troubled IPL, seemingly? No? Yes! (9)
 - 20 Extraordinarily, all men I described returning in a thousand years, many times over! (9)
 - 21 Reef taken for a ride endlessly (4)
 - 24 Indigenous experiment gets around a spot of bother (6)
 - 25 Where you might see a plate and a pitcher containing batter? (8)
 - 28 Upset by a stupid person, tattles now and then (7)
 - 29 More cheerful way to get the flame going (7)
 - 30 Wait by husband's manor, keeping child at heart! (8)
 - 31 Dreaded a freed criminal (6)
- DOWN**
- 1 Head of healthcare rebuilt a spoilt infirmary (8)
 - 2 Philosopher's squad ignores rejection upon rejection (5)
 - 3 Look forward to money getting invested into business leader's model (6)
 - 5 An informed deputy enabling leaders? (4)
 - 6 Cunningly erects laboratory's fences under the hood (8)
 - 7 Large number of people (not sadhus) let loose! (9)
 - 8 Finally gone – a clever, entertaining setter, undoubtedly! (6)
 - 9 Catastrophic matter put before specialist for remedy (9)
 - 14 Dubiously claimed, "On eating some bananas ultimately disease can be cured!" (9)
 - 16 Lies a bit about one's competencies (9)
 - 18 Satisfying when farmer gets money (8)
 - 19 Ordered a retreat from field even with men to spare? (8)
 - 22 Raid prematurely ended husband's transfer (6)
 - 23 After explosive gale, recalled European competition! (6)
 - 26 Think twice when axing leader for change (5)
 - 27 Achievement staying in safe atmosphere! (4)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13238

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

A	I	K	I	D	O	H	A	M	P	E	R
R	N	O	C	W	A	E					
A	S	I	G	R	U	R	L				
E	V	S	N	I	T	A					
E	N	M	E	S	H	E					
F	L	Y	B	Y	W	I	O				
U	S	G	E	R	O	D	E				
W	I	C	M	A	D	L	E				
E	C	C	T	N	E						
V	A	R	A	S	I	D	L	U	G	E	
V	N	N	O	O	A	L					
H	E	R	E	A	N	D	W	S	E		



Kawasaki Versys' engine is its crowning jewel, to say nothing of its impressive handling and comfortable seating

RISHABH BHASKAR

Every time I step off an adventure tourer, I am left with a sense of conviction about their aptness for our roads. They have the ability to gobble serious miles without compromising on comfort and also have a touch of sportiness sewn in. And that is where motorcycles like the Kawasaki Versys 1000 appear to make a strong case for themselves.

The Design

Firstly, it is the sheer size of the Kawasaki Versys 1000 that captures your attention, leaving you a little intimidated as well. With its new ZX-6R inspired face, the Versys 1000 is a little easier on the eyes, but it is still not what you would call pretty.

Step to the side and it becomes even more apparent that this motorcycle is built to chew miles all day long. The 21-litre tank, massive fairing and spacious seating are all indicative of the Versys' touring orientation. But there is no getting away from the fact that the bodywork is so huge that the relatively small 17-inch wheels make the motorcycle appear disproportionate, despite running sport-bike tyre sizes.

The other advantage of so much real estate is what is possibly the roomiest and comfiest rider and pillion seat in the class. The ergonomics are pretty relaxed, with a slightly pared-back footrest and an easy reach to the bar. That, along with the windscreens, takes the fa-

Calling adrenaline junkies and adventurers



KAWASAKI VERSYS 1000 SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	1043cc, 4 cyls, liquid-cooled
MAX POWER	120hp at 9000rpm
MAX TORQUE	102Nm at 7500rpm
WEIGHT	255kg
WHEELBASE	1520mm
GROUND CLEARANCE	150mm
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	21 litres
FRONT SUSPENSION	USD fork
REAR SUSPENSION	Monoshock
FRONT WHEEL	17 inches
FRONT TYRE	120/70
REAR WHEEL	17 inches
REAR TYRE	180/55



tigue out of spending a whole day in the saddle.

Engine & Performance

The Versys' engine is the crowning jewel of the whole package; it is the same engine that also powers the Ninja 1000SX, however, it makes less power and torque in the Versys. Nevertheless, 120hp and 102Nm are decent figures.

When you fire up the engine, the sweet hum at idle feels like the

calm before the storm. Once on the move, the loud intake howl is accompanied by a surge in acceleration that belies this motorcycle's size and weight. You get to unmentionable speeds in no time and the engine doesn't feel strained at any point. Slot the slick gearbox in sixth, and the Versys transforms into an effortless cruiser with enough juice in reserve to pull a quick overtake, sometimes even without down-shifting. Even in the city, the engine's tractability and heat management is impressive, making it capable of dealing with a city commute, if necessary.

The 2019 update to the Versys 1000 also brought in IMU assisted, three-step traction control (TC) and lean-sensitive ABS. Adding another layer of safety are the two power modes – Full and Low. The 'Low' mode chops power down to 75% and also softens the power delivery. This makes riding this big Kawasaki quite easy, whether in the wet or dry. However, we did find the TC to be too intrusive in some situations and it cuts power rather abruptly. A smoother throttle action does help to an extent, but Kawasaki needs to refine the system further so that it doesn't upset the chassis the way it currently does on loose and slippery surfaces.

Handling

It is not just the performance but also the way this 255kg motorcycle handles that impresses. Get past the initial trepidation of riding a tall motorcycle and you will be sur-

prised to see how well this motorcycle takes to the bends. There is oodles of grip and feedback through the chassis while the 17-inch wheels make life easy during quick direction changes.

The suspension does a pretty good job of absorbing undulations, and the ride quality over bad roads is comfortable enough despite the firm edge. Adjustability, however, is limited and one can tune the 43mm fork and monoshock for preload and rebound only.

For those wondering if they should wander off-road on this Versys, the motorcycle can only handle a mild trail. Because, the 17-inch wheels, fat tyres and 150mm of ground clearance aren't encouraging specifications to venture off the beaten path. The 310mm discs do a good job of hauling down the motorcycle to a stop while the ABS is well-calibrated to prevent unnecessary intervention.

Verdict

At ₹1.44 lakh, the Kawasaki Versys 1000 is nothing but a steal for the kind of performance it offers. Not to mention the sweet sound and character of an inline-four engine. In fact, at this price point, its biggest competition comes from its sibling the Ninja 1000SX. It may not have the ergonomics, suspension travel and all-day comfort of the Versys 1000 but it is more powerful and better equipped. That said, the Versys offers unbeatable value for someone looking for a supremely comfortable and fast road-biased touring motorcycle.

AUTO SNIPS



First batch of 2021 Suzuki Hayabusa sees great demand

Suzuki recently launched the 2021 Hayabusa in India at ₹16.4 lakh (ex-showroom, Delhi). Just days after the launch, the first batch of 101 motorcycles allocated for India have been sold out. Bookings for the 2021 Hayabusa are now closed, though deliveries of the first batch should begin around mid-May, the COVID-19 situation allowing. The new Hayabusa retains much of the visual identity, but it brings in a vastly improved electronics suite, tweaked suspension, better brakes and a two kilogram weight loss.



Harley Davidson Pan America 1250 price revealed

The new Harley-Davidson Pan America 1250 is priced from ₹16.90 lakh in India, an official statement by the brand has revealed. The adventure bike will be available in two variants, with the higher-spec Pan America Special costing ₹19.99 lakh (ex-showroom, India). Bookings are currently open. Powering the bike is a new 1,252cc, V-twin engine dubbed the Revolution Max. The unit makes 150hp at 9,000rpm and 128Nm at 6,750rpm. The engine is paired to a six-speed gearbox with a slipper clutch.



Roland Bouchara appointed CEO and MD for Stellantis in India

Stellantis India and Asia Pacific has announced key leadership appointments for operations in the region. Roland Bouchara has been appointed to the role of CEO and managing director for Stellantis in India, while Dr Partha Datta has assumed responsibility for engineering, design, R&D operations across the India and Asia Pacific region.

Bouchara, who had headed Citroen's India operations as senior vice president of sales and marketing since 2017, will take full responsibility for the Jeep and Citroen brands.

Pocket-sized performers

Hyundai Santro

Rating: 8/10

The Hyundai Santro's AMT unit is smooth and works well with the 69hp, 1.1-litre petrol engine. However, the engine feels weak and dated though it is refined. The Santro's cabin is well put together, quality of materials used also feels good and there is plenty of space on offer too. Depending on the variant there is plenty by way of equipment too. It is also well priced, compared to some segment rivals.

Price (ex-showroom, Delhi) ₹5.69 – 6.42 lakh



Compact and automatic – the best combination to face traffic congestion or parking challenges. These are the five best automatic hatchbacks in India just now...

RIVAN RS

Are you in the market for an automatic hatchback but are on a tight budget? We take a look at the best budget-friendly, automatic hatchbacks you can currently buy. These cars are best used for relatively urban commutes, where the automatic gearbox and smaller dimensions shine. With over eight options to choose from, we have selected the best five:



Datsun Go

Rating: 7/10

With the facelift in 2018, Datsun gave its hatchback a big shot in the arm with revised styling, a better-equipped and spruced up cabin, and more safety kit. Currently, the most affordable car in India with a CVT automatic, the Datsun Go feels smoother to drive than its competition, though the 77hp, 1.2-litre engine is rather gruff. Also, while the current Go is a significant improvement over its predecessor, it still falls short of rivals in terms of quality. On the plus side, the Go CVT is the most affordable car on sale in India with electronic stability control, which somewhat accounts for its relatively higher asking price.

Price ₹6.31 – 6.51 lakh



Tata Tiago

Rating: 7/10

The Tata Tiago is well-kitted, drives like a bigger car, looks attractive and is roomy to boot. However, the 86hp, 1.2-litre petrol unit is not the most refined or frugal around, and neither is the 5-speed AMT one of the slickest of its kind. Prices are also on the higher side of the segment. Nonetheless, the Tiago's safety and value for money proposition can't be ignored.

Price ₹5.99 – 6.85 lakh

Prices as on May 3, 2021

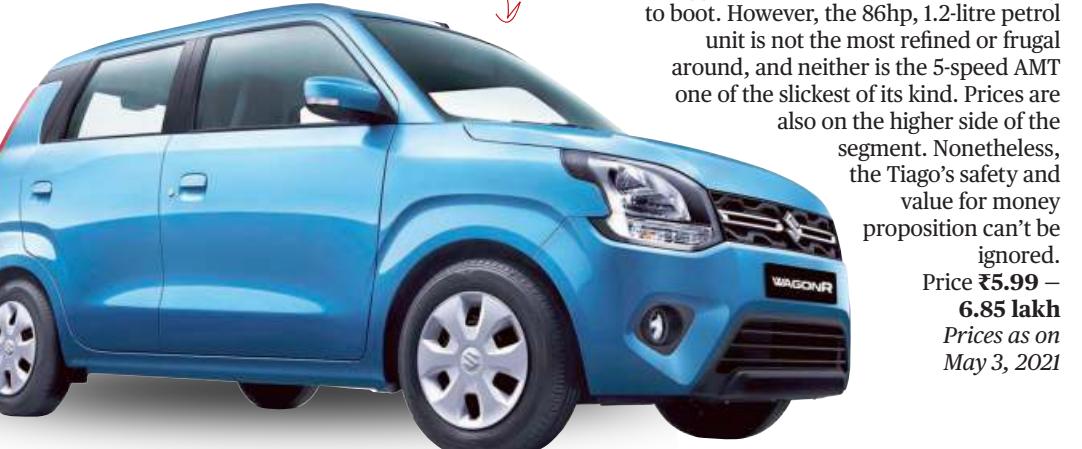


Maruti S-Presso

Rating: 7/10

The Maruti Suzuki S-Presso is a sprightly urban runabout, thanks to the peppy and frugal 68hp, 1.0-litre petrol engine and 5-speed AMT gearbox. The tall-boy approach has led to a significantly roomy cabin, though the exterior proportions with small footprint, high roof and narrow body makes the hatchback appear gawky, while the upright SUV-like styling may not be to all tastes. It also feels more basic compared to the other hatchbacks here, but then it is the cheapest car in this list.

Price (ex-showroom, Delhi) ₹4.90 – 5.06 lakh



Maruti Wagon R

Rating 8/10

The Maruti Suzuki Wagon R's compact dimensions make it city friendly. Its tall boy design and high set seats not only help liberate space in the cabin, but aid in easy ingress and egress too. The hatchback comes with two petrol engines – a 68hp, 1.0-litre and an 83hp, 1.2-litre – both of which get an AMT option. The stronger engine is our pick, as the 5-speed AMT is a good match to this unit and it has better performance too. The Wagon R's aggressive price point also makes it excellent value.

Price (ex-showroom, Delhi) ₹5.63 – 6.33 lakh



Vidyodaya, by Rohan George

When school went online last year, Rohan George, from Woodstock School, Mussoorie, would experience a little tech trouble once in a while. "Even though I had all these good systems in place, I still had days when my wifi was bad and I couldn't see my classmates. I wondered how children in villages were managing," says the class X student. He decided to help raise ₹50,000 for a few and set up a fund-raiser on Milaap.org. Rohan had been advised by Raj Kumar, who runs one of Landour Community Hospital's projects, on which villages and schools he could help. Elite Scholars Home and Dhana Inter College serving Rautu ki Beli, Airi, and Mathamali, in Uttarakhand, were selected. With the first round, he was able to set up 10 routers in the villages and schools, so teachers could upload lessons and children connected through their parents' smartphones could download them. Then, he heard that the schools were finding it difficult to pay the monthly bills, so he now has a second round going, for ₹40,000, of which a quarter of the money has been raised.



The kids are all right

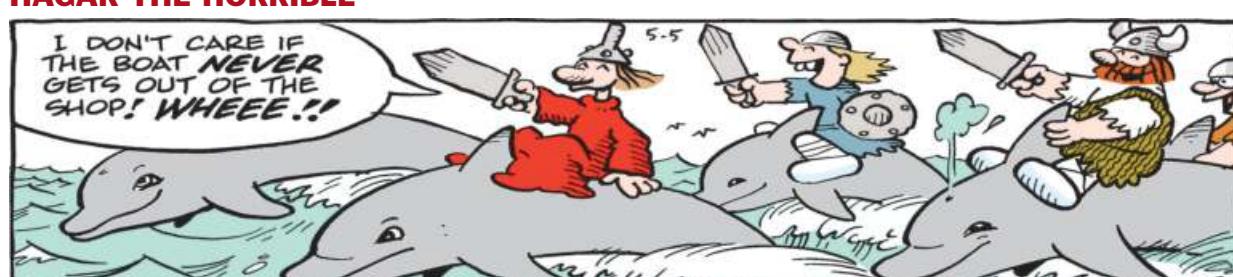
SUNALINI MATHEW AND SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

Ninan Christy teaches tribal students

When Ninan Christy, a student of Trivandrum International School, was on vacation in Wayanad, his aunt asked him if he would like to help tribal students between the ages of 10 and 12 with English and Maths. "They were having online classes and some of them were finding it difficult to understand the subjects. The classes were telecast on Victors TV and the reception was also not the best at places. The children were all from the locality and so they were able to come home for classes. That is how I taught five of them during the vacation," says 17-year-old Ninan (@ninanchristy). Since schools with the State Board syllabus have closed for summer, Ninan is also taking a break from his classes.



The little army School-going kids are stepping up to help with studies, internet connection and verification of resources ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**Poach Cafe****Hagar the Horrible****Hagar the Horrible****PEANUTS****TIGER****Tia Garg and Suhani Daruka founded The Uncut**

An organisation that arose out of the idea of parliamentary debating, The Uncut was formed by Tia Garg and Suhani Daruka, both students in class XII, in DPS, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi. "We realised that a lot of kids weren't aware of things happening right in front of them," so they began talking about everything from government policies to mental health, says Tia.

They were soon joined by five others, each heading a different segment (editorial, design, PR, for instance) and about 50 volunteers from across the country. When the current COVID-19 crisis went out of hand, they decided to help by identifying and verifying resources: spreadsheets containing information about telephonic consultations, medicine and meal availability, and links to other sites offering help. "We operate 24x7, and most of us are in the 14 to 18 age group," says Tia, adding that they could plunge into the work because board exams have been indefinitely postponed.

Usually people get in touch on Instagram (@theuncutteam), and they have received about 800 direct messages in the two weeks they have been active. Celebrities such as Sonam Kapoor, Varun Dhawan, and Alia Bhatt have put out stories featuring them.

The best part, she says, is the "satisfaction you get when you help someone. That really ups the morale of the whole team." There are trying times as well, like when they are not able to help. "We encourage team members to take a break. We'll do a chill Zoom session or a movie night." They plan to soon go live with a psychologist too.

LOSS, on canvas

Yasmin Zaidi's new artworks reflect on the pandemic, isolation and grief



SUNALINI MATHEW

her ground floor flat in Mumbai, where she has a little garden. "My mother was very fond of gardening," she remembers.

This time though, flowers have been used as a metaphor for the departed. Urdu poet Afzal Ahmed Syed's *Hamein Bahut Sare Phool Chahiye*, which seems to allude to war and talks about how we need a lot of flowers to cover our dead, played in her head as she painted.

"When I paint, personal things come in – a book by Annie (her daughter, a writer), but the whole world was becoming personal," she says of the shock waves that seemed to have affected everyone.

She hasn't thought of selling: "I hardly think of the paintings as belonging to me." She adds she wouldn't know how to, and even if she did, it would go to COVID relief.

Right now, she's recovering from a gall bladder surgery and is with her son in Pune. "I want to paint more, but I have run out of canvas, and it's difficult to get it right now," she says.

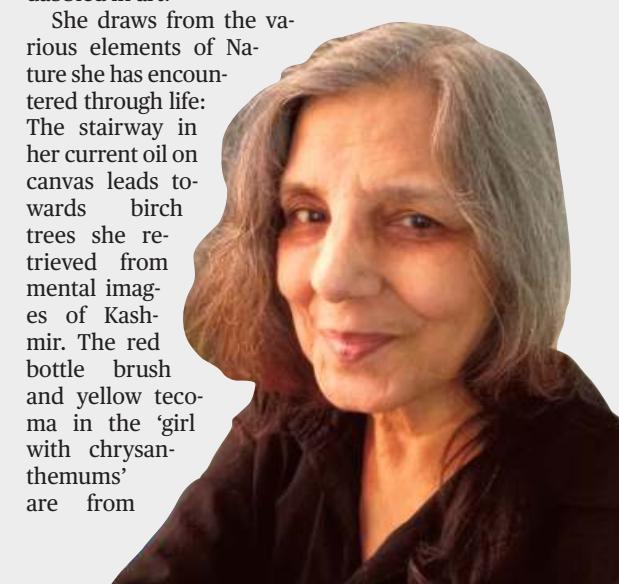
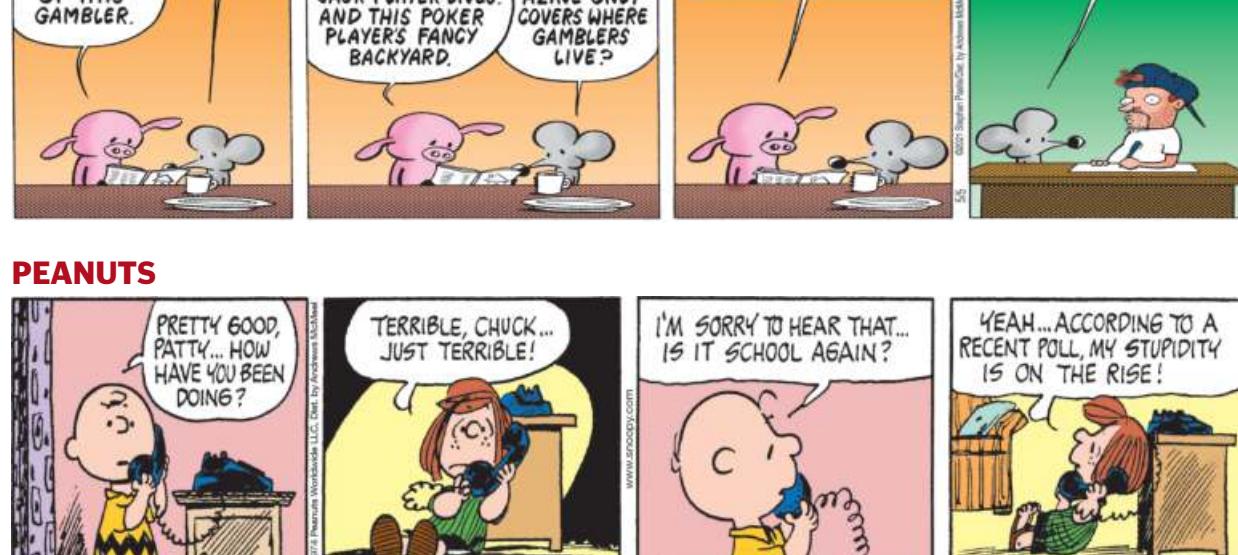
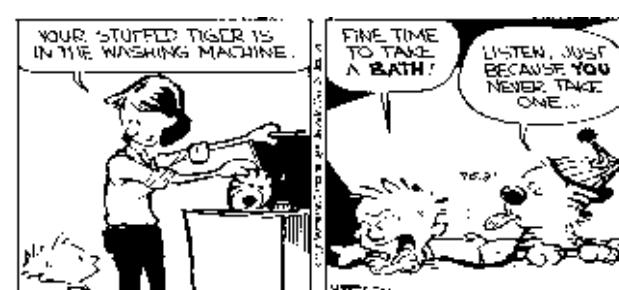
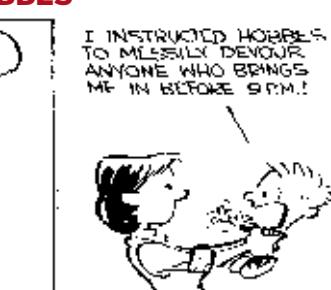
Loveliness and loneliness Yasmin Zaidi and her artwork (above) ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Aanya Malik started H3: Humanity Has Hope

While H3 (@humanityhashope_ on Instagram) was started by class 12 student Aanya Malik, who is the head of operations, she is joined by four others in Chandigarh and Delhi, who also hold roles such as head of design and head of marketing, and help people find medical resources. Their 50-odd volunteers, all between 10 and 19 years, work through the day, taking a break for a few hours in the early hours of the morning. While their group has had experience working on other projects, such as campaigns to protect stray dogs, the idea to set up an NGO (currently in their parents' names) was because of a long-term

vision of continuing "to work for society" even after school, as Vaanya Gilhotra, one of the core members, who is in class XI puts it. "We have two WhatsApp groups: one where we post unverified leads, and one where we post verified ones," says Vaanya, speaking about how they streamline processes. While many of them still have school, they work between classes or redirect calls when they are busy. "We do tell people to take a break, and take care of their mental health," says Aanya, adding that when people reach out to ask for information about crematoriums, it can get especially hard. They hope to get funding soon and expand their work to include dog adoption, the environment and serving the underprivileged.

She draws from the various elements of Nature she has encountered through life: The stairway in her current oil on canvas leads towards birch trees she retrieved from mental images of Kashmir. The red bottle brush and yellow tecoma in the 'girl with chrysanthemums' are from

**PEARLS BEFORE SWINE****PEANUTS****CALVIN AND HOBBES**

FDA to approve shot for adolescents

Roll-out of Pfizer vaccine among those aged between 12 and 15 could begin as early as next week

SRI RAM LAKSHMAN

WASHINGTON

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is set to approve the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech two-dose mRNA COVID-19 vaccine for adolescents aged between 12 and 15 years, according to reports in the American press.

The roll-out could begin as early as next week. More than 131 million shots of the Pfizer vaccine have been used to date in the U.S., and the extension to adolescents could assist with school reopening later this year.

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine – one of two mRNA vaccines (the other is from Moderna) that have Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) in the U.S. for use in people 16 years and older – is likely to be cleared for EUA for adolescents as early as this week, as per reports, which were based on comments from FDA officials. The day



New shield: A March 24 photo of a nine-year-old volunteer taking part in the Pfizer vaccine trial in Durham, U.S. ■ AP

after the FDA's expected approval, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will likely meet to expand the age range for its COVID-19 vaccine to include individuals 12-15 years of age is ongoing," Stephanie Cacchino, an FDA spokesperson, said, as per the *Washington Post*.

The FDA declined to put a timeline to the approval. "The FDA's review of Pfiz-

er's request to amend its emergency use authorisation (EUA) in order to expand the age range for its COVID-19 vaccine to include individuals 12-15 years of age is ongoing," Stephanie Cacchino, an FDA spokesperson, said, as per the *Washington Post*.

Moderna is also expected to release the results of a U.S. vaccine study on 12-17-year-olds in the summer. Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech trials for children 6 months and older are also under way. Another company, Novavax, which expects to seek approval for its vaccine in the second quarter of this year, has also

participated in a Pfizer clinical study, none who were fully vaccinated got COVID-19, compared to 18 cases in the group that got placebos, the company had reported in March.

Less susceptible

While children can get COVID-19, data available over the past year indicates that they are significantly less susceptible than adults. However, the proportion of children in overall infections has been rising in the U.S., partly because older adults are getting vaccinated.

In April, the government relaxed conditions for foreign vaccine use in the country, by permitting foreign vaccine manufacturers to conduct clinical trials in India within 30 days of being given EUA (rather than before the fact). Pfizer announced in February that it had withdrawn an earlier application for EUA in India where it had not met the drug trial requirements in place at the time.

expanded its clinical trials to include children in the 12-17 age group. Pfizer was seeking an "expedited approval pathway" for its vaccine in India, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said in a May 3 social media post. The vaccine is currently not approved for any age group in India. "Unfortunately, our vaccine is not registered in India, although our application was submitted months ago," Mr. Bourla said in the post.

After a welcome dinner on Monday focused on the nuclear programmes of Iran and North Korea, the Foreign Ministers opened formal talks at Lancaster House, a West End mansion, welcoming one another with COVID-friendly elbow-bumps and minimal staff.

The G7 devoted its first session on Tuesday to China, whose growing military and economic clout and willingness to exert its influence at home and abroad have increasingly unnerved Western democracies.

"It is not our purpose to try to contain China or to hold China down," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told reporters on Monday. "What we are trying to do is to uphold the international rules-based order that our countries have invested so much in over so many decades to the benefit, I would argue, not just of our own citizens, but of people around the world – including, by the way, China."

Mr. Blinken pledged "robust cooperation" with Britain in pressuring China over the Xinjiang region, where Beijing's incarceration of one million Uighurs and other Muslims has been

G7 seeks common front on China

First in-person talks held in two years

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

The Group of Seven wealthy democracies on Tuesday discussed how to form a common front towards an increasingly assertive China in the Foreign Ministers' first in-person talks in two years.

Backing U.S. President Joe Biden's calls for a deeper alliance of democracies, host Britain invited guests, including India, South Korea and Australia, for talks in central London stretched out over three days.

But in line with the Biden administration, which has shifted the tone if not substance of former President Donald Trump's hawkish stance on China, Mr. Raab also called for "finding constructive ways to work with China in a sensible and positive manner where that's possible" – including on climate change. "We want to see China stepping up to the plate and playing its full role," Mr. Raab said.

The nations of the G7 – which also include Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan – mostly share concerns about China but some have different approaches.

Japan has historic tensions with China but has held off on joining Western nations with sanctions, wary of inflaming relations with its trading partner.

Italy has been seen as one of the most Beijing-friendly nations in the West, in 2019 signing up for the Belt and Road Initiative. But Rome joined EU peers in March in summoning the Chinese Ambassador in a row triggered by concerns over treatment of the Uighurs.

The Ministers later held a session on the spiralling crisis in Myanmar and were also due to discuss Russia, Libya, Syria, and climate change among other topics.

Fighting erupts as U.S. troops start leaving Afghanistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KANDAHAR

Thousands of Afghans were forced to flee homes as fierce fighting erupted between government forces and the Taliban in a southern province after the U.S. military began withdrawing its remaining troops from Afghanistan, officials said on Tuesday.

Afghan forces pushed back insurgent attacks on multiple checkpoints in the past 24 hours in the province of Helmand, where the U.S. military on Sunday handed over base to government forces as part of its formal pullout that began on May 1.

U.S. officials on Tuesday said they had completed 2%-6% of withdrawal from Afghanistan, with the equivalent of 60 cargo planes of material so far removed ahead of the September deadline.

About 1,000 families had fled their homes to escape the fighting that erupted on the outskirts of Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand, and other parts of the province, said Sayed Mohammad Ramin, the region's director for refugees. He said the families had taken refuge in Lashkar Gah.

Fighting also erupted in several other provinces.

The U.S. has downplayed the latest fighting and said the withdrawal process was unaffected as it removes its final 2,500 troops from the country.

"We've seen nothing thus far that has affected the drawdown, or had any significant impact on the mission at hand in Afghanistan," U.S. Department of Defence spokesman John Kirby said on Monday.

Biden quadruples Trump refugee cap after backlash

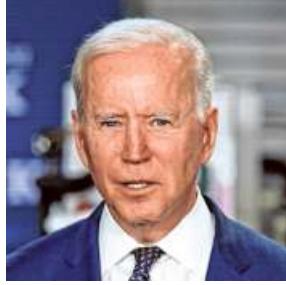
He faced blowback for delay in replacing the ceiling set by his predecessor

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden formally raised the nation's cap on refugee admissions to 62,500 this year, weeks after facing bipartisan blowback for his delay in replacing the record-low ceiling set by former President Donald Trump.

Refugee resettlement agencies have waited for Mr. Biden to quadruple the number of refugees allowed into the United States this year since February 12, when a presidential proposal was submitted to Congress saying he planned to do so.

But the presidential deter-



Joe Biden

mination went unsigned until Monday. Mr. Biden said he first needed to expand the narrow eligibility criteria put in place by Mr. Trump that had kept out most refugees. He did that last month in an emergency determination. But it also stated that Mr. Trump's cap of up to 15,000 refugees this year "remains justified by humanitarian concerns and is otherwise in the national interest," indicating that Mr. Biden intended to keep it.

That brought sharp push-back for not at least taking the symbolic step of authorising more refugees to enter

would not hit the 62,500 mark Mr. Biden had previously outlined.

In the end, Mr. Biden returned to that figure. Mr. Biden said he received additional information that led him to sign the emergency presidential determination setting the cap at 62,500.

"It is important to take this action today to remove any lingering doubt in the minds of refugees around the world who have suffered so much, and who are anxiously waiting for their new lives to begin," Mr. Biden stated before signing it. He said Mr. Trump's cap "did not reflect America's values as a nation that welcomes and supports refugees".

But he acknowledged the

"sad truth" that the U.S. would not meet the 62,500 cap by the end of the fiscal year in September, given the pandemic and limitations on the country's resettlement capabilities – some of which his administration has attributed to the Trump administration's policies to restrict immigration.

The White House insisted it was unable to act until now because the administration was being taxed by a sharp increase in unaccompanied young migrants from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras arriving at the southern U.S. border, though any link between the border and the government's decision on refugees was not immediately clear.

But he acknowledged the



Fatal crash: Rescue workers moving a train carriage from the accident spot in Mexico City on Tuesday. ■ REUTERS

23 killed, 79 injured in Metro overpass collapse in Mexico

'A support beam gave way as a train was passing'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO CITY

An elevated section of the Mexico City Metro collapsed and sent the train plunging toward a busy boulevard late on Monday, killing at least 23 people and injuring at least 79, officials said.

Rescuers found four bodies inside a carriage that was dangling from the overpass but were unable to remove them. It was not clear if those dead were included among the toll of 23. A crane carefully lowered the car to the ground on Tuesday.

Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum said one of the concrete beams collapsed as a train passed over it about 10:30 p.m. in one of the deadliest episodes in the history of the city's subway system, which is

among the world's busiest. "The cause of the collapse of the beam must be established through an expert investigation," she said.

Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary Marcelo Ebrard called the collapse "the most terrible accident we have ever had in mass transportation." Mr. Ebrard was Mexico City's Mayor from 2006 to 2012, when the affected line was built.

Ms. Sheinbaum said 77 of the injured were hospitalised, adding that children were among the dead.

The overpass was about 5 meters above the road in the borough of Tlalnepantla, but the train ran above a concrete median strip, which apparently lessened the casualties among motorists.

Devotees defy COVID-19 ban in Pakistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LAHORE

Thousands of Shia Muslim devotees – many not wearing masks – gathered in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore for a religious procession on Tuesday, fanning fears about the spread of the coronavirus.

The federal government had issued a notice banning mass gatherings commemorating the death of Prophet Muhammad's companion and son-in-law Imam Ali, but local negotiations with religious leaders failed.

"I have attended this procession every year for as long as I can remember," said Ali Kazmi, 28, who took part in Lahore, where officials estimated between eight and ten thousand worshippers participated. "They just try to stop Shia mourning ceremonies and processions using different excuses."

Members of the Shia sect make up around 20% of the Islamic republic's 220 million population. Smaller processions were also held in major cities across the country.

Pakistan is struggling to contain a third wave of infections, with more than 8,00,000 cases and 18,000 deaths declared.

Far-right crimes spike in Germany

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BERLIN

The number of crimes committed by right-wing extremists in post-war Germany jumped to its highest level ever in 2020, according to official figures released on Tuesday. The police recorded

23,604 crimes of a far-right nature last year, a jump of over 5% on the previous year, and the highest figure since records began in 2001.

"Right-wing extremism remains the biggest threat to our country," said Interior Minister Horst Seehofer.

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD (A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

No. 49, 4th & 5th Floor, East Wing, Khanjia Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560001. Phone No. 080-40931272 Website : www.kiadb.in email: cdoce1@kiadb.in or jdtp@kiadb.in

Tender Notification No. IADB/ENGG/EIA/EC/ETND-EC-06/1301/2021-22 Dated: 04-05-2021

NOTICE INVITING TENDER TO PROVIDE PROJECT CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR OBTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE (EC) (Through GoK e-Procurement portal only)

KIADB is inviting tenders under two cover systems for providing project consultancy services for preparing EIA, SIS studies etc., to obtain Environmental Clearance (EC) form State Level Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) and Consent for Establishment (CFE) from Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) and Half yearly compliance report to be submitted as per the statute for EC & CFE conditions, for 3 years for the proposed KIADB Industrial Areas Projects. The firms/Consultancy Companies/ Organisations who are approved as Accredited Consultants in the accredited list of Ministry of Environment and Forest, New Delhi are eligible to participate in this tender.

SL. No.	Proposed Name of the New Industrial Areas	Approx. Extent
1	Obla pura Industrial Area, Doddachannhalli, Adihosahalli, Mavinakomanahalli, Karehalli, Doddabele and Maddenahalli Villages, Thyamangondlu Hobli, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.	858.443 Acres (347.54 Ha)
2	Vemagal 2nd Phase Industrial Area, Harjenahalli, Gudigondanahalli, Malliyappanahalli, Kurugal Villages, Vemagal Hobli, Kolar Taluk, Kolar District	511.3 Acres (206.91Ha)
3	Bavanahalli Industrial Area, Bavanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Maluru Taluk, Kolar District.	761.03 Acres (307.97 Ha)

Applicants may download bidding documents from the e-procurement portal <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>

Scheduled dates are as follows:

- Last date to receive pre bid Queries: **17-05-2021**, up to **5.00 PM**.
- Pre bid meeting will be held on : **24-05-2021 at 11.30 AM**.
- Deadline for submission of Technical and financial bids is **07-06-2021 up to 4.00 PM**.
- Time and date of opening Technical bids is on **09-06-2021 after 11.30 AM**.

Sd/- Chief Engineer-2
KIADB, Bengaluru

DIPR/DDU/325/AKAR/2021-22

Covid-19 - DON'T SPREAD RUMOURS, ACT RESPONSIBLY, AVOID INFECTION-NOT THE INFECTED.



ODISHA LIVESTOCK RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY (OLRDS)

OBPI CAMPUS, BHUBANESWAR-751003

Web site-www.olrds.nic.in

Email:olrdsah@gmail.com

EoI No. 01/ OLRDS Date 05.05.2021

The Chief Executive Officer, Odisha Livestock Resources Development Society (OLRDS) invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from the intending firms/ organizations / Agencies for supply of 5.5 lakh doses approximately Sex Sorted Semen for genetic improvement of Cattle for the State of Odisha in phased manner during the year 2021-22. The details of the Expression of Interest (Non-transferable) as well as terms and conditions and information docket are available on the OLRDS website www.olrds.nic.in. Interested parties are requested to download the required documents and submit their response to the undersigned at the above mentioned address along with the cost of the EOI document of Rs.11800/- in shape of Bank Draft drawn in favour of the CEO, OLRDS payable at Bhubaneswar.

MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	48,254	-0.95
US Dollar	73.85	0.14
Gold	46,758	0.38
Brent oil	68.55	1.33

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	768.75	7.35
Asian Paints	2587.15	5.00
Axis Bank	700.35	-2.40
Bajaj Auto.	3830.35	-21.50
Bajaj Finserv	10986.45	-55.25
Bajaj Finance	5615.75	64.60
Bharti Airtel	552.45	-6.40
BPLC	421.45	5.45
Britannia Ind	3435.85	-3.40
Cipla	878.45	-31.75
Coal India	132.80	0.60
Divis Lab	3985.35	-88.65
Dr Reddy's Lab	5067.25	-18.70
Eicher Motors	2368.00	-28.25
Grasim Ind	1415.95	-1.40
HCL Tech.	900.95	-6.75
HDPC	2377.20	-41.30
HDFC Bank	1388.35	-26.10
HDFC Life	667.85	-4.05
Hero MotoCorp	2776.75	-16.50
Hindalco	362.55	-7.40
Hind Unilever	2407.65	-0.35
ICICI Bank	591.55	-5.20
IndusInd Bank	910.15	-3.45
Infosys	1329.40	-22.65
Indian Oil Corp	91.40	-0.05
ITC	199.60	-1.35
JSW Steel	715.40	-7.85
Kotak Bank	1732.65	7.20
L&T	1337.60	-4.90
M&M	741.15	-11.80
Maruti Suzuki	6508.25	-89.60
Nestle India Ltd.	16546.60	39.85
NTPC	103.75	-0.50
ONGC	109.65	1.95
PowerGrid Corp	218.05	-2.75
Reliance Ind	1916.60	-42.45
SBI Life	982.90	24.30
State Bank	351.50	0.90
Shree Cement	27753.30	-236.55
Sun Pharma	645.15	-14.05
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	645.25	-31.85
Tata Motors	289.45	-3.55
Tata Steel	1063.85	-0.90
TCS	3049.75	12.75
Tech Mahindra	960.40	2.70
Titan	1402.90	-21.05
UltraTech Cement	6296.45	-53.70
UPL	611.25	-6.55
Wipro	481.95	-5.40

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 04		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.72	74.04
Euro	88.86	89.25
British Pound	102.26	102.71
Japanese Yen (100)	67.35	67.65
Chinese Yuan	11.38	11.43
Swiss Franc	80.80	81.16
Singapore Dollar	55.37	55.62
Canadian Dollar	59.94	60.23
Malaysian Ringgit	17.95	18.04

Source: Indian Bank

Lockdowns to impact production: Maruti

NEW DELHI
Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) expects some impact on its production if lockdowns and curfews continue amid the second wave of COVID-19. PTI

Infosys, Mphasis to add U.K. jobs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU
Infosys said it plans to create 1,000 digital jobs in the U.K. in the next 3 years.

The new recruits would be scheduled to join Infosys' design studio in Shore-ditch, innovation centre in Canary Wharf, and proximity centres in Nottingham.

"While the talent gap has been looming, the events of the past year have exacerbated the need for vital digital skills as businesses have rapidly accelerated their digital transformation," CEO Salil Parekh said.

Separately, Mphasis said it is expanding its footprint in the U.K. by establishing a nearshore centre, outside of London. The IT solutions provider expects to create close to 1,000 U.K. jobs. (With PTI inputs)

MFIs flag rural borrower distress to RBI

Lenders plead for central bank relief, say small-ticket, rural customers hit harder by second wave

VIKAS DHOOT

NEW DELHI

The pandemic's second wave is affecting rural households far more than last year, with a large number of microfinance staffers, borrowers and their families hit by COVID-19, impacting many more livelihoods than during the first wave.

The trend, which poses a higher risk of loan delinquencies if the rising infections don't taper off by the end of May along with mobility restrictions, was flagged by microfinance institutions (MFIs) to the Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday, according to two industry representatives who attended the meeting.

Urge the central bank to grant forbearance for borrowers unable to pay instalments with some flexibility



Hunkering down: Many borrowers intend to conserve cash to tide through the phase, says MFI executive. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

for the MFIs to restructure affected loans, industry representatives observed that while collections had been normal till early April -- in the wake of the gradual recovery -- they had slowed

down since then.

"A larger proportion of borrowers and their families are affected by the illness, even in rural areas, in contrast to last year," an industry executive said, speaking on

condition of anonymity. "Many of our borrowers' livelihoods are getting affected and they intend to conserve cash to tide through this phase," he added.

The official said that a significant section of MFI staff working with borrowers had also been infected, triggering fear among employees.

"Instead of an across-the-board moratorium... it would be better to give MFIs freedom to restructure loans based on requests without attracting the provisioning norms," said another MFI official. "We have suggested to the RBI to consider this, while invoking relief provisions that are applied for natural calamities," he said.

In a statement after Monday's meeting, the RBI said that the Governor had discussed the current economic

situation and the outlook on potential stress on MFIs' balance sheets, as well as credit flows to their borrowers.

ICRA cautioned on Tuesday that MFIs face a 'high risk' perception amid the sharp surge in infections. Though some States have classified the industry as an essential activity, borrowers' cash flows may be affected due to restrictions.

"Rapidly rising infections and mobility restrictions are... impacting MFIs' field operations," noted Sachin Sachdeva, sector head, financial sector ratings at ICRA. "Consequently, the industry is witnessing a reduction in collections," he said.

"We estimate a sequential drop of 8%-10% in collections in April 2021 and the same may dip further," Mr. Sachdeva cautioned.



Hope lingers: India has the best growth prospects, relative to peers at similar development levels. ■ S. R. RAGHUNATHAN

Fiscal metrics to stay weak on COVID: S&P

FY22 GDP impact may be 100-300 bps'

REUTERS

MUMBAI

An ongoing second wave of COVID-19 infections in India could hurt its near-term economic recovery and possibly diminish growth for the full year, S&P Global Ratings said on Tuesday.

"India's COVID wave will inevitably hit the recovery and could push growth below 10%," said Shaun Roache, chief economist, Asia Pacific at S&P.

"The longer it takes to regain control, the greater the permanent damage, especially as policy space is limited."

With 3.45 million active cases, India recorded 357,229 new infections over the last 24 hours, while deaths rose 3,449 for a toll of 222,408, health ministry data showed. Experts said actual numbers could be five to 10 times higher.

"In a scenario wherein Myanmar is classified as a sanctioned country under the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), or if OFAC opines that the project violates the current sanctions, (Adani Ports) plans to abandon the project and write down the investment," the company said in a filing to exchanges on Tuesday.

U.S. sanctions may spur Adani to exit Myanmar

Ports firm had won a terminal project

REUTERS

CHENNAI

Indian shares ended at their lowest level in more than a week on Tuesday, dragged by heavyweight financials, energy and IT stocks, as domestic coronavirus cases crossed the grim milestone of 20 million.

The NSE Nifty 50 index dropped 0.94% to 14,496.5, while the benchmark S&P BSE Sensex closed 0.95% lower at 48,253.5, after swinging in choppy trading for most of the session.

Reliance Industries Ltd. and top lender HDFC Bank Ltd. were the biggest drags on the benchmark indices, falling 2.2% and 1.9%, respectively.

OFAC, part of the U.S.

Treasury Department, administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions based on the country's foreign policy. A military coup in Myanmar on February 1 and an ensuing crackdown on mass protests has drawn sanctions on military-controlled entities.

Adani Ports last year won a bid to build and operate Yangon International Terminal. An Australian human rights group in March released a report citing documents purporting to show that an Adani unit will pay up to \$30 million in land lease fees for the project to the Myanmar Economic Corporation, which has been sanctioned by the U.S.

भारत सरकार / Government of India

परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग / Department of Atomic Energy

नाभिकीय ईंधन समिश्र / Nuclear Fuel Complex

सिविल अग्नियंत्रिकी भारत, द्वितीय तल, सारथी नवन / Civil Engineering Division, 2nd Floor, Sarathini Building

ई-सिविल इंजीनियरिंग और डिजिटल एडवाइजरी, हैदराबाद, ECL Post, Hyderabad-500 062

(an ISO 9001, ISO 4001 & OHSAS 18001 Organisation)

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना NOTICE INVITING TENDERS TENDER NOTICE NO.C/1240/2021 to 1242/2021

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, अंतर्राष्ट्रीय हेल्पर्स के माध्यम से समाज और प्रशासन अनुभव रखने वाले प्राक्तं एकेडेमी से निर्वाचित कार्य हैं।

एकल / दो चरण प्राप्ति में नद निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। | On behalf of President of India, on line (e-tender) Single part (for sl no 3) and Two part (for sl no 1 & 2) item rate tenders are invited from competent and well experienced eligible contractors for the following works.

SL No.	एकाई/टी रिक्विरी नंबर	कार्य का नाम	अनुमति लागत	निःशुल्क देखने के लिए निविदा करने के अवधि	प्रस्तुत करने की देखने के लिए निविदा करने के अवधि	हार्ड प्रिंटिंग को प्रस्तुत करने की देखने की अवधि
1	C/1240/2021	Supply, laying and construction for raw water pipeline from RR site to NFC-Kota Township area for Nuclear Fuel Complex at Rawatbhata, Kota, Rajasthan	32 crore	03.05.2021 to 22.05.2021	17.06.2021	23.06.2021 Envelope-I
2	C/1241/2021	NFC Kota UOC Containers - Site Grading and Civil Works for Construction of Platform for stacking UOC Containers at NFC, Rawatbhata.	7.72 crore	06.05.2021 to 27.05.2021	05.06.2021	12.06.2021 Envelope-I
3	C/1242/2					

How the Indian Premier League bubble burst – and what's next

The 2021 edition, beset by COVID fears on Monday, was postponed indefinitely after more positive tests on Tuesday

IPL 2021

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

With the COVID-19 virus being detected in four biosecure IPL bubbles, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had no option but to indefinitely postpone the 2021 edition of the T20 league on Tuesday.

"These are difficult times, especially in India and while we have tried to bring in some positivity and cheer, it is imperative that the tournament is now suspended and everyone goes back to their families and loved ones in these trying times," read a statement issued by IPL on Tuesday morning.

Monday had served a severe warning. The match bet-



ween Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bangalore was called off after two KKR players – Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier – tested positive for COVID-19.

In addition, at least two members of the Chennai Super Kings entourage, including bowling coach L. Balaji, were confirmed to have contracted the virus.

The final straw, however, was when Sunrisers Hyderabad wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha and Delhi Capitals leg-spinner Amit Mishra were diagnosed COVID-19 positive on Tuesday. It meant every member of four of the eight participating franchises had to serve at least a six-day iso-

lation period. As a result, an emergent meeting of the IPL governing council and the BCCI office-bearers, which had until a few hours earlier hoped to discuss the modalities of shifting the remaining IPL games to Mumbai, had to make the inevitable decision to suspend the edition.

While IPL executives were trying their best to ensure a "safe passage" for Indian cricketers in the other four teams, BCCI office-bearers were "hoping" to create a window for the IPL.

The most plausible window appears to be the period after the T20 World Cup, scheduled in October-November, provided English and Australian cricketers are available ahead of the Ashes at the end of the year.

"We just hope that somehow the IPL season resumes at some point later this year. Yes, availability of window is a huge factor but from everyone's perspective – the players, managements and fans – it will be unfair if IPL 2021 has to be abandoned without seeing a winner," said a franchise executive, on condition of anonymity.



The trigger: Amit Mishra and Wriddhiman Saha returned positive COVID-19 tests, forcing the organisers to postpone the tournament indefinitely. ■ FILE PHOTOS

BCCI to facilitate 'safe passage'

Process of ensuring secure return home for all begins



Packing their bags: It is believed that many of the Indian players, including RCB skipper Virat Kohli, have started heading home. ■ SPORTZPICS/IPL

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

IPL officials have reiterated their commitment to ensuring that all the stakeholders of the event return home safely.

"The BCCI will do everything in its powers to arrange for the secure and safe passage of all the participants in IPL 2021," said the IPL release that announced the suspension of the tournament on Tuesday.

It was the second time in as many weeks that the IPL made such a promise. Last week, after five players had left their respective biosecure bubbles, IPL chief executive Hemang Amin had expressed similar sentiments.

However, not all the

players and support staff members can return home immediately.

The representatives of four franchises that have COVID-19 cases – Kolkata Knight Riders, Chennai Super Kings, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals – have to serve a six-day isolation period and clear three tests before being allowed to check out of the hotels. As do match officials involved in the most recent games involving these teams.

The Indian cricketers in the other four teams have started the process of returning home, depending on the available modes of transport.

For overseas cricketers, The Hindu understands that

the BCCI has touched base with Indian embassies of various countries whose citizens are involved in the IPL. Efforts are being made to ensure that all participants – players, coaches, support staff, commentators, broadcast crew – can travel in groups to their respective countries.

With the Australian government having barred entry of inbound passengers from India until May 15, the BCCI has asked the Australian players to choose a destination – India or overseas – where they feel safe. In the interim, the Australian cricketers are hoping that their government relaxes the rules and allows them to return at the earliest.

Suspension may force T20 WC shift

With teams reluctant to travel to India, the event could be moved to UAE

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The BCCI's decision to suspend the IPL midway through the edition could lead to the T20 World Cup being moved out of the country later this year.

India has been awarded the 16-team marquee event, scheduled to be played in October-November. But tournament director Dhiraj Malhotra had recently confirmed that the United Arab Emirates was a back-up venue for the tournament.

The IPL's suspension will be a major roadblock in convincing the International Cricket Council (ICC) and participating cricket associations about the case for staging the event in India. Indeed, a BCCI official conceded that "it will be a miracle" if they agree to travel.

"It's a major roadblock, with everyone being apprehensive. We are still confident of hosting the tourna-

ment and hope that the wave subsides and teams agree to travel to India. At the moment, it appears a distant possibility and we may have to host the event in UAE," the official added.

The ICC Annual Conference in June is set to finalise the venue for the tournament.

Dry run

Despite multiple stakeholders, including key personnel in organising the event, having expressed apprehensions about hosting IPL 2021 in India during the pandemic, the BCCI went ahead with its plan to treat the event as a dry run for the T20 World Cup. Even in early March, a plan for staging the tournament in four venues in the Mumbai-Pune corridor, avoiding air travel, was presented to the BCCI top brass.

But the Board decided to take a calculated risk and finalised a caravan format with six host cities.



Roadblock: The breach of the IPL bio-bubble could scuttle India's chances of hosting the T20 World Cup later this year. ■ SPORTZPICS/IPL

Hosting IPL-14 in India the right decision, says Wadia

The situation deteriorated quickly, feels the Punjab Kings co-owner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Punjab Kings co-owner Ness Wadia on Tuesday backed the BCCI's decision to host IPL-14 in India amid the COVID-19 threat, saying that was the "right call" before the situation deteriorated quickly.

"If the ground staff wasn't part of the whole bubble then that needs to be fixed. Also cutting down the venues also needs to be considered forward to reduce the risk."

He said holding the league in the UAE, which hosted it last year due to the pandemic

was concerned, he said: "Due diligence was done before the IPL but no one is perfect. The right call was taken to hold it in India ahead of the World Cup. It is just unfortunate that the situation deteriorated so quickly."

"I don't think this has got anything to do in a specific country (India or UAE) would have made a difference. Everyone tried their best... sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't."

Speaking of criticism by foreign players such as Australia's Adam Zampa and Andrew Tye, who had flown back to their country after withdrawing midway through the league, Wadia pointed out that the situation was very different when

he back home, would not have made any difference.

"Everyone tried their best... sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't."

"With due respect to the international cricketers, including Zampa, the situation was very different a month ago. They should study the fact that cases were very less when we started."

"During the Australian Open tennis tournament, they shut the city down. People didn't complain then, why now?" asked Wadia.



Ness Wadia. ■ FILE PHOTO

CSK batting coach Hussey diagnosed with COVID-19

The sample sent for re-test reveals the same result

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Chennai Super Kings batting coach Michael Hussey on Tuesday tested positive for COVID-19, a day after the team's bowling coach L. Balaji returned positive for the virus.

This was confirmed by the IPL sources hours after the 14th edition of the T20 league was indefinitely suspended due to a COVID-19

outbreak in its bio-bubble.

Hussey's test reports came on Tuesday. "Hussey was tested and his sample came positive. We sent it for retesting but that has also come positive," said an IPL source.

On Tuesday, SRH's Wriddhiman Saha and DC's Amit Mishra turned positive. On Monday, KKR bowlers Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier returned with positive results.



Michael Hussey. ■ FILE PHOTO

IPL: late call, but the right one as things spiral down rapidly



BETWEEN WICKETS
SURESHE MENON

Calling off the IPL was the right – if delayed – decision, even if the Board of Control for Cricket in India had its hand forced by the rapid developments once the bio-bubble had been breached, exposing players in what, technically, was the safest real estate in the country.

Players from three franchises tested positive, matches had to be rescheduled, and the venues chosen had some of the highest number of COVID cases in India. There were murmurs too that players were finding it difficult to focus on the games or motivate themselves, and talked openly of returning home. It would have been surprising if it had been otherwise.

These are difficult times, and the BCCI did well finally to cut its losses and do the humane thing. I suspect this might not be a popular decision among hardcore fans, judging by some of the reaction to this column

last week where I suggested the IPL be called off.

Cricket cannot exist in a vacuum untouched by the events around it. The 'distraction' argument favoured by many doesn't work when those providing the distraction begin to fall ill themselves. A year from now, five years, ten years later this break won't matter at all.

Trivial, frivolous

Sport is trivial, almost frivolous at a time like this. It is not the end of the world if a cricket tournament is called off at the halfway stage. To keep it going when nearly half a million Indians are contracting the COVID virus every day and the death count is rising worryingly would have been insulting to those suffering and dangerous for those playing.

There is a point in every crisis when quick decisions and rapid moves keep it from sliding into a catastrophe. What works against such decision-making is usually the ego, and the determination to prove that the original judgements were right.

There is a Gresham's Law ("bad money drives out good") operating in poor decision-making too. Bad decisions tend to take over, narrowing the space for good ones. It happened at the national level when we were

asked to believe the pandemic was over and governments did little to prepare for the predicted second wave.

To project normalcy

Had the BCCI not wanted to make a point of everything being hunky dory in India, it could have played the tournament in the UAE like it did last year. That would have been safer in a small country where a majority of the citizens have been vaccinated. The desire to show the (cricketing) world that India could host the World T20 in October may have been a factor too.

But the BCCI might have overplayed its hand. And nearly paid the price. The uncertainty and alarm in the IPL reflected the uncertainty and alarm in the country as a whole. It is little consolation that the sport lived up to its reputation as one that mirrors society.

In the end, the BCCI got it right, and now has to deal with the mopping up operations. The stakes are not insignificant. In the life versus livelihood debate, it weighed in on the side of life, which for long time looked unlikely, given the huge sums of money involved. Matched perhaps only by the huge egos.

The decision, however, comes

with its own peculiar problems. In the short term, there's the question of ensuring that all the players return home safely.

This will involve dealing with the governments of countries like England, Australia, New Zealand, Bangladesh who have banned flights from India and have stringent quarantine rules in place.

Then there is the matter of sorting out sponsorships, television rights and other deals for the truncated season while ensuring that future tournaments do not suffer. It will be as much about diplomacy and tact as about reminding the actors involved who the boss is, a tactic that has been at the bottom of many BCCI's recent successes.

Just a week ago, BCCI's interim chief executive officer Hemang Amin had sent out an email to the franchises saying three important things. One, that they were totally safe in the bubble.

Two, that they were playing not just to win, but for humanity. And three, that the BCCI would do everything to ensure they reached their homes safely.

The first two turned out to be mirages. But he could still regain some of the lost face by ensuring the third comes true.

Mertens knocks out World No. 3 Halep

MADRID OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

World No. 3 Simona Halep was dumped out on Tuesday, losing 4-6, 7-5, 7-5 in the round-of-16 to Belgian Elise Mertens at the Madrid Open.

Halep had sailed through the first two rounds on the Spanish clay without dropping a set but she ended up second best in a match which yielded 15 breaks of serve.

Halep produced 10 double faults in the match to Mertens' nine.

Just a week ago, BCCI's interim chief executive officer Hemang Amin had sent out an email to the franchises saying three important things. One, that they were totally safe in the bubble.

Two, that they were playing not just to win, but for humanity. And three, that the BCCI would do everything to ensure they reached their homes safely.

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Padukone recovering after testing positive



Prakash Padukone. ■ FILE PHOTO

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Indian badminton legend Prakash Padukone is recovering in hospital after testing positive for COVID-19. Padukone, 65, showed mild symptoms and was admitted to a city hospital as a precautionary measure.

He is stable and is expected to be discharged in a few days, a source said.

In 1980, Padukone became the first Indian to win the All England Open badminton championships.



Belgian delight: Mertens fought back after losing the first set to shock Halep. ■ REUTERS

TV PICKS

Champions League: Sony Ten 2 & Ten 3 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Thursday)

Sports scribe Ruchir Mishra passes away



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
Seasoned sports journalist Ruchir Mishra passed away in Nagpur in the wee hours of Tuesday after contracting COVID-19.

Mishra, 42, was associated with *The Times of India* in Nagpur for over a decade, having earlier worked with *Dainik Bhaskar* and *The Hitavada*.

Mishra was one of the most authoritative voices on domestic cricket in Central India region. The cricketing fraternity, including Test stars Murali Kartik, Umesh Yadav, Wasim Jaffer and Naman Ojha, condoled his death. He is survived by wife and two children.

IN BRIEF

CAS rejects Gomathi's appeal, suspension stays

LAUSANNE
The Court of Arbitration for Sport has rejected an appeal by Gomathi Marimuthu against her four-year suspension for doping in 2019. The Tamil Nadu athlete, who claimed the 800m gold in the 2019 Doha Asian championships, had tested positive for 19-norandrosterone and was suspended last year.



Scan reveals grade one calf strain for Taylor

AUCKLAND
New Zealand's middle-order batsman Ross Taylor has been diagnosed with a grade one calf strain after he limped out of the team's training session on Monday. He will stay with the team to help rehabilitate the injury. ANI

Nagal in second round

PRAGUE
Sumit Nagal beat Zdenek Kolar 6-2, 6-4 to reach the €44,820 Challenger pre-quarterfinals on Tuesday. In the Biella Challenger in Italy, Srim Balaji and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan entered the last eight by beating Italy's Pietro Buscaglione and Pietro Rondoni 6-2, 6-2.

Big blow to Sevilla's LaLiga title hopes

West Ham's top-four bid back on track

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCIES
MADRID

Sevilla's chances of winning LaLiga could be over after it suffered a heartbreaking defeat 1-0 against Athletic Bilbao on Monday, with Inaki Williams scoring a 90th-minute winner at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan.

The loss leaves Sevilla six points adrift of leader Atletico Madrid, with four games left to play.

Serie A: Torino 1 (Vojvoda 63) bt Parma 0.



Making no mistake: Offered time and space, Inaki Williams dinks past Yassine Bounou to break Sevilla's heart. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Superb Curry keeps Warriors on course



On the move: Stephen Curry tries to beat Willy Hernangomez for one of his 41 points on Sunday. ■ AP

NBA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES

Stephen Curry erupted for 41 points as Golden State Warriors stayed on course for the post-season with a 123-108 victory over New Orleans Pelicans on Monday.

Curry's 33rd 30-point game of the season helped the Warriors move to 33-32 to leave the team firmly in the hunt for a Western Conference play-in tournament place.

Elsewhere on Monday, Denver Nuggets clinched its place in the playoffs despite

sliding to a 93-89 defeat to the Los Angeles Lakers. The Nuggets booked their place in the playoffs after the Atlanta Hawks defeated the Portland Trail Blazers 123-114.

Russell Westbrook completed his 32nd triple-double (14 points, 21 rebounds, 24 assists) in Washington Wizards' 154-141 defeat of Indiana Pacers.

The results: Washington 154 bt Indiana 141; Orlando 119 bt Detroit 112; Golden State 123 bt New Orleans 108; Atlanta 123 bt Portland 114; New York 118 bt Memphis 104; Philadelphia 106 bt Chicago 94; LA Lakers 93 bt Denver 89; Utah 110 bt San Antonio 99.

Pro League matches postponed

HOCKEY

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

The Indian men's hockey team's competitive international assignments ahead of the Tokyo Olympics are effectively over.

The team's upcoming FIH Hockey Pro League away matches against Spain and Germany, scheduled on May 15-16 and May 22-23 respectively, have been officially postponed due to the COVID-induced travel restrictions.

"The FIH, Hockey India

as well as the National Associations of Germany, Spain and Great Britain are currently looking at all potential options to rearrange these matches at a later date," the International Hockey Federation said in a statement.

With matches against Great Britain, initially scheduled in London on May 8-9 also postponed, India's only remaining international assignment before the Tokyo Olympics was expected to be home Pro League matches against New Zealand on May 29-30. But while the

FIH hasn't officially called them off, the games have already been marked as postponed on its website.

Many countries have paused flights from India as a consequence of the second wave of the pandemic, Germany being one of them.

If these ties are not rescheduled before Tokyo, which looks highly unlikely at the moment given the massive surge in COVID cases in the country, the men are likely to be training at home till their departure for the Games.

BFI official Sacheti passes away

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Boxing Federation of India (BFI) executive director and seasoned sports administrator Raj Kumar Sacheti passed away on Tuesday. He was 55. Sacheti, who was admitted to a hospital following COVID-19 infection, suffered a cardiac arrest, according to the BFI.

Sacheti was a member of



the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Boxing Task Force for the 2021 Tokyo

Olympics. He also worked as an assistant joint secretary of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

"R.K. Sacheti was the life and soul of the BFI. Indian boxing reaching such heights in the last few years was largely his contribution.

We will miss him dearly," said BFI president Ajay Singh in his condolence message.

Indian side to play in AFC Women's Club Championship

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

An Indian side will feature in the prestigious AFC Women's Club Championship 2021 to be held later this year, the national federation said on Tuesday.

The Indian Women's League champion will represent the country in the eight-team pilot tournament of Asian Football Confederation (AFC), to

be played between October 30 and November 14.

Group A (East) will consist of clubs from Chinese Taipei, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, while Group B (West) will have teams from India, Iran, Jordan and Uzbekistan.

All India Football Federation General Secretary Kushal Das said the competition will provide a "huge boost" to the women's game in India.

Bedraggled Real Madrid faces uphill task

Chelsea will look to press home advantage gained from away leg



ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Real Madrid could see the return of captain Sergio Ramos for its Champions League second leg against Chelsea in London on Wednesday. The central defender has returned to training after a muscle injury and might make it back to the squad at Stamford Bridge.

Left back Ferland Mendy may also return to the squad after not playing in the first leg because of injury, and

Eden Hazard could start against his former club after playing a few minutes last week in Madrid.

Coach Zinedine Zidane will be without his other regular central defender, Raphael Varane, who is also injured.

Chelsea, whose last final appearance was when it clinched the European title in 2012, should have most of its regular starters available for the return match. Coach Thomas Tuchel's team dominated most of the first leg.

Selby is champion

SNOOKER

REUTERS
SHEFFIELD

Mark Selby beat fellow Englishman Shaun Murphy to claim a fourth World snooker title on Monday at the Crucible Theatre as a capacity crowd was allowed at a British sporting event for the first time in more than a year.

The Jester from Leicestershire held his nerve in a tense evening session to triumph 18-15 and claim the title for the first time since 2017.

The 37-year-old led 10-7 after Sunday's first two sessions but Murphy won Monday's opening frame and came agonisingly close to making it 10-9 when a final black failed to from in frame 19. Selby potted the black to lead 11-8 and looked comfortable as he moved 17-13 ahead.



Mark Selby. ■ GETTY IMAGES

But with the almost 1,000 fans, all wearing face coverings and desperate to witness some late drama, Murphy made consecutive century breaks to close to within two frames.

Murphy, who won the 2005 title as a 150-1 qualifier, looked poised to narrow the gap to one frame but he narrowly missed a crucial last red and Selby pounced to make a winning clearance.

AIFF thanks AFC

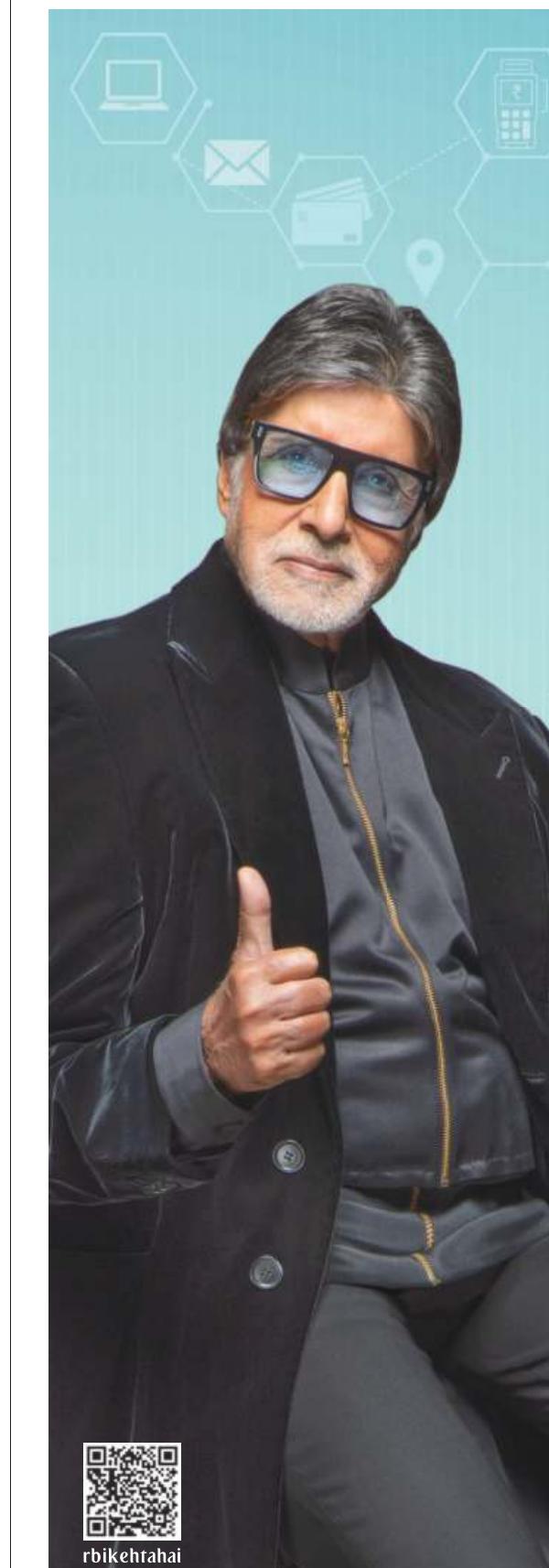
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The All India Football Federation (AIFF), on Tuesday, thanked the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) for giving it an opportunity to host the Group E matches of the AFC Champions League.

All the group matches, which featured FC Goa's games, were held in Margao.

"The AIFF is extremely grateful to the AFC for their support and belief in AIFF's organisation capabilities in successfully hosting the Group E matches of the AFC Champions League 2021 in Goa from April 14-29, 2021," the AIFF said in a statement.

It also thanked the Central and State Governments for their support.



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Olympics-bound team to train in Zagreb

NRAI ropes in individual coaches also apart from national coaches

SHOOTING

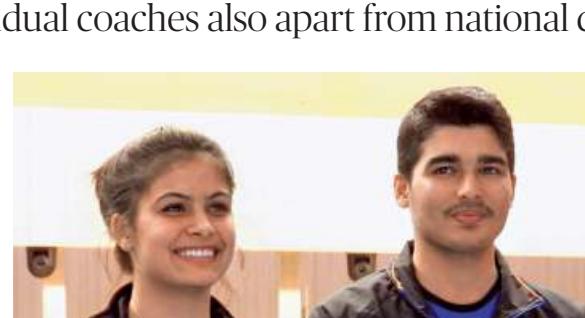
KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

The Olympic shooting team will be based in Zagreb, Croatia, for training and competition, to prepare in right earnest for Tokyo, without being distracted by the raging pandemic.

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), after many brainstorming sessions with the coaches and other stakeholders for about a month, finally found the best path ahead. The national federation has opted to charter a flight for the team, and also get everyone vaccinated prior to departure.

The federation and government have roped not only the national team coaches and support staff, but also individual coaches who have been working with the Olympic qualified shooters.

There will be nine coaches for the 13 rifle and pistol



Aiming high: Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary will be keen to make the most of the training. ■ SPECIAL ARRAGEMENT

shooters. The rifle coaches outnumbered the two pistol coaches because some of the coaches like Samaresh Jung, Jaspal Rana and Romak Pandit were unable to take up such a long stint abroad for various reasons.

The two foreign coaches Oleg Mikhailov and Pavel Smirnov, along with Deepali Deshpande, Manoj Kumar, Suma Shirur, Ved Prakash Pilaniya have been drafted into the squad.

Divyansh Singh Panwar's

coach Deepak Kumar Dubey, Elavenil Valarivan's coach from Gun for Glory, Neha Chavan, and Apurvi Chandela's coach Rakesh Manpat will be part of the training squad.

There will be four physiotherapists Sumit Arora, Zeinab Samar, Sumita Jain and Shloka Varvatkar, apart from two physical trainers Akshay Bhapkar and Har Kaur.

Apurvi, Elavenil, Anjum Moudgil, Tejaswini Sawant, Divyansh Singh Panwar's

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