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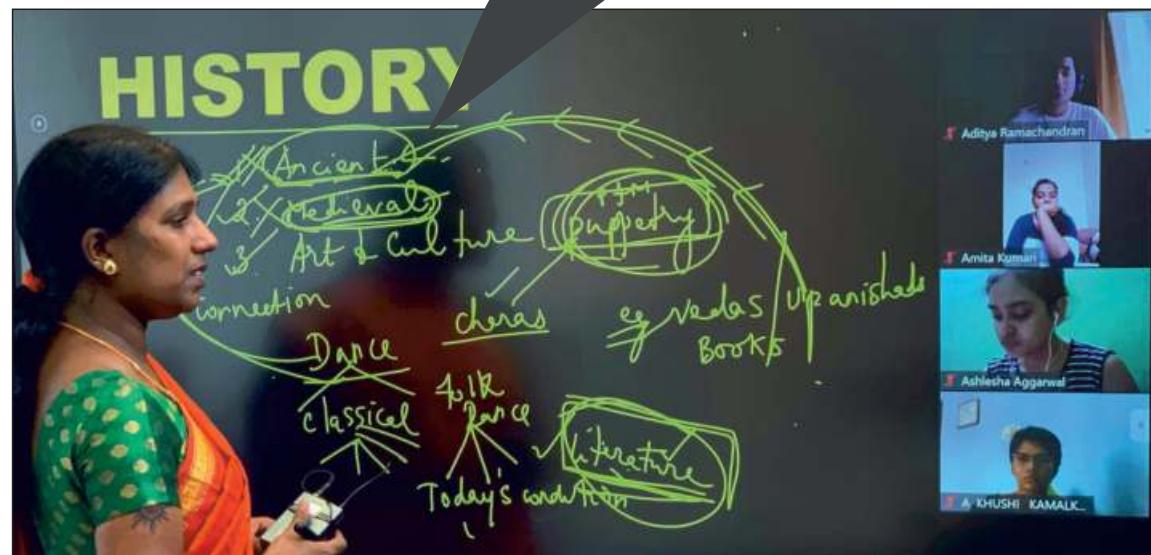
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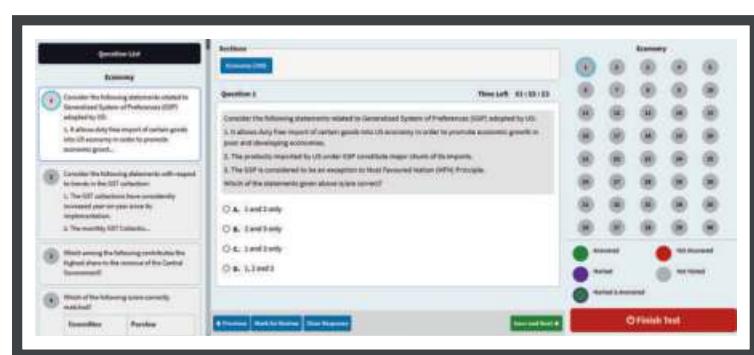


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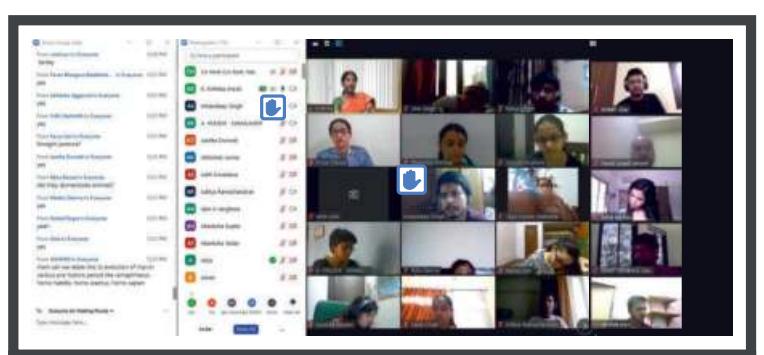


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AIR 8
Vaishali Singh

I really can't thank Rau's enough because when I came to them I was so confused and so underprepared but I got such good guidance and detailed feedback that I could take my preparation forward and I think I have done well. I owe Rau's IAS a big thanks.



AIR 11
Puja Priyadarshini

My mother was a student of Rau's IAS to prepare for the CSE in her days. It is she who recommended me to join the Study Circle. I want to thank my Alma Mater for all the guidance and support. To all the students at Rau's IAS, you'll be given a lot of reading material and handholding wherever required, Use it! You are in an institute that knows how to teach for IAS exam well, so utilise that!

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Sasikala likely to be released from Karnataka prison in January
page 8



Jaya Bachchan says film industry is being flogged to divert attention
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Supreme Court grants relief to former Punjab DGP Sumedh Singh
page 11



NEP for an education system rooted in Indian ethos: Ramesh Pokhriyal
page 9

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NEARBY



Record testing in Delhi; 4,263 new cases reported

NEW DELHI

As many as 4,263 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 2,25,796. The city also witnessed the highest number of tests conducted in a single day – 62,669.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Facebook India V-P's no-show irks House panel

NEW DELHI

Facebook India's vice-president and managing director Ajit Mohan did not appear before a Delhi Assembly Committee on Peace and Harmony on Tuesday despite being summoned via notice. The panel is looking into FB's alleged role in Delhi riots.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

'Riots probe conducted in unbiased manner'

NEW DELHI

Delhi Commissioner of Police S.N. Shrivastava has given a written response to retired IPS officer Julio Ribeiro's letter reiterating that the probe into the February riots is not biased towards any community. On September 12, Mr. Ribeiro had written to him seeking an impartial probe.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 5

China has massively deployed troops along LAC, says Rajnath

India has made appropriate counter deployments, Defence Minister tells Lok Sabha



Replenishing stock: Personnel unloading supplies from an IAF transport aircraft at a Ladakh base on Tuesday. ■ PTI

number of friction points".

Mr. Singh said the amassing of troops by China went against the 1993 and 1996 agreements. Respecting and strictly observing the LAC was the basis of peace and tranquillity in the border areas and that was explicitly recognised in the agreements, he noted.

Build-up since April

The Chinese actions on June 15 at Galwan and the attempts to alter the status quo of the south bank of the lake on August 29 and 30 "reflect a disregard of our various bilateral agreements," he said. "While our armed forces abide scrupulously by it, this has not been reciprocated by the Chinese side."

Mr. Singh said that since

April, a build-up of troops and armaments by the Chinese side adjacent to eastern Ladakh was noticed. In early May, the Chinese side took action to hinder the normal, traditional patrolling pattern of Indian troops in the Galwan Valley area, causing a face-off, he said.

On the September 4 meeting in Moscow with his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Wei Fenghe, Mr. Singh said he made it clear that "even as we wanted to peacefully resolve the issue and would like the Chinese side to work with us, there should also be no doubt about our determination to protect India's sovereignty and territorial integrity".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Govt. refuses discussion on LAC face-off

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday refused the Opposition's demand for a discussion on the India-China face-off in eastern Ladakh, citing sensitivities related to "national security".

At a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) of the Lok Sabha, where floor leaders of all political parties meet, the Congress raised the demand.

'Not the right time'
Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, who represented the government at the meeting, said the issue was sensitive and was related to national security, and thus could not be discussed at a public platform.

Government sources said that as troops were currently deployed at the border amid a tense face-off, the time was not right to have a public discussion on the state of play.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

India has surplus medical oxygen: govt.

COVID-19 cases cross 50 lakh mark

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday raced past the 50 lakh mark, registering 85,716 new COVID-19 cases. The overall tally stood at 50,12,736 at the time of going to print. With 1,340 fresh fatalities, the death toll rose to 82,169.

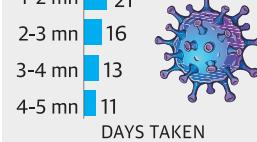
The development comes on a day the Union Health Ministry said there was no shortage of supply of medical oxygen, and the country had surplus production.

The Ministry, however, cautioned that hospitals should have robust inventory management and encouraged rationalised use of oxygen to ensure that no artificial scarcity was created.

Rajesh Bhushan, Secre-

Path to 5 million

The daily COVID-19 case load in India has increased at a rapid pace, with the last one million cases being registered only in 11 days



DAYS TAKEN

■ PTI

tary, Union Health Ministry, said a little over 6% of patients were currently on oxygen support. Of them, 3.69% were on oxygen support, 2.17% on ICU beds with oxygen support and 0.36% on ventilator support.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

SC stays broadcast of TV show

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the broadcast of *Bindas Bol* aired by Sudarshan News channel till further orders, *prima facie* observing that the object of the programme is to vilify the Muslim community and accuse it of surreptitiously trying to infiltrate the civil services.

"Episodes broadcast till now show the nature and objective of the programme. Pending further orders of the court, Sudarshan News stands injunctioned from making any more broadcasts on this subject on any other name too," a three-judge Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud ordered.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 10

United States welcomes India's role in Afghan peace talks

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Three days after India took the plunge on engaging with the Taliban at the first Intra-Afghan Negotiations, U.S. Special Envoy on Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad met with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval

and Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla during a brief four-hour visit to New Delhi.

"Mr. Khalilzad appreciated India's participation in the Intra-Afghan Negotiations (IAN) held in Doha on September 12. He briefed about the U.S. assessment of the IAN and shared the

U.S. perspective on the Afghan peace process," official sources said.

"The two sides discussed future steps and possible cooperation between India and the U.S. in furthering the Afghan peace process," the sources said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

New Bill on powers of Delhi govt., L-G soon

Legislation to amend 1991 Act may provide more discretionary powers to the L-G

VIJAYA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is likely to introduce a legislation in the ongoing Parliament session to amend a 1991 Act pertaining to the powers and functions of the Delhi government and the Lieutenant-Governor.

The National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2020, to "bring ease in implementation of certain provisions of the Act", is among more than 20 Bills proposed to be introduced in this Parliament session. The Bill is yet to get the Cabinet's nod and it was not taken up at the Union Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

A Home Ministry spokesperson did not respond to requests regarding the provisions of the Bill.

According to a source, the Bill proposes to clearly spell out the functions of the

Council of Ministers and the Lieutenant-Governor by giving more discretionary powers to the L-G.

Proposed changes

According to changes proposed in the new Act, the L-G could act in his discretion on any matter that is beyond the purview of the powers of the Assembly of Delhi in matters related to the All India Civil Services and the Anti Corruption Branch (ACB). It will also give more teeth to the L-G, and the validity of any decision taken as per such discretion shall not be questioned.

The Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi government is often at loggerheads with the Centre regarding administrative matters in the Capital. A clutch of petitions were filed in the Supreme Court against a 2015 notification by the MHA, which said that the Delhi government had no powers in services-related matters and the ACB could not register cases against any employee, officer or functionary of the Central government.

The Union Territory of Delhi with a Legislative Assembly came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA inserted by the 'Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991'. It said that the UT of Delhi shall be called the National Capital Territory of Delhi, and the administrator thereof appointed under Article 239 shall be designated as the Lieutenant-Governor.

According to the existing Act, the Legislative Assembly of Delhi has the power to make laws in all matters except public order, police, and land.

The apex court is still examining the services matter. In 2018, a five-judge Bench of the SC had unanimously held that the L-G was bound by the "aid and advice" of the Delhi government and both had to work harmoniously with each other.

JIBE AT KEJRIWAL ▶ PAGE 3



Power tussle: Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, L-G Anil Baijal.

Social Forestry) to prepare lists of snake handlers in each district. Various parameters, including experience, age, health as well as track record, will be considered during the selection process. Those short-listed will be required to undergo a mandatory training on safe and scientific handling of snakes.

While the certification will be valid for five years, the respective ACFs can withdraw or cancel the same if the snake handler is found to be involved in any illegal or unethical practices.

The protocol tasks certified snake handlers with responding to alerts of snake presence in human habitations, informing the caller of the immediate

precautions to be adopted, and to intimate the concerned ACF of the activity. They will be required to wear protective gear and equip themselves with safety equipment while on the task.

Rescued snakes will also have to be released in the presence of forest officials at the earliest. If found injured, the snake can be released only after ascertaining its fitness. Non-native species, however, cannot be released and have to be handed over to the Forest Department.

Forest Officers will also be imparted training on safe handling of snakes at State Forest Training Institutes. As many as 318 Forest Officers completed the first phase of training recently.

stakeholder in a united regional front and we hope other regional parties will join for the sake of the indigenous people of Assam," said Adip Kumar Phukan, working president of the Asom Songram Mancha, whose birth preceded that of the AJP.

Eye on BPF
Other regional parties that could be a part of the proposed front ahead of the 2021 State elections include Asom Gana Mancha, formed a few months ago, the Gana Shakti Party and the Autonomous State Demand Committee. The regional parties also hope to rope in the Bodoland People's Front that is believed to be drifting away from ally BJP.

The proposed front may also accommodate the party that the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti led by jailed activist Akhil Gogoi is expected to form soon.

Prior to the formation of the AJP, Mr. Gogoi had said too many regional parties could hand the BJP an easy victory through division of votes. "It is imperative that all groups against the BJP and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act are on the same platform," he had said while being taken for a health check-up a few days ago.

The Congress resented the AASU-AJYCP's refusal to its proposal for teaming up against the BJP. "All anti-BJP and anti-CAA forces should ideally unite," said State Congress president Ripun Bora.

Golden harvest



Field day: Farmers working in a paddy field in Pulwama district of south Kashmir on Tuesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Kerala to have certified snake handlers

In a first, State Forest Department frames guidelines for rescuing snakes

SARATH BABU GEORGE

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Becoming the first to institutionalise snake handling in the country, the Kerala Forest Department has framed guidelines for rescuing snakes from human dominated places and releasing them in uninhabited areas.

The move to certify snake handlers comes amid allegations of unscientific approaches by snake catchers that tend to create stress to the animal and pose risk to their and others' lives. Kerala has reported 334 deaths and 1,860 other cases of snake-bites in the past three years, according to chief wildlife warden Surendrakumar. There have also been allegations of snakes being



With care: Kerala chief wildlife warden Surendrakumar training forest officials how to catch a snake. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

supplied for criminal purposes. The murder of Kollam native Uthra after being bitten by a snake that was allegedly planted in her room by her husband dominated the headlines recently.

The guidelines make it mandatory for snake handlers, aged between 21 and 65 years, to seek certification. The applications will be screened by the Assistant Conservators of Forest (ACF).

We are keen on being a stakeholder in a united regional front and we hope other regional parties will join for the sake of the indigenous people of Assam," said Adip Kumar Phukan, working president of the Asom Songram Mancha, whose birth preceded that of the AJP.

"We are keen on being a

IN BRIEF

DDA to hold 'Youth Sabhas' over MPD-2041

NEW DELHI
The Delhi Development Authority on September 18 will interact with the city's youth as a part of its planning process for the preparation of the Master Plan for Delhi 2041. Three "Youth Sabhas" will also be conducted by the urban body for this purpose.

Air Quality of Delhi-NCR		
Delhi 144	Gurugram 130	
Ghaziabad 160	Faridabad 187	
Noida 154	Greater Noida 170	
Good 0-50	Satisfactory 51-100	Moderate 101-200
Poor 201-300	Very Poor 301-400	Severe >400
Air Quality Index at 4 p.m. yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) Source: CPCB		

Two drivers arrested for robbery after losing jobs

NEW DELHI
Two drivers, who lost their jobs during the lockdown, were arrested for allegedly robbing a person after offering him a lift in a cab in west Delhi's Dwarka area, the police said on Tuesday. The duo had no work since the COVID-19 lockdown, the police said.

House committee furious after Facebook India V-P's no-show

'A final warning will be given, action will be taken if official fails to appear again'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Facebook India's vice-president and managing director Ajit Mohan did not appear before a Delhi Assembly Committee on Peace and Harmony on Tuesday despite being summoned via notice. The panel is looking into Facebook's alleged role in the north-east Delhi riots.

Role in riots
Committee chairman Raghav Chadha said Facebook India officials had "objected" to the summons notice. "Refusing to appear before the committee is contempt of the Delhi Assembly. Your refusal to appear before the committee is an attempt to conceal crucial facts in relation to Facebook's role in the February 2020 Delhi communal violence. This shows that Facebook has something to hide."

RAGHAV CHADHA
Chairman of Delhi Assembly Committee on Peace and Harmony



This shows that Facebook has something to hide. This shows that Facebook is running away from this committee and allegations on Facebook's role in Delhi riots may not be completely baseless," Mr. Chadha said.

The committee is looking into alleged "deliberate and intentional" inaction by Facebook to contain "hateful content". On August 31, the committee said that prima facie it

seemed that Facebook had a role in the riots and it should be treated as a co-accused.

Last week, the committee sent a notice summoning Mr. Mohan to appear before the committee on Tuesday.

"We respectfully object to the notice and request you to recall it," Mr. Chadha quoted a letter sent by Facebook to the committee.

"They [Facebook] have told the committee to with-

draw the notice since a Parliament committee on information and technology is looking into the matter and we [Delhi Assembly Committee] should not interfere in the issue. They have also said that since the issue is related to law and order and IT Act passed by Parliament, we should not interfere in the issue," he said.

The committee has decided to give a "final warning" to Facebook and one more chance will be given to Mr. Mohan to appear before the panel. "In the event of subsequent default, the committee shall be constrained to invoke its power to initiate breach of privilege proceedings against Facebook India and thus inviting penal jurisdiction of the House among others," said Mr. Chadha.

Activists say voices of dissent being suppressed by regime

They release charter, seek transparency from Central govt.

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

As part of the *If We Do Not Rise* campaign, several women's groups, human rights organisations and LGBTQIA communities on Tuesday released a charter of demands, seeking accountability and transparency from the government.

The campaign was launched on September 5 to mark the third death anniversary of journalist Gauri Lankesh. Activists said that in the current environment, voices of dissent were being suppressed by the government and being labelled "anti-national".

Speaking of widespread destitution, starvation and suffering of the working class due to the current economy of the country amid the ongoing pandemic, acti-

We have a situation where there is absolutely no scope for people to question

ANJALI BHARADWAJ
Activist

vist Anjali Bharadwaj said: "The government has left no stone unturned to use this situation of lockdown or near-lockdown to curb all forms of dissent."

"The government has no intention to be answerable or accountable to the people of this country. We have a situation where there is absolutely no scope for people to question," Ms. Bharadwaj said.

The charter includes demands for institutional autonomy and integrity, right to life and safety, right to education, food security and

right to political participation, among others.

Hunger deaths

Annie Raja, of the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), raised demand for food security. "Reports have started coming in on hunger deaths. Be it women domestic workers or daily wage labourers or agricultural workers, they have all lost their jobs during this period," said Ms. Raja.

Activist Kavita Krishnan said, "A democracy is marked by presence of constraints on power and protection of the weak. We are seeing that this has been overturned these days. The police in India, instead of relying on investigation, rely on torture. We are seeking accountability from the ones in power."

HC directs JNU to sanction leave to professor to pursue fellowship

Rejection of application is completely arbitrary, says court

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) to sanction extra-ordinary leave (EOL) to one of its professors to pursue a nine-month fellowship offered by a French research institute.

Justice Jyoti Singh remarked that the rejection of the application for grant of EOL to Professor Udaya Kumar was "completely arbitrary and against the provisions of the Ordinance of the university and contravenes the Wednesbury's principles

of reasonableness and fairness".

Justice Singh said, "I must express here that the court is a little amazed at the resistance of the university to grant EOL to the petitioner [Mr. Kumar] for his fellowship".

"There is no gainsaying that the petitioner herein is not going on leave for any self-service or self-employment. He is only going to acquire higher qualifications and in my view, it is a matter of great prestige also for the university that one of its professors has been offered a fel-

lowsip at a prestigious institute for advanced study in France," the judge said.

The court's decision came on plea by Professor Udaya Kumar from the Centre for English Studies, School of Language Literature and Culture Studies, JNU challenging the rejection of his application for grant of EOL.

Mr. Kumar said he had applied for EOL without pay for a period of nine months to pursue a fellowship at Nantes Institute of Advanced Study, France. However, the varsity rejected his application without giving any reason.

Delhi Commissioner of Police S.N. Shrivastava has given a written response to retired IPS officer Julio Ribeiro's letter reiterating that the investigation into the February communal riots is not biased towards any religion.

On September 12, Mr. Ribeiro wrote to Mr. Shrivastava demanding impartial probe and raising questions over the action taken by Delhi Police against anti-CAA protesters, following which a group of retired civil servants also joined him in writing to the police chief.

"They were simply exercising their fundamental

rights to freedom of speech and peaceful protests as guaranteed by the Constitution," they wrote, adding that such type of investigations would make people "lose faith in democracy, justice, fairness and the Constitution" and could lead to the "breakdown of law and order".

Correct perspective
In a letter shared on Tuesday, Mr. Shrivastava said that it's his duty to put things in "correct perspective" and that any conclusion be drawn on the basis of facts obtained through investigation. He also said that police is "reticent" about details of investigation other than what's part

S.N. Shrivastava
of court documents.

Pointing out that Mr. Ribeiro hadn't spoken to any police officer regarding investigation, Mr. Shrivastava wrote, "Further, while you expressed your apprehen-

sion about the fairness in investigation when I spoke to you over telephone, you acknowledged not having any first-hand information about the cases. Regrettably, no officer of Delhi Police was contacted to apprise yourself of the actual situation. As a highly experienced police officer, you would agree that one may not come to a correct conclusion in view of the limited information available in public domain".

FIRs registered

Mr. Shrivastava also mentioned that of the 751 FIRs that have been registered, 410 are based on complaints by the minority community

and 190 from the "other community"; the rest were registered based on daily dairy entries. "Delhi Police has examined a large majority of persons who either have a role in north-east Delhi riots or have information that will help arrive at the truth. It has questioned persons without regard to their religion and party affiliation," he stated, adding that of the 1,571 persons arrested, they're almost equal in number from both communities.

Mr. Shrivastava stated that "false perceptions" are created by "interested groups" and that "anybody aggrieved with the investigation can always seek judicial remedies.

High Court tells DU to expedite evaluation of open book exam papers

Bench tells university to issue letters to principals emphasising urgency so that results can be declared by first week of Oct.

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The High Court on Tuesday directed Delhi University to expedite evaluation of papers of open book examination held recently so that results of final-year undergraduate students can be declared by the first week of October.

A Bench of Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Subramonium Prasad directed Delhi University to forthwith issue letters to the principals of all the colleges affiliated with it, emphasising the urgency of the matter.

The court was also informed that pursuant to its previous orders, a notifica-

tion was issued by Delhi University, calling upon final-year UG and PG students, who propose to seek admission in foreign universities for further studies, to apply to the university for seeking their results.

Out of 900 students, who had sent the request, some of them are seeking admis-

sion in Indian universities whereas others are seeking admission in foreign universities. Till September 14, 292 e-mails have been sorted out, while 277 e-mails relate to final-year UG students, who propose to travel abroad for studies, 15 e-mails relate to the final-year PG students, who propose to travel abroad for further studies, the court was informed.

D.S. Rawat, Acting Dean (Examination), Delhi University has assured the court that the letter finalised in respect of the final-year UG students, containing their provisional results shall be dispatched directly to the foreign universities concerned.

The court was hearing a petition on issues being faced by students, who are moving abroad for higher education. The issue cropped up during the hearing of a petition concerning OBE for final-year undergraduate DU students. It will hear the petition again on September 23.

DMRC builds indigenous signalling technology

Red Line, Phase IV to get new system

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Atmanirbhar Bharat," the DMRC said.

Apart from being put to use in all Phase IV corridors, the ATS of the Red Line (Rithala to Ghaziabad) will be upgraded to the new system, officials said.

"It can work with train control and signalling systems of various suppliers. It can also work with different technologies of train control and signalling systems. Additionally, it is suitable for introduction in Indian Railways, which is now introducing centralised train control on a large scale that uses ATS functions," the DMRC stated.

The prototype system was launched by Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra and DMRC managing director Mangu Singh.

NGT seeks report on plastic pens

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Union Environment Ministry to furnish a report on whether plastic pens fall under the purview of plastic waste management rules.

Noting that the matter had not been finalised yet, a Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed authorities to file an action taken report by October 14.

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a plea against the unchecked use of plastic pens having an adverse impact on the environment, moved by petitioner Avani Mishra.

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF UTTARAKHAND
FINANCE SECTION-1,
No. 738/01(130) 2016/XXVII(1)/2020
Dehradun, Dated : 10 Sept, 2020**

PRESS NOTE

10 YEAR UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT STOCK 2030

The Government of Uttarakhand is floating a 10 year loan in order to finance development schemes, such as those relating to Power, Agriculture, Irrigation and Industries for economic growth of the State. The Stock will be sold through the Reserve Bank of India by auction in the manner indicated in the finance department notification No. 737/01(130)2016/XXVII(1)/2020, dated September 10, 2020. The successful bidders will be required to make payment on September 16, 2020. Which will be date of commencement of the tenure of the Stock. The loan will be repaid at par on September 16, 2030. The issue price will be Rs. 500.00 crore (nominal) interest at the rate determined by the Reserve Bank of India on the basis of bids received, will be payable half yearly.

Interest in respect of the loan will be subject to tax under the Income Tax Act, 1961. Subscriptions for the loan can be made in the form of Cash/Bank Draft or Cheque and will be received at the public debt offices of the Reserve Bank of India at Kanpur and Mumbai.

Details of the terms of loan are contained in Finance Department Notification dated September 10, 2020 referred to above, copies of which alongwith the application forms are obtainable from the receiving offices mentioned above.

Financial position of the Government of Uttarakhand

The Government's budget documents (which can be obtained from the website budget.uk.gov.in) give detailed information regarding the latest financial position of the state.

Balance in Reserve Funds : The balance at the credit of the Uttarakhand consolidated sinking fund as on March 31, 2018 was Rs. 2484.3239 crore.

Debt position: The total debt of the Government of Uttarakhand as on March 31, 2018 was of the order of Rs. 41014.9441 crores consisting of Rs. 9838.4101 crores in form of Special Securities issued to National Small Saving Fund of Government of India, Rs. 26662.2830 crores on account of State Development Loans, Rs. 3724.0215 crores representing loans from the Agricultural Credit fund of the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development and rest includes Govt. of India loans.

Assets of the Government : Against the outstanding public debt of Rs. 41014.9441 crores the assets of the State Government on March 31, 2018 are in the form of roads and bridges, Irrigation projects, Power projects, Departmental buildings and other capital projects.

DIPR/UK/13118

**BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD
(POWER WING)**

Corrigendum-II E-AUCTION NOTICE

Dated: 08.06.2020

Name of Office : Chief Engineer/Transmission System, Planning & Design (TS) Directorate, SLDC Complex, Industrial Area Phase-I, BBMB, Chandigarh-160002 Tel: 0172-2654468

Name of Work: E-Auction for Sale of Scrap, Un-serviceable material of BBMB pertaining to the administration of Chief Engineer/TS.

Last Date & time for receipt of request for participation along with EMD & necessary Documents 25.09.2020 upto 17:00 hrs.

Date/Time of E-auction (Part-I, JMP) 06.10.2020 from 11:00-14:00 hrs.

Date/Time of E-auction (Part-II, JMP) 08.10.2020 from 11:00-14:00 hrs.

For complete details of auction terms i.e. cost of specification, Earnest Money Deposit etc., please visit BBMB website <https://bbmbprocure.com> & <https://www.bbmb.gov.in>

State Transport Commissioner, Punjab S.C.O. 17

Timings

DELHI

WEDNESDAY, SEP. 16
RISE 06:07 SET 18:25
RISE 04:33 SET 18:01
THURSDAY, SEP. 17
RISE 06:07 SET 18:24
RISE 05:41 SET 18:41
FRIDAY, SEP. 18
RISE 06:08 SET 18:22
RISE 06:48 SET 19:20

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	37	26
Safdarjung	37	26
Palam	36	27

Delhi Ploom Today

38°C Day would turn hot and humid with partly cloudy sky. Evening also would remain slight warm.

Delhi Ploom Tomorrow
38°C Easy morning becoming hot and humid afternoon with partly cloudy sky and light winds.

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IN BRIEF

Police destroy 16,000 bottles of illicit liquor

NEW DELHI
The Delhi Police on Monday destroyed over 16,000 quarter bottles of illicit liquor, which were seized from south Delhi, officials said on Tuesday.

Record testing done in Capital; active cases near 30,000 mark

Delhi sees 4,263 new COVID-19 cases; no. of containment zones at all-time high

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

As many as 4,263 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 2,25,796, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Tuesday.

The city also witnessed the highest number of tests conducted in a single day – 62,669. The Capital, however, did not report a record number of cases as the positivity rate (percentage of people testing positive for every 100 tests done) is currently at 6.8% – the lowest since August 19, when the rate was 6.7%.

Sisodia stable, has fever
Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who tested positive for the virus on Monday, is now stable, though he has fever, said sources. "His fever comes and goes, but he is fine and his oxygen levels are



People in queue for COVID-19 testing in north-west Delhi's Adarsh Nagar on Tuesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

in the required range. He is under home quarantine," a source in the Aam Aadmi Party said.

The city has also reported 36 more fatalities, taking the death toll to 4,806.

Of the total cases, 1,91,203

people have recovered and there are now 29,787 active cases. The number of containment zones in the city has jumped to a record 1,560. "The Chief Secretary holds a daily review meeting with all District Magistrates

Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases
2,25,796

Total deaths
4,806

New cases in the past 24 hours
4,263

New deaths in the past 24 hours
36

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

(DMs) where cases, positivity rate and containment zones are discussed. The DMs have been instructed to create more containment zones, especially micro-containment zones, to check the spread of the virus," a Delhi government official said.

Out of the total 14,482 beds available for COVID-19 treatment in the city, 54.02% are vacant; 60.8% of ICU beds with ventilators are occupied, and 64.6% of ICU beds without ventilators are occupied, as per government data on Tuesday.

Cases of COVID-19, dengue co-infection rising: doctors

Combination could enhance severity of both diseases

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN

NEW DELHI

Delhi is registering a rise in co-infection of dengue and COVID-19 with doctors now warning that this combination could enhance the severity of both diseases.

"Most cases of COVID-19 and dengue are asymptomatic (about 80%), and in a setting of co-infection one disease might enhance the severity of the other," Ashutosh Biswas, professor of Medicine at AIIMS-Delhi, told *The Hindu*.



Fumigation in progress at a north Delhi locality to combat dengue. ■ FILE PHOTO

pends on clinical conditions and symptoms," he added.

AIIMS authorities said 53 dengue cases have been admitted to the hospital so far this year, out of which 42 were reported during the ongoing pandemic. "Emergency of co-infection of COVID-19 and dengue is expected to be a serious public health challenge. Rising dengue cases will create more pressure on an already overburdened health system," said doctors.

It is also difficult to distinguish symptoms of the two diseases due to overlapping

initial clinical presentations and laboratory parameters. "Both COVID-19 and dengue have unpredictable clinical courses and both generally require hospital monitoring for management. Most hospitals are busy managing COVID-19 and very little window is open for tackling another disease outbreak. IV Fluid therapy is challenging in co-infected patients due to early development of ARDS/pulmonary oedema, and treatment with low molecular weight heparin for management of COVID-19 may enhance bleeding in the presence of dengue, especially with low platelet count," said Dr. Biswas.

Doctors added that besides diagnostic and treatment challenges there is "limited experience" in tackling such situation and the "paucity of medical literature on management of such co-infection cases has kept everyone in dark".

AAP criticises BJP for 'anti-farmer' laws

Party claims ordinances presented by Centre a step towards privatising farming

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday slammed the BJP for bringing in alleged "anti-farmer" laws such as Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020; Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance, 2020; and Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020.

The party said it will oppose these Bills in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Addressing a press conference



Bhagwant Mann ■

lives of the farmers. The Bill is a step towards privatising the farming industry. The MSP will be finished and the Bill will give a clear freehand to the private players. Earlier, the BJP has privatised the banks, LIC, railways etc and now they have targeted the agricultural lands. The farmers across India are protesting against this Bill."

Mr. Mann claimed that to save a Cabinet post, the Shiromani Akali Dal has "sold out" the rights of the farmers of Punjab and if the SAD really wants to support their rights, then they must vote

against the Bill in Parliament.

"Yesterday [Monday], the Union Minister also said that when the discussion and planning of these Bills were taking place, the CM of Punjab also supported this. I want to ask the Congress to clarify its position. On one side, they are opposing the Bill and on the other, they are supporting the Bill. Tomorrow while we raise our voice inside Parliament, the Punjab unit of the party will hold a tractor march in front of the house of SAD MP Hardeep Singh Kaur Badal," said Mr. Mann.

Mr. Mann claimed that to save a Cabinet post, the Shiromani Akali Dal has "sold out" the rights of the farmers of Punjab and if the SAD really wants to support their rights, then they must vote

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PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
GURU HARGOBIND THERMAL PLANT
LEHRA MOHABBAT
E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders are invited for the following works for all thermal plants of PSPCL as per Tender specifications:-

Sr. No.	Description of work	Quantity handled
1.	a) Rendering liaison services for optimum materialization of MSQ for ROM/washed coal, including supervision of loading & weighing of coal at loading ends, by rail mode from CIL subsidiaries to all PSPCL thermal plants. b) To minimize the transit loss of ROM/washed coal dispatched to all PSPCL thermal plants from CIL subsidiaries. c) Covering of loaded wagons of PSPCL coal rakes with good quality tarpaulin & ropes for covering after completion of loading as per Railway standards/PSPCL requirements.	2-3 Million Tonnes per Year.

Enquiry No: 07/FE&T/GHTP/FM-69 Dated 14.09.2020

Down loading of specification/Tender Documents from website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in	Start Date	14.09.2020
	End Date	13.10.2020 upto 17:00 hrs
Last date & time for receipt of request for registration of contractors with GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat	06.10.2020 upto 17:00 hrs	
Last date & time for bid submission	14.10.2020 upto 11:30 hrs	
Date and time for opening of technical bid/tender fee/EMD	14.10.2020 at 12:00 hrs	
Date and time for opening of price bid & reverse auction	Will be intimated later on	
Mode of Tendering	e-tendering	
Cost of Tender specifications (in Rs.) & mode of its payment	Rs. 2950/- (2500+18% GST)	
Mode of Tendering	e-tendering only	
Payment mode for cost for tender documents	Online on the website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in	

Detailed NIT may be downloaded from https://eproc.punjab.gov.in. Other details regarding e-tendering process can be downloaded from PSPCL website www.pspcl.in. All bidders are intimated to get their digital signatures well in time so as to submit their tenders via e-tendering process.

Note: It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on official PSPCL website www.pspcl.in

DPR PB I/77243 Chief Engineer/O&M
GHTP-46/2020

GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE					
SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH
1	PT. B.D. SHARMA, UHS, ROHTAK	DEPLOYMENT OF COOPERATIVE LABOUR AND CONSTRUCTION SOCIETIES CONSISTING OF ALL SCHEDULE CASTE MEMBERS OR DEPLOYMENT OF OTHER AGENCIES FOR LIFTING AND TRANSPORTATION OF COAL FROM THE COAL WHARF AT THE UHS CAMPUS, ROHTAK (TWO TIMES IN A DAY OR AS PER REQUIREMENTS) TO MUNICIPAL CORPORATION DUMPING AREA AT ROHTAK FOR ONE YEAR WHICH IS EXTENDABLE MAXIMUM OF ANOTHER ONE YEAR SUBJECT TO SAME CONDITIONS AS FOR THE UHS CAMPUS (UHS) CAMPUS, ROHTAK.	CLOSING DATE 15.10.2020	30600/-	www.uhsr.ac.in 01262-281311 msspgmshy@gmail.com
2	HAFED	SHORT TERM E-TENDER FOR PURCHASE OF RICE BRAN DE-OILED CONTINUES RICE BRAN MUSTARD DE-OILED (IN HDPE BAGS) SOUND MAIZE COMMON SALT LIQUID SOYABEAN OIL COTTON SEED CAKE AND PACKING MATERIAL	15.09.2020 27.09.2020	445.05 LACS	www.hafed.gov.in (0172) 2590497 hafed@hry.nic.in
3	GMDA, GURUGRAM	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF ROADS FROM SECTOR 1 TO 23 GMDA IDS (22, 24, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 159, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 87, 56, 47 ETC.) AND OTHER WORKS	11.09.2020 17.09.2020	487.70 LACS	https://www.gmda.gov.in/ xen3infra1.gmda@gov.in 01262-267029 (hsilidcotkata@gmail.com)
4	HSIIDC	ANNUAL OPERATION & MAINTENANCE CONTRACT (AMC) OF STREET LIGHT SYSTEM IN PHASE-I(BL)/C, R&R AT IMT ROHTAK	16.09.2020 30.09.2020	21.14 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in/ PR No. 231161
5	HAFED	HAFED HAS INVITED E-TENDER FOR SALE/AUCTION OF APPROX. 1200 MT KACHCHI MUSTARD CAKE ON "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" LYING AT HAFED OIL MILL, ROHTAK. THE DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF INVERTER LEASE LINE OF 500 MBPS BANDWIDTH.	OPENING CLOSING DATE 28.09.2020	Rs. 400/- per MT	www.hafed.gov.in addigmp@gmail.com 9729549008 eprocurement@srus.ac.in
6	CH. RANBIR SINGH UNIVERSITY JIND.	CONSTRUCTION OF MASTER DIVIDING ROAD OF SEC-68 OUTER GURUGRAM, "PROVIDING AND FIXING OF RCC PIPE NP-2 VERTICALLY IN SHAPE OF VERTICAL POLE WITH EXCAVATION & FILLING WITH EARTH, EXCLUDING PROVIDING TWO COAT PAINT FOR PVC EMULSION PAINTS ON VERTICAL RCC PIPE POLE FROM SECTOR 68 TO 80, GURUGRAM AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONCERNING THERETO "	14.09.2020 28.09.2020	1.50 LACS	www.crsu.ac.in 01262-285006
7	HARYANA SHEHRI VIKAS PRADHANAKA	MTC. OF ALL HORT. WORKS IN RAMBAGH SATHAL / TOWN PARK AT IMT ROHTAK	CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020	12.30 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in/ Samvad 62799
8	GMDA GURUGRAM	CONSTRUCTION OF MASTER DIVIDING ROAD OF SEC-68 OUTER GURUGRAM, "PROVIDING AND FIXING OF RCC PIPE NP-2 VERTICALLY IN SHAPE OF VERTICAL POLE WITH EXCAVATION & FILLING WITH EARTH, EXCLUDING PROVIDING TWO COAT PAINT FOR PVC EMULSION PAINTS ON VERTICAL RCC PIPE POLE FROM SECTOR 68 TO 80, GURUGRAM AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONCERNING THERETO "	15.09.2020 21.09.2020	7.19 LACS	https://www.gmda.gov.in/ xen1infra1.gmda@gov.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

ENTERPRISE CONNECT

PFC provides solar roof panel to Asha Schools

Power Finance Corporation (PFC), India's leading NBFC, has installed a standalone solar roof top system at ASHA School, run by Indian Army Wives Welfare Association in Delhi Cantonment. The installation has been carried out as part of PFC's CSR initiative. Shri Ravinder Singh Dhilon Chairman and Managing Director, PFC along with Lt. General R K Anand inaugurated the stand alone solar roof top system of 5kWp capacity. Under this CSR initiative, PFC is providing 5kWp standalone solar roof top systems with battery back in 37 Asha schools across the country. Asha School is run by Army Wives Welfare Association, which works for the welfare of the spouses, children and dependents of the Army personnel. ASHA schools are educating and training differently abled children to bring them into main stream of society. PFC is also providing solar lanterns to Indian Army under its CSR initiative. 5,000 solar lanterns have already been supplied to Indian Army which is helping them in tough terrains and forward posts.

Ashish Garg elected as President of Corporate Secretaries International Association (CSIA)

CS Ashish Garg, President, The Institute of Company Secretaries of India, has been unanimously elected as the President of the Council of Corporate Secretaries International Association, for the year 2021. Corporate Secretaries International Association was established as an association in the year 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland to facilitate, develop and promote the profession of Corporate Secretaries and Governance . Governed by a Council of members and representatives from each national member organisation, CSIA has more than fourteen member countries today and is catering to 100000 governance professionals across the globe. With the strengthening of the Governance Structure in the country and with its growth as an inclusive nation in the Global Corporate Governance map, India Inc. has already made headway in achieving its goal of becoming one of Global Corporate Leaders. Appointment of CS Ashish Garg, as the President of CSIA, would bolster the ambit of this growth.

Inauguration of Integrated Command & Control Centre of NDMC

Lt. Governor – Delhi inaugurated Integrated Command & Control

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON



General public is hereby informed that one person namely **Rajesh Sharma S/o Ramswaroop Sharma** R/o H.No. 665, Mohalla Baoli 6, Tooti Chowk, Pahar Ganj, Delhi. Age 54 years, Height 5'2", Complexion wheatish, Face long, Built thin, **For identification:** Mentally weak, wearing Black colour pant, Dark Blue colour shirt and Black shoes in feet has been missing since 02.09.2020 from his house.

In this regard a DD No. 69-A dated 03.09.2020 has been lodged at PS Pahar Ganj, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the undersigned at the address or telephone nos. given below.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/332/CD/2020

SHO

PS Pahar Ganj, Delhi

Ph. 011-23520787, 23524746

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL



General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Varsha Kumari D/o Mithilesh Mandal** R/o Qtr. No. 22C, Mandir Marg, Behind Hanuman Mandir, Govindpuri Market, Delhi Cantt., New Delhi Age: 17 yrs, Height: 5'2", complexion fair, black eye and long black hair. Wearing blue colour suit and brown colour sandal in feet has been missing from the area of PS Delhi Cantt., New Delhi since 03.03.2015.

In this regard a FIR No. 102/2015 dated: 05.03.2015 U/s 363 PC has been registered at PS Delhi Cantt., New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl, but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph: 011-24368638
011-24368641
DP/258/SW/20

Punjab CM seeks apology from Union Minister Danve

'Misleading statement about State's stand on agri ordinances'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has sought an apology from Union Minister Raosaheb Danve, accusing him of giving a misleading statement regarding the State's stand on the farm ordinances in Parliament.

Referring to Mr. Danve's statement in the Lok Sabha on September 14 about Punjab being on board regarding the farm ordinances, Captain Amarinder said the remarks of the Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution were aimed at defaming the Congress and its government.

Referring to Mr. Danve's statement in the Lok Sabha on September 14 about Punjab being on board regarding the farm ordinances, Captain Amarinder said the remarks of the Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution were aimed at defaming the Congress and its government.

The Chief Minister said in a statement that at no point did the high-power committee make any suggestion about bringing these "anti-farmers ordinances", which the Centre introduced amid the pandemic and has now placed in Parliament for



CM Amarinder Singh

enactment.

"The Minister should apologise immediately," said Capt. Amarinder. He said his government has consistently and persistently opposed any move to dilute the rights and interests of farmers not only in the high-power committee on agricultural reforms but in the State Assembly and on all public forums.

Capt. Amarinder also said the presentation of the ordinances in Parliament had totally exposed the

farce of Shiromani Akali Dal's pretence of protecting the interests of the farmers of Punjab.

Akali Dal exposed'

"With the BJP-led NDA government going ahead with laying the ordinances on the table of the House on the very first day of the Parliament session, instead of accepting SAD's so-called plea to defer the same, the Akali charade on the issue had been laid bare," said the Chief Minister.

"The fact that Sukhbir Singh Badal had stayed away from the House on Monday, when the ordinances were presented for legislation, showed that the entire drama of seeking postponement of their enactment was played out by the SAD chief to appease the farmer organisations, which have been up in arms against the ordinances," he added.

Central nod for Haryana rail project

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Tuesday approved the 121.7 km Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor Project, which is expected to be completed in five years at an estimated cost of ₹5,617 crore.

Under the project, the rail line will start from Palwal, Haryana, and end at the existing Harsana Kalan station (on Delhi-Ambala section) in Sonipat, Haryana, while providing connectivity enroute to existing Patiala station (on Delhi-Rewari line), Sultanpur station (on Ghaziabad-Farukhnagar Line) and Asaudha station (on Delhi Rohtak Line).

The project will be implemented by the Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited, a joint venture company set up by the Ministry of Railways and the Government of Haryana, an official statement said.

Arunachal CM tests positive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has tested positive for COVID-19 a day after meeting Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi.

"I had undergone Covid test RT-PCR and have tested positive for Covid19. I am asymptomatic and feeling healthy," the Chief Minister tweeted on Tuesday.

JHARKHAND URJA SANCHARAN NIGAM LIMITED

(CIN No.:U40108JH2013SGC001704)
Regd. Office: 2nd Floor, JUSNL (SLDC) Building Kusai Colony, Doranda, Ranchi - 834002 Fax No.:0651-2400123 (E-mail:cetjusnl@gmail.com)

TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE

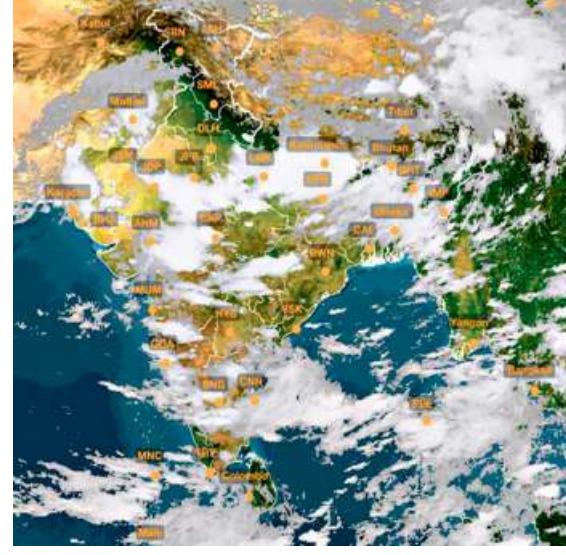
Due to unavoidable circumstances, RFP invited vide RFP No. 74/ PR/ JUSNL/ 2020-21 for Appointment of Consultancy Firm for the Office of (C&RA) of Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd. (JUSNL) for Support in Business Operation and Regulatory framework (Detailed in Scope of Work) is hereby cancelled.

सर्वदा एवं राष्ट्रदित में जज्जी वाच्ये। कृपया अपनी शिकायतों को 18003456570(कॉल सेन्टर) पर दर्ज करायें।

PR No. 231161 Sd/- General Manager, C&M (NWBP

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.2	34.5	25.6	Kozhikode	9.9	30.2	24.8
Ahmedabad	2	33.4	27.2	Kurnool	0.7	29.2	23.2
Aizawl	5	28.3	20.4	Lucknow	—	36.4	27.6
Allahabad	—	36.0	27.8	Madurai	—	35.0	24.2
Bengaluru	—	26.2	20.2	Mangaluru	15.8	28.7	23.2
Bhopal	2.8	33.8	23.9	Mumbai	6.9	31.5	24.6
Bhubaneswar	0.2	35.2	26.6	Mysuru	0.5	28.0	21.1
Chandigarh	—	35.8	26.8	New Delhi	—	37.4	26.0
Chennai	1.8	32.0	25.0	Patna	3.4	34.0	27.2
Coimbatore	—	31.0	22.8	Pond Blair	62	29.9	23.2
Dehradoon	—	33.2	23.9	Puducherry	—	32.0	25.8
Gangtok	41.3	19.2	17.4	Pune	—	28.1	21.7
Goa	26.8	30.4	23.1	Raipur	—	34.0	25.8
Guwahati	8.2	33.4	23.6	Ranchi	—	33.5	24.5
Hubballi	—	26.0	21.0	Shillong	2.7	25.4	18.1
Hyderabad	6.3	29.4	21.6	Shimla	—	26.5	19.0
Imphal	0.3	30.6	20.6	Srinagar	—	29.6	14.1
Jaipur	—	36.8	25.4	Thiruvananthapuram	1.2	31.3	23.4
Kochi	5.2	29.6	24.6	Tiruchi	—	33.0	25.3
Kohima	1.6	24.8	18.0	Vijayawada	31.6	32.6	25.6
Kolkata	—	33.7	27.8	Visakhapatnam	5.3	33.8	27.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bhopal, Rajasthan recorded an air quality index (AQI) score of 252 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 9

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

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

Will let lawyers travel on locals on experimental basis, State tells HC

Passes will be issued from September 18 till October 7 to attend physical hearings

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government told the Bombay High Court on Tuesday that lawyers who have to attend physical hearings will be allowed to travel by local trains in Mumbai on an "experimental basis" from September 18 to October 7.

The State government said advocates who need to be present before one of the four Benches of the court can write to their respective registrars, obtain a certificate and then approach the railway authorities to issue them a travel pass for that particular day.

Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhakoni produced a note explaining the arrangement before a Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipan-



Under consideration: The Bombay High Court is planning to extend a similar relief to lawyers of trial courts. ■ FILE PHOTO

kar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni. On behalf of the Railways, Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh agreed to set in motion the proposed arrangement.

tial staff permitted to travel by special suburban train services being run amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The high court passed an order saying the advocates who intend to physically appear before the court should write to their designated registrar, seeking a pass for the particular date on which their matter is listed for hearing in court. The court recorded that the registrar should issue the certification only after confirming the correctness of the claim made in the application.

Upon receipt of such a certification, the advocates may approach the railway authorities to obtain the appropriate pass/document for travel or ticket allowing them to use the special suburban train services.

Third plea filed against coverage of actor's death

HC issues notice to Centre, Law Commission on PIL to expand contempt law

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court has issued notices to the Central government, the Law Commission and the Press Council in a third plea filed on Tuesday regarding the media coverage of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

The petition seeks "expanding the Contempt of Courts Act to include starting point of the pending proceedings in a case to be from the registration of FIR".

The third public interest litigation (PIL) petition was filed by a registered trust, Pursuit of Justice. The petitioners call the "extent of media frenzy concerning all issues and non-issues involving the said incident is quite 'disturbing'". It says that this has given rise to an urgent need to find an acceptable constitutional balance between a free press and administration of justice.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni issued notices and will hear all

three matters on the media coverage of Rajput's death together on October 8.

The latest petition seeks to expand the scope of the Contempt of Courts Act to include any publication which obstructs the administration of justice during the pendency of proceedings. It also calls for the registration of an FIR to be considered at the beginning of the case instead of the filing of the final report under Code of Criminal Procedure as of now.

The PIL quoted that the

Law Commission in its 200th Report had also recommended that the starting point of the proceedings should be from the time a person is arrested instead of the filing of a charge sheet, as the provision postulates.

The plea goes to say, "The media, how so much ever,

revered it is as the fourth pillar of democracy, does not enjoy unfettered, unrestricted and unbridled freedom of reporting which can impinge upon similar and other rights of the citizens. The re-

cent, persistent and continuous reporting of the Sushant Singh Rajput case has blurred the line of fine and ethical reporting and irresponsible journalism, which has the propensity of setting up dangerous precedents in terms of demolishing and seriously impairing the faith and confidence of the people in the law and order machinery of the state."

'Irresponsible coverage'

The third petition adds that the irresponsible media coverage is a "serious violation of the constitutional protection guaranteed under Article 21 (Right to Life) concerning the rights of a person to a fair trial, the right to privacy of individuals being subjected to such roving public gaze facilitated by relentless media coverage, a serious violation of the privacy of a deceased person and depriving citizens of their right to receive unadulterated and accurate news as information instead of news as a form of entertainment".

Cases force M.P. House to opt for 1-day session

Biaora MLA died after recovering from COVID-19

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

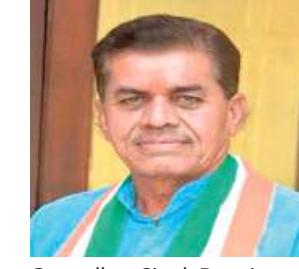
An all-party meeting in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday decided to shorten the scheduled Vidhan Sabha session to a single-day in view of the death on the day of a Congress MLA who had earlier contracted COVID-19 and 39 MLAs having been infected so far.

"In view of the pandemic, the death of an MLA who had earlier contracted the illness and infection spread among legislators, the session will now be held in a limited way," pro tem Speaker Rameshwar Sharma told reporters here. He said members could attend the session virtually too.

The necessary financial and legislative business would be conducted in the House on September 21 in the presence of limited members. Further, written answers to questions received from MLAs for three days, on which the session was earlier planned, would be provided to them, the Vidhan Sabha Secretariat said.

The death comes on the day an all-party meeting is scheduled to discuss the three-day Assembly session which will begin from September 21.

The death has rendered another Assembly seat vacant even as by-elections to 27 of them are due.



Goverdhan Singh Dangi.
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The State Congress said its MLA from Biaora Goverdhan Singh Dangi died from multiple-organ failure while undergoing treatment at a private hospital, days after he recovered from COVID-19. He was 62.

Spokesman Durgesh Sharma said Mr. Dangi's son had brought back his body to Biaora in Raigarh district from a hospital in Gurugram. "He worked extensively in the field of education and undertook Narmada parikrama along with senior leader Digvijaya Singh," he said.

His death comes on the day an all-party meeting is scheduled to discuss the three-day Assembly session which will begin from September 21.

The death has rendered another Assembly seat vacant even as by-elections to 27 of them are due.

Milk, not eggs, will check malnutrition: Chouhan

M.P. CM contradicts Minister's statement

STAFF REPORTER
BHOPAL

of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday said that milk instead of eggs would be served to malnourished children, contradicting an announcement recently by Women and Child Welfare Minister Smriti Devi.

"The government will distribute milk to malnourished children. To keep malnourishment away, milk, not eggs," Mr. Chouhan said.

The State government has planned to distribute milk to children at anganwadi centres on September 17 during the 'Gareeb Kalyan Sapta' (poor's welfare week), to mark the birthday

A few days ago, Women and Child Welfare Minister Smriti Devi had reiterated her proposal to provide eggs to children and pregnant women to combat malnutrition. A former Congress leader who switched over during the political turmoil in March, Ms. Devi had first made the announcement during her previous stint while holding the same portfolio.

At least 42% children under the age of five years are stunted, while 43% are underweight in M.P., according to the National Family Health Survey - 4 (2015-2016).

THE HINDU

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Joint Director	Level 12 (78800-209200)	14.3	50 years	01
Chauffer	Level 2 (19900-63200)	3.6	35 years	01

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Ill-advised move

By seeking contempt action for an innocuous comment, HC judge has set off controversy

Given the embarrassment and adverse publicity suffered by the Supreme Court because of its verdict holding advocate Prashant Bhushan guilty of contempt for a couple of tweets, one would have thought the superior judiciary would avoid wading into needless controversies by invoking its contempt jurisdiction. However, Justice S.M. Subramanian of the Madras High Court seems to believe that anyone criticising judges should be dealt with by the threat of contempt. In an ill-advised move, he has written to the Chief Justice, seeking permission to initiate contempt proceedings against prominent Tamil actor Suriya for an innocuous comment on recent judicial orders declining to interfere with the conduct of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for medical courses. The actor, responding with anguish to recent suicides by MBBS aspirants out of fear of failure, had remarked that "a court that dispenses justice through video-conferencing out of fear of the coronavirus is ordering students to write an exam without fear". The judge claims that the actor had questioned the integrity and devotion of judges and that such a remark, if unpunished, would undermine public trust in the judiciary. It is only petulant resort to contempt law without necessary cause that would make the layman lose trust in courts. No reasonable person who reads Mr. Suriya's statement would construe it as contempt of court, as it does nothing more than state an obvious fact: while the pandemic has resulted in virtual hearings, the court has allowed an examination involving a million-and-a-half students.

As pointed out by six former judges of the High Court in a letter to the Chief Justice asking him not to act on Justice Subramanian's letter, the judge's construction of the actor's comments is off the mark. Besides, no one would believe that the actor had interfered with any judicial proceeding through his comment, or that it hindered the administration of justice in any way. That a judge should show unbelievable acracy in shooting off a letter to the Chief Justice, within hours of the actor's statement being aired on television, evidences an alarming level of intolerance towards criticism and a monarchical understanding of how courts ought to deal with public opinion. The actor, who also runs a voluntary organisation dedicated to increasing access to education for underprivileged children, has commented in the past, too, on matters related to education. There is no reason to abridge his constitutional right to do so, especially on an issue of public importance. Further, Justice Subramanian's request is also impermissible in law. The High Court does not have jurisdiction to initiate contempt in respect of an order passed by the Supreme Court, going by the apex court's verdict in *Vitisah Oberoi* (2017). There is no reason for Chief Justice Amreshwar Pratap Sahi to permit initiation of contempt action against Mr. Suriya.

Venus in focus

International collaborations can help probe the dense atmosphere of Earth's neighbour

Venus, the hottest planet in the solar system, has not enjoyed as much recent attention as Mars, as far as space missions are concerned. With surface temperatures of above 460° Celsius that can melt even a metal like lead, and a heavy atmosphere of carbon dioxide, the planet was considered hostile to life. This despite its being similar in size to the Earth and rocky, so much so that it is often called the Earth's "sister planet". There was some excitement when the European Space Agency's mission, Venus Express, found signs of ozone, made of three oxygen atoms and considered a biomarker, in the upper atmosphere of Venus, in 2011. But the recent discovery of traces of phosphine, another biomarker, in its atmosphere has just given the search for extraterrestrial life a shot in the arm. Phosphine, a compound of one phosphorous atom and three hydrogen atoms, is given out by some microbes during biochemical processes. In an atmosphere rich in carbon dioxide, it is likely to get destroyed soon. However, the researchers estimate that phosphine forms about 20 parts per billion of Venus's atmosphere. This fact, when added to the hostile conditions on its surface, yields tantalising possibilities – of phosphine's survival through extraordinary chemistry and thermodynamics or the stubborn triumph of biology and life.

This finding was the result of years of careful study by a team of international astronomers led by Jane S. Greaves of Cardiff University and was announced in a paper published in *Nature Astronomy*. Prof. Greaves first identified phosphine in Venus's atmosphere in 2017, using the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope in Hawaii. Further study and precise observations using the Atacama Large Millimeter/sub-millimeter Array facility in Chile confirmed the suspicions of the researchers in 2019. The very caution exercised by the researchers in announcing the fact underlines the lack of knowledge about these systems and the need to make sure before celebrating the discovery of extraterrestrial life. This can now only be taken further by making *in situ* measurements in the atmosphere of Venus. This poses its own challenges. Apart from the high surface temperature and dense atmosphere, the presence of sulphuric acid in the atmosphere of Venus makes it a highly corrosive environment. Perhaps flying at a height and sending down drones or balloons would be more feasible than a landing. Missions to Venus have been planned by NASA and ISRO. While NASA's mission is slated for launch next year, ISRO is looking at 2023 right now. As is not uncommon in space missions, a spate of collaborations may well improve chances of efficiently probing the dense atmosphere of the planetary neighbour.

Lessons from an immortal conversation

Today, as India confronts some of its biggest strategic challenges, there are deep insights that the Mahabharata can offer



AMITABH MATTOO

In 1991, close to his death, Bimal Krishna Matilal, the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at All Souls College, Oxford, wrote one of his final pieces: a brilliant polemical essay, 'Krsna: In Defense of a Devious Divinity'. Brought to my attention by his favourite student, the JNU's Heera Man Tiwari, the article challenged the western view of the apparently less-than-godly conduct of Krishna before and during the war on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. In 2012, inspired, in part, by Matilal, and the compendium of *Essays on the Mahabharata* edited by McGill's Arvind Sharma, I wrote in this daily (December 11, 2012): "If all the books on war and peace were to suddenly disappear from the world, and only the *Mahabharata* remained, it would be good enough to capture almost all the possible debates on order, justice, force and the moral dilemmas associated with choices that are made on these issues within the realm of international politics."

On strategic thinking

My article, along with other writings, was an attempt at confronting a major western critique of India; a Eurocentric belief that India and Indians had only episodically written about strategic issues and that there was no real culture of strategic thinking in India. The American think-tank Rand's Vice President, George K. Tanham, had put this starkly in his 1992 paper, 'Indian Strategic Thought: An Interpretive Essay' (commissioned by the U.S. Under Secretary for Defence) in which he argued that the Indian elite had not systematically or coherently thought about na-

tional security. Since then, many scholars, including at JNU, have reviewed different traditions of strategic thinking in India: from Asoka's post-Kalinga idealism to the more predictive hard-headed realism of Kautilya, to the more critical traditions of thinking about war and peace.

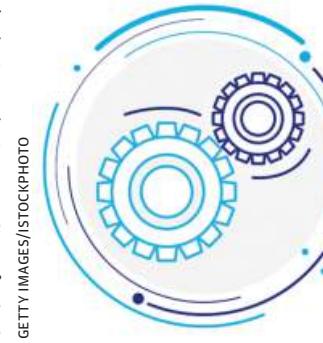
Fortunately, we also now have the benefit of the External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar's book, *The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World*, which recognises the importance of the *Mahabharata* in a deeply perceptive chapter, 'Krishna's Choice: The Strategic Culture of a Rising Power'. A must read for all students of foreign policy. Earlier, we had the inspiring account of Amrita Narlikar and Aruna Narlikar, *Bargaining with a Rising India: Lessons from the Mahabharata*.

Limited scrutiny

However, even today, in contrast to the industry of researchers who devote themselves to studying Chinese strategic culture, the interest in India's thinking is still limited. This must change; not in a nativist or a revivalist fashion or by necessarily emphasising India's exceptionalism, but to understand that India's strategic culture acts as an important intervening variable between power, interest and material capabilities, on the one hand, and the higher purpose of statecraft on the other.

Today, as India confronts some of its biggest strategic challenges there are deep insights that the *Mahabharata* offers us, including from the immortal dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. For Prof. Matilal's western critics: "[Krishna] is a riddle, a paradox. If anything, he appears to be a devious diplomat", an enigma. In reality, Krishna (even in his mortal form) is the ultimate strategic visionary, a political genius, who believes in upholding Dharma, almost at any cost.

What does Dharma mean par-



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

ticularly in terms of strategic vision? First, Dharma means upholding the larger righteous interest, the welfare of humanity both in its mundane and transcendental sense. For the leadership of a nation state, it means protecting the national interest defined as the interests of the people from internal and external adversarial circumstances.

Second, Dharma means action not passivity; acting without material incentives, and without regard for narrowly defined gains from that action. And acting decisively while recognising, however, that the war for upholding Dharma will almost necessarily always cause collateral damage (both in terms of a strict adherence to principles as well as possibly unrestrained violence).

Finally, the war for Dharma requires acting independently, without attachment, without fear and without external pressure. In sum, Dharma in foreign policy can only be sustained through the doctrine of strategic autonomy. It is the only principle that can bring into harmony flexibility in diplomacy (even duplicity when needed) and purposeful violence when required; so much so that true statecraft and strategic autonomy become inseparable, bringing about a fusion of thought and action for the higher purposes of statecraft. Dharma is beyond self-interest, it is beyond partisan causes, it is concerned almost always with the larger good; it reifies humanity,

the people and not necessarily the state. As Krishna emphasises to Arjuna: "karman yevidhikāras te mā phales u kadācana mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo mā te saṅgo stv akarman i>You have a right to act but never to any fruits thereof. You should never be motivated by the results of your actions, nor should there be any attachment".

Righteous national interest

In contemporary terms, what are the secular aspects of the wisdom that Krishna imparts to Arjuna, particularly in the Bhagavad Gita? Ultimately, for Krishna, our strategic policies must be rooted within the overarching framework of Dharma and for promoting the larger righteous national interest (*Yato dharmas Tato Jaya*: Victory and Dharma go together) rather than any selfish or partisan cause.

In many ways, this wisdom reinforces India's long-standing quest for strategic autonomy, defined as the pursuit of stability, space and strength, as an instrument for promoting national Dharma. As an illustrative example, even at the end of his teachings and his call for action, Krishna encourages Arjuna to reflect and to introspect on what he has learnt, and discard whatever he finds unsuitable: "Thus, I have explained to you the most confidential of all knowledge. Deliberate on this fully, and then do what you wish to do." (iti te jñānam ākhyānam guhyād guhyātaram mayā, vīmśa śyātad aśeṣa n a yathēchasi tāthā kuru").

In terms of moral philosophy with deep implications for statecraft, the concerns that define Prof. Matilal's essay or the Ryerson University scholar Vishal Sharma's are similar to the one raised by the sage, Uttanka, in *Āśvamedhikāparvan*, when he encounters Krishna after the war. Why does Krishna not successfully broker peace between the warring cousins rather than preside over genocide? Why does Krishna undermine his sta-

ture by apparently resorting to "duplicious or even deceitful means in the course of war"? Prof. Matilal and others offer compelling explanations to coherently justify Krishna's actions, including those rooted in moral consequentialism and the lack of omnipotence of the lord when he acquires an earthly form. Krishna is the final guardian of Dharma, a leader; and, on occasion, as Prof. Matilal points out, a leader needs to create "new paradigms for showing limitations of such a generally accepted moral code of truth-telling and promise-keeping".

A distinction

Of the few, in the West, who understood the importance of Dharma (otherwise, for most, an elusive term) was the scientist, J. Robert Oppenheimer (who led the Manhattan project that led to the development of the first atomic weapons). As he witnessed the first nuclear test in July 1945, 'he thought of a verse from the Bhagavad Gita: "divi sūrya-sahasrasya bhaved yugapad utthita yadi bhā sadr̄ ī sā syād bhāsas tasya mahā - manah (If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst at once into the sky, that would be like the splendour of the mighty one)". And then the shloka: "kālo smi lokāks ayakrtpatrā ddho lokānsamā hartumā prava ttalā am become Death, the destroyer of worlds"'). Not surprisingly he supported the development of nuclear weapons against fascism, but opposed the production of a thermonuclear hydrogen bomb during the Cold War. This, he believed, was the difference between Dharma and Adharma and it is a distinction that the Indian leadership must reflect upon and comprehend in its fullest and most inclusive sense.

Amitabh Mattoo is Professor of International Studies at the Jawaharlal Nehru University and Honorary Professor at the University of Melbourne

Impediments to equal productivity, dignity

Doing right by disabled professionals is still considered more a favour than as affording them their right to full inclusion



RAHUL BAJAJ

As a disabled person inhabiting a world designed for the able-bodied, one learns to put up with a lot of indignities that others would consider unacceptable. These include: the everyday pain of being excluded from a whole host of normal life activities, and the challenge of having to constantly find ways of living with equal productivity and dignity as others which the able-bodied often simply do not have to think about. Even so, sometimes, one is overcome by the hot, white anger of something so irredeemably unfair that it cannot be just treated as one of the thousand cuts the disabled face everyday.

Access to a database

In her speech recently to the National Federation of the Blind, Laura Wolk, the first female disabled law clerk on the U.S. Supreme Court, noted how there exists a massive gap between what blind legal professionals, when provided appropriate tools and resources, are capable of achieving and what they are allowed to achieve, on account of the multiple impediments placed in their path.

And an incident last week served for me as a painful remini-

der of two such impediments and of how it feels to be on the receiving end of the kind of irredeemably unfair treatment I referred to earlier.

A battle I have been waging for some time now has been to make SCC Online, India's premier legal database used by practising lawyers, accessible to persons with disabilities. This database is the only online supplier of true copies of judgments (which are the only authenticated copies of any judgments accepted in Indian courts, apart from the copies of judgments uploaded on the website of the relevant court).

SCC Online has myriad accessibility barriers – unlabelled links, search filters which cannot be applied with screen readers, and the text of judgments being inaccessible due to security settings. Thus far, the company running this website has balked at any attempts to make it more accessible – a response characterised by defensiveness, indifference and sheer insensitivity.

Therefore, I took to Twitter in the hope of creating a groundswell of demands for SCC to mend its ways. The response I got is emblematic of the belief system that prevents the disabled from realising their full potential. In response to my plea, a person said: "His [sic; how] exactly can that make it more accessible? Set out your suggestions if you want traction. @... are busy helping us win cases." When I asked him to explain why lawyers like me should not be simi-

larly helped by the platform, he stated: "Tough. Learn to be brief." Given that SCC Online is a private database, much like private property, the person said, no one has the right to ask that it be made accessible. His first tweet received the endorsement of SCC Online.

This incident vividly brings to light two fundamental issues that prevent the disabled from leading lives of equal dignity and productivity: an exclusionary mindset and the inability to recognise the disabled as rights-bearing citizens, entitled to demand fair and equal treatment from every service provider, public or private.

An exclusionary mindset

It has always been my aspiration to be a litigator: nothing about the law excites me more than the prospect of winning a battle of wits in a courtroom. During one of my internships at a leading litigation firm in India, I was unable to get meaningful work. On being informed of this by one of my mentors, the partner at that firm said to the former: "But one thing I

should indicate is that usually people with special skills have a harder time coping with litigation and it might not be a bad idea in future to advise them towards the corporate side as that is on the whole, slower paced."

In the same vein, the Supreme Court of India held last year, in *V. Surendra Mohan vs. State Of Tamil Nadu* that 'Tamil Nadu's policy, of reserving the post of civil judge only for people whose percentage of blindness does not exceed 40-50%, was rational and reasonable. It ruled that a judicial officer has to possess a reasonable amount of sight and hearing to discharge her functions. It accepted the claim that impaired vision makes it impossible to perform the functions required of judicial officers'.

The fallacy in this line of thinking is that it starts with the wrong premise. Instead of starting with the premise that a blind person is as much entitled as anyone else to freely choose what profession they wish to pursue, meaning thereby that any barriers on their path must be attenuated, it instead starts on the premise that the existing ways of doing things will always remain the way they are, so tough luck to those whom they exclude.

As the Supreme Court held last year in the case of *B.K. Pavitra vs. Union of India*, albeit in a slightly different context: "Our benchmarks will define our outcomes. If this benchmark of efficiency is grounded in exclusion, it will produce a pattern of governance

which is skewed against the marginalised. If this benchmark of efficiency is grounded in equal access, our outcomes will reflect the commitment of the Constitution to produce a just social order."

Compliance on accessibility
Equally important, in the public imagination, doing right by the disabled is still widely considered a function of the goodness of one's heart, a favour that constitutes one's good deed for the day. The project of affording them full inclusion and access is not thought of as their right which everyone must help vindicate. This view is innocent of the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (<https://bit.ly/2ZDRELD>). Section 46 of the Act requires all service providers, public or private, to comply with the rules on accessibility framed by the Central Government within a period of two years from the date of their promulgation. This two-year period expired in June 2019.

Until each of us is firmly committed to the idea of implementing the two fundamental changes sketched above, we will continue to live in an environment in which, even as we sing praises of the disabled who achieve success despite the obstacles placed on their path, we do not pause to reflect on what it is that makes it so hard for them to succeed in the first place and what we can do to reverse this state of affairs.

Rahul Bajaj is a Judicial Law Clerk at the Supreme Court of India



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

In Parliament

The government's written reply in Parliament, to a question about the numbers of migrant labourers dying on the way during the lockdown – that no such data was available – betrays utter callousness and insensitivity to one of the greatest tragedies in India since Partition. It was accentuated by a sudden announcement of a total lockdown during the pandemic, with no contingent planning and preparations put in place to meet the inevitable fallout of such an abrupt move and affecting the most vulnerable sections. On the same ground, no

compensation to their families could be paid. It may be recalled how the Solicitor General misled the Supreme Court of India, that as he was speaking, "there was no migrant walking on the road". This was contrary to the facts as some TV channels were covering, live, migrant labourers trudging long distances – many of them hungry, dehydrated and walking barefoot under the blazing sun. Replies to other questions were evasive taking undue advantage of the fact that as unstarrred questions, members are not entitled to seek oral replies to their questions on the floor of

the House. Will the government reconsider restoring Question Hour, at least on alternate days?

S.K. CHOWDHURY,
Bengaluru

Competitive exams
The report of a student ending her life unable to cope with the stress associated with the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) is heart-wrenching. NEET was introduced with the objective of ensuring meritorious entry to medical colleges in the country, without any hassles. But the sad reality is that in a country as diverse as India, with

entrenched socio-economic inequalities, common entrance exams such as NEET are seen to be playing havoc with the lives of students from the lower strata. The perception that NEET does not offer level-playing field to all students as those who have access to private and expensive coaching are at an advantage, cannot be faulted. That young students give up halfway also reflects poorly on our education system. Students are hardly being taught to accept that failure is a part of life and that they should move on with their endeavours with the lessons learnt from such

episodes in life. In the mad pursuit of scoring high marks and academic grades, the significance of instilling the virtues of perseverance, persistence, patience and resilience in young, impressionable minds is being given a go-by. NEET is here to stay. Hence, it is time that steps are taken to ensure a level-

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

A sentence in the article titled "A spectre is haunting Brexit" (Profiles page, Sept. 13, 2020) read: "Dublin would have the best of both worlds, being brought under dual jurisdiction of the EU and the U.K. ... single market." It should be Belfast, not Dublin.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the date (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-284297/28526300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-2855263; E-mail: readerseditor@

An economic disaster foretold

The reported contraction of the economy is likely an underestimate for reasons of omission and commission



AMIT BHADURI & DEEPAKAR BASU

According to data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation of the Government of India on August 31, 2020, real quarterly GDP contracted by a whopping 23.9% between April-June 2019 and April-June 2020. This magnitude of real GDP decline is unprecedented since the country started publishing quarterly GDP estimates in 1996. This is an economic disaster, no doubt. But is a bigger one in the offing?

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, India's real GDP contraction between April-June 2019 and April-June 2020 has been the largest among 13 large economies of the world. China is the only country which saw a positive growth of 3.2% in that period. However, even that reported contraction of the Indian economy in all likelihood is an underestimate for reasons of omission of statistical information and commission of policies of insidious intent.

An underestimated disaster

The unorganised sector forms a significant part of the Indian economy. According to some estimates, it accounts for 45% of output and 93% of employment of the working population.

While data collection methods have undoubtedly improved over time, coming up with reliable estimates of value added in the unorganised sector is challenging. Typically, government statisticians combine information about value added per worker from enterprise surveys with information about employment from employment-unemployment surveys to generate estimates of output in the unorganised sector.

This methodology is applied in benchmark years in which the enterprise and employment surveys are conducted, typically once every five years. The benchmark estimates are only available for those years. For other years, the estimate of output in the unorganised sector is extrapolated from benchmark year estimates



"The lockdown has disproportionately hit the non-agricultural unorganised sector." A labourer works at the Delhi-Meerut Expressway in Ghaziabad. ■ AFP

using information about other indicators like the index of industrial production, the wholesale price index, and tax collection. By its very nature, such a methodology generates doubtful estimates for non-benchmark years even in the best of times. They have become misleadingly unreliable due to the sudden shock of the lockdown imposed by the Central government to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The lockdown has hit the unorganised sector disproportionately hard, as did the previous shock of demonetisation. As a result, standard methods of estimating the output of the unorganised sector by extrapolation and quantifying its contribution to the whole economy overestimates the income generated by it during the pandemic. The actual situation is much worse. The benchmark estimates of output refer to some pre-COVID-19 year and information on other variables like tax collection has been rendered far less reliable for this period.

We are told that employment in the last quarter has increased somewhat, but these are mostly self-employed persons who have now returned to the market place but earn far less because customers' purchasing power has significantly declined. While they can technically be counted as being employed in terms of

working time, they can only be considered grossly underemployed in terms of income earned. And this gap between employment and earnings is likely to grow without injection of massive purchasing power by the government directly into the unorganised sector.

Can agriculture help?
The sectoral pattern of real GDP decline provides important information. The three sectors which contracted the most were construction (at -50.3%), trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting (at -47%) and manufacturing (at -39.3%). Large parts of the first two fall in the unorganised sector underlining how the lockdown has disproportionately hit the non-agricultural unorganised sector.

The only sector which did not contract was agriculture, and that was because of a good monsoon year. It grew between April-June 2019 and April-June 2020 at 3.4%. However, in the present circumstances, agricultural growth will not help much in economic recovery. Agricultural output has risen, but agricultural income will not rise correspondingly due to the same lack of purchasing power in the unorganised sector for buying agricultural products. We are likely to face again, perhaps on a bigger scale, the same obscene situation

of foodgrains piling up while millions go hungry.

A still bleaker future

India's economic woes did not start with the pandemic. Its economy has been slowing down for the last couple of years. The year-on-year change in real GDP for the economy shows that the growth rate of quarterly real GDP has been slowing down at least since the fourth quarter of 2017, declining from 7.6% in Q4 2017 to 3.3% in Q1 2020.

Ill-conceived measures of the Central government have harmed the economy. In November 2016, demonetisation provided the first negative shock. The second one, in the form of the Goods and Services Tax in July 2017, came even before the economy had time to recover from the first shock. All this played out on the canvas of an economy where financial fragility was increasing due to unaddressed problems in the banking sector. Increasing financial fragility coupled with negative policy shocks halted the trajectory of rising growth, and the lockdown has sent the patient who was already ailing into a coma.

Can the economy recover in the foreseeable future? In theory, yes, but in practical terms, no. The reason? The government is not interested in averting an economic crisis for the poor. It is interested in ensuring that the handful of its industrialist friends do well irrespective of the state of the economy. And by all accounts they are doing well. Mukesh Ambani, who has now become the fourth richest person in the world, is only growing richer by the day; Adani too is progressing at a highly satisfactory rate, monopolising airport development. This rosy picture should not be spoiled by irrelevant facts like a 23.9% contraction of the real economy.

And of course, more of the same is likely to come – not to transform but to strengthen this reality. The government has just declared in Parliament that it cannot pay compensation to the families of those migrant workers who died because it does not have the relevant data. Isn't a bigger crisis in the offing?

Amit Bhaduri is former Professor Emeritus, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and Deepankar Basu is Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Parliament and its panels

There is a need to rethink the tenurial prescription for reconstitution of Department-related Standing Committees



VIVEK K. AGNIHOTRI

The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees have a so-called tenure of one year. There was speculation in the media that the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, M. Venkaiah Naidu, is keen on amending the rules to give them a fixed tenure of two years. However, since these are joint committees of the two Houses of Parliament, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha also has to concur.

What the rules say

According to sub-rule (4) of Rule 33ID of the Lok Sabha Rules and sub-rule (3) of Rule 269 of the Rajya Sabha Rules, the term of office of the "members" of the committees shall not exceed one year. Thus, it is the term of office of the members and not that of the committees *per se* that is one year.

This tenurial issue has to be looked at against the backdrop of the fact that the Rajya Sabha itself undergoes partial biennial renewal, since one-third of its members retire every two years by virtue of clause (I) of Article 83 of the Constitution. As far as the Lok Sabha is concerned, it has a fixed tenure of five years, unless sooner dissolved. Given these facts, Mr. Naidu's suggestion is in consonance with the biennial partial reconstitution of the Rajya Sabha.

In the Rajya Sabha, the annual renewal is only notional; major changes are brought about only after each biennial election. Since the Rajya Sabha biennial elections have taken place only in June 2020, there is little point in going through the re-nomination exercise again now. As far as the Lok Sabha is concerned, the major reconstitution takes place when a new Lok Sabha is elected, that is normally after five years. Since there is a mismatch between the election schedule of the Rajya Sabha (every two years) and the Lok Sabha (every five years), it is only once in 10 years that the requirement of major reshuffle of the Standing Committees in both the Houses is expected to coincide, that is after the second round for the Lok Sabha and the fifth biennial round of the Rajya Sabha.

Against this backdrop, there is definitely a need to rethink the tenurial prescription for reconstitution of Department-related Standing Committees. Given the different election schedules of the two Houses and since the term is prescribed for the members, there is perhaps no need to mandate the same term for the members of both the Houses.

The Rajya Sabha Rules prescribe no fixed

tenure for all the other Standing Committees of the Rajya Sabha listed therein. The standard prescription relating to the constitution of those committees states that the committee shall hold office until a new committee is nominated and that the casual vacancies in the committee shall be filled in by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. As far as the Lok Sabha is concerned, most of its committees listed in the Lok Sabha Rules have a tenure of one year, except a few for which no tenure has been prescribed. It would appear that committees concerned with deliberations of a serious nature were given a term coterminous with that of the House, while others were prescribed annual renewal. The Department-related Standing Committees, which were constituted later in 1993, came to be clubbed with the latter category by the Lok Sabha. The Rajya Sabha followed suit.

Another fact to be taken note of is that there are 24 Department-related Standing Committees, each with a membership of 31 (10 of the Rajya Sabha and 21 of the Lok Sabha). They can accommodate 240 members of the Rajya Sabha and 504 members of the Lok Sabha. Ministers cannot be members of these committees and some senior members opt out. Thus no eligible and available MP is left out of the membership of these committees. As a matter of fact, members of some parties have to perform double duty. It, therefore, stands to reason that once a member is nominated to a committee, based on his expertise and/or preference, he should be allowed to continue till he retires or otherwise discontinues the membership in order that the committee is able to benefit from his experience and expertise.

Different tenures

The language of the Rules of the two Houses makes it clear that the one-year term is of the members of the committees and not of the committees *per se*. The Standing Committees are permanent. Hence, there should be no difficulty if the terms of the members of the two Houses on these committees are different, in consonance with the tenure of the Houses themselves. Given these facts, it would stand to reason if the tenure of Department-related Standing Committees is prescribed differently for the two Houses. It may be two years for the Rajya Sabha members and for the Lok Sabha members, it may be coterminous with its life. The Rules could also provide that casual vacancies may be filled in by the Presiding Officers, who may also be empowered to reconstitute the membership of their respective Houses in the committees, if they so desire.

Vivek K. Agnihotri is Former Secretary-General, Rajya Sabha, Parliament of India

Won technically, lost morally

The issue of territorial jurisdiction of the Sushant Singh Rajput case must be resolved

R.K. VIJ

The controversy over territorial jurisdiction of the Sushant Singh Rajput case is over, but it may arise again when the final report is placed in court as the Supreme Court did not resolve the dispute arising out of the claims of the two States. However, it took cognisance of the fact that in future, if commission of a cognisable offence is determined, "the possibility of parallel investigation by the Mumbai police cannot be ruled out".

The Supreme Court did not give due weightage to the death having taken place in the jurisdiction of the Bandra Police, and that inquiry had made substantial progress. More importance was given to the FIR recorded on a statement which was not "first in time" and was also delayed. But these can be questioned only at the trial stage. In fact, the Court adjudicated only on technical grounds.

First, an inquiry

In case of a suicide, unless the victim leaves behind a suicide note alleging that someone was responsible, registration of a case of abetment to suicide is mostly preceded by an inquiry. Taking advantage of the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) which allow more than one court, and thereby more than one police station, to have jurisdiction, the Patna Police directly registered a case of abetment to suicide along with sections pertaining to criminal breach of trust, cheating and defalcation of money. In this case, the main objective is to unravel the cause of death; all other transactions relating to it are secondary.

The purpose of law to allow more than one court or police station to exercise jurisdiction is not to permit two agencies to inquire into the same incident simultaneously. It only intends that either of the two or both or more could take cognisance in case part of an offence is committed under their jurisdiction. The difference between inquiry into the 'cause of death' under Section 174 of the CrPC and investigation into an offence cannot be exploited in favour of the latter just because 'the cause of death' is not ascertained. Courts must rise to

make this distinction irrelevant when investigation is generally preceded by such an inquiry.

The Indian Police are often questioned for not registering FIRs despite being well equipped with information disclosing an offence and having territorial jurisdiction over the case. Under such circumstances, the police of the two States fighting over jurisdiction of a case raises moral questions. A cognisable offence is registered so that it can be taken to its logical conclusion. If an agency is ready to transfer a case almost immediately after registration to another, its intention could be questioned.

The matter of jurisdiction

It is a settled law that if an offence is disclosed, the court will not normally interfere with an investigation and the matter of rightful jurisdiction will be decided only when the final report is submitted in the court. However, when an inquiry into the cause of death is pending, registration of a direct cognisable case with regard to the same incident at any other place may defeat the whole objective of having the rightful jurisdiction under the CrPC. Though the Supreme Court, in *Lalita Kumari* (2013), directed that the registration of an FIR is mandatory, each police station has its own notified territorial area to ascertain the actual cause of action of any offence or incident. When it is clearly known that some other police authority who has rightful jurisdiction is already inquiring into the cause of death to ascertain abetment to suicide, the law need not be exploited to debar that agency only on technical grounds.

DATA POINT

Rural deviation

India's COVID-19 Case Fatality Rate (CFR) has been on a decline. The country's CFR (deaths/cases) reduced from 2.97% on June 30 to 1.64% on September 15. One reason could be the fact that, despite a rapid rise in rural cases in recent months, a similar increase in rural deaths was not observed. Is the CFR lower in rural areas as the share of population with co-morbidities is lower compared to urban areas? A district-wise analysis shows that this is not necessarily so. The relation between CFR and diabetes prevalence in rural areas is mild and somewhat negatively correlated. This lends credence to the argument that there is more to low CFR in rural areas, perhaps explained by lower reporting of deaths. By **The Hindu Data Team**



PERSISTENTLY LOW RURAL CFR

The CFR in rural and semi-rural districts has always remained lower than in urban and semi-urban districts. Notably, despite a case surge in rural areas in August and September, the rural CFR continued to remain low.

LOWER RURAL CO-MORBIDITIES

The share of male population with co-morbidities such as diabetes and hypertension is higher in urban areas than rural areas, data from NFHS-4 (2015-16) show.

Co-morbidities among men*	Urban	Rural
Hypertension - slightly above normal	11.4	9.8
Hypertension - very high	1	0.8
Blood sugar level - high	8.8	7.4
Blood sugar level - very high	4.4	3.5

RELATIVE TO DIABETES

The chart plots the % of men with high blood sugar levels against the CFR in rural (red circles) and semi-rural (blue circles) districts. There is a mild negative correlation between the indicators. Thus, counter-intuitively, the CFR was in fact lower in many districts where the % of men with high sugar levels was higher.

RELATIVE TO HYPERTENSION

The chart plots the % of men with 'slightly above normal' hypertension levels against the CFR in rural and semi-rural districts. There is a very weak positive correlation between the two indicators, showing that the CFR is not necessarily linked to prevalence of hypertension.

CFR

FROM PAGE ONE

'China has massively deployed troops'

Later, on September 10, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, met in Moscow where they agreed on a five-point plan for disengagement and reduction of tensions. On this, Mr. Singh said that if implemented "sincerely and faithfully" by the Chinese side, it could lead to "complete disengagement and restoration of peace and tranquillity in the border areas".

In July, addressing troops near Pangong Tso, Mr. Singh said the "progress in the talks [with China] should lead to a resolution of the issue" but "there was no guarantee to what extent the issue would be resolved."

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said the Foreign Ministers reached an important consensus on

"easing up the situation" and the two sides would remain in communication with each other through diplomatic and military channels "to push for settlement of the issues remaining on the ground".

"We hope India will work with China to follow these important agreements and make concrete efforts to improve the situation on the ground," Mr. Wang said.

Since the meeting, there has been an uneasy calm in Ladakh, including on the north and south banks of Pangong, which saw a rise in tensions in the past two weeks.

The two sides have since agreed to hold another round of Corps Commander-level talks to discuss disengagement which, an Army source said, is likely to be held this week.

Govt. refuses discussion on LAC face-off

The meeting was followed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's statement in the Lok Sabha on the situation. However, with Leader of the Congress legislative party in the Lower House Adhir Ranjan Choudhary not being al-

lowed to express his views after the statement, the Opposition walked out.

Mr. Singh will be making a statement in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday where clarifications can be asked for by the Opposition under the rules.

India has surplus medical oxygen: govt.

"We have been in touch with States to ensure that there is no delay in the supply of oxygen. Each State needs to ensure proper inventory management so that oxygen can be replenished in time," he said.

Mr. Bhushan added that the States, including Delhi, Bihar, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, have been directed to increase their COVID-19 testing numbers to ensure that "we are able to catch any missing persons".

Importance of RT-PCR
"We have written to States about the importance of RT-PCR (real-time polymerase chain reaction) tests of symptomatic negatives in antigen tests. To chase the virus, you have to catch missing persons," Mr. Bhushan said at a press conference.

U.S. welcomes India's role in Afghan peace talks

During the talks, both sides stressed on the need for regional support for the Afghan peace process, that could see the Taliban being brought into the political mainstream in Kabul, and on the importance of ending transnational terrorism from Afghan soil.

"The United States and India share the view that the peace process must continue until there is agreement on a political roadmap and a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire. The Afghan sides should ensure their territory must not be used by any terrorist group against any other country," said a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy in Delhi.

On Saturday, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar spoke via video-conference at the inaugural session of the Intra-Afghan Negotiations (IAN) in Doha, the first time that an Indian official has addressed a gathering that included the Taliban (which India has thus far considered a terror group).

New Delhi also sent a high-level official delegation, led by the MEA point person for Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, J.P. Singh.

The MEA did not respond to a question on whether the Indian officials had met with Taliban repre-

sentatives directly. However, a senior government official said that "by participating in IAN at Doha, India has already engaged all parties," signalling a major shift in Indian policy.

This was Mr. Khalilzad's 5th visit to New Delhi since he was appointed the U.S. Special Representative on Afghanistan Reconciliation by U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018.

In an interview to *The Hindu* in May 2020, Mr. Khalilzad had advocated an official India-Taliban engagement, saying it would be "appropriate" given India's importance in Afghanistan. However, the government had refused to comment on the statement then.

Mr. Khalilzad flew into New Delhi on a special plane on Tuesday directly from Pakistan. With the Intra-Afghan negotiations under way in Qatar, the U.S. Special Envoy is pushing for a ceasefire, and during his meetings with the Pakistani army Chief General Bajwa and Pakistan's special envoy on Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq, he reportedly asked for Pakistan's support in convincing the Taliban to commit to a reduction or cessation of violence.

Kerala counts past deaths as case graph rises

State adding 10 to 15 deaths a day to toll; no spikes in Telangana, A.P.; strike by doctors hits work in Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala's COVID-19 case graph continued to rise with the State reporting 3,215 new cases on Tuesday.

Fresh tests stood at 41,054 and the cumulative case burden at 14,033 cases, 31,156 of them active cases.

The toll from the virus was also going up with an average of 10-15 deaths being added

COVID-19

daily. Total deaths were 466 on Tuesday, with the Health department adding another 12 deaths that occurred earlier in the week in various districts under the COVID-19 head.

Locally acquired infections constituted 96% of new cases on Tuesday. A source for infections was not traced in 315 cases.

Telangana's cases were re-

vised upward to 1,60,571 with 2,058 people testing positive on Monday. A total of 51,247 tests were conducted and results of 908 were awaited. The death toll went up to 984 with 10 more fatalities.

The 2,058 cases included 277 from Greater Hyderabad, 143 from Rangareddy, 135 from Karimnagar, 108 from Warangal Urban, 106 from Siddipet, 103 from Khammam, 97 from Medchal-Malkajgiri and 96 from Nalgonda. Of total cases, 30,400 were active, the Health department said.

Andhra Pradesh added 69 new deaths on Tuesday, besides 8,846 new infections. There were 92,353 active cases. The State claimed a COVID-19 death rate of 0.86%, and said it the lowest compared to Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Krishna district had the highest death rate and Chit-

Swapna's police custody after medical examination

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI/THRISSUR

The Special Court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) will decide on the application for the police custody of Swapna Suresh, an accused in the diplomatic gold smuggling case, after assessing her health conditions.

The Special Judge announced the decision on Tuesday while considering the application of the NIA.

A medical board constituted for examining Swapna, who had complained of chest pain, suggested an angiogram test for her.

Swapna's counsel Geo Paul argued that the application for her police custody should be considered only after obtaining her medical report. The court accepted his arguments and said it would wait for the report to decide on her case.

At the same time, the court allowed the police custody of Sandeep Nair, Muhammed Shafi and Muhammed Ibrahim, the other three accused in the case who were produced in the court, till Friday.

The investigation agency has extracted 2TB each data from the digital devices seized from the accused and it wanted to confront them with the data. It had also submitted before the court that the initial scrutiny of the data was completed on September 11. The mirror image of the devices owned and connected to the accused were also obtained by the agency, according to its submission in the court.

According to a Thrissur report the medical board found that Swapna did not have any serious illness. She and K.T. Rameez, another accused in the case, who were admitted to Government Medical College Hospital, Thrissur, were sent back to the Viyyur jail on Tuesday.

The case is listed for hearing after four weeks.

Actor couple called for questioning in drug case

CCB searches property of Aditya Alva, who is absconding

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Continuing investigations into the drug racket involving the Kannada film industry, the Central Crime Branch (CCB), on Tuesday, issued a notice to actor-couple Digant Manchale and Aindrta Ray, directing them to appear for questioning on Wednesday.

The names of the actor-couple cropped up after the CCB found their association with absconding accused Sheikh Faazil, sources said. Faazil allegedly organised high-end gambling parties at a casino in Sri Lanka, which the other accused attended, and at which they peddled drugs.

Ms. Ray is said to have attended one such party recently and even promoted the event on social media. This brought her under the

Unending task

Health care professionals all over the country are working tirelessly to detect virus cases. The graph shows the spread of the pandemic in the southern States



Break time: A worker in PPE kit taking a break, while waiting for people to arrive for taking the COVID-19 test in Bengaluru on Tuesday. ■ MURALI KUMAR

*Kerala has a mismatch of 70 cases due to unaccounted deaths, missing persons | **Telangana numbers are as of 8 p.m. on Monday

***Karnataka has 19 non-COVID deaths

toor's toll was the highest at above 500.

With government doctors in Karnataka on strike over higher pay, fewer COVID-19 positive cases and discharges

were recorded on Tuesday.

While doctors were treating patients and attending to other duties, they were not uploading reports on COVID-19 and National Health

Mission. The Department of Health and Family Welfare said nine districts did not report a single discharge, while no new case was reported from Bagalkot.

There were 7,576 new cases on Tuesday and 97 deaths.

However, testing had not declined and 68,365 tests were conducted on Tuesday. Tamil Nadu reported 5,697 new cases of COVID-19 and 68 more deaths on Tuesday. Of this, 989 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Chennai and 485 in Coimbatore, while the cases surged in Tiruppur as 262 persons tested positive for the infection.

Till now, a total of 5,14,208 persons have tested positive for COVID-19 in the State. Chennai's overall tally of cases crossed 1.5 lakh and the toll crossed 3,000.

As many as 4.58 lakh persons were discharged in the State.

The State's toll touched 8,500 with 68 more fatalities.

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

Sasikala's jail term may end on Jan. 27

IMRAN GOWHAR

BENGALURU
V.K. Sasikala Natarajan, close aide of late former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, lodged in the Central Prison at Parappana Agrahara in Bengaluru since 2017, may be released on January 27, 2021, the Prison Department has confirmed.

It has also said that Sasikala may undergo one more year of imprisonment, till February 27, 2022, if she failed to pay a fine.

T. Narasimamurthy, city-based social activist, had filed an RTI query seeking details of her release in August, but his request was initially turned down. After he approached higher authorities, the information was shared on September 11.

Sasikala, convict No. 9234, is serving her term in the Central Prison since Fe-

bruary 15, 2017, after the Supreme Court set aside a High Court acquittal and upheld the trial court conviction in the disproportionate assets case, which also involved the late Jayalalithaa. The court had ordered Sasikala to pay a fine of ₹10 crore, beside serving four years of imprisonment.

Sasikala's nephew Sudhakaran and her confidante J. Ilavarasi are also serving jail terms.

IN BRIEF



Airport case: HC Bench recuses from hearing

KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court recused itself from hearing petitions filed by the State government and others against the Centre's decision to approve the grant of lease/concession on the right of operation, management and development of the Thiruvananthapuram international airport to Adani Enterprises Limited.

Pampa: HC stays vigilance court's order for probe

KOCHI

The Kerala High Court stayed for two months the Thiruvananthapuram vigilance court's order for a probe into the alleged corruption in awarding contract for mining of sand accumulated during the flood on the Triveni bank at Pampa.

A.P. HC bars publication of case details

STAFF REPORTER

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Tuesday restricted publication of any news related to the details of an FIR and further proceedings.

Following a writ petition filed by a former Advocate-General, the High Court stayed further inquiry and investigation.

The order stated that no electronic or print news be published in respect of FIR no. 8/RCO-ACB-GNT/2020 of ACB [Anti-Corruption Bureau], Guntur, dated September 15, 2020, and connected events until further orders of the High Court.

The court issued directions that social media posts shall also not be published.

The case is listed for hearing after four weeks.

Telangana govt. opposes Electricity Act amendment

State Assembly adopts resolution against the changes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has resolved to present a strong case against the proposed amendment to the Electricity Act, 2003 by the Central government, terming it as "unilateral decision and a blatant attempt against the federal spirit of the Constitution."

"If the dictatorial bill is passed, the States will lose their control over the energy sector," he said, adding that the distributor sub-license method mentioned in the new Act would lead to backdoor entry for private companies.

Explaining the highlights of the draft Bill circulated by the Centre immediately rescind its moves that were harmful to the interests of the people, farmers and underprivileged sections in particular.

Moving the resolution in the House on Tuesday, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao described the proposed amendment as "draconian and dangerous" and totally against the federal spirit of the Constitution.

The regulatory commission to be set up at the Central level would decide the charges that should be paid by farmers and other consumers without subsidy, he said. The new Act would enable consumers to procure more power through open access system and this would adversely affect the distribution companies.

"For States like Telangana which are giving cross subsidies, this will be a very heavy burden," he lamented. The State was providing subsidy in excess of ₹10,000 crore every year towards free power to the farm sector.

CVC drops action against top officials of Train18 team

They were part of the Integral Coach Factory core group behind India's first semi-high speed train

S. VIJAY KUMAR

CHENNAI

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has advised the Ministry of Railways to drop action against top officials of the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, who were part of the core team that made Vande Bharat Express, India's first semi-high speed train.

According to sources in the Railways, the CVC advised that no action be taken against then General Manager Sudanshu Mani, principal chief mechanical engineer Shubhranshu, principal chief electrical engineer N.K.

Gupta, chief design engineer S.P. Vavre and others facing allegations of irregularities in the purchase of three-phase propulsion equipment for electrical multiple units, mainline electrical multiple units and Train18 (Vande Bharat Express).

In a note, the CVC said the clause "found restrictive by the Railway Board does not appear to be restrictive in view of the response received against the tenders".

The Commission put on record its disagreement with the Disciplinary Authority and the Principal Executive Director (Vigilance), Railway

Board, and advised 'No Action' against Mr. Vavre, who retired from service on August 31. Action was dropped against Mr. Mani and Mr. Gupta, both retired; and Mr. Shubhranshu, Chief Administrative Officer, Rail

Wheel Factory, Bela. Meanwhile, the Vigilance Directorate of the Railway

Scheme for health sector extended

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package insurance scheme for health workers fighting COVID-19' has now been extended for another 180 days, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

The scheme was announced on March 30 for 90 days and was extended for 90 days (up to September 25). This Central sector scheme provides an insurance cover of ₹50 lakh to healthcare providers who may have to be in direct contact and care of COVID-19 patients, and therefore is at risk of being infected.

It covers private hospital staff/retired/volunteer/local urban bodies/contract/daily wage/ad-hoc/outsourced staff requisitioned by States/Central hospitals/autonomous hospitals of Central/States/UTs, AIIMS & NIIs/hospitals of Central Ministries drafted for COVID-19 related responsibilities.

10 States account for 77% of active COVID-19 cases: govt.

Norms for rational use of personal protective equipment issued, says Minister

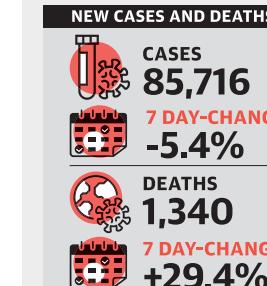
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Minister of State for Health Ashwini Choubey on Tuesday told the Rajya Sabha that only 10 States – Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Odisha, Assam and Kerala – contribute to 77% of the active COVID-19 cases in the country.

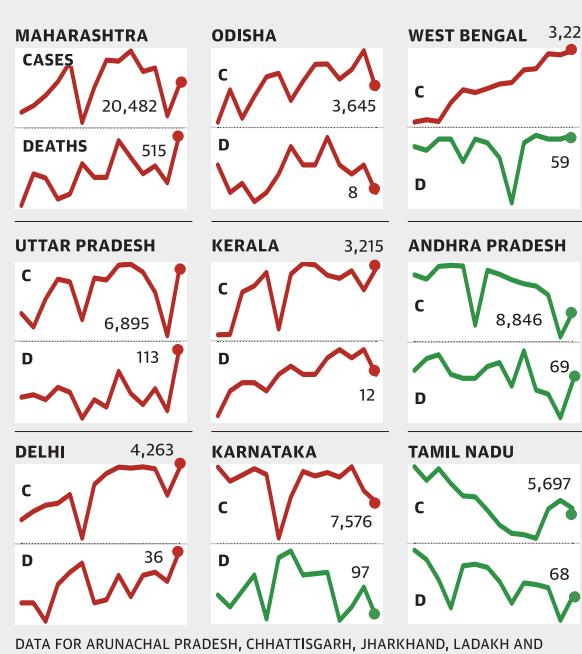
There is evidence, according to the World Health Organization, which suggests that transmission occurs primarily through direct, indirect or close contact with infected people through saliva and respiratory secretions, he said. "Airborne transmission of the virus can occur in healthcare settings where specific medical procedures, called aerosol-generating procedures, generate very small droplets called aerosols." The Centre, in its guidelines on the rational use of

Viral tracker

With 85,716 COVID-19 cases recorded on Tuesday, India became the second country to cross 50 lakh infections. The day also saw the highest single-day rise in fatalities, with a whopping 1,340 new deaths. The graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. The States are classified based on where cases/deaths are rising (red) or falling (green).



personal protective equipment (PPE) issued on March 24, has accounted for the



possibility of airborne transmission in aerosol-generating procedures and has re-

commended appropriate PPE for such settings, he said.

Jharkhand HC rejects man's plea for relief

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

The Jharkhand High Court has rejected anticipatory bail application of a man accused of circulating a post through a WhatsApp group indicating that a woman of Malaysian origin was responsible for spreading coronavirus.

The plea came up for hearing in the court of Justice Mr. Rongon Mukhopadhyay in Jharkhand HC, Ranchi, on September 9.

The petitioner Snesh Nah Yadav, a government employee, had applied for anticipatory bail apprehending his arrest in connection with a case filed in Jharia police station in Dhanbad district. According to the judgment, "The post prompted comments targeting a particular community."

SC stays broadcast of TV programme

Object of Sudarshan News show is to vilify the Muslim community, says court

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the broadcast of *Bindas Bol* aired by Sudarshan news channel till further orders, *prima facie* observing that the object of the programme is to vilify the Muslim community and accuse it of surreptitiously trying to infiltrate the civil services.

"Episodes broadcast till now show the nature and objective of the programme. Pending further orders of the court, Sudarshan News stands injunction from making any more broadcasts on this subject on any other name too," a three-judge Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud ordered.

The court said it was "insidious" to use the freedom of press to make "rabid" allegations, says SC.



It is insidious to use the freedom of press to make rabid allegations, says SC.

on a religious minority community.

'UPSC jihad'

The court was hearing a plea alleging that the show makes communal remarks about the entry of members of the Muslim community into the UPSC (Union Public Service Commission). At one point, it said, the anchor used the phrase "UPSC jihad".

The court said, "The edif-

"How rabid can it get? Targeting a community for appearing in the civil services exam? Such insidious charges put a question mark on the UPSC exams itself. Can such programmes be allowed in a free society?" the court asked.

Senior advocate Anoop Chaudhari, for petitioner Firoz Iqbal Khan, said the show was "blatantly communal" and had become a "focal point" of hate speech. It was a nine-part show and only the first few parts were over.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, for the channel, said he was instructed it was an investigative story done keeping in mind public interest and national security.

Mr. Divan agreed to file a detailed reply by Thursday (September 17), the next date of hearing.

Fewer than 34,000 inter-State migrant workers in 2019-20

No workers registered in Delhi, Dehradun and Patna: govt.

PRISCILLA JEBARA
NEW DELHI

In the last five years, there have been no inter-State migrant workers registered in the Delhi, Dehradun or Patna regions. Nationwide, there were less than 34,000 workers registered in 2019-20 under the Inter-State Migrant Workers (ISMW) Act, 1979, according to a response to a recent Right to Information (RTI) Act request.

In response to another recent RTI request, the Indian Railways said it only keeps data on "casualties arising from consequential train accidents", and thus has no information regarding deaths on the Shramik Special trains that transported migrants during the lockdown.

On Monday, the Labour Ministry told the Lok Sabha that it had no data on the migrant workers who lost their jobs or lives during the lockdown. However, it claimed that over one crore migrant workers returned to their home States during the lockdown.

The ISMW Act, which came into force four decades ago, is meant to protect vulnerable workers who leave their own home State for employment. It applies to every establishment and contractor who has five or more migrants on their rolls and prohibits their employment without a certificate of registration. According to the Act, each registered worker must be issued a pass book with details of employment, wages and benefits.



Gasping for air: Migrant workers scampering to board buses in New Delhi in May. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

meant that when the sudden lockdown was imposed, the government had no information about migrant workers," said Ms. Bhardwaj. "Millions of people were left with no means and resources and forced to walk hundreds of kilometres... This could have been prevented had the law been properly implemented."

Ms. Bhardwaj also filed an RTI with the Railways, asking for the details of people who died on Shramik Special trains since May 1. "The Safety Directorate of Railway Board maintains the data of casualties arising out of consequential train accidents only. During the period from May 1 to June 25, there were no deaths on the Shramik Special trains due to the consequential train accidents," said the response.

In a case filed in June in the Supreme Court, faced with reports of more than 80 deaths on Shramik Specials, the Centre claimed that all the deaths were due to earlier illnesses, not due to lack of food, water or medication.

The lackadaisical approach towards this law

CBI conducts searches in J&K land case

DEVESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday conducted searches at multiple locations in Jammu and Kathua in connection with a land grab case against R.B. Educational Trust, run by former State Minister Choudhary Lal Singh, and others.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice

No: SA/E/9/2020-21/W1. Dated 14.09.2020
Divisional Railway Manager / Electrical / Salem Division, Salem-5 for and on behalf of the President of India Invites E-Tender for the tender mentioned work.

Online bids only will be accepted. For detailed NIT, qualification criteria, bidding document, tender submission etc. can be viewed/downloaded from website portal www.irrep.gov.in. The EMD shall be made in online banking Payment only.

Name of Work Details:

1) SA/E/9/2020-21/W1: Southern Railway- Soft upgrades improvements at Stations – SA Division: Provision of Soft Upgrades to Station over TPT-SA Jurisdiction in Salem Division- Technical Arrangements. Approx. cost - Rs.30,40,532/- EMD- Rs.60,100/-

2) SA/E/9/2020-21/W2: Salem Division- Replacement of ETL at PTI- DST, MAP, BDI, BQJ stations on age cum technical condition. Technical Arrangements. Approx. cost - Rs.4,54,336/- EMD - Rs.9,100/-

3) SA/E/9/2020-21/W3: 1. SA Division- Provision of Collection well with Automatic Pumping Arrangements in LUS/RUB of SA-MTD section-2 Nos (LUS/RUB of JT-LD section-4 Nos. (LUS/RUB of SA- MTD section-2 Nos (Total 16 Nos) - Electrical Arrangements. Approx. cost - Rs.18,31,978/- EMD - Rs.36,600/-

4) SA/E/9/2020-21/W4: Salem Division- Proposed Extension and Raising of PFTs in NSG6 category stations (VJNL, SUU, KAY, DC) - Electrical Arrangements. Approx. cost - Rs.14,02,606/- EMD - Rs.28,100/- Completion Period - St. No: 1 to 4: 6 Months

Closing Time & Date 15.00hrs. on 19.10.2020

All tendendum/ Corrigendum, Time extension/ Clarification, etc. will be uploaded in the website only and will not be published separately in Newspapers.

Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.

Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical) Salem

Follow us on : [Twitter](#)

DIPR/smgt/No.63/09/mca/2020-21

KERALA ACADEMY FOR SKILLS EXCELLENCE (State Skill Development Mission)

Registered Office: 3rd Floor, Carmel Towers, Vazhuthacaud Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala-695014
Ph: 0471 2735856

No: KASE/969/2020/Exe4

Dated: 10.09.2020

CORRIGENDUM - TIME EXTENSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The due date for submission of the Expression of Interest for iSTEP was 11.09.2020, 5.00 pm. The due date has been extended to 07.10.2020, 5.00pm. For further details please visit www.kase.in.

RO/01400/D3/2020/I&PRD

Sd/- Managing Director

VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED

(A Govt of Karnataka Enterprise)
Office of the Executive Engineer, VJNL U.B.P

Division no.2, B.R.Project-577 115

Phone No: 08282-256345 E Mail id: eeubp2@rediffmail.com

CIN No. U41000KA2016SGC097260

No:EE/VJNL/UBP/DIV-2/BR/PB/TUNNEL/2020-21/614

Dated: 14/09/2020

CORRIGENDUM NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Managing Director, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limited, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP Division No.2, B R Project, Shimoga District, Karnataka had invited Short term tender notification for the work of Construction of Tunnel from Km 10.507 to Km 11.007 of Wild Life mitigation measures in the work of Lifting of 15 TMC water from Tunga reservoir to Bhadra Reservoir under Upper Bhadra Project Scheme-A, (Package-I) **Indent No: VJNL/2020-21/TU/WORK/IDENT1469** vide Notification No.506 Dated :24-08-2020, But Due to some Technical Reason the Opening of Tender have been Postponed.

The details of Corrigendum of Tender are listed below

SI.No. 1. Previously : Last date of Submission of Completed e-Tendering Documents (Cover I & II) through E-Portal till 16.09.2020 upto 17.00 Hrs. **Modified :** Last date of Submission of Completed e-Tendering Documents (Cover I & II) through E-Portal till 28.09.2020 upto 17.00 Hrs

SI.No. 2. Previously : Last date & Time for Tender Queries/Clarification till 15/09/2020 upto 16.00 Hrs **Modified :** Last date & Time for Tender Queries Clarification till 25/09/2020 Upto 16.00 Hrs

SI.No. 3. Previously : Date and Time of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I) By Superintending Engineer, VJNL, UBP Circle No.1 B.R Project on 18.09.2020 at 17.00 Hrs **Modified :** Date and Time of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I) By Superintending Engineer, VJNL, UBP Circle No.1 B.R Project on 30.09.2020 at 17.00 Hrs

SI.No. 4. Previously : Date of Opening of Financial Bid will be intimated to the Technically Sucessful Bidders **Modified :** Date of Opening of Financial Bid will be intimated to the Technically Sucessful Bidders

Sd/- Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP Division-2, B.R.Project-577115.

DIPR/smgt/No.63/09/mca/2020-21

Scientists document cases of asymptomatic reinfection

Report says this may be a 'potentially under-reported entity'

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Researchers have reported what may possibly be the first instance of people in India being infected twice over by SARS-CoV-2 but remaining asymptomatic. Moreover, one of those infected appeared to carry a variant that conferred resistance to neutralising antibodies.

The report appears in a paper that has been posted on a pre-print repository, meaning it has not been peer-reviewed.

Globally and in India, there have been intermittent reports of people being infected at least twice and confirmed positive by an RT-PCR (reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) test. However, they have almost always involved the person being symptomatic at least once.

"Our analysis suggests that asymptomatic reinfection may be a potentially under-reported entity," say the authors of the report that include a team of doctors and geneticists from the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB).

Healthcare workers

The people who tested positive are healthcare workers at the Government Institute of Medical Science, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, and their infections were picked up as part of routine surveillance that the hospital conducts on its staff.

The fact that the patients were infected twice could be reliably established because the viral samples gleaned from their nasal swabs underwent a whole-genome sequencing. This ruled out potential instances of their lab samples being contaminated or a false positive, or an old infection getting reactivated.

The healthcare workers first tested positive on May 5 and May

Ajit Doval walks out of SCO interaction

This came after Pakistan displayed new political map

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday responded strongly after Pakistan displayed the newly-unveiled political map of the country during the meeting of the National Security Advisers of the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, who was participating in the virtual interaction, left the meeting midway after Pakistan displayed the map prominently behind its delegation.

Fictitious map

"Pakistan's use of a fictitious map as a backdrop for its representative depicting sovereign Indian territories as part of Pakistan is a blatant violation of the SCO Charter and against all its estab-



Ajit Doval

ev, Secretary of the National Security Council of Russian Federation, expressed his personal appreciation to Mr. Doval for his participation.

Russia's response

"Russia does not support what Pakistan has done and hopes that Pakistan's provocative act will not affect India's participation in SCO and definitely not cast any shadow on Mr. Patrushev's warm personal relationship for NSA," said the source.

Pakistan on August 4 unveiled the map which depicted the entire region of Jammu and Kashmir as part of its territory.

It also showed Junagadh and Manavadar as part of its territorial claim. India had protested the move and described it as "political absurdity".

Kashmir has grassroots democracy: India

We remain committed to upholding all human rights despite cross-border terrorism, it tells UNHRC

upholding "all human rights".

"We regret that the High Commissioner in her oral update made a reference to the situation in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. In this context, I would like to underline that, since the changes made in August 2019, people in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have been enjoying the same fundamental rights as people in other parts of India," Mr. Pandey said.

He argued that the decision to end the special status of the region under Article 370 had brought grassroots democracy to the citizens and safeguarded human rights.

"We have been able to revive grassroots democracy and provide a new momentum to social and economic development, despite the

Mr. Pandey said India remained committed to

...people in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have been enjoying the same fundamental rights as people in other parts of India

INDRA MANI PANDEY

Permanent Representative, UNHRC

challenge posed by COVID-19 pandemic and persistent attempts by one country to infiltrate terrorists to derail this process," said Mr. Pandey without naming Pakistan.

Police violence
Earlier on Monday, Ms. Bachelet referred to the continued tension in Kashmir.

She said "incidents of military and police violence against civilians continue, including use of pellet guns, as

well as incidents related to militancy".

Ms. Bachelet was one of the earliest to point out the difficulties created by the communication lockdown that was imposed just before Kashmir's special status was ended on August 5, 2019.

Crucial session

The human rights session is crucial as it indicates the agenda before the U.N. General Assembly which will convene later this month.

The High Commissioner welcomed some of the initiatives of the government of India at the political front but insisted for greater political liberty in the volatile region.

"While I welcome the release of some political and community leaders, hundreds of people remain in arbitrary detention, with many

habeas corpus petitions still pending – including those of many of Jammu and Kashmir's political leaders," said Ms. Bachelet.

She also referred to the hostilities between India and Pakistan and urged for peace between the two South Asian neighbours in the context of the tension over Jammu and Kashmir and said,

"My office is committed to continuing its engagement with both India and Pakistan, to uphold the rights of the Kashmiri people – which is the best way to prevent further tensions and conflict."

Ms. Bachelet also referred to several other global hot spots for human rights including Hong Kong where a new National Security Law has increased concern over the civil liberties of the citizens.

the Art Loss Register Certificates. The Met Police further found that the vendor involved was now deceased due to which there were no grounds to open any investigation in the U.K.

Interestingly, the owner of the Rama idol informed the HCI and Met Police that he was in possession of two other idols, of Sita and Lakshmana, which he has handed over to the High Commissioner Gaitri Issar Kumar on Tuesday at India House.

On Tuesday, all three idols were formally handed over to Tamil Nadu government through a virtual meeting attended by Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Prahлад Singh Patel.

Mr. Patel thanked the British police, the Tamil Nadu government's Idol Wing, the Archaeological Survey of India, and the HCI for making the recovery possible.

(With inputs from Damini Nath in New Delhi)

MPs unite over Punjabi for J&K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

In a rare show of unity, a day after Anandpur Sahib MP Manish Tewari raised the demand that Punjabi be included in the list of official languages in J&K after a new Bill left it out, Shiromani Akali Dal MP Sukhbir Singh Badal and National Conference's Farooq Abdullah echoed the demand during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha.

Mr. Badal said J&K had been for many years part of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh's Sikh empire and Punjabi was spoken by many in the State. He pointed to Dr. Abdullah and said, "Dr. Abdullah will bear out what I'm saying, he himself speaks fluent Punjabi."

Dr. Abdullah acknowledged that Punjabi was indeed spoken widely, and added that Pahadi and Gojari language too should be added to the list.

Kashmiri leaders contest claim on house arrests

No one under such arrest in UT: govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday that 223 people are under detention in Jammu and Kashmir and no one is under house arrest.

Union Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy said the government of Jammu and Kashmir has reported that in view of the constitutional changes effected by Parliament regarding the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir in August, 2019, various measures were taken to maintain public order which included preventive detention of certain persons.

"As on 11.09.2020, 223 persons are under detention. No person is under house arrest in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir," Mr. Reddy told the Lok Sabha in a written reply.

Responding to the claims, People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Waheed ur Rehman Para said the Centre was lying and he continues to be under house arrest.

"It is unfortunate that after a year of detention they are telling us you were never detained. I still continue to remain under house arrest and the irony of the situation is that now the onus is on me to prove that I am not under house arrest. Peddling lies in the temple of democracy has shamed the entire country. From a cop deployed at my house to the MoS in Parliament all are lying. Who do we complain to?" Mr. Para told *The Hindu*. He said 11 political workers of the PDP were also un-



G. Kishan Reddy

der house arrest.

Former J&K Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti continues to be detained under the Public Safety Act.

Sajad Lone, president, Peoples Conference, tweeted, "What a sad state of affairs. Y do they have to do this. If someone is under house arrest. Just say it. Either the state administration is lying to the Union govt or it is the Union govt's own initiative. We live here. We r telling u. People r under house arrest".

Congress leader Salman Anees Soz, son of former Union Minister Saifuddin Soz, said the "government lies to Parliament blatantly".

Mr. Reddy also said the number of terrorist incidents has reduced significantly after the bifurcation of the erstwhile State on August 5 last year.

From June 29, 2018 to August 4, 2019 (402 days), there were 455 terror incidents and from August 5, 2019 to September 9 (402 days), 211 such incidents took place in the newly created Union Territory.

Education Plus career counselling event from Sept. 19

Digital conclave aims to help students make informed choices and chalk out their future

STAFF REPORTER

CHENNAI

The Hindu-Education Plus Career Counselling conclave will take on a digital avatar this year for its 18th edition.

The digital conclave aims to help students make informed career choices and chalk out their future, while setting a benchmark in educational and professional guidance.

The four-day digital conclave will act as a platform to connect students and pa-

rents with speakers and educational institutions, and equip them with the necessary counselling and guidance to pick the right career choices.

To be held from September 19 to 22, the conclave will have subject experts addressing sessions covering commerce, architecture, pure sciences and medicine, as well as sessions on how to crack the Civil Services exams, among others.

Students of Classes IX to



XII, as well as those looking for options to pursue their post-graduation can attend the conclave. Interested par-

ticipants can register for free to attend the sessions on all four days.

To login and register, stu-

dents can go to <http://bit.ly/THEPEDIT> or scan the QR Code.

They will also be able to access the schedule of the conclave.

Students who WhatsApp their email IDs to 9964648444 or 9449343420 will receive a free soft copy of The Hindu Education Plus career counselling hand-

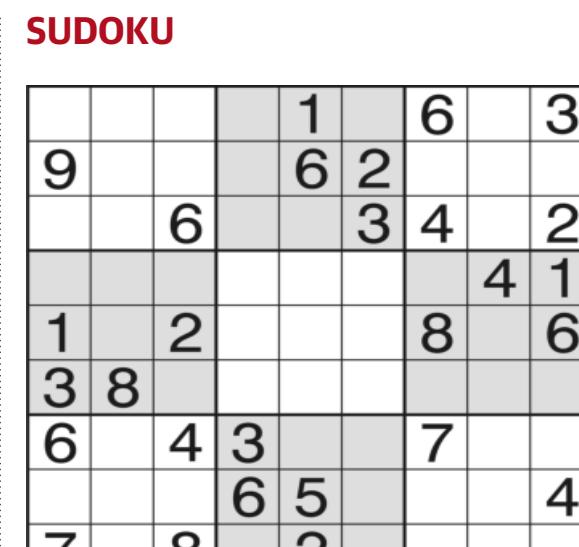
book. Hard copies of the book are available at *The Hindu*'s offices across Karnataka.

Insights IAS is the gold sponsor for the event; and East West; Acharya Bangalore B-School, the Institute of Company Secretaries of India; and the Shaheen

Group of Institutions, Bidar are the silver sponsors for the event.

QR code:

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13041

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

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FAITH

His endless Vibhuti

When reading the tenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, every reader, along with Arjuna, is initiated into savouring the breath-taking experience of the Lord's endless Vibhuti. It is no wonder that the spiritually conscious aspirant makes every effort to learn more about His glories and dwell on them, pointed out Swamini Satyavratananda in a discourse.

The Lord states that He is the sole source of all His Vibhutis and also that there is no limit for His Vibhutis. Whatever He has explained is only a fraction of His greatness that always remains indescribable. The entire universe with all the galaxies, the sun, moon etc., and the wonderful world of nature, beings, and so on that are subject to constant change stand testimony to His glories; but they also indicate that what is revealed is a speck of His infinitude.

This is similar to the fact that the wave in the vast ocean at best is only a very inadequate representation of what the ocean really is. While to know Him fully is impossible, it is possible to appreciate His intricacies of His creation. Whatever is manifest, animate or inanimate, movable or static, owes its existence to Him. He animates the entire universe and pervades every aspect of it. The sun, moon and the stars shine owing to His prabhava. While all things and beings are supported by Him, the special display of beauty and splendour in many aspects of creation reveals Him more than others. Is it not a great wonder that the thumb print in each one is distinct and unique and cannot be replicated? Who can fathom His greatness? None can claim that he knows God fully. Even the Vedas accept their inability when they try to describe His greatness. In fact, it is not necessary to know His greatness fully. Merely to realise Him as the only eternal truth is sufficient.



SERGIUS BARRETO

Kia's Sonet is an all-new model, a compact SUV which shares its platform with a Hyundai stablemate – the Venue. But while their underpinnings are the same, they share very little when it comes to the exterior and interior. So, what is the Sonet like?

The Sonet's front carries Kia's 'Tiger Nose' grille, and is flanked by slim LED headlights with the signature 'heartbeat' DRLs. Below it sits a sharply cut bumper with fog lights and a faux skid plate. The most defining element though is the C-pillar that appears swept back, thanks to the inset quarter glass and black-out treatment. The alloys are also quite striking. At the rear, the tail-lights too have the 'heartbeat' DRL signature. A faux skid plate with an integrated faux diffuser and dummy exhausts round off the rear end.

Accessories galore

Inside, the Sonet really scores in terms of material quality, fit and finish – it could rival cars from higher segments. The textured dashboard top, chunky steering wheel, and the tactile feel of all the switchgear are top class. Taking centre stage on the dashboard is the massive 10.25-inch touchscreen – the largest in class. It is sharp, offers split screen functionality and comes with the brand's UVO connectivity suite. You also get 'Hello Kia' voice commands to control various settings.

There is plenty of equipment too: a seven-speaker Bose audio system, an air purifier with UVC light, ventilated front seats, and a HEPA filter that the company says kills viruses. The safety kit includes six airbags, ABS and ESC besides front and rear parking



sensors. The rear is relatively cramped and best for two not-too-tall passengers. The seat itself is quite comfy with plush padding, though thigh support is a bit short. The front seats, however, are large and well bolstered.

Power performer

The Sonet is offered with three engines – four if you count different outputs – and five gearboxes. There is a base 83hp 1.2-litre petrol paired with a 5-speed manual; a 120hp, 1.0-litre turbo-petrol mated to a 7-speed DCT or 6-speed iMT; and a 1.5-litre diesel in two states of tune – 100hp, 240Nm when paired with a 6-speed manual, and 115hp, 250Nm with a 6-speed torque converter. For this review, we drove both versions of the turbo-petrol along with the diesel-auto.



A true all-rounder

In terms of material quality, fit and finish, the Sonet could rival cars from higher segments

SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH	3995mm
WIDTH	1790mm
HEIGHT	1642mm
WHEELBASE	2500mm
TYRE SIZE	215/60 R16
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	45 litres
BOOT CAPACITY	392 litres
ENGINE	998cc, 3-cyls, turbo-petrol; 1493cc, 4-cyls, turbo-diesel
POWER	120hp at 6000rpm; 115hp at 4000rpm
TORQUE	172Nm at 1500-4000rpm; 250Nm at 1500-2750rpm
GEARBOX	6-speed clutchless manual/7-speed dual-clutch auto; 6-speed auto

Cruise along The Sonet makes for an effortless ride ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

give you enough grunt.

Sport mode lets you hold onto gears for longer, but the Normal mode is useable and intuitive; it will be enough for everyday driving. There is also an Eco mode that does not throttle the engine's performance.

Style and substance

In the turbo-petrol variant, the engine is balanced and refined; it gets vocal only near the redline. The punchy midrange and the ease with which it builds power makes it a fun drive. The DCT gearbox is not as good as VW's DSG unit and tends to get tripped up at slow speeds. The iMT, in comparison, offers you more control over gearshifts, though the unit itself does its best work during relaxed driving.

In testing, it was the diesel-auto that was the quickest, clocking in a 0-100kph time of 11.48sec, compared to the petrol DCT's 12.25sec and 13.37sec for the iMT. The Sonet also easily soaked up massive potholes; the fat 215/60 R16 tyres did a good job of smothering rain-savaged roads.

The slightly nose-heavy diesel has a marginally heavier steering while the petrol felt a bit more agile. Both cars offer a great degree of confidence at high speeds. Grip through the corners is also good, and body roll is well contained. The steering does not offer much feedback, but it is light enough in the city and has enough weight at higher speeds.

It is hard to fault the Sonet aside from its not-so-spacious rear seat. It is beautifully styled and has striking details. Of course, pricing is a key factor in the Sonet's ultimate success, but there is no doubt that Kia has another winner on its hands.

AUTO SNIPS



Mercedes-AMG GLE 53 Coupe to launch on September 23

Mercedes is set to launch the second-gen GLE Coupe in India on September 23, 2020. The coupe-SUV will be available in the performance AMG GLE 53 variant powered by 435hp twin-turbo V6 petrol engine. Bookings for the new GLE Coupe are currently open. The GLE Coupe sports a steeper windscreens and rear window rake, along with a bespoke rear-end. Considering the powertrain and features on offer, expect a price tag north of ₹1.25 crore (ex-showroom) for the Mercedes-AMG GLE 53 4Matic+ Coupe.



MG launches Hector Anniversary Edition at ₹13.63 lakh

MG Motor India has launched a special edition Hector to commemorate the SUV completing a year on sale in India. The Hector Anniversary Edition is priced at ₹13.63 lakh for the petrol-manual version and ₹14.99 lakh for the diesel-manual variant (all prices, ex-showroom, India) and comes with additional kit as well as special finance offers. The celebratory version offers additional kit, like a wireless mobile charger and air purifier. The special edition model also has Mediklinic's cabin sterilisation tech that is said to eliminate bacteria and viruses using "active oxygen".



Piaggio launches leasing schemes for Vespa, Aprilia scooters

The Vespa and Aprilia scooter range is now available on lease. Piaggio India has joined hands with OTO Capital, a vehicle finance and loan company, to roll out new leasing options for a range of scooters from the two brands. The application process is quick and easy, and can be done using the OTO mobile app. As of now, the scheme is only available for customers in Pune and Bengaluru. Customers can enjoy the benefits of a low down payment, with 30% off on EMI. In addition, customers can also get up to ₹2,500 waived on the first month's subscription fees.

Q AND A WITH HORMAZD



A comfortable ride

I want to buy a car with good rear-seat comfort because I suffer from back pain. My budget is ₹50-75 lakh. Should I buy a new or used car? An SUV or sedan? For a new car, I'm considering either the Lexus ES 300h or Mercedes C-class, and if a used car, either a Toyota Land Cruiser or a 2017-2018 Lexus SUV.

Balasubramaniyan, Chennai

• A new car is always preferable as you are sure of what you are going to get. In the luxury segment, maintenance costs can shoot up if a used car had faults which were not spotted earlier. A sedan is always better as it offers a better ride quality than a SUV. The ES 300h is far better as it has more space, the ride quality is very good and the rear seat has recline function. The hybrid powertrain is ideal for city driving. The C-class is more cramped in comparison, and the rear-seat under-thigh support isn't very generous. The only advantage of the C-class is that it is cheaper than the Lexus ES 300h, and resale value may be a bit better too.

For entertainment

I want to buy a multimedia unit for my 2012 Volkswagen Vento and my budget is ₹25,000. Should I go for Sony or Blaupunkt? What is the difference between an inbuilt amplifier and separate amplifier?

Smit Patel, Ahmedabad

• Both Sony and Blaupunkt have various modes of head units with built-in amplifiers. The biggest difference between an external and in-built amplifier is added power and the flexibility of installation if you want to add additional speakers in the rear doors or maybe a subwoofer.

Hormazd Sorabjee is the editor of Autocar India. Mail your feedback and queries to roadshow@thehindu.co.in

Sitting pretty The Racing Sixties are bound to be the centre of attraction wherever they go ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Swing back to THE SIXTIES

In the transition from BS4 to BS6 norms, Vespa's Racing Sixties are as easy on the road as they are on the eyes

RISHABH BHASKAR

When you think of Vespas, the first thing that comes to mind is its effortless style. But what if you want more style and exclusivity?

In comes the new Vespa Racing Sixties. This scooter is essentially the 2020 Vespa SXL with a paint scheme that instantly grabs your attention.

Vespa says the theme was inspired by racing liveries from the Sixties. The white base colour has an attractive, pearlescent finish that gleams.

Adding contrast are the red and gold stripes on the front mudguard, apron, and on the side and rear panels. Completing the Sixties theme are the gold wheels that look attractive when



in motion.

Vespa has finished the rim of the square LED headlamp, mirrors and exhaust muffler shield in matte black to stick to the scooter's retro yet sporty appearance.



Underneath the bodywork, the 125cc version makes 9.93hp at 7,500rpm and 9.6Nm of torque at 5,500rpm; the 150cc Racing Sixties' engine develops 10.4hp at 7,600rpm and 10.6Nm of torque at 5,500rpm.

The scooter we tested was the 150cc. In the transition from BS4 to BS6 norms, Piaggio has dropped the engine displacement

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE:	149cc, single-cylinder, fuel-injected
POWER:	10.5hp at 7600rpm
TORQUE:	10.6Nm at 5500rpm
GEARBOX:	CVT
FRONT BRAKE:	200mm disc
REAR BRAKE:	140mm drum
TYRES (F/R):	110/70-11 120/70-10
L/W/H:	1770/690/1140mm

ment of the 3-valve engine from 154.8cc to 149.5cc; power is up by 0.20hp though peak torque is down from 10.9Nm to 10.6Nm.

Heart over head Thump the starter and the single cylinder, air-cooled, fuel-injected engine settles into a refined idle. Piaggio has done well to dampen vibrations and that holds true even as speed rises. The only let-down is that the motor has lost the sense of urgency that was present in the BS4 model. Nevertheless, only a proper test will reveal if there has been a significant impact on performance or not.

The Vespa Racing Sixties' monocoque chassis inspires confidence around bends, thanks to the crystal clear feedback from the chassis.

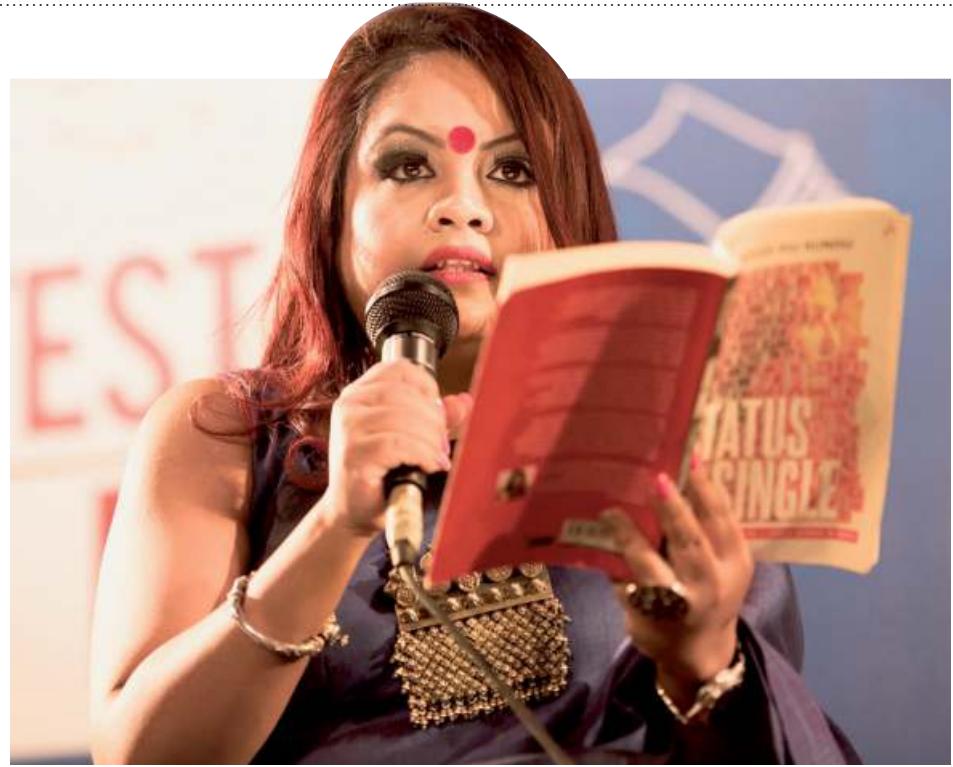
The MRF tyres (110/70-11 front and 120/70-10 rear) offer sufficient grip as well. The trailing link suspension at the front and monoshock at the rear are also responsible for its planted manners, but there is no denying that this comes at the cost of ride quality to some extent.

The Vespa rides well over small and medium-sized potholes despite the slightly stiff rear. It thuds over deep craters, but the ride is acceptable for the most part.

The brakes are decent, but could do with more feel, especially at the front. The ABS system is not too intrusive. However, once it comes on, it stays for a while.

At ₹1.20 lakh for the 125cc variant and ₹1.32 lakh for the 150cc scooter, the Racing Sixties commands a ₹5,000-6,000 premium over the corresponding, standard Vespa SXL variants.

While the price gap is large for what is essentially the same scooter with a different paint scheme, buying a Vespa has always been a case of the heart winning over the head.



SWETA AKUNDI

Kamla Bhasin is not too happy with the term 'single women'. How are we single, she asks, when we are living with our friends or siblings, taking care of our parents or children?

The developmental feminist-activist and poet was in conversation with Sreemoyee Piu Kundu to kick off the second season of *Status Single*, a series of online conversations around women without partners, who are an inspiration to the host. The first episode was aired on September 10 (World Suicide Prevention Day). Kamla herself had lived with a man with bipolar disorder, and spoke of her daughter who died by suicide in London some years ago.

The future episodes on Sreemoyee's Facebook page will feature chats with LGBTQI and animal rights activist Mona Ambegaonkar and writer-poet Sreela Das Gupta; the latter represents the Diversity and Inclusion space at Tata Consultancy Services.

"Mona is raising a love child and is a single mom by choice. Her candidness about the place of middle-aged women actors in mainstream popular culture has led to many intense conversations," says Sreemoyee. Sreela, whom she met at a CII summit, lives alone in Kolkata, defying stereotypes about people living with disabilities.

Status Single started out as a book authored by Sreemoyee in 2018, and which comprises interviews with single women – unmarried, divorced, widowed, separated,



Iron jawed QUEENS

From its origins as a book, *Status Single* by Sreemoyee Kundu is now a series of online conversations featuring inspirational women who defy conventions

and abandoned – from across India.

"I myself had been discriminated against when it came to finding housing, and had been judged by gynaecologists," says Sreemoyee, explaining the reason there needs to be a community of women

THE LINE UP

September 20, 5.30 to 7 pm:
MONA AMBEAONKAR, Actor, activist

September 23, 6.30 to 8 pm:
SREELA DASGUPTA, Diversity and social inclusion specialist

September 27, 5.30 to 8 pm: **VINTA NANDA**, Filmmaker, writer

Follow *Status Single* on Sreemoyee Kundu's Facebook page

A fulfilled life (Clockwise from left) Sreemoyee Kundu; and guests on *Status Single*, Kamla Bhasin and Mallika Sarabhai ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



picking each other up.

Her divorced friends, she adds, were quickly pushed back into the dating world or 'second shaadi'. Many kept their marital status discreet in offices for fear of being judged or vilified. "While writing the book, Section 377 had not been read down yet. So I had also seen the angst among members of the LGBTQIA community who could not have legal partners. Plus, there were single women with disabilities who as it is not considered a visible part of the society," she says.

"After the book came out, I had many women reach out to me. Some had quit working because they had children, and now their marriages were floundering and they needed financial independence to afford lawyers and fight for child custody. Some were being cheated out of their inheritance by married siblings," she adds.

With a Facebook and WhatsApp group in place, she hopes that *Status Single* will be a meeting ground for single women of all ages and communities; there are 74 million of them in India today, she points out.

With the lockdown, and the ensuing bad economy with its paycuts and layoffs, the struggle is amplified. "Working women with disabilities were stuck at home without any caregiving facilities. Older single women whose children live abroad found themselves dependent on their security guards and kind-hearted neighbours," she says. This led to her starting the first season of *Status Single* with the format focussed on a different cause each time: from access to help for single mothers, to women entrepreneurs, and post Sushant Singh Rajput's death, on men, their mental health and the assumed role of women as caregivers.

"Back then I was getting invited to a lot of webinars and most of them encouraged fake positivity. I wanted to have a sustained dialogue that offered solutions," she says.

The first season of *Status Single* started in March and continued fortnightly until August. The second, also comprising 10 episodes, is more personal. Will there be a third season? "Somebody suggested I speak with 'Men who inspire me'. Now there is a wave of feminist fathers (*Thappad*, *Gunjan Saxena*), so I might do that."

A journal of an unusual year

Gayatri Gill's debut book *The Day Before Today: Lockdown Stories* is a narrative of the time we live in

DEEPA ALEXANDER

For a couple of months now we have been staring down the barrel of dystopian summer. No camping trips, no swim in the community pool and no family holidays. Just lots of peace, quiet, and communion with Nature. And, plenty of domestic violence, melancholy, and murder.

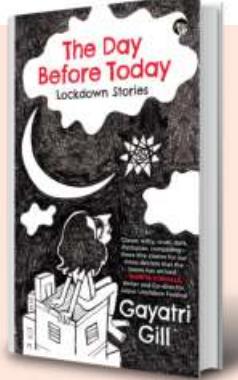
Of course, some have to get out to work for survival while others have upped and left home for elsewhere where they have hunkered down to record these strange times. Gayatri Gill is one such writer who has written her debut book *The Day Before Today: Lockdown Stories* (published by Speaking Tiger) while the Coronavirus made us beat a forced retreat to our homes.

Over phone from Goa, where she is living out the pandemic with her two children, Mumbai-based Gayatri says, "We are living in such a tumultuous time; all boxed in. Getting these emotions out was cathartic for me."

Writing is an old, familiar haunt for Gayatri, who has been scriptwriter, producer, and co-founder of Swastik Productions, and has spent more than a decade working in digital, animation and documentary formats. The 15 stories have been illustrated by Niyati Singh, who is lead researcher of the India Justice Report at the Tata Trusts.

"I was raised in Delhi and worked in Pune and Mumbai with mass media. Working on documentaries has helped me perceive the unusual," says Gayatri, on how she came to tell the short stories in her book that were first written as WhatsApp forwards for family and friends.

"The idea to write first struck on March 25, when we went into lockdown. The book has lived its own journey since. I never thought of it as a physical book. After five stories did the rounds, the publisher got in touch for an e-book," says Gayatri adding that she



wrote five more and then another five, dwelling on nearly every aspect of the lockdown.

The stories, written in the early months of lockdown, strangely seemed to have predicted the future, especially some of the terms that crowd our vocabulary today. "A lot of the stories came from reading the news. Fact and fiction merged," says Gayatri.

Written in-between work from home, the book begins with *Day One*, the story of a widow crushed under the burden of living with her in-laws, young children, the annoying sight of her brother-in-law sitting where her husband used to and the awful truth of having to live with a glorified image of her dead husband. The closing line of the story is a zinger and sets the tone for the rest of the book.

There on, the stories, running into a page or two, dwell on a particular emotion and move on. There are the stories of a family that discovers fun and baking late one night because there is no school on the morrow; there is Sia trying to time her visit to the supermarket so that she can bump into her crush; colony apps that restrict walks and jogs around the neighbourhood; a matter-of-fact murderer who decides to come back from work and clean up the mess, and a child holding on to a pandemic blanket and the memory of a grandparent when the world turns cold.

Scary, poignant, and melodramatic with cliff-hanger endings and tight-fisted storytelling, the book is brought to life by Niyati's sombre illustrations. The stories, like our present world, stand at a razor's edge holding a precise mirror to the times we live in, to instances we recognise happening around us. Gayatri, who is working on a children's book, says she has no plans to write a sequel portraying a post-COVID world, but ends the book with a note of hope for the Day After Tomorrow.

In the now Gayatri Gill ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

All aboard the flight to imagination

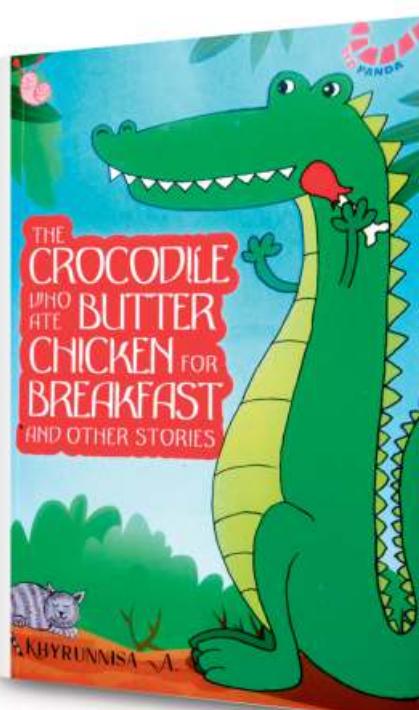
Children's writer Khyrunnisa's stories engage readers with commonplace incidents, humour and anthropomorphized animals

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

For author Khyrunnisa A, inspiration comes in many forms. It could be a teenager who wanted a crocodile as a pet, a leaf blower in the neighbourhood or a friend's son who reared rabbits. That ability to turn commonplace incidents into engaging stories is evident in *The Crocodile Who Ate Butter Chicken for Breakfast and Other Stories* (published by Red Panda), her

new collection of stories for children. It has crocodiles, cats, koalas, squirrels, frogs and flies coming alive in 20 stories. As she anthropomorphizes the characters, the innate humour she weaves in is not lost even in the ingenuous plots of some of the tales.

"I usually work on my plots and stories while I am in the kitchen or washing up. It is easy to find a subject for a story but the resolution of a tale is not always easy," she says, over phone



Comedy is key *The Crocodile Who Ate Butter Chicken for Breakfast and Other Stories* by Khyrunnisa ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

from her house in Thiruvananthapuram.

The award-winning children's author says that since she is writing for children, she tries to ensure that the stories have a happy ending and are not gory, although she does not shy away from talking about carnivores feasting on their prey or a butter chicken-loving crocodile. Many of the stories in the book had appeared in the children's magazine *Dimdimma*.

Khyrunnisa explains that while some of her stories were inspired by real-life incidents, even those required imagination and creativity to turn them interesting. For instance, the story of the crocodile that came home was based on an incident that her son's friend had told her.

"He told me that one of his friends kept hankering for a crocodile as a

pet and for a birthday, he was actually gifted a baby crocodile in a basket. Although he tried to keep it hidden in his bedroom, he realised that crocs are not all that easy to domesticate or look after at home. Unlike the croc in my story that chased a coconut plucker, this croc was sent packing before any such thing happened," she says, laughing.

In some cases, it was a news item that caught her attention. She would file it away in her memory and then draw upon it to spin a story around it. If 'Zebra Crossing', a tale of a utopia in trouble, is a delightful play on words, 'The Koala Magic' is for all those who have kept alive the Calvin (of Calvin and Hobbes fame) in them.

The author has recreated that age of innocence when children could have lengthy conversations with their favourite toys and go on imaginary adventures as well. About 10 of the stories in the collection are written from the point of view of the animals, while 10 are narrated by people.

Khyrunnisa, a former lecturer of English at All Saints' College in Thiruvananthapuram, has always expressed her concern about falling standards in education and how the syllabus for students of literature has been watered down in many ways. Her indignation at that has found expression in the story 'When Literature Returned to Spear's Academy'. 'O Deer' emphasises the importance of education.

With illustrations by Meenakshi Iyer, the book is meant for children between the age of nine and 14.

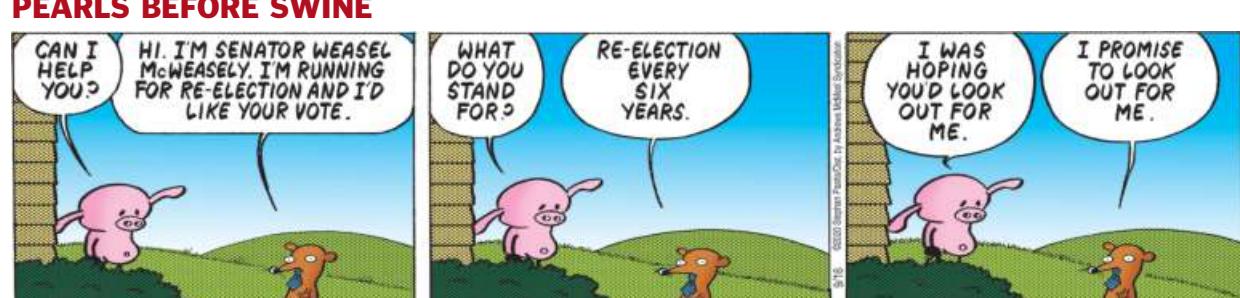
This is the author's second collection of stories revolving around animals. Khyrunnisa's earlier book *Lizard of Oz*, published by Scholastic, was also a collection of stories based on the animal world.

Creator of the popular Butterfinger series, the writer says that she is busy at work on her next novel on the lovable, bumbling hero of her books who always saves the day with his ingenious and unorthodox methods.

POOCHE CAFE



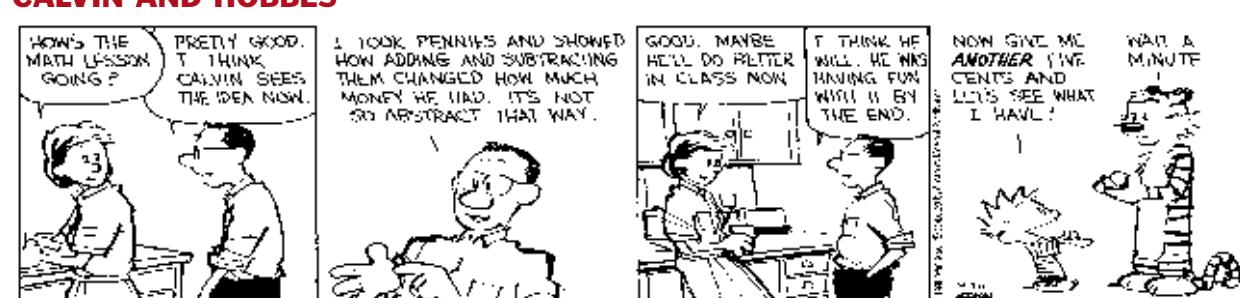
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



UAE, Bahrain set to ink deals with Israel

PM Netanyahu will sign agreements with Emirati and Bahraini Foreign Ministers at the White House

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain on Tuesday will become the latest Arab states to break a longstanding taboo when they sign agreements toward normalising relations with Israel in a strategic realignment of West Asian countries against Iran.

U.S. President Donald Trump was due to host the White House ceremony around noon, capping a dramatic month when first the UAE and then Bahrain agreed to reverse decades of ill will without a resolution of Israel's decades-old dispute with the Palestinians.

At the U.S.-brokered event, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will sign agreements with Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan and Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al Zayani.

The deals make them the third and fourth Arab states to take such steps to normalise



New equations: U.S. President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and wife Sara in the White House on Tuesday. ■ AFP

ties since Israel signed peace treaties with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994.

The UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anwar Gargash, said on Tuesday his country's decision to normalise relations with Is-

rael had "broken the psychological barrier" and was "the way forward" for the region, creating more leverage.

The back-to-back agreements, which have drawn bitter condemnation from the Palestinians, mark an im-

probable diplomatic victory for Mr. Trump. He has spent his presidency forecasting deals on such intractable problems as North Korea's nuclear programme only to find actual achievements elusive.

Bringing Israel, the UAE and Bahrain together reflects their shared concern about Iran's rising influence in the region and development of ballistic missiles. Iran has been critical of both deals.

With Mr. Trump up for re-election on November 3, the accords could help shore up support among pro-Israel Christian evangelical voters, an important part of his political base.

More deals

Speaking to Fox News hours before the ceremony, Mr. Trump said he expected more Arab countries to normalise ties with Israel and predicted the Palestinians would eventually join as well or else be "left out in the cold".

One target of White House appeals is Saudi Arabia, the biggest Gulf Arab power. So far the Saudis, whose King is custodian of Islam's holiest sites and rules the world's largest oil exporter, have signalled they are not ready.

'Any Iran attack will see 1,000 times greater U.S. response'

Trump issues threat amid reports on alleged Iranian plans

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday vowed that any attack by Iran would be met with a response "1,000 times greater in magnitude," after reports that Iran planned to avenge the killing of top general Qasem Soleimani.

A U.S. media report, quoting unnamed officials, said an alleged Iranian plot to assassinate the U.S. Ambassador to South Africa was planned before the presidential election in November. "According to press reports, Iran may be planning an assassination, or other attack, against the U.S. in retaliation for the killing of terrorist leader Soleimani," Mr. Trump tweeted.

"Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!"

Relations between Washington and Tehran have been tense since the Iranian revolution, and have spiralled since Mr. Trump pulled out of the nuclear deal with Iran in 2018. In Ja-

morning show Fox & Friends, "Matti didn't want to do it. Mattis was a highly overrated general, and I let him go."

The revelations support reports that came out in 2018 when Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward published his book *Fear: Trump in the White House* and which the President denied at the time.

nuary, a U.S. drone strike killed Soleimani in Baghdad.

Iran on Monday dismissed the report of an assassination plot as "baseless" and part of "repetitive and rotten methods to create an anti-Iranian atmosphere on the international stage".

Wanted to kill Assad, but Mattis opposed it: Trump

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Tuesday he wanted to assassinate Syrian strongman Bashar al-Assad in 2017, but that his then-Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis opposed the operation.

"I would have rather taken him out. I had him all set," Mr. Trump told the

morning show Fox & Friends. "Matti didn't want to do it. Mattis was a highly overrated general, and I let him go."

The revelations support reports that came out in 2018 when Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward published his book *Fear: Trump in the White House* and which the President denied at the time.

IN BRIEF



EU does not recognise Lukashenko: Borrell

BRUSSELS The European Union does not recognise embattled leader Alexander Lukashenko as the legitimate President of Belarus, the bloc's diplomatic chief said. Josep Borrell, the EU's high representative for foreign affairs, told the EU Parliament the August 9 election that returned the strongman to power was fraudulent. ■ AFP

Navalny can breathe on his own, plans to return to Russia

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny said on Tuesday he was able to breathe unaided in his first public comments after his suspected poisoning in Siberia, while his aide said he planned to return to Russia once recovered.

"Hello, this is Navalny," he wrote in a post on Instagram. "Yesterday I was able to breathe on my own all day." "I miss you," he told his supporters.



On the recovery path: Alexei Navalny posing with his family at Berlin's Charite hospital on Tuesday. ■ AFP/INSTAGRAM

WTO faults U.S. over Trump's China tariffs

Duties inconsistent with trading rules'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

The World Trade Organization on Tuesday upheld a complaint by China over additional duties slapped by the U.S. on some \$250 billion worth of Chinese goods.

A panel of experts set up by WTO's Dispute Settlement Body ruled the tariffs were "inconsistent" with global trade rules, and recommended that the U.S. "bring its measures into conformity with its obligations".

The panel was created in January last year to review U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to hit China with tariffs on a quarter of a trillion dollars' worth of goods.

The tariffs imposed in 2018 marked the beginning of the trade war between the world's two largest

economies. China's representative told the organisation at the time that the tariffs imposed were "a blatant breach of the U.S.' obligations under the WTO agreements and is posing a systemic challenge to the multilateral trading system".

U.S. slams WTO The U.S. responded defiantly, blasting the organization as "completely inadequate" in holding Beijing accountable.

"The U.S. must be allowed to defend itself against unfair trade practices, and the Trump administration will not let China use the WTO to take advantage of American workers, businesses, farmers, and ranchers," U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in a statement.

Pak. schools reopen as COVID-19 cases drop

Classes are set to resume in phases

REUTERS
KARACHI

Millions of students in Pakistan returned to classes on Tuesday after a break of six months, as schools and colleges began to reopen for the first time since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

Educational institutes were closed in March as COVID-19 began to spread in Pakistan, but, with daily infection numbers falling, the government last week announced a staggered resumption of classes.

"May God make us successful in this test, and may the loss suffered by the students be compensated," Minister of Education Shafqat Mahmood told reporters in Islamabad.

Senior schools were the first to restart, with middle school set to go back next



Students inside a classroom in Karachi on Tuesday, after a gap of 6 months. ■ REUTERS

week and primary school the week after.

Mr. Mahmood warned that schools that did not follow precautionary measures, including the wearing of masks and social distancing, would be closed.

However, some government officials are sceptical, saying younger children will not be able to follow the rules.

British MPs back Johnson's Brexit Bill despite EU anger

PM says Bill is a 'safety net against the bloc's tariff threats'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

British lawmakers on Monday backed a new Bill that would override parts of the Brexit treaty struck with the European Union last year, despite outrage in Brussels and alarm at home over such an overt breach of international law.

MPs in the House of Commons gave their initial approval to the U.K. Internal Market Bill by 340 votes to 263, clearing the way for four days of detailed scrutiny of the text this week and next.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson earlier argued the legislation was a "safety net" against what he claimed were EU threats to impose



Boris Johnson

tariffs on U.K. internal trade and even stop food going from mainland Britain to Northern Ireland.

EU sets deadline But EU leaders have dismissed this as "spin" and warned Mr. Johnson to uphold commitments he himself made in the Brexit

U.S. issues travel warning for China, HK

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

The U.S. on Tuesday issued a sweeping new advisory warning against travel to mainland China and Hong Kong, citing the risk of "arbitrary detention" and "arbitrary enforcement of local laws."

The advisory is likely to heighten tensions between the sides that have spiked since Beijing's imposition on Hong Kong of a strict new national security law that has already been met with U.S. punitive actions.

It warned U.S. citizens that China imposes "arbitrary detention and exit bans" to compel cooperation with investigations, pressure family members to return to China from abroad, influence civil disputes and "gain bargaining leverage over foreign governments."

IPL SPECIAL

A galaxy of cricket stars – amid stringent social-distancing guidelines and strict quarantine measures – will lock horns in the 13th edition of the IPL in the UAE. The 53-day T20 extravaganza will offer a definite mood lift to a nation struggling with a pandemic.



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MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	39,044	-0.74
US Dollar	73.64	-0.22
Gold	53,019	1.06
Brent oil	39.88	0.18

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	352.65	1.00
Axian Paints	2017.55	-13.65
Axian Bank	449.55	9.00
Bajaj Auto	2937.35	-20.35
Bajaj Finserv	6115.55	-3.40
Bajaj Finance	3513.40	72.70
Bharti Airtel	485.55	11.45
BPLC	414.40	-2.75
Britannia Ind	3734.10	14.60
Cipla	742.45	20.85
Coal India	124.10	-0.85
Dr Reddy's Lab	4442.35	78.25
Eicher Motors	2140.60	-18.80
GAIL (India)	92.10	0.15
Gasim Ind	720.40	13.40
HCL Tech.	792.70	-2.25
HDFC	1758.75	20.75
HDFC Bank	1070.50	12.55
HDFC Life	594.20	-5.25
Hero MotoCorp	3037.15	8.65
Hindalco	176.75	0.95
Hind Unilever	2124.45	0.95
ICICI Bank	371.55	7.85
IndusInd Bank	633.40	24.05
Bharti InfraNet	202.50	-0.10
Infosys	982.45	4.05
Indian Oil Corp	82.25	-0.45
ITC	181.80	-1.55
JSW Steel	289.60	-0.25
Kotak Bank	1323.95	19.25
L&T	909.95	7.85
M&M	613.45	-1.85
Maruti Suzuki	7052.80	-76.05
Nestle India Ltd.	16040.95	-42.35
NTPC	91.10	0.25
ONGC	73.80	0.15
PowerGrid Corp	173.30	1.80
Reliance Ind	2318.85	16.30
State Bank	200.15	1.65
Shree Cement	2065.25	275.75
Sun Pharma	506.40	10.60
Tata Motors	148.40	-0.15
Tata Steel	405.25	0.60
TCS	2491.40	0.00
Tech Mahindra	791.15	0.40
Titan	1174.55	-13.45
UltraTech Cement	3931.45	17.35
UPL	529.70	13.80
Wipro	307.35	0.15
Zee Entertainment	217.45	1.25

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.45	73.77
Euro	87.28	87.66
British Pound	94.70	95.12
Japanese Yen (100)	69.43	69.76
Chinese Yuan	10.84	10.89
Swiss Franc	81.02	81.38
Singapore Dollar	53.99	54.23
Canadian Dollar	55.80	56.07
Malaysian Ringgit	17.76	17.86
Australian Dollar	53.79	54.07

Source: Indian Bank

DGCA begins safety audit of IndiGo, Vistara

MUMBAI
The DGCA has commenced a special safety audit of IndiGo and Vistara in the wake of the recent Air India Express plane crash, a top official said. PTI

Flipkart's sales event to create '70,000 jobs'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU
Flipkart, the homegrown e-commerce marketplace, hopes to generate more than 70,000 direct and lakhs of indirect seasonal jobs as the e-tailer gears up for its annual festive sale event, Big Billion Days.

While creating direct job opportunities across Flipkart's supply chain, that include delivery executives, packers, sorters, there will also be additional indirect jobs created at Flipkart's seller-partner locations and kiranas.

"By generating employment and enabling our sellers to scale businesses during this time, we're doing our part to drive growth in the industry and the economy," said Amitesh Jha, senior VP, Ekart and Marketplace, Flipkart.

Tencent joins Chinese tech firms investing in Singapore

Company forges on with global push after India, U.S. setbacks

Forecasts of heavy rains raise concerns about kharif crops

Excess rainfall could extensively damage crops when they ripen later this month

REUTERS

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

Forecasts of heavy rains across key central and western growing regions have stoked fears of potential crop losses in the second half of September, industry officials said.

Last week, the weather office said the monsoon, which turned patchy in the first week of September, will pick up in most parts, with rains expected in some of the key farm belts.

Spurred by monsoon rains, farmers have planted a record acreage with crops such as rice, corn, cotton, soybeans and sugarcane.

Rains were 17% above average in June but July rains



Overcast future: July rains were 10% below average. But, they picked up in August and were 27% above average. ■ AP

were 10% below average. The monsoon picked up again in August and were 27% above average.

Heavy rains in August damaged some cotton, pulse

and soybean crops in a few pockets. In the absence of any official estimate, trade, industry and government officials say the rains had localised impact and the damage

was not widespread.

But heavy rains could cause extensive damage this month when crops ripen.

Torrential rains would damage soybean and peanut which now need a relatively dry spell, said B.V. Mehta, executive director of the Solvent Extractors' Association of India. Still, soybean output could surpass last year's 9.3 million tonnes, he said.

"Some pulse crops suffered a bit of damage in August, and now there are concerns about heavy rains in the latter part of this month," said Vivek Agrawal, who owns JLV Agro, a trading firm.

"We are keeping our fingers crossed."

FDI of \$1 bn flowed from China to over 1,600 firms'

Investment came over four years: govt.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

More than 1,600 Indian companies have received foreign direct investments (FDI) worth \$1 billion from China during the April 2016 to March 2020 period, according to government data.

The data was provided in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday to a question on whether it was a fact that large-scale investments had been made by Chinese agencies in Indian companies, especially start-ups.

Over 1,600 companies received \$1.02 billion in FDI equity inflows from China for the April 2016 to March 2020 period, the data show. These companies were in

46 sectors. Out of them, the automobile industry, printing of books, electronics, services and electrical equipment received more than \$100 million in FDI each during the period.

Automobile, services
The automobile industry received the maximum FDI from China at \$172 million. The services sector attracted \$139.65 million.

In the reply, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur said the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had informed that the FDI Data Cell compiles and maintains the data of FDI reported through equity inflow into the country.

Over 1,600 companies received \$1.02 billion in FDI equity inflows from China for the April 2016 to March 2020 period, the data show. These companies were in

Utilising capacity fully is the priority: Toyota Kirloskar

Automaker confident of Centre's support to industry, jobs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on Tuesday said its first priority was to ensure full utilisation of production capacity it had already created in the country.

The company has an installed capacity of 3.1 lakh units spread across two plants in Bidadi, near Bengaluru. "Our first step is to ensure full capacity utilisation of what we have created and this will take time," TKM said in a statement.

In an interview with Bloomberg earlier, TKM vice chairman Shekar Viswanathan said that the government kept taxes on cars and mo-

torbikes so high that firms found it hard to build scale.

Committed to India

The company later said it continued to be committed to the Indian market, and its operations in the country were an integral part of Toyota's global strategy.

"We remain confident that the government will do everything possible to support the industry and employment. We recognise the strong proactive efforts being made by the government to support various sectors of the economy and appreciate the fact that it is open to examine this issue despite the current challenging revenue situation," the firm added.

TKM's recent partnership with Suzuki in India on sharing technology and best practices are also in support of the 'Make in India' initiative and the government's policy, and aim to enhance the competitiveness of both firms, the automaker said.

Exports fall 12.7%, trade deficit eases to \$6.77 bn

Aug. imports slide 26%, gold bucks dip

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Contracting for the sixth straight month, India's exports slipped 12.7% to \$22.7 billion in August, on account of decline in the shipments of petroleum, leather, engineering goods and gems and jewellery items, according to government data released on Tuesday.

The country's merchandise imports too declined 26% to \$29.47 billion in August, leading to a trade deficit of \$6.77 billion, compared with a \$13.86 billion deficit a year earlier.

Oil imports declined 41.6% to \$6.42 billion in the month under review. Gold imports jumped to \$3.7 billion in August as against \$1.36 billion in August 2019. Federation of Indian Ex-

port Organisations President Sharad Kumar Saraf expressed concern on the dip in figures from labour-intensive sectors of exports, which impacts employment generation. "There is a need to analyse imports as well, as such a steep decline in imports may hamper the industrial recovery in the coming months," he said.

SpiceJet logs ₹593 cr. loss, revenue plunges to a sixth

Carrier delays payments to vendors

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Low-cost carrier SpiceJet on Tuesday reported a net loss of ₹593.4 crore in the first quarter ended June, compared with a profit of ₹261.7 crore in the year-earlier quarter.

This figure includes the ₹95 crore as income in the form of compensation from Boeing for the 13 grounded 737 MAXs, which the airline is yet to receive.

The airline's operating revenue shrank to a sixth of its pre-COVID-19 levels and stood at ₹514.7 crore for the reported period as against ₹3,002 crore in the same quarter last year.

Operating expenses were

RBI issues draft on rupee IR derivatives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Tuesday proposed allowing foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to undertake exchange-traded rupee interest rate derivatives transactions subject to an overall ceiling of ₹5,000 crore.

Interest Rate Derivatives (IRDs) are contracts whose value is derived from one or more interest rates, prices of interest rate instruments, or interest rate indices.

The proposed directions are aimed at encouraging higher non-resident participation, enhance the role of domestic market makers in the offshore market, improve transparency, and achieve better regulatory oversight, according to the central bank.

reduced by half to ₹1,303 crore, as more than half the fleet remained grounded because of government regulations for COVID-19.

Contraction of 90%
In a statement, the airline said it was operating 47% of its aircraft and that its capacity utilisation, or passenger seat kilometres, in the quarter contracted by 90%.

"On account of its operational and financial position, and the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the company has deferred payments to various parties, including vendors and its dues to statutory authorities," the carrier added in the statement.

chief economist Yasuyuki Sawada.

Last week, two global rating agencies Moody's and Fitch projected the Indian economy to contract 11.5% and 10.5% respectively in the current fiscal.

Finding the right combination key to unlocking Kings' potential

With several match-winning options to choose from, including a returning Maxwell, the brains-trust of Kumble and Rahul needs to ace the balance of the starting XI

IPL COUNTDOWN

RAKESH RAO

Some T20 specialists in the Kings XI Punjab line-up hold the key to its fortunes. Imagine an on-fire Chris Gayle and comeback-man Glenn Maxwell exploding at the top and at the finish! In between, skipper and opener K.L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal and James Neesham contribute as briskly as they usually do. Well, in such a scenario, it will be tough to stop Kings from gatecrashing the playoffs.

Main challenge

However, the main challenge for the Karnataka combo of Rahul and new coach Anil Kumble will be to find the right balance in the starting line-up.

In the past, Kings started well but finished poorly. The only exception was in 2014, when Maxwell played his part and the team reached the final.

Back with Kings after 2017 for a whopping ₹10.75 crore, Maxwell is a certainty to play most games.

Since Gayle has hardly played in the past year, his



Glenn Maxwell. ■ FILE PHOTO

management to play an additional all-rounder or an overseas bowler.

Jonty Rhodes' presence as the fielding coach promises better catching and run-saving methods from Kings.

With the batting sorted out, much depends on how the team bowls. Sheldon Cottrell, Mohammed Shami and Mujeeb Ur Rahman appear a certainty in the starting line-up. Should the pitches assist spin, Indian options like K. Gowtham, M. Ashwin, Ravi Bishnoi and J. Suchith come into play.

Collective wisdom

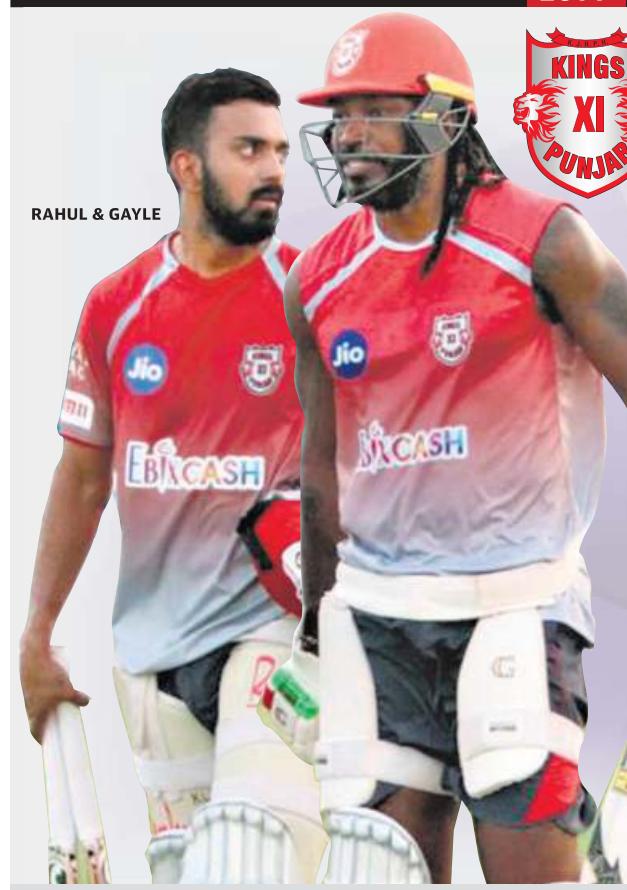
In four out of the last five editions, Kings failed to finish in the top-five. Again, not many expect the side to make the playoffs.

With low pressure of expectations, the collective wisdom of Kumble, Rhodes, Gayle, Rahul and Maxwell could find a winning combination to upset the calculations of some other playoff aspirants.

No doubt, Kings look good to score big. Should spinners assume a bigger role as the league heads to the business end, Kings could well rule.

THE KINGS XI PUNJAB DOSSIER

FINALIST
2014



THE SQUAD: K.L. Rahul (Capt.), Chris Gayle, Karun Nair, Sarfaraz Khan, Mandeep Singh, Glenn Maxwell, K. Gowtham, Sheldon Cottrell, Mohammed Shami, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Ishan Porel, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, M. Ashwin, Harpreet Brar, Deepak Hooda, Chris Jordan, Darshan Nalkande, James Neesham, Nicholas Pooran, Simran Singh, J. Suchith, Tajinder Singh Dhillon, and Hardus Viljoen.

COMPILED BY G. PRASAD

	P	W	L
Overall*	176	82	94
vs. CSK	21	9	12
vs. DC	24	14	10
vs. KKR	25	8	17
vs. MI	24	11	13
vs. RR	19	9	10
vs. RCB	24	12	12
vs. SRH	14	4	10

* Kings XI's remaining matches were against Deccan Chargers (10), Pune Warriors (6), Gujarat Lions (4), Rising Pune Supergiant (4), and Kochi Tuskers Kerala (1).

TOP PERFORMERS

BATTING

Most runs: Shaun Marsh (2477, 69 innings)

Highest: Sehwag (122 vs. CSK, 2014, Mumbai)

Best average: K.L. Rahul (54.43 - 1252 runs, 5 n.o., 28 innings)

Best strike rate: Glenn Maxwell (167.27 - 1186 runs, 709 balls, 51 innings)

Most 100s: Hashim Amla (2)

Most sixes: Miller (87)

FACTFILE

Most matches: Piyush Chawla (87)

Most matches as captain: Adam Gilchrist (34 - W 17, L 17)

Most catches (fielder): David Miller (49)

Most dismissals (wicketkeeper): Wriddhiman Saha (48 - Ct 36, St 12)

Best strike rate: Mohammed Shami (17.00 - 19 wickets, 54 overs, 14 matches)

Best economy rate: Praveen Kumar (6.96 - 165.2 overs, 1152 runs conceded, 44 matches)

Most four-fors: Andrew Tye (3)

Bowling: Best average, Best strike rate, Best economy rate (min. 250 balls)

JAFFER & KUMBLE



KINGS XI'S 2020 FIXTURES ALL TIMES IST

Sept. 20	vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 24	vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 27	vs. RR	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 1	vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 4	vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 8	vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 10	vs. KKR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 15	vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 18	vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 20	vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 24	vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 26	vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 30	vs. RR	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Nov. 1	vs. CSK	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi

SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Six (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.

Tour de France: Eurosport (SD & HD), 4 p.m.

England v Australia: 3rd ODI, Sony Ten 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Messi in exclusive club of sporting billionaires

PARIS

Lionel Messi, the best paid footballer in 2020 with an income of \$126 million (\$92 million for the 2020/2021 season and \$34 million from sponsors and other sources) according to Forbes, has joined the elite club of billionaires alongside Tiger Woods, Floyd Mayweather and Cristiano Ronaldo. AFP



Karma wins 16th stage, Roglic still in yellow

VILLARD DE LANS

Primoz Roglic maintained the overall lead in the Tour de France on Tuesday as Bora's German all-rounder Lennard Kämna won the medium mountain stage 16. AFP

We could have given more thought to taking a knee, admits Langer

MANCHESTER

Australia coach Justin Langer has admitted his side could have given more thought to taking a knee during its tour of England following criticism from West Indies great Michael Holding. England and West Indies adopted the gesture at the start of each of their three Tests in July. The practice was not followed in subsequent series against Pakistan and Australia. AFP

S.R. Patil passes away

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Former Test cricketer Sardarshiv Raoji Patil (S.R. Patil), passed away at his residence in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, on Tuesday. He was 86.

Patil, a useful all-rounder, led Maharashtra in Ranji Trophy besides representing India against New Zealand in what turned out to be his lone appearance in international cricket.

Patil is survived by wife Sulabha and two daughters – Neeta Shinde and Deepa Khambhe.

Taking stock



The surveyor: BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has a look around the Sharjah Cricket Stadium. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Training camp for Olympic squad mooted

Coach Deepali says Delhi looks the best place with all facilities for shooters

SHOOTING

KAMESH SRINIVASAN NEW DELHI

Shooters of the Indian Olympic squad have been training at home during the pandemic, but the coaches have felt the urgency to have a national camp and get on with proper preparation.

World and Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra also felt that Indian shooting needed to wake up from its slumber and get on with organised activities, so as to have the best shot at the Tokyo Olympics.

"Training at home for long may have a negative effect. They are so young. Bad

habits in technique can very easily creep in when not monitored."

"The team needs to train in a camp, maybe in a bio bubble environment," said Bindra.

Request for long camp

National rifle coach Deepali Deshpande said that a request had been made by the coaches for a long camp of about six to eight weeks, starting in October.

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) and the Sports Authority of India (SAI) have to work out all details for a 'safe camp'.

"Training camps must res-

ed out that a long camp would address a lot of things effectively."

Comfort zones

"A longer camp is required to recover the time lost. We will get enough time to settle down in the new training environment with all safety measures."

"On the technical front, it is a tougher task to get shooters back from their comfort zones to the same level as they were in February before the lockdown. We need time for all these."

"If we have a long camp, we don't have to rush into the next camp," said Deepali.

"Deepali pointed

Added SOPs for SAI camps

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

With more national sports federations restarting training accompanied by more cases of COVID-19 cases among elite athletes, SAI has now issued additions to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for new trainees.

All athletes, coaches and support staff will have to undergo mandatory RT-PCR test at least 96 hours before travelling and will be allowed only on the production of a COVID negative certificate. In case it isn't possible, the person will be tested on arrival, SAI said in a press release.

Kerber bows out; Rublev advances

ROME MASTERS

AGENCIES

ROME

Angelique Kerber fell to a straight-set defeat against Czech Katerina Siniakova in the Rome Masters on Tuesday even as Russian seventh seed Andrey Rublev eased through to the second round defeating Facundo Bagnis 6-4, 6-4.

Three-time Grand Slam winner Kerber crashed out 6-3, 6-1 in 68 minutes.

Important results (first round): Men: John Millman bt Joao Sousa 7-5, 7-6(2); Andrey Rublev bt Facundo Bagnis 6-4, 6-4.

On Monday: Men: Jannik Sinner bt Benoit Paire 6-2, 6-1.



Causing a flutter: Katerina Siniakova put it across Angelique Kerber. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Women: Katerina Siniakova bt Angelique Kerber 6-3, 6-1; Marketa Vondrousova bt Misaki Doi 6-1, 4-6, 6-4.

Chelsea starts with a win

REUTERS LONDON

Chelsea got its Premier League campaign on track after lethal finishing coupled with some good luck gave it a 3-1 win at Brighton on Monday.

Brighton had taken the game to Chelsea in the first half but fell behind later.

The results: Brighton 1 (Trossard 54) lost to Chelsea 3 (Jorginho 23-pen, James 56, Zouma 66); Sheffield United 0 lost to Wolves 2 (Jimeenez 3, Saiss 6); Tottenham 0 lost to Everton 1 (Calvert-Lewin 55).



Jorginho. ■ GETTY IMAGES

BETWEEN WICKETS