



NEARBY



Kapila Vatsyayan passes away at 92

NEW DELHI
Kapila Vatsyayan, the grand matriarch of cultural research, died at her Gulmohar Enclave residence in New Delhi on Wednesday morning. Her brother S.C. Malik said she was suffering from age-related problems. The Padma Vibhushan awardee was 92 years old.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 11

Delhi records 4,473 COVID cases, a new high
NEW DELHI
The Capital on Wednesday witnessed the highest COVID-19 tally with 4,473 cases being reported in the past 24 hours. The city also saw the second highest number of daily tests – 62,593 – on Wednesday, according to the Delhi government's health bulletin.

CITY ▶ PAGE 4

Babri mosque demolition case verdict on Sept. 30
LUCKNOW
The judgment in the Babri Masjid demolition case will be delivered by a special CBI court here on September 30, almost 28 years after the structure in Ayodhya was razed to the ground. Special Judge S.K. Yadav has directed all the 32 accused in the case to appear in the court.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 5

Russia inks pact to test, supply Sputnik V vaccine to India

Agreement with Dr. Reddy's Laboratories doesn't include its manufacture

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Russia Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), which is piloting Russia's Sputnik V candidate vaccine, currently in Phase 3 trials, has partnered with the Hyderabad-based Dr. Reddy's Laboratories to test, and subject to regulatory approvals in India, supply 100 million doses of the vaccine.

G.V. Prasad, co-chairman and managing director, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, said in a joint statement with RDIF: "We are pleased to partner with RDIF to bring the vaccine to India. The Phase 1 and 2 results have shown promise, and we will be conducting Phase 3 trials in India to meet the requirements of the Indian regulators. Sputnik V vaccine could provide a credible option in our fight against COVID-19 in India."

The RDIF said in the statement, "The Sputnik V vaccine, which is based on well-studied human adenoviral vector platform with proven safety, is undergoing clinical trials for the coronavirus pandemic. Deliveries could potentially begin in late 2020 subject to completion of successful trials and registration of the vaccine by regulatory authorities in India." The agreement does not

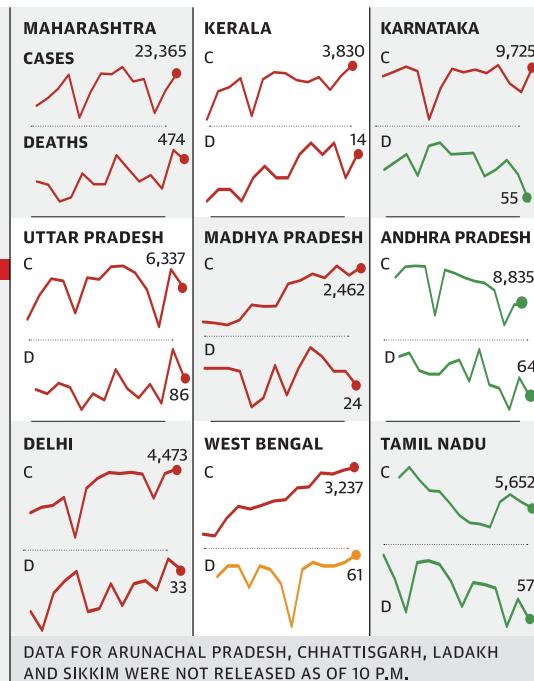
Viral tracker

With 94,732 COVID-19 cases recorded on Wednesday, India's tally stood at 51,12,806. As many as 1,108 deaths were added, taking India's toll to 83,222. A total of 5.94 crore samples have been tested as of September 15, according to the ICMR

NEW CASES AND DEATHS



The graphs depict the new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. If average cases and deaths in the last seven days are higher than the previous seven days, then the cases and deaths are rising ■; if they are lower, then dropping ■; if they are similar, then cases and deaths are flattening ■ in that State



include manufacturing the vaccine in India. An RDIF spokesperson said the organisation was still looking for manufacturers.

The Dr. Reddy's-RDIF agreement constitutes the second major international deal for supplying a potential vaccine after the agreement between British company AstraZeneca and the Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII).

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Gadkari tests COVID-19 positive

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said he had tested COVID-19 positive. "Yesterday, I was feeling weak and consulted my doctor. During my check up, I tested COVID-19 positive," he tweeted. "I am at present doing well." PTI

Serum Institute allowed to resume trials

The Drugs Controller General of India has allowed the Serum Institute of India to resume the clinical trial of the Oxford COVID-19 vaccine in the country, a senior Health Ministry official said on Wednesday.

▶ PAGE 10

Chargesheet filed in north-east Delhi riots case

Police have named 15 accused out of the 21 persons arrested so far over protests against the CAA



Special Cell personnel bringing the chargesheet papers to the Karkardooma Court in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ PTI

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI
The Delhi Police Special Cell investigating the "larger conspiracy" behind the riots in north-east Delhi submitted a chargesheet at the Karkardooma Court in east Delhi on Wednesday.

"The chargesheet includes the names of 15 persons who were charged under the stringent UAPA [Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act] and other serious charges like murder, rioting and attempt to murder. The persons named in the chargesheet were found instigating people gathered at anti-CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act) protest sites," said a police officer.

"It took 195 days to complete the first phase of investigation. During this period, 747 witnesses have been examined and approximately 75 electronic devices have been seized as part of the investi-

Discrepancies in T.N.'s COVID-19 data

Health Secretary attributes it to duplicate entries

PON VASANTH B.A.
CHENNAI

A part of an internal report compiled by the Health and Family Welfare (HFW) Department in Tamil Nadu to present to officials at the highest level has shown data that is different from the COVID-19 data publicly reported by the State in its bulletins every day.

The report available with *The Hindu* had data till September 7. Compared with the media bulletin released for

Mismatch in data

An internal report of the Health and Family Welfare Department in Tamil Nadu on COVID-19 has shown differences with regard to the numbers publicly reported by the government. The report has data till September 7.

Cases as per admissions in institutions mentioned in the internal report	Cases as per data provided in the media bulletin*	Difference
Deaths	8,339	7,925 (+)414
Recoveries	4,43,074	4,10,116 (+)32,958
Active cases	44,067	51,215 (-)7,148
Total cases	4,95,480	4,69,256 (+)26,224

the same day, this data showed a difference of 26,224 additional COVID-19 cases admitted till then to different types of institutions (including home quarant-

ine), and 414 more in the total deaths.

The deviation was in one page, which was the part of the report capturing the number of COVID-19 patients

admitted to hospitals, COVID Health Centres (CHCs), COVID Care Centres (CCCs), and those in home isolation.

This category-wise data is not part of the State's daily media bulletin. It instead gives the total number of people under treatment in all different facilities combined, which is always in sync with the total number of active cases given in the bulletin. As per this specific data in the internal report, Tamil Nadu had a total of 4,95,480 COVID-19 positive admissions in various facilities and 8,339 deaths till September 7.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Parliament project: Tata's bid is lowest

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

Tata Projects Limited's financial bid of ₹861.9 crore for the construction and five-year maintenance contract of a new Parliament building was the lowest of the two bids opened by the Central Public Works Department on Wednesday, according to the bid documents.

Tata's bid was 8.4% less than the CPWD's estimated cost of ₹940 crore.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 11

97 deaths on Shramik Specials: govt.

Earlier, it said it had no data on workers who lost jobs, lives

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

Ninety-seven people lost their lives while travelling in the Shramik Special trains, which were run to help migrant workers stranded due to the nationwide lockdown reach their home State, the government told Parliament on Wednesday.

Claims amounting to more than ₹20 crore to compensate for the loss of property had been filed before the Delhi government, which indicated the scale and immense cost of the tragedy, added the police.

Open 16,000 Police Control Room calls were received and a total of 751 cases were registered by Delhi police in connection with the riots. Fifty-nine cases were assigned to a Special Investigation Team constituted in the Crime Branch; 691 cases were investigated by the district police; and one case, registered on March 6 to investigate the larger conspiracy behind the riots, was assigned to the Special Cell.

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 2

The statement comes two days after the government told Parliament it did not have any data on the migrant workers who lost their jobs and lives during the pandemic.

He said the State police had sent the bodies for post-mortem in 87 cases.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

VISIONIAS
INSPIRING INNOVATION
LIVE/ONLINE Classes Available
www.visionias.in

7 IN TOP 10 SELECTIONS IN CSE 2019
from various programs of VISION IAS

FOUNDATION COURSE GENERAL STUDIES PRELIMS CUM MAINS 2021

PREPARATION UNINTERRUPTED
Organize all your lectures and study material effectively and access them from anywhere, anytime
LIVE / ONLINE cum Offline classes

DELHI English Medium 29 Sept 5 PM | 11 Sept 10 AM | 15 Sept 1:30 PM
Hindi माध्यम

JAIPUR | AHMEDABAD | LUCKNOW
PUNE | CHANDIGARH | HYDERABAD

#PrelimsIsComing
ABHYAAS 2020
ALL INDIA GS PRELIMS MOCK TEST SERIES

4 TESTS | TEST 2 | TEST 3 | TEST 4 | TEST 5
29 Sept 5 PM | 11 Sept 10 AM | 15 Sept 1:30 PM
7 Aug JAIPUR | PUNE | CHANDIGARH | HYDERABAD

ONLINE
Register at: www.visionias.in/abhyas

DELI • HEAD OFFICE: Apsara Arcade, Karol Bagh | CONTACT: 8468022022, 9019066066
JAIPUR 900194244 | PUNE 8007500096 | HYDERABAD 9000104133 | LUCKNOW 990947040 | CHANDIGARH 8468022022

HC refuses to entertain JMI student's bail petition

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday said it was not inclined to entertain the bail plea of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) student Asif Iqbal Tanha as the police was in the process of filing the chargesheet in the case before a trial court here by September 17.

Justice Vibhu Bakshu said that once the chargesheet is filed in the case, Mr. Tanha can agitate the bail before the trial court.

The High Court also directed the trial court to dispose of any bail plea filed by Mr. Tanha expeditiously, preferably within two weeks from the filing.

The High Court gave the direction after Delhi Police said that it will file the chargesheet in the case under the stringent anti-terror law – Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act – by Thursday. Mr. Tanha, a 24-year-old student, who was arrested on May 19 and in judicial custody since May 27, has challenged the trial court order dismissing his bail plea in the case.

Speak out against injustice, says Khalid in pre-recorded video

'Delhi Police not after rioters; people who criticise government being implicated'

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI



Former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student Umar Khalid recorded a video statement before his arrest on Sunday wherein he urged people to continue to raise their voice against injustice.

In the 2 minute 18 second clip, Mr. Khalid – who has been arrested in connection with a north-east Delhi riots case lodged against him under sections of the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act – starts off by saying that if people are watching the video, it means he has been arrested.

Police inaction

Pointing finger at the way investigations are being conducted into the riots, Mr. Khalid said the police are not after rioters or those who incited violence. "They are not after those who incited violence in front of the police and TV cameras... we all saw. Let alone any FIR against them, the police have not even brought them in for

questioning," he said.

On the other hand, those who criticise the government and were protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens are being falsely implicated even though the police have no evidence against them, he added.

Trying to arrest

"They had been trying to arrest me for the last few months and attributing false statements to me," said the activist.

Talking about the video that has been cited by the police as evidence of Mr.

I did not even mention the words: riot and violence. Now, they are using false narrative against me in the media and forcing people to give false testimonies against me

UMAR KHALID
Former JNU student

this country is as much mine as it is yours?" he asks in the clip.

Talking about the diverse cultures in India, Mr. Khalid said there are believers of many religions in the country and they are all equal in the eyes of the law. "Today, they are trying to change this and trying to divide us. They're trying to silence everyone who speaks against it by putting them behind bars," he said.

Scare and silence

Mr. Khalid added that "they are not only trying to scare and silence the ones they are arresting", but also everyone else who "wishes to speak against them".

"Nainsaifi ke khilaaf awaaz buland kijiye... jin lo-gon se jo jhooth mukadmon main phasaya jaa raha hai, unki raih ki maang kijiye... har zulm ke khilaaf boliye..." (Speak louder against injustice... demand release of those who have been falsely implicated and jailed... speak out against every cruelty)," he concluded.

'Politically sophisticated network tried to influence Delhi polls'

Chadha says he will request Assembly panel looking into allegations against FB to take notice of report

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Raghav Chadha, chairman of the Delhi Assembly Committee on Peace and Harmony, on Wednesday said that he will propose the committee to take suo moto cognisance of a report by media platform BuzzFeed News about revelations by a whistleblower

er from Facebook about an alleged attempt to influence the February Delhi election.

"I am likely to put it before the panel and this will be considered in the ongoing matter. The committee will have to decide on it though," Mr. Chadha said.

The panel is currently looking into other allega-

tions against Facebook.

Fired FB employee

"In India, she [whistleblower] worked to remove 'a politically sophisticated network of more than a 1,000 actors working to influence' the local elections taking place in Delhi in February. Facebook never publicly dis-

closed this network or that it had taken it down," read a BuzzFeed News article about a memo sent by a recently fired Facebook employee.

The House panel said that revelations made in the article find resonance with the initial findings of the panel with respect to "misinformation" spread by Facebook.

Mr. Chadha said, "These practices adopted by Facebook are in no manner condonable and have direct adverse effect on the sanctity of free and fair elections in our country. If not deterred timely, it will be an assault on the pristine democracy of our country and may cause unfathomable damage."

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Ref. No.F.3 (5-3810)-FWPM/SHFW/2019 Date: 10-09-2020

e-Tender is hereby invited on behalf of the State Health and Family Welfare Society, Tripura for "Selection of MOHFW Govt. of India empaneled HR Recruitment Agency for The Recruitment Services of NHM" under STATE HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE SOCIETY, TRIPURA.

The details of tender, list of items with indicative quantity and Tender Documents are made available on website: (<http://tripuratenders.gov.in>). The last date / time of submission of the tender documents by online upto 12-10-2020 at 04-00 p.m. All future modification / corrigendum shall be made available in the e-procurement portal, So, bidders are requested to get the update themselves from the e-procurement web portal only.

(Dr. Siddharth Shiv Jaiswal, IAS)
Mission Director, NHM,
Govt. of Tripura

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Sealed tenders under two parts (Un priced & priced) are invited for the supply of following materials from all bidders:-

NIT No.	Brief Tender Description	Estimated Cost (₹)	Cost of EMD (₹)	Due Date & Time of Submission	Date & Time of Opening
CMC/BR/20-21/SV/AR/867	RATE CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING SECURITY SERVICES FOR TWO YEARS IN BRPL.	23.00 Crore for one Year	23,00,00/-	07.10.2020 1530 HRS	07.10.2020 1600 HRS

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)
For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com
For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit
of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com
Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527
Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

BSES
BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, New Delhi
TENDER NOTICE Date: 17.09.2020

Sealed tenders under two parts (Un priced & priced) are invited for the supply of following materials from all bidders:-

NIT No. Brief Tender Description Estimated Cost (₹) Cost of EMD (₹) Due Date & Time of Submission Date & Time of Opening

CMC/BR/20-21/SV/AR/867 RATE CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING SECURITY SERVICES FOR TWO YEARS IN BRPL. 23.00 Crore for one Year 23,00,00/- 07.10.2020 1530 HRS 07.10.2020 1600 HRS

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit

of tender documents etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com

Regd. Off. : BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 | Corporate Identification No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

Telephone No. : +91 11 3999 7235 | E-mail : brpl.eauction@relianceads.com | Website : www.bsesdelhi.com

Cost of each Tender Document except for Insurance ₹ 1180/- (Non Refundable)

For any query Call on 011-3999444 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceads.com

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submit



MUTUAL FUNDS

Sahi Hai

**CRICKETERS HO YA FANS,
HAR EK KE LIYE MUTUAL FUNDS SAHI HAI.**

- Retirement planning ke liye Sahi Hai
- Long-term aur short-term ke liye Sahi Hai
- Direct Plan ke zariye invest karna Sahi Hai
- SIP se investment ki shuruvat karna Sahi Hai
- Investment karne se pehle risk ko samajhna Sahi Hai

To know how Mutual Funds are right for you:

- Visit mutualfundssahihai.com
- Visit your nearest Mutual Fund office or contact a Mutual Fund distributor or an investment advisor today

Follow Mutual Funds Sahi Hai on:

Scan for more information



Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks. Read all scheme related documents carefully.

Timings

DELHI

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
SATURDAY, SEP. 19
RISE 06:08 SET 18:21
RISE 07:56 SET 19:58

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 38 27
Safdarjung 38 27
Palam 37 28Delhi Palam Today
38°C Easy morning becoming hot and humid afternoon with partly cloudy sky and light winds.Delhi Palam Tomorrow
38°C A spell of rain and thunderstorm may occur at some places with cloudy sky and gusty winds.© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before resorting to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, shall not be held responsible for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products or services. In event of any dispute the Owner, Publisher, Printers, Editors & Directors/ Employees of this newspaper/company will be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Capital hits a new high with daily COVID-19 count touching 4,473

60.8% of beds with ventilators and 65.4% of those without ventilators are occupied

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Capital on Wednesday witnessed the highest COVID-19 tally with 4,473 cases being reported in the past 24 hours. Delhi also saw the second highest number of daily tests – 62,593 – on Wednesday, according to Delhi government's health bulletin.

Of the total 2,30,269 cases, 1,94,516 people have recovered and there are 30,914 active cases. Also, 33 more deaths were reported, swelling the death count to 4,839.

Out of the total 14,521 beds available for COVID-19 treatment, 53.2% were vacant, as per government data on Wednesday. But 60.8% of the ICU beds with ventilators have been occupied and 65.4% of the ICU beds without ventilators are full.

Taking the crisis into con-



A woman undergoing a rapid antigen test at Adarsh Nagar in the Capital.

■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

sideration, the government has declared 100 beds each for COVID-19 treatment in government-run Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital and Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital, according to an official order.

"In view of the pandemic, to augment the availability of beds for COVID-19 patients in NCT of Delhi, Government of NCT of Delhi has decided to declare the following hos-

pitals as designated COVID hospitals partially for admitting confirmed/suspected cases in addition to the already designated COVID hospitals," an order issued on Tuesday by the Delhi government read.

On Tuesday, *The Hindu* had reported that according to the second serological survey done in August by the Delhi government, 30% of the 257 people who had recovered from COVID-19 and tested for antibodies against the virus did not have any trace of it.

But experts said there was no need to "panic" as the neutralising antibodies (IgG) tend to vanish after three months. But in most cases the memory cells will remember the virus and trigger an immune response if the person, who recovered from COVID-19, is again attacked by the virus.

Court tells Delhi govt. to focus on shoring up RT-PCR testing capacity

HC notes that RAT results are accurate only up to 60%

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The High Court on Wednesday directed the Delhi government to focus on shoring up the capacity of testing through RT-PCR, noting that results of the tests conducted through RAT are accurate only to the extent of 60%.

A Bench of Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Subramonium Prasad said, "We are of the firm view that RT-PCR should be the way forward".

"The results of the tests

conducted through RAT are accurate only to the extent of 60% thus leaving a great doubt about infection being carried by those persons who are asymptomatic," the Bench said, directing the Delhi government to "substantially" scale up testing through RT-PCR.

It directed an expert committee constituted by Lt. Governor to identify the areas of focus in Delhi for conducting testing through RT-PCR. The court also directed the government not to de-

clare the sero surveillance-3 report till its analysis vis-a-vis the previous two sero surveillances is finalised and placed on record before the court.

Delhi government's additional standing counsel (ASC) Satyakam stated that the sero surveillance-3 results are still being compiled and more time will be required to finalise the report.

In response to the High Court direction, Delhi government said it will implement the orders.

'Slum dwellers along railway tracks can be rehabilitated in 40,000 flats'

Jain writes to Goyal, offers cooperation in relocation process

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi Urban Development Minister Satyendar Jain on Wednesday wrote to Union Railway Minister Piyush Goyal and said that 48,000 shanties along Delhi railway tracks can be rehabilitated in 40,000 flats, which are in the city, and offered full cooperation for their rehabilitation.

On Tuesday, *The Hindu* had reported that according to the second serological survey done in August by the Delhi government, 30% of the 257 people who had recovered from COVID-19 and tested for antibodies against the virus did not have any trace of it.

"The Delhi government also has more than 40,000 flats, out of which some are ready and some will be ready soon. These flats can also be used if needed, and the Delhi government had also written a letter to the railways last week in this re-

gard. But these flats are located on the outskirts of Delhi. These flats can be given to slum dwellers who live in areas that do not have vacant land around and who cannot be provided houses under 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahin Makaan' policy," Mr. Jain wrote.

"I am very happy that the

Central government lawyer

said in the Supreme Court

that the Delhi government, the Centre, and the railways will prepare a plan in this regard. On behalf of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and the Delhi government, I assure full support and cooperation in our efforts to provide shelter to the poor

people," he added.

Mr. Jain said that a detailed plan has to be created to find out where every slum is to be built. "We will cooperate fully with you in formulating these policies, and the Delhi government can make these plans and give it to you if you need it," the letter read.

He said that they must now find land around every slum area where pucca houses can be built for the slum dwellers. "It will require the cooperation of all government agencies. The support of the agency to which the land belongs to will also be required," he said.

Environment Minister offers solution for stubble burning

Pusa Institute's product can turn stubble into manure: Rai

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI



Gopal Rai

on the results so that the model can be implemented in those States as well to ease the financial burden on the farmers and reduce air pollution.

"We will speak to both the Central government as well as the States. Union Environment Ministry has a very important role to play in this initiative. We will create a proper strategy after discussion with the Chief Minister," Mr. Rai added.

A Delhi government official said that the capsules mixed in water will be sprayed on stalks that are left behind from the harvester, but the shorter stubble that sticks to the ground even after cutting the crop will have to be managed separately.

Delhi BJP chief tests positive for COVID-19

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
State Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Adesh Gupta has tested positive for COVID-19.

Mr. Gupta had previously tested negative but got tested again due to bad health conditions over a week. As many as 17 staffers staying at the party's State headquarters on Pant Marg had tested positive on Tuesday.

Mr. Gupta, who was suffering from viral fever for a week before getting himself tested again, took to Twitter requesting everyone he had come in contact with to get tested.

IN BRIEF

Delhi BJP likely to declare office-bearers' names soon

NEW DELHI
The Delhi BJP is expected to announce the names of office-bearers over the coming days at the end of reorganisation exercise. Sources said that Model Town candidate Kapil Mishra is among top contenders for general secretary post. The announcement is expected between September 18 and 21. It may, however, be delayed due to Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta having contracted COVID-19.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE						
SIR. 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	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE KURNOOL (A.P)	RPF FOR DOOR TO DOOR COLLECTION SEGREGATION TRANSPORTATION AS WELL AS PROCESSING OF WASTES IN MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, KURNOOL + 1 OTHER WORK	CLOSING DATE 24.09.2020	457.70 LACS	etenders.hry.nic.in	secymkdd2018@gmail.com
2	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE GHARAUANDA	CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY AT BEGAMPUR DUMPING SITE + 1 OTHER WORK	15.09.2020 24.09.2020	28.68 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	1748-250070 Secymc.gharauanda@hry.nic.in
3	UHBVN	APPOINTMENT OF AN AGENCY FOR DESIGN, MANUFACTURING, SUPPLY & INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF SUPERVISORY CONTRACTORS FOR PURCHASE & TRADE SYSTEM IN URBAN CITY AREA AND PANCHKULA CITY AREA AT SUB-STATIONS LEVEL AND DISTRIBUTION LEVEL ON (URBAN) 11KV FEEDERS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF CHANDIGARH, PANCHKULA CITY AREA (HARYANA) AND PANCHKULA CITY AREA (HARYANA)	CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020	10 LACS	etenders.hry.nic.in	9317554907 seprojets@unbhvn.org.in
4	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE DHARUHERA	DOOR TO DOOR COLLECTION AND SEGREGATION AT SOURCE AND SECONDARY SEGREGATION AND DUMPING POINT AND DISPOSAL SITE OF SOLID WASTE, IN MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, DHARUHERA.	CLOSING DATE 22.09.2020	Quoted By Agency	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	Secretary
5	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PALWAL	MAINTENANCE OF VARIOUS PARKS FROM N/W NO 01 TO 31 WITHIN MC PALWAL + 4 OTHER WORKS	Opening of Technical Bid - 24.09.2020	71.13 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	7011419674
6	HARYANA STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION	APPOINTMENT OF STRATEGIC ALIANCE MANAGEMENT OPERATORS (SAC) AT SUB-DISTRICT LEVEL-CENTRAL CONTAINER FREIGHT STATION (CCFS) AT REVERSE LOGISTICS CENTRE	16.09.2020 22.09.2020	5 LACS	etenders.hry.nic.in	SECRETARY
7	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.13/2020/AC-210/GS) SUB- ANNUAL RUNNING CONTRACT FOR OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF CENTRAL AC PLANTS & EVAPORATING PLANTS OF UNIT-6,788, NEW SERVICE BUILDING AND SEWA BHAWAN, PTPS, PANIPAT	CLOSING DATE 10.10.2020	1.05 CRORE	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xenmcpcl1@gmail.com

GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND NATIONAL HIGHWAY WING OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER NATIONAL HIGHWAY DIVISION, DHANBAD- 826001

NATIONAL BIDDING /e-Procurement Notice (2nd Call)

Tender Reference No:- NH/Dhanbad/02/2020-21

Dated :- 16.09.2020

Application in the prescribed format from eligible consultants for Request for Proposal (RFP) on Preparation of Feasibility cum Detailed Project Report are invited for the following Project

as detailed below:-

1	Name of Works	Consultancy Services for DPR Preparation of Giridih Bypass including Land Acquisition and Utility Shifting
3	Cost of document (Rs.)	Copy of online receipt of Non-refundable fee of Rs.10,000/- through NTPR portal- www.bharatkosh.gov.in towards payment of cost of bid document.
4	Bid Security (Rs.)	NA
5	Time of Completion	300 Days (Including rainy season)
6	Date of Issue of Notice	Date : 16.09.2020
7	Date of Publication of Tender on website	Date : 24.09.2020 at 11.30 AM
8	Last Date for Receiving Queries	Date : 06.10.2020 upto 11.30 AM
9	Pre-Bid Conference	Date : 06.10.2020 Time 11.30 Hrs Place: Office of the Chief Engineer, NH Wing, Jharkhand, Ranchi.
11	Application/Bid Due date	Date : 13.10.2020 upto 14.00 Hrs Through website : https://www.eprocure.gov.in only
12	Last date of submission of online challan and others documents in original	Date : 13.10.2020 upto 16.30 Hrs
13		Date : 13.10.2020 upto 17.00 Hrs in the office of the Chief Engineer, NH Wing, Jharkhand, Ranchi.
14	Authority & Place of opening of Bids	The Chief Engineer, NH Wing, Jharkhand, Ranchi in his office at Engineering Hostel, Sector-3, Dhurwa, Jharkhand, Ranchi.
15	Time & date of opening of bids	Date 14/10/2020 Time 15:30 Hrs Through website: https://www.eprocure.gov.in
16	Validity of bid	120 days from bid due date
17	Officer inviting bids	Executive Engineer, NH Division, Dhanbad
18	Contact no. of procurement officer	9430764524, 9431136074
19	Helpline no. of e-procurement cell	06512400863, 9934366707

Note:- Further details can be seen on website

(Amrendra Kumar Saha)

Executive Engineer

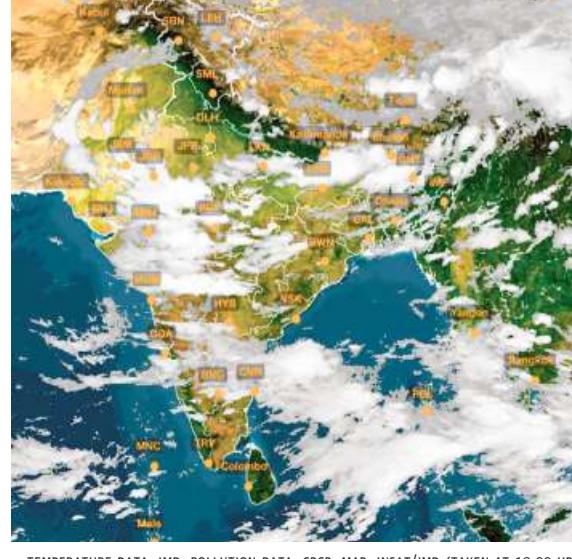
NH Division, Dhanbad

PR 232939(National Highway Authority of Jharkhand)20-21*D

Office of the Chief Engineer-cum-Executive Director

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 Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Bihar, west Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Marathwada, Konkan & Goa, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Telangana, coastal & north interior Karnataka, Kerala, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	1	34.4	25.9	Kozhikode	23.7	32.0	23.4
Ahmedabad	0.2	33.9	26.6	Kurnool	0.2	30.1	23.4
Aizawl	9	27.9	19.9	Lucknow	—	37.0	27.6
Allahabad	—	35.8	27.8	Madurai	—	36.7	24.2
Bengaluru	0.2	27.0	20.2	Mangalore	39.6	28.2	22.8
Bhopal	28.1	33.5	24.3	Mumbai	3.1	30.9	25.0
Bhubaneswar	3.5	32.7	26.9	Mysuru	8	29.0	19.8
Chandigarh	—	36.8	27.9	New Delhi	—	37.9	26.8
Chennai	—	32.4	27.0	Patna	19.8	—	26.6
Coimbatore	—	32.2	23.4	Pond Blair	—	29.6	24.6
Dehradun	—	32.7	25.8	Puducherry	—	34.8	26.8
Gangtok	41.7	19.9	17.7	Pune	—	29.5	22.8
Goa	10.3	30.0	23.7	Raipur	—	34.7	26.4
Guwahati	—	31.4	25.2	Ranchi	—	33.5	23.9
Hubballi	—	26.0	21.0	Shillong	3.5	24.1	18.3
Hyderabad	0.8	32.2	22.0	Shimla	—	28.0	20.0
Imphal	0.2	30.0	20.6	Srinagar	—	30.2	12.1
Jaipur	—	37.0	26.2	Thiruvananthapuram	2.9	30.7	24.2
Kochi	12.8	29.8	24.4	Tiruchi	—	35.8	25.2
Kohima	—	24.8	17.8	Vijayawada	—	33.4	27.1
Kolkata	19.3	33.0	27.0	Visakhapatnam	27.4	32.8	27.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	14	40	36	...36	58	■■■■■
Bengaluru	3	20	29	...37	68	■■■■■
Chennai	42	36	53	...64	■■■■■	■■■■■
Delhi	8	43	18	...167	221	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.6	51	26	...34	50	■■■■■
Kolkata	.8	19	12	...40	61	■■■■■
Lucknow	7	32	27	...185	151	■■■■■
Mumbai	24	19	18	...38	63	■■■■■
Pune	20	8	45	...16	17	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	.8	33	18	...35	41	■■■■■

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.

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

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

PM_{2.5} & 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

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bhawali, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 224, indicating unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Elor, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 12

Farmers fear end of MSP regime

Experts say new agri Bills could facilitate exploitation by big corporate houses

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

Farmers in Punjab and Haryana are up in arms against the Centre's agriculture-related Bills as they fear their enactment – one of these has already been passed in the Lok Sabha – would be a step towards the abolition of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime. Agriculture experts too share similar concerns that this could leave farmers vulnerable to possible exploitation at the hands of big corporate houses.

"The three farm-related Bills, which are all set to become law after being passed in the ongoing session of Parliament, are anti-farmer. The one on essential commodities removes all cereals, pulses, oilseeds, potato and onion from trade restrictions and price control – this will ultimately benefit only the middlemen and traders. Private players will buy the produce in harvest season, when prices are generally lower, and release it later when prices firm up. Small and marginal farmers will suffer the most as they depend immensely on the intermediaries to sell the produce," Jagmohan Singh, general secretary, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Dakauda) in Punjab, told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Singh claimed by doing away with the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act that facilitated procurement of the produce of farmers, the BJP government has given a free hand to private corporate houses to exploit the farmers. "After the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, which aims to open up agricultural marketing outside notified 'mandis' for farmers, now private companies will establish



Farmers taking out a protest rally against Central Bills in Patiala on Wednesday. ■ PTI

private 'mandis' on which there will be no government regulation," he said. The ramifications, he argued, is that all State bonuses on MSP and purchase and other protections will be lost. "Companies will benefit as trading rates will not be under pressure of government procurement and they will be able to force farmers to reduce their rates."

'Stir will be intensified'
Sarvan Singh Pandher of Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Samiti, which had been staging continuous sit-ins in Punjab since September 7 as a mark of protest against the Bills, said that they will be forced to intensify their stir if the Central government did not address their concerns.

"These Bills are a first step towards elimination of the MSP regime, which are in line with the recommendations of the Shanta Kumar committee, which had also suggested dismantling the MSP structure. It's clear that after implementing the recommendation on the Bills, now the discontinuation of

the MSP would follow," Mr. Pandher predicted.

Nirbhay Singh, president of the Kirti Kisan Union (Punjab), said that in the absence of any government security for farmers against possible manipulation, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, which creates a framework for contract farming through an agreement between a farmer and a buyer prior to production, would only result in exploitation of farmers. "Corporates will buy from farmer at cheap rates and sell at higher price to consumers," he said.

Rattan Mann, president of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (Tikait) in Haryana, said that the Central government needs to understand that these Bills in present shape would not benefit the farming community. "The government should promulgate another Bill making the MSP a statutory right of farmers," he said.

Lakhwinder Singh, an agriculture expert and a pro-

fessor of economics at Panjab University, Patiala, said once the foodgrain market is created outside the regulated market (APMC), then it's quite clear that there would be no MSP. "It is understood that when one is taking food outside the regulated market, and there is no regulation of that market, then MSP will not be applicable on that trade," he said.

'Don't stop traffic'
Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Wednesday appealed to farmers not to stop traffic or violate Section 144 in the State over the agricultural Bills.

He, however, made it clear that no cases would be registered against them for violation of Section 144 "as they are fighting for their lives".

"FIRs already registered against farmers protesting in violation of Section 144 would be withdrawn," said the Chief Minister, urging the farmers to take their protests to Delhi, at the doorstep of the Central government.

Bills will lead to unrest in Punjab: Amarinder

CM submits memorandum to Governor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Wednesday led a Congress delegation to submit a memorandum to Governor V.P. Singh Badnore seeking his intervention for non-purposse of the agriculture related Bills by the Centre in Parliament.

the Chief Minister later told journalists that the legislations would lead to rise in the people's anger. "Why are we playing into the hands of Pakistan?"

'Farmers will suffer'

"These Bills, one of which has already been passed in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, are against the national interest, and particularly detrimental to Punjab where the majority of the farmers tilled less than five acres and would be the worst hit," he said.

Hoping that the Centre will not get the other two passed in Parliament, he said the Centre had failed to take the interest of the farmers into account in introducing the ordinances and instead, took a stand in favour of corporate houses.

Hooda seeks special session of Assembly

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Leader of the Opposition and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said on Wednesday

the Congress would meet Governor Satyadev Narayan Arya soon to demand a "special session" of the Haryana Assembly to discuss the Centre's three agricultural Bills.

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT

Mr. N SELVA KUMAR

PH: 9820350726

selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in

THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

7 children died of encephalitis in 2020: Yogi

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Seven children died due to encephalitis in Uttar Pradesh in 2020 as against over 450 four years ago, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said.

In 2016, 466 children died in U.P. due to the Acute Encephalitis Syndrome and the Japanese Encephalitis, a government spokesperson said quoting Mr. Adityanath. In 2020, the figure came down to seven, the government claimed.

'Successful strategy'

This shows how successful the State government's strategy against vector-borne diseases has been, said Mr. Adityanath after an inter-departmental review meeting of vector-borne diseases.

In 2017, the BJP government soon after coming to power had come under fire after several children died in the Baba Raghav Das Medical College in Gorakhpur allegedly due to shortage of oxygen supply over payment of dues of the supplier.

The Special CBI court framed charges of criminal conspiracy against Mr. Advani and several other accused in 2017.

Babri demolition case verdict on September 30

All 32 accused told to appear in special CBI court that day

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The judgment in the Babri Masjid demolition case will be delivered by a Special CBI court here on September 30, almost 28 years after the structure in Ayodhya was razed to the ground. Special Judge S.K. Yadav has directed all the 32 accused to appear in court.

Among the accused are senior BJP leader and former Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani and his colleagues Murli Manohar Joshi, Uma Bharti, Kalyan Singh, Vinay Katiyar and Sadvi Rithambra. Mr. Singh was the Chief Minister of U.P. when Babri Masjid was demolished on December 6, 1992.

The Special CBI court was working against the month-end deadline set by the Supreme Court for the verdict. The final arguments by the defence and the prosecution were heard by September 1, and then the judge began writing the verdict. Some of the final submissions by the accused were made through videoconferencing. The CBI, which investigated the case, has produced 351 witnesses and about 600 documents as evidence before the court.

"I can't comment at this moment who will come and who will not," Mr. Mishra said. The CBI court was working against the month-end deadline set by the Supreme Court for the verdict. The final arguments by the defence and the prosecution were heard by September 1, and then the judge began writing the verdict. Some of the final submissions by the accused were made through videoconferencing. The CBI, which investigated the case, has produced 351 witnesses and about 600 documents as evidence before the court.

"The resettlement of the displaced Brus in Urehmpara area will affect the jhum

ED attaches assets worth ₹11.62 cr. in NH-74 case

Disbursal of excess compensation for land resulted in loss to exchequer

DEVESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached assets worth ₹11.62 crore in connection with the alleged disbursal of excess compensation to the people from whom land along the National Highway (NH) 74 in Uttarakhand was acquired. It resulted in a loss of ₹21.51 crore to the exchequer.



Stop press

Courts must avoid omnibus orders against publication without actual risk of prejudice

A blanket gag order against the media is often fraught with serious consequences for both free speech and the citizen's right to receive information. Orders by different courts, restraining the media from reporting on particular cases or programmes from being telecast, have drawn attention this week to questions of prior restraint, media freedom and the right of people facing investigation to a fair trial. A quite unusual and legally questionable decision has been the interim order of the Andhra Pradesh High Court imposing a ban on the media, and even social media, from mentioning anything in relation to an FIR filed by the police against a former Advocate General of the State and others. It is unusual in the sense that there appears to be no material to justify such censorship other than an allegation by the petitioner that it is a 'foisted' case. It is also accompanied by an order staying the investigation itself. It is indeed open to a High Court to grant a stay on investigation in extraordinary cases. When political vendetta is alleged against the government of the day, that too by someone who had served a previous regime as a law officer, the need for media coverage and public scrutiny is all the greater. How the petitioner would benefit from the complete absence of any reportage is unclear. It prevents legitimate comment even to the effect that there is no substance in the allegations.

Injunctions against publication can either be an order to prevent possible defamation or invasion of privacy, or one aimed at protecting the fairness of a trial or investigation. The Supreme Court did hold in *Sahara vs. SEBI* (2012) that the Court can grant preventive relief on a balancing of the right to free trial and a free press. However, it favoured such temporary restraint on publication "only in cases of real and substantial risk of prejudice" to the administration of justice or a fair trial. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court, on the same day, passed a more important interim order stopping the telecast of the remaining episodes of a series on Sudarshan News on entirely different grounds. Holding that the programme – four episodes were aired – was nothing but vilification of Muslims, the Court found it necessary to interdict the telecast of more episodes. The Court seems to have made a distinction between freedom of expression and propagation of hate. In recent years, there have been quite a few instances, especially in Karnataka, of omnibus interim injunctions against all media houses obtained by some people solely to prevent any news reporting about themselves. While claiming to be defamed by one publication, they sue all media outlets and obtain open-ended stay on publications, including those that are hardly interested in writing about them. As a matter of principle, courts ought to avoid omnibus orders against publication. Such orders are often to the detriment of the right to know.

New order in West Asia

Accords between Arab States and Israel can't bring peace without solving the Palestine issue

The so-called Abraham Accords, signed in the White House on Tuesday by the UAE, Bahrain and Israel, under U.S. President Donald Trump's mediation, clearly mark a new beginning in the relations between the Sunni-ruled Gulf kingdoms and the Jewish state. Under the agreement, the UAE and Bahrain would normalise ties with Israel, heralding better economic, political and security engagement. More Arab countries are expected to follow suit, say U.S. and Israeli officials. The agreements have the backing of Saudi Arabia, arguably the most influential Arab power and a close ally of the UAE and Bahrain. The ailing, octogenarian ruler of the Kingdom, Salman bin Abdulaziz, is treading cautiously for now, but Riyadh has opened its airspace for commercial flights between the UAE and Israel. The accords, the first between Israel and Arab countries since the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty, also offer a rare diplomatic win to Mr. Trump, whose other foreign policy bets, be it Iran or North Korea, were either disastrous or stagnant. With less than 50 days to go before his re-election bid, he has called the agreements "the new dawn of a new Middle East".

Though of historical and geopolitical significance, it is too early to say whether the accords will have any meaningful impact on West Asia's myriad conflicts. Unlike Egypt and Jordan, which signed peace treaties with Israel in 1979 and 1994, respectively, the Gulf countries are not frontline states in the Arab-Israeli conflict. They had established backroom contacts with Israel years ago; what is happening now is their normalisation. Second, the agreements leave the Palestinian question largely unaddressed. With Arab countries signing diplomatic agreements with Israel bilaterally, the Arab collective support for the Palestinian movement for nationhood, which has been the basis of the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, is crumbling. But it does not mean that the Palestinian question would fade away. The vacuum left by the retreat of the Arab powers from the Israel-Palestine conflict is being filled by the non-Arab Muslim powers – Iran, Turkey and their allies. The geopolitical sands may be shifting but the core issue concerning Israel is unresolved. Three, the UAE-Bahrain agreements are in fact endorsing the region's emerging order. With the U.S. in retreat and Turkey and Iran pursuing more aggressive foreign policies, there is a three-way contest taking shape, in which Sunni-ruled Arab kingdoms, all American allies, are realigning their geopolitical interests with Israel. The Abraham Accords are likely to sharpen this contest. If Mr. Trump and the signatories to the accords want to bring peace here as they have claimed, they should address the more structural issues, which include the unresolved question of Palestine.

Nationalism and the crisis of federalism

Unless the attack on coalescent, democratic nationalism is curbed, cracks might appear in a distinctive Indian project



RAJEEV BHARGAVA

Several Chief Ministers have recently complained about the growing crisis of Indian federalism. The central government backing out of its legal commitment to compensate for Goods and Services Tax (GST) shortfall is one ground for this complaint and just the tip of a dangerous iceberg. A deeper problem lies in a flawed understanding of nationalism and the government's disregard for democratic principles. Federalism can function only in the hands of those with a grasp of India's democratic nationalism. Both are indispensable and neither works properly without the other.

Three nationalisms

Two broad conceptions of nationalism developed in the subcontinent before India achieved Independence. The first, the idea that a community with a strongly unified culture must have a single state of its own, bifurcated into two nationalisms. One defined culture in *ethno-religious* terms and was articulated by the curiously similar Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. Hindus and Muslims were separate nations and needed states of their own. For the Hindu Mahasabha, Indian nationalism simply had to be Hindu nationalism. This primacy of Hindu identity potentially had adverse consequences not only for religious but also linguistic minorities, including those Hindus who viewed their mother tongue as important as their religion. For Hindu nationalists, Hindu identity permanently outweighed being Tamil or Punjabi.

The second manifestation of the same conception was articulated by sections of the Congress party which too saw the nation as defined by a common culture whose

adherents must have a state of their own. But this common culture was not ethno-religious. It was defined instead by shared historical experience, the struggle against British colonial rule, and developed through an interpretation of ideas emanating from different cultural sources. For want of a better term, call this second nationalism, *civic*. More inclusive than any ethno-religious nationalism, its secular, composite content is qualitatively different from Hindu or Muslim nationalisms.

However, surprisingly, its basic form is not unlike Hindu nationalism. It too conceives common culture in terms of a strong idea of unity that marginalises or excludes other particular identities. A civic Indian identity, shaped at best by a thin composite culture, trumps other public identities, including linguistic ones.

A third nationalism accepts that communities nourished by distinct, territorially concentrated regional cultures have the capacity to design states of their own as also educational, legal, economic, and other institutions. They possess self-governing rights. Yet, they eschew independent national aspirations, seeing themselves as constituents of a larger, equally significant common culture with another state that belongs to everyone. Indeed, they build on this shared culture and come together to consolidate the nation. Occasional conflicts between the common culture of the central state and distinct cultures of constituent states are admitted but mechanisms to prevent them are also created. This may be called a *coalescent* nationalism consistent with a fairly strong linguistic federalism; The central state associated with it is not multi-national. At best, it is a multi-national state without labels, one that does not call itself so; a self-effacing multi-national state.

Being linguistically federal

In the 1930s, all three conceptions circulated among political elites in



India. By the 1940s, however, coalescent nationalism was submerged by the other two. After Partition, India rejected ethno-religious nationalism but its ruling elites, obsessed about the dangers of further fragmentation, began to view with suspicion the political expression of even linguistic identities. No one was more uneasy with this than Jawaharlal Nehru himself who wondered if a federation structured along ethno-linguistic lines might tempt politicians to mobilise permanently on the basis of language and divert attention from issues of material well-being. Second, like religious identities, it might 'freeze' linguistic identities and increase the likelihood of inter-ethnic violence, encourage separatism and eventually lead to India's break up.

Thus, when the Constitution came into force in 1950, India adopted unitary, civic nationalism as its official ideology. Though a federal arrangement was accepted, the second tier of government was justified in functional terms not on ethical grounds of the recognition of group cultures. The security and unity of India were cited as the primary reason. A unitary mindset shaped by the experience of a centralised colonial state was resurrected and it seemed that the idea of a coalescent nationalism with multi-cultural federalism was lost forever. A special commission to examine this issue concluded that language-based provinces were 'not in the larger interests of the Indian nation'. Yet, another committee, that included Nehru considered the recommendations of the commission and felt that while 'the present is not an opportune moment for the formation of new provinces, if public sentiment is insistent and overwhelming, we, as

democrats must submit to it'.

Before long the unitary arrangement and the conception that underpinned it proved inadequate. The third nationalism on the backburner came right back into the game as India shifted its allegiance slowly to a system of states that rejected the wholesale absorption of ethnic identities into a larger civic identity. This happened when the fledgling Indian democratic state was forced to encounter mass politics. Demands for autonomy, for sharing political power were immediately made by regional leaders. The issue of linguistic States became the focus of popular agitation forcing the creation, in 1953, of the State of Andhra for Telugu-speaking people. Soon after, a commission to reorganise States on a linguistic basis was set up.

The committee argued that justice requires the creation of partially self-governing States that recognise all major linguistic groups. Besides, their creation improves administrative efficiency, deepens democracy, and alleviates anxieties of regional minorities induced by fear of linguistic domination. Since domination eventually invites resistance and conflict which undermines the nation-state, only federalism can block language-based majoritarianism, contain conflicts and strengthen Indian nationalism. Only coalescent nationalism creatively combines claims of unity with claims of recognition of diverse cultures. A robust democratic arena allows the play of complementary multiple identities, and through dialogue, discussion and negotiation, helps to resolve disputes.

Following the Committee's recommendations, States were reorganised in 1956. Soon mass agitation forced the division of the province of Bombay into Maharashtra and Gujarat. In 1966, Haryana was separated from Punjab to become an independent state. Much later, States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand were carved out. India slowly became a coalescent na-

tion-state, moving from the 'holding together' variety to what is called the 'coming together' form of (linguistic) federalism. This meant that regional parties were stronger than earlier in their own regions and at the centre. This sowed seeds of a more durable centre because it was grounded more on the consent and participation of regional groups that, at another level, were also self-governing. Indian federalism also attempted to remove its rigidities by incorporating asymmetries in the relation between the Centre and different States; treating all States as equals required the acknowledgement of their specific needs and according them differential treatment.

States as equals

This coalescent nationalism has served India well, benefiting several groups in India. True, it has not worked as well in India's border areas such as the North-east and Kashmir. But their problems can only be resolved by deepening not abandoning coalescent nationalism. Indeed, the Indian experience shows that whenever the Centre has been non-manipulative, treated politicians and people of regional States with respect, the entire polity works smoothly. On the other hand, whenever regions are treated disrespectfully, and norms of democratic functioning abandoned, then powerful, even violent, forces have been unleashed leading to grave instability.

The contemporary crisis of federalism is due to the attack on coalescent, democratic Indian nationalism by a conceptually limited and morally weak idea of Hindu nationalism. Unless this offensive is curbed, and these trends reversed, I fear we might begin to see major cracks in our distinctive nationalist project. That would be nothing short of disastrous for the Indian republic.

Rajeev Bhargava is Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi

Nicks to the Chinese strongman's image

Though no threat to Xi Jinping's authority, developments in China's domestic security landscape reveal systemic fissures



SHIKHA AGGARWAL

Domestic security constitutes an integral dimension within the strategic-security dynamics of states. However, for authoritarian regimes and political ideologies, where power flows from the barrel of the gun, the concept transcends this traditional role and becomes a tool of both political survival and power for the top leadership. As such, it becomes crucial for authoritarian leaders to exert absolute command over the domestic security apparatus of the state.

It is in this context that the recent downfall, in China, of top security officials on corruption charges and the creation of a new 'small leading group' assume significance. At the very outset, they reflect Chinese President Xi Jinping's perceived vulnerabilities and one of Beijing's primary socio-political dilemmas.

Targets of anti-graft drive

In addition to sanctioning an aggressive foreign policy posture and military assertiveness in China's various sovereignty disputes, Mr. Xi announced his post-COVID-19 blitzkrieg at the domestic scene by once again launching an attack on the so-called 'tigers' through his anti-corruption campaign. Among others, one of the prominent officials facing corruption charges is the former Vice-Minister of Public Security, Sun Li Jun. This makes Sun the third vice-ministerial level official be-

longing to China's Ministry of Public Security to have fallen in recent years since the arrests of Meng Hongwei and Li Dongsheng in 2018 and 2016, respectively. Notably, Meng was serving as the president of the Lyon-based Interpol at the time of his arrest.

In addition to his high-profile status, Sun's arrest is significant as he led the ministry's First Bureau which deals with the sensitive issues of domestic security and Hong Kong affairs. Other top security officials facing corruption charges are the police chiefs of major provinces such as Shanghai (Gong Daoan) and Chongqing (Deng Huilin).

The arrest of Deng Huilin once again highlights the challenge of Chongqing that Mr. Xi first dealt with in the form of the infamous Bo Xilai scandal which involved an alleged coup attempt against the Chinese President shortly after he had assumed office. Chongqing has become one of the primary targets of the anti-corruption campaign, with several high-ranking officials having fallen under the corruption net over the years.

Challenges from within

The arrests of Meng, Sun and Deng follow Mr. Xi's struggles with the security establishment that began with the downfall of the former public security czar and Politburo Standing Committee member, Zhou Yongkang back in 2014. Though information remains sketchy, it is widely believed that Sun, Meng and Li were close to Zhou who himself was regarded as a prominent member of the 'Shanghai Clique' – the powerful faction of the Chinese Communist Party led by its patriarch and former President Jiang Zemin. Analysed from this perspective,



Mr. Xi seems to continue to face challenges from the fragments of a faction that had once catapulted him to the helm of China's politics, but has since then become one of his primary targets in the quest for supremacy.

At one level, these cases serve to highlight the depth of the corruption malice within the Chinese Communist Party; they also point towards the ever-increasing efforts by Mr. Xi to exercise absolute authority over China's domestic security apparatus; hence, they reveal a possible challenge facing his meticulously crafted and deftly marketed 'all powerful' image. In fact, as has been noted by prominent China watchers, a 2015 article (by Xinhua) listed the domestic security forces as one of the 12 most frequently used phrases by Mr. Xi during his first two years in office.

Planned events

Another move that underscores Mr. Xi's renewed efforts to control the domestic security machinery is the launch of a nationwide campaign to "rectify education" for politicians and law enforcement officials. The aim is to "scrape the poison of the bones" of the country's political and legal systems under the aegis of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission (CPLC), China's apex body dealing with law enforcement and public security. This campaign will run from next year to the first quarter

of 2022. A pilot programme will be tried in select regions between July and October this year. Interestingly, 2022 is the year when the CPC is slated to hold its 20th Party Congress. This will perhaps be one of the most important political events in China's recent history as it will decide Mr. Xi's political fate and the continuation of his direct or indirect influence (via an all loyalist politburo) over the country.

Additionally, the commission has announced plans to use technological advancements such as blockchain, artificial intelligence and big data to help monitor its police officers and judges.

In conjunction with this campaign, a new body called the Safe China Construction Coordinating Small Group has been established with the CPLC Secretary, Guo Shengkun, serving as its helm. This group has been tasked with tackling the emerging challenges to the country's social and political stability. It is worth noting that during a Politburo Standing Committee meeting in February, Mr. Xi had characterised the coronavirus pandemic as a major test for China's governance system, with implications for the country's social stability.

In fact, these new measures have come amid growing international chorus against China's policies in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, the South China Sea, and in China's territorial dispute with India. On the domestic front, Mr. Xi has faced rare public criticism from individuals such as Xu Zhangrun, a (now former) professor at Tsinghua University (incidentally, the President's alma mater) and fellow 'princelings' or the 'second generation reds' such as Ren Zhiqiang and Cai Xia. Confronted with an increasingly complex internation-

al and domestic scenario, it is no coincidence that Mr. Xi wants to keep a tight rein on the security establishment of the Chinese Party-state.

Shuffling the deck

While these latest moves are to a great extent governed by Mr. Xi's assessment of China's (and his own) present vulnerabilities, they nevertheless complement his efforts since assuming power to bring the domestic security front under his supreme control. A key initiative in this regard was the restructuring of the People's Armed Police (PAP) command structure in 2017-18. Prior to 2018, the PAP had a dual command structure wherein it used to report both to the state Council and the Central Military Commission (CMC). With the restructuring, the PAP now operates under the sole command of the CMC, and thereby its Chairman, Mr. Xi. Furthermore, Mr. Xi has created at least two new institutions to streamline, better integrate and oversee China's domestic security apparatus in the form of the Central National Security Commission and the National Supervision Commission. These bodies were established in 2013 and 2018, respectively. However, not much information is available regarding the exact nature, role and activities of these institutions.

On closer scrutiny, the recent developments within China's domestic security landscape may not point towards a significant threat to Mr. Xi's authority. They nonetheless provide a glimpse into the existing fissures within the Chinese system.

Shikha Aggarwal is a Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan Fellow at the National Chengchi University

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.

Chinese buildup

The shocking news of the massive deployment of Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control is also characteristic of a nation with a double face and which frequently violates past agreements (Page 1, "China has massively deployed troops along LAC, says Rajnath", September 16). The

counter-deployment of Indian troops at friction points can be the only befitting response at the moment though it cannot take us anywhere near the solution. The government has taken the right stand, based on national security reasons, to turn down the Opposition's demand for a discussion. Exercising extreme caution and

keeping defence secrets under wraps are wise.

N. VISVESWARAN, Chennai

Entrance examinations
I am taken aback by reports of suicides – of students, anticipating failure in their selection for medical courses. There are only 76,928 medical seats in India, whereas 15.93 lakh

applications have been received for NEET 2020. Obviously, 95% of aspirants have to necessarily look elsewhere. They should understand this and be prepared to move on in life, irrespective of the results.

I cite another example. There were only 896 vacancies in the Indian civil services, for 2019, with nearly 15 lakh applicants. But the multitude who did not succeed moved on.

Perhaps it has to do with the fact that the IAS applicant is old enough to understand the realities of life. Hence it is imperative that parents, teachers and the general public counsel youngsters and widen their eyes to the many other opportunities that beckon

in life. The Madras High Court is right that such incidents should not be glorified. On a personal note, I have seen many persons, who, though sad that they did not get a medical seat, eventually do much better in life.

ISRAEL K. MANI, Wellington Barracks, The Nilgiris

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



To the brink and back in Ladakh

At the heart of China's actions lies a historical strategy that India needs to address with great tact



ARJUN SUBRAMANIAM

Realists within India have always argued that the People's Republic of China (PRC) only deals in the currency of power and brushes aside liberal and moralistic underpinnings to negotiations in every realm. Whether the recent talks between India's External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, and China's Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, will yield any major dividends, or whether it will be another elaborate smokescreen laid by China, is anybody's guess.

A recent editorial in the pro-government *Global Times* in Beijing has put out a clarion call for the people of China to be prepared for 'war with neighbours', without specifically mentioning India. Presently, this was put out after the Jaishankar-Wang Yi talks and included a reference to the moral conduct of war.

Not often have the Indians realised that at the heart of the PRC's strategy to manage its periphery was another fault line in history. Often referred to as Mao's 'Five Finger Strategy,' the strategy has continuously sought to reassess control over Arunachal Pradesh, or what the PRC calls 'Southern Tibet', Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal and Ladakh, as part of an effort to secure China's periphery. This has turned into a Chinese obsession that has destabilised South Asia. It can now be argued that despite being surprised and having had to reckon with a successful PLA operation to change the status quo in several pockets across the LAC in Ladakh, India's refusal to buckle under pressure has given the PLA and Xi Jinping much to think of.

The spontaneous and violent response of the Indian Army during the Galwan clash of June 15, and the well-planned and executed operation to tactically occupy important heights on both the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso have demonstrated a wide spectrum of capabilities and intent on India's part. While these have not resulted in any gains on the ground, the PLA remains entrenched in 'grey areas' and has been



Hills and lows: Indian soldiers at the foothills of a mountain range near Leh on June 24. ■ FILE PHOTO

forced to pause and mull over its future actions on the ground, giving India time to build up for the winter and prepare for the long haul.

Some analysts believe that an escalation of some kind seems inevitable, and that it is imperative that the series of meetings at various levels do not infuse a sense of hope that rapprochement is around the corner, unless it is accompanied by a visible change on the ground. Others who have served in the area and observed the trajectory of the PLA build-up argue that there is no way that the deployments, dense as they may be, are enough to support even a localised skirmish. Adding to the difficulties of the PLA in any further operations is the widely accepted military proposition that uphill attacks to dislodge entrenched defenders from the kind of heights now occupied by the Indian Army would require overwhelming force ratios of upwards of 9:1. If one looks back at the heavy losses suffered by the Indian Army during their initial assaults in the Kargil conflict, one may wonder whether the PLA has the appetite to deal with such losses.

Measured approach

A 'hot' LAC will favour the PLA with its greater reserves and will test India to its limits. It is the worst option that India must prepare for, even more

than a localised and limited conflict. The latter is a situation that the PLA wants to avoid as it has already achieved several operational outcomes by adopting elaborate coercive methods short of conflict. Hence, the only body language that must go out from the Indian armed forces at present is that it is more than prepared for a limited conflict.

Of greater significance will be a realisation within the PLA leadership that India's emerging combined arms firepower has the potential to inflict significant attrition on the PLA's combat potential in and around the tactical battle area and in medium depth on the Tibetan plateau. This may be coupled with a realisation that in its obsession with learning from the lessons of the 1991 Gulf War, the PLA may have missed out on thinking more about high altitude warfare, something that the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force have gained much experience in over the decades.

There is also a realisation that the Indian Navy's assertive maritime posturing, its willingness to join collaborative groupings to contain an aggressive PLA Navy, and increasing articulation on the need to ensure freedom of navigation reflects a growing willingness on India's part to 'go out and meet an adversary' on the high seas rather than stay in the

backwaters. The biggest stumbling block to rapprochement between the two countries lies within the PLA, which has seriously intellectualised its role as the sword-arm of Chinese national power. It has assiduously developed plans to take down adversaries and rolled out its playbook with a multi-front strategy that will run its course. History looms large again, as the PLA was Mao's principal instrument against Chiang Kai Shek in the late 1940s as he sought to forge a new identity for the Chinese people. This time around, after shaping the global environment with economic muscle, Xi Jinping is now using the PLA as a vanguard in his bid to narrow the gap further with China's principal global competitor, the U.S. India would do well not to become collateral damage in this great power competition.

While diplomatic initiatives and further coercive explorations in the economic domain must continue, pragmatism and realism suggest that in the short-term, it is India's military resolve that offers the most potential for precipitating any kind of conflict mitigation. Several practitioners feel that the current face-off will only be resolved if the PLA is offered a face-saving proposition, and that would need some deft politico-military-diplomatic manoeuvring from India.

What of a fresh boundary agreement with China following this face-off? Two trajectories seem possible. The first will involve a path of least resistance that brings into play a new paradigm and fresh protocol for managing a stressed but not a 'hot' LAC - much like 'old wine in a new bottle.' The second would entail a stroke of 'enlightened statesmanship' that sees both President Xi Jinping and PM Modi cut through much of the clutter to reach a 'swap deal,' the kinds of which are said to have been proposed by Zhou Enlai in 1959 and Deng Xiaoping in the early 1990s. For Xi, it would mean having to get around an increasingly assertive PLA, while PM Modi would need to get around fractured and jingoistic constituencies across the political spectrum that still hold on to impossible historical probabilities.

Arjun Subramaniam is a retired Air Vice Marshal from the IAF, a historian and the author of the forthcoming 'Full Spectrum: India's Wars 1972-2020'

than a localised and limited conflict.

Pandemic and a free press

India must return to its democratic values to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak effectively



JOEL SIMON

leading information can undermine public health and efforts to fight the pandemic. And the damage to the Indian economy caused by the disease itself and the precipitous national lockdown in March has inflicted tremendous pain on families across the nation.

The Modi government needs to deploy the full arsenal of tools available in a democracy to confront the challenge. This means presenting a clear and credible plan to the people for tackling COVID-19, and using persuasion, arguments, evidence and reason to rally their support. It means unleashing the innovation and entrepreneurship of the Indian business community that has fuelled the country's rapid growth. It means encouraging debate and competition of ideas that drive political solutions. And it means combating misinformation through aggressive public information campaigns, not raw censorship.

The democratic world is rooting for India's success. While Chinese censorship helped fuel the original outbreak in Wuhan by suppressing information about the spread of the novel coronavirus, the Chinese government has used its propaganda networks to cover up its initial failures and shape global perceptions. China has made the case



that its system of authoritarian power was essential for controlling the pandemic. It contrasts the giant poll parties in Wuhan, where life has largely returned to normal, with the chaotic response in democratic countries like the United States, Brazil, and India.

Not surprisingly, the Chinese government's narrative has resonated with authoritarian governments around the world that have used a public health emergency to restrict civil liberties and increase State surveillance and control. Even in democracies, citizens are beginning to wonder if liberty and freedom must be sacrificed to fight the disease. The U.S., grappling with its own shortcomings and political dysfunction, has not effectively made the case that democracy is an asset and not a liability in fighting a public health emergency.

India has long been a leader and an example in the democratic world, but its response to the pandemic has weakened its position. In order to restore its lustre, India's leaders need to express confidence in democratic principles and trust in the country's citizens. That starts with a commitment to a free press.

Joel Simon is the executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists

Beyond the barriers of disability

The differently-abled community offers a vast potential that can be tapped with the right steps

ERIC FALT

force. Those with mental disabilities, women with disabilities and those in rural areas are the most neglected.

Worst-hit group

As is the case with most crises, the COVID-19 pandemic has had its worst impact on marginalised communities. For instance, students with disabilities have found it extremely difficult to access remote learning through digital platforms. The UNESCO's 2019 State of the Education Report of India acknowledges that inclusive education is complex to implement and requires a fine understanding of the diverse needs of children and their families across different contexts. India has made considerable progress in terms of putting in place a robust legal framework and a range of programmes that have improved enrolment rates of children with disabilities in schools. However, further measures are needed to ensure quality education for every child to achieve the targets of Agenda 2030, and more specifically, the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goal 4.

Globally, UNESCO joined its partners in the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network to raise awareness about the need to put in place strategies to mitigate the impact of school closures on learners with disabilities. The implementation of the ground-breaking National Education Policy 2020 provides a historic opportunity to utilise the immense potential.

Two of the most celebrated icons of music, Stevie Wonder and Andrea Bocelli, and star Indian para-athlete Deepa Malik have already set the tone for making inclusion the norm. With the right investments, youth with disabilities in India can also be the country's largest asset. The pandemic has shown us that we are only as healthy as our neighbour. It has exposed the large cracks of inequality, urging us to ponder over our responsibilities towards each other. Let us use this time as a catalyst for change and work together to ensure that all persons with disabilities enjoy the full range of human rights.

Eric Falt is the director, UNESCO New Delhi and UNESCO representative to Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka



DATA POINT

Course preference

Engineering continues to be the most popular professional course in the country, according to a recently released report*, with southern States recording the highest takers for the course. However, vocational studies was preferred over engineering by male students in rural areas. A higher share of women preferred medicine, compared to males.

By The Hindu Data Team

ALL-INDIA COURSE-WISE % SPLIT OF STUDENTS PURSUING TECHNICAL/PROFESSIONAL COURSES

OBSERVATIONS | The table below shows that one in two urban males pursued engineering, while in rural areas a higher share of males were enrolled in vocational studies compared to engineering. Among female students, medicine was the second-most popular after engineering. In the southern States, except in Kerala, and the industrialised States of Maharashtra and Gujarat, a high proportion of students were enrolled in engineering. Vocational courses saw a higher share of takers in States such as Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Jammu and Kashmir had the highest share of students pursuing medicine, with Rajasthan at a distant second

Type	Engineering	Vocational studies	Medicine
Males	41.5	20	4.9
Urban males	51.5	11	5.9
Rural males	30.1	30.3	3.8
Females	28.1	6.4	13.7
Urban females	33.5	3.7	16.7
Rural females	20	10.3	9.1
All-India	36.9	15.2	7.9
Urban areas	44.8	8.3	9.9
Rural areas	26.8	24	5.5

COURSE-WISE % SPLIT OF STUDENTS PURSUING TECHNICAL/PROFESSIONAL COURSES IN MAJOR STATES^

State	Engineering	Vocational studies	Medicine
J&K	15.1	9.5	34.8
Himachal	11.8	30.9	10.7
Punjab	30.9	11.6	6.9
Delhi	27.9	2.4	6.7
Haryana	20.4	29.6	10.5
Uttarakhand	25.6	24.1	9.9
U.P.	22.2	16	5.3
W.B.	26.2	9.3	10.2
Jharkhand	20	37.7	8.8
Bihar	6.1	58	1.3
Odisha	32	17.5	2.5
Rajasthan	16.6	19.9	18.5
Gujarat	38.7	19	6.8
Maharashtra	46.2	11	7.5
Chhattisgarh	35	7.7	6.7
M.P.	26.9	16.3	4.9
A.P.	55	10	4.3
T.N.	58.2	8.2	8.2
Telangana	56.1	8.8	6.9
Karnataka	48	21.1	5.9
Kerala	23.7	15.5	11.6

* Household social consumption on education in India (July 2017 - July 2018). ^Other professional courses not considered

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 17, 1970

'What happens if Govt. is toppled?'

Mr. M. Karunanidhi, Chief Minister, to-day [September 16, Tiruchi] asked Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, founder-leader of the Swatantra Party, to clarify what would happen if Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Government was toppled at the Centre as desired by him. In a press statement, Mr. Karunanidhi wanted Rajaji to tell him what kind of a Government would be formed and who would be the "fortunate" person to become the new Prime Minister. Would Rajaji "unhesitatingly" accept the responsibility of taking over the Prime Ministership, or would Mr. Kamaraj be made Prime Minister, he asked. Mr. Karunanidhi desired to know whether Rajaji thought that a new Parliament would be elected or the President would "rule" till 1972. Would Rajaji accept Presidential rule till 1972, he asked. Even if elections to Parliament were held in 1971 itself, elections to the Assemblies would have to be held in 1972. This would result in both the Government and the people being preoccupied with elections for the next two years. Did Rajaji want this, he asked. In future also, the two elections would be held in alternate years, he pointed out.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 17, 1920

The Meston Award
(From an editorial)

The text of the second report from the Joint Select Committee on the Rules under the Government of India Act is now available. It shows that the amendments made by the Committee in regard to the Meston Award are far less satisfactory than what Reuter led us to believe. The provincial share in the income-tax is not to be 25 per cent of the gross revenue estimated to accrue from the income-tax and super-tax collected by the provincial agency, as we were originally led to suppose. It would appear that the India Council suggested some modifications, and we are told that accepting the more important of these suggestions the Committee are of opinion "that there should be granted to all provinces some share in the growth of revenue from taxation on income so far as that growth is attributable to an increase in the amount of income assessed." The manner in which this share is to be assessed and its extent "are stated in the new Rule 15 which the Committee have inserted, and it may be explained here that the figure 400 lakhs in that rule represents approximately 25 per cent of the gross revenue estimated to accrue from income-tax and super-tax collected by provincial agency in the year 1920-21."

FROM PAGE ONE

Russia inks pact to test, supply Sputnik V vaccine

The latter will manufacture 100 million doses of the vaccine, of which reportedly half will be for India.

On August 11, the Sputnik V vaccine, developed by the Gamaleya National Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, was registered by the Ministry of Health of Russia and became the world's first registered vaccine against COVID-19 based on the human adenoviral vectors platform. Detailed information on the vaccine, the technological platform of human adenoviral vectors, and other details are available at sputnikvaccine.com

On September 4, a research paper on the results of Phase I and Phase II clinical trials of the vaccine was published in *The Lancet*, a peer-reviewed international medical journal, demonstrating no serious adverse effects and a stable immune response in 100% of the participants. Post-registration clinical trials involving 40,000 volunteers are currently on. More than 55,000 volunteers had applied to take part in the trials. The first results are expected to be published in October-November.

China rebuts Rajnath, says India violated pacts

Rajnath Singh

in preparation for the worst."

While the alert level had now been lowered, the source told the paper "it could be reinstated if circumstances changed".

"The level can be decided by troops on the border, as happened before the 1987 skirmish, when it was adjusted several times," the newspaper reported.

97 people died on board Shramik Specials: govt.

"51 post-mortem reports have been received from respective State police so far, in which reasons for deaths have been shown as cardiac arrest/heart disease/brain haemorrhage/pre-existing chronic disease/chronic lung disease/chronic liver disease etc," he said. The Minister said policing on the Railways is a State subject

Discrepancies in two sets of COVID-19 data in T.N.

A health worker taking samples to test for COVID-19 in Chennai.

consistencies that might have crept into the data collected in the particular format.

The control room run by the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine (DPH) is the nerve centre when it came to notifiable diseases, he said, adding that it collected data at the patient-level directly from labs and through proper reporting channels from hospitals and other institutions. This was further cross-checked at multiple levels to remove duplications, he explained.

Pointing out that this was the sacrosanct and accurate data, he said that the [contentious] numbers on admissions on the other hand, available in the internal report, are not collected at the patient-level, but as total numbers. He said the internal report was basically prepared for decision-makers, primarily to give an indication on the availability of hospital beds and not for the number of COVID-19 cases.

Health Secretary Radhakrishnan ruled out under-reporting or staggered reporting of COVID-19 data. By way of explanation, he attributed the mismatch to possible duplications or other minor in-

"We have long neglected data in our health management system. For instance, we have never counted tuberculosis or diphtheria properly. The exception was polio as we had a goal of zero," he said, adding that COVID-19 has once again stressed the importance to be given to public health.

Arguing that the State was forthcoming and transparent on COVID-19 data, he highlighted that the media bulletin even gave specific details on every death.

Kerala reports a new high of 3,830 cases

Testing rises in A.P. as trend of lower infection rate holds; over 9,700 test positive in Karnataka; Telangana adds 2,273 cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

of whom 28 were in Thiruvananthapuram.

The State capital marked a new high in daily cases at 675. Of these, all except five were locally acquired infections.

While 75,013 samples were tested in Andhra Pradesh on Tuesday, the State reported less than 10,000 new infections a day later. The lower test positivity rate held good for the sixth day.

Overall, the tally inched closer to the six-lakh mark, with 8,835 new infections, at 5,92,760 and the death toll rose with 64 more fatalities on Wednesday, Health Department data said. There were 90,279 persons under treatment. The overall test positivity rate so far was 12.33% and single day positivity rate for the previous day was 11.78%. Tests per million ratio was 90,016.

East Godavari reported another single-day high in

Desperate measures

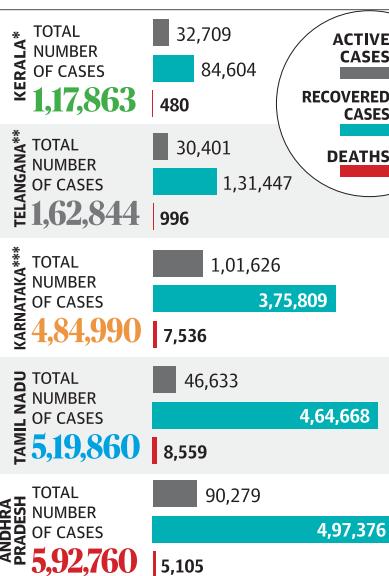
With COVID-19 cases on the rise, the States have gone all out to test as many people as they can. The graphs show the spread of the pandemic in the southern States



The only way out: A health worker collecting samples from a mobile COVID-19 testing bus at a hospital in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

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

**Karnataka has 19 non-COVID-19 deaths



on Wednesday. Active cases touched 1,01,626, of which 818 patients were in ICUs.

The number of deaths were down at 70 on Wednesday. Bengaluru Urban reported 3,571 cases and 27 of the 70 deaths. Also, 70,981 tests were conducted including 34,336 rapid antigen tests.

Telangana recorded 2,273 cases on Tuesday. While 55,636 samples were tested, results of 883 were awaited. With 12 more deaths on Tuesday, the toll stood at 996. New cases included 325 from Greater Hyderabad.

A total of 5,652 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. This took the State's overall tally of cases to 5,19,860. As of date, a total of 46,633 persons were under treatment in the State.

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

new infections at 1,421 and three new deaths.

A day after non-cooperation by Karnataka Government Medical Officers' Association (KGMOA) affected

reporting of COVID-19 cases, Karnataka on Wednesday reported 9,725 cases.

Nearly 4,900 government doctors had from Tuesday stopped submitting reports

including those on COVID-19 seeking pay revision. On Tuesday, 7,576 cases were recorded

However, discharges were not reported from 17 districts

SC seeks response to plea on airports

Deliberate omission to install fail-safe system at vulnerable airports alleged

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court asked the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to respond to a plea that there was a "deliberate omission" for years to install a fail-safe system to stop aircraft from overshooting runways at vulnerable airports such as Mangalore and Kozhikode.

A three-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad A. Bobde issued notice to the Ministry and the DGCA on a writ petition filed by Delhi resident Rajen Mehta, represented by advocate Shohit Chaudhry.

Mr. Mehta sought the installation of the Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS) in at-risk airports



An Air India Express flight skidded off the runway while landing in Kozhikode in August. ■ AP

across the country, especially Kozhikode and Mangaluru. He said the EMAS could have averted the tragic Mangalore air crash of 2010 and the recent one in Kozhikode. Timely installation could

have saved lives and crores of rupees in aircraft loss.

"The existence of EMAS was brought to the knowledge of Air Authority of India (AAI) and the respondents [DGCA and Civil

Aviation Ministry] in 2008. However, for no plausible reason, it has not been installed till date. During this time, the aviation industry has seen two horrific incidents at Mangalore and Calicut causing loss of hundreds of lives, which could have been saved by the timely action of the respondents," the petition said. EMAS was installed in approximately 125 airports across the world, it pointed out.

Mr. Mehta also sought an Inquiry into the delay in installing EMAS despite specific knowledge about the vulnerability of the Mangalore and Kozhikode airports.

He said criminal action should be initiated against the officials responsible for the delay.

Kerala to cut salaries of govt. staff for 6 more months

Pay deducted for COVID-19 fight to be merged with PF

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

the expenses for the COVID-19 fight, in the Provident Fund (PF), on April 1, 2021.

"The amount merged in the PF can be withdrawn by the employees from June 1, 2021 and will be given 9% annual interest till it is deposited in the PF on April 1, 2021. This is to avoid the ₹2,500 crore additional burden to the exchequer if the deducted amount is returned now," a communication from the Chief Minister's Office said.

The Cabinet decided to extend the salary cut for another six months from September after holding discussions with recognised unions of government employees and teachers. The initiative will be known as the COVID-19 Income Sup-

port Scheme. It will also attract 9% annual interest till it is merged with the PF on April 1, 2021.

For pensioners without PF, the deducted money will be returned after June 2021 in equal monthly installments. Leave surrender, frozen now, will be merged with PF and will be allowed from September, but the money can be withdrawn only from June 1, 2021. In the next financial year, leave surrender will be allowed only from June 1, 2021.

Leave without pay that is available for 20 years has been reduced to five years. The practice of reporting posts after the employee goes on leave for 90 days has been scrapped.

Cabinet officials questioned the star couple separately and recorded their statements before allowing them to leave.

"We have questioned them in detail, but they will be summoned for further enquiry at a later date," said Sandeep Patil, Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime).

Drug probe: actors quizzed

Aindrita Ray, Diganth Manchale appear before CCB officials

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

CCB

Central Crime Branch (CCB) officials on Wednesday questioned actor-couple Aindrita Ray and Diganth Manchale for over four hours to ascertain their possible roles in the drug racket involving the Kannada film industry. Their names cropped up during the course of the investigation with alleged links to Sheikh Faazil, one of the accused who is absconding, said the police.

CCB officials questioned the star couple separately and recorded their statements before allowing them to leave.

"We have questioned them in detail, but they will be summoned for further enquiry at a later date," said Sandeep Patil, Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime).

"The couple also admitted to attending some of the parties, but denied having

knowledge of drug use," an official said.

African national held

Meanwhile, the CCB arrested an African national, Bernald Udenna, for allegedly selling drugs at parties attended by the elite, including film stars. One of the people arrested in the case was in contact with him.

IN BRIEF

In focus: Aindrita Ray and Diganth speaking to mediapersons after appearing before the CCB. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Kerala govt. eases norms for migrants

Asymptomatic workers who have tested positive will be allowed to work now



Back to work: Workers who arrive in Kerala need to undergo quarantine for 14 days. ■ THULASI KAKKAT

14-day quarantine. The contractor should provide individual rooms which are safe and hygienic. Workers who arrive in the State without the COVID-19 test certificate will have to undergo an antigen test on the fifth day. The contractor should bear the cost of the test.

Follow protocol

Workers who test negative should follow the COVID-19 protocol. They should not mix with the public and should remain confined to the work site and place of accommodation. All guest/specialised/essential workers entering the State should register on the covid19jagratha portal well in advance and obtain clearance before they reach the entry points to the State.

Miscreants damage Sai Baba idol in A.P.

Unidentified persons reportedly damaged the idol of Sri Shirdi Sai Baba on a temple premises on Wednesday. The miscreants damaged the idol in a temple in Nidamanuru, sources said. Activists of the BJP staged a protest over the alleged desecration.

Tirupati MP Balli Durgaprasad dead

TIRUPATI
Balli Durgaprasad Rao, Member of Parliament representing the Tirupati (SC) Lok Sabha constituency, died while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, on Wednesday.

IN BRIEF



Kalyan Singh discharged from Lucknow hospital

LUCKNOW
Former U.P. Chief Minister Kalyan Singh, who had been undergoing treatment at Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences here after testing positive for COVID-19, was discharged on Wednesday on his family's request. The 88-year-old leader had no fever and was normal at the time of discharge, the hospital said in a bulletin.

Virus test at airport for international passengers

NEW DELHI
The government has allowed RT-PCR testing at the airport of entry on a pilot basis to facilitate the transfer of international passengers. Airports will set up sample collection-cum-waiting lounges. Passengers can wait for the results or proceed to a hotel nearby for isolation until the result is known. The tests can be booked online, according to information shared in the Rajya Sabha by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Hardeep Puri.

SC orders fresh probe into law student's death

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered fresh investigation into the mysterious death of a third-year student of National Law University, Jodhpur, three years ago. A Bench, led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman, set aside the closure report filed by the Rajasthan police into the death of 21-year-old Vikrant Nagaich in August 2017. The student's mother, represented by advocate Sunil Fernandes, had sought a CBI probe to solve the "mystery of the unnatural death" of her son.

No infiltration along China border: Centre

Rajya Sabha told that no incidents reported in last 6 months

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government on Wednesday informed the Rajya Sabha that "no infiltration has been reported along the India-China border in the last six months".

BJP MP Anil Agarwal asked in a written question whether it was a fact that cases of infiltration from Pakistan and China had increased in the last six months. Minister of State for Home Nitayand Rai said in a written reply that since February, there had been 47 cases of infiltration bids along the India-Pakistan border. Regarding China, he said that no infiltration had been reported in the last six months.



There were 47 cases of infiltration bids along the Indo-Pak. border

NITAYAND RAI
Minister of State for Home

wan clash on June 15 claimed the lives of 20 Indian soldiers.

On Tuesday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh informed the Lok Sabha that China had mobilised a large number of troops and armaments along the LAC as well as in the "depth areas". He said the LAC was not commonly delineated.

In early May, the Chinese side took action to hinder the traditional patrolling pattern of Indian troops in the Galwan valley area, causing a face-off.

Mr. Singh pointed out there were several friction areas in eastern Ladakh, including Gogra, Kongka La and the north and south banks of Pangong Tso lake.

'Govt. was slow to react on COVID-19'

Opposition leaders say attention was being given to Trump visit instead

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In the first discussion on the COVID-19 pandemic in Parliament, Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha accused the government of being slow to react because of U.S. President Donald Trump's visit and imposing an all-round lockdown without due preparations.

Congress's deputy leader in the House Anand Sharma opened the debate by questioning the government's claim that the lockdown imposed on March 26 saved the spread of COVID-19 to 14-29 lakh persons.

"The House must be informed as to what is the scientific basis on which we have reached this conclusion that but for the sudden lockdown, the number of cases could have risen by 29 lakh. The day the lockdown was



Point by point: Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien was among those who took the government to task. •RSTV/PTI

imposed, there were 600 cases. But, as we are discussing this subject, there are 50 lakh cases and almost 82,000 deaths. This is the true picture," he said.

The government's claim that the death rate was one of the lowest in the world was also false, as neighbouring countries Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka

had reported fewer deaths. The abiding image of migrant workers trudging back to their homes on highways was what the world saw, he stated.

Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien said there was a need to understand the chronology of events. The first COVID-19 case was found in India on January

30. "What was happening on February 24? Donald Trump was visiting India and was being hosted," he recalled.

DMK's Tiruchi Siva, too, charged the government with a delay in imposing the lockdown because of Mr. Trump's visit. Samajwadi Party's Ravi Prakash Verma said Indian airports were not closed just to oblige Mr. Trump. He alleged that whenever Mr. Trump's entourage went in Delhi, Ahmedabad and Agra, the places became a hotspot.

Congress Chief Whip Jairam Ramesh expressed his disappointment in a tweet, "Deeply disappointing that Members were not allowed to speak fully on the COVID-19 situation. What is the point of having this session and MPs coming from all over the country, if MPs have severe time restrictions."

Sushant case media coverage heartless, says Trinamool MP

'Guidelines on reporting suicides should be followed'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Trinamool Congress MP Pratima Mandal said in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday that media outlets had sunk to the "lowest of the low" in its coverage of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death in June.

Taking on the Congress, he said its opposition to the Bills was nothing but politics. The BJP was doing what the Opposition party had promised in its manifesto, he added.

Farmers' groups in Punjab and Haryana have been protesting against the Bills, saying there is no adequate safety net for small and marginal farmers.



Pratima Mandal

up to him and a young person also died by suicide following the actor's death." The World Health Organisation had come up with some guidelines on how to report on suicides and the Indian

media should evolve some guidelines for itself, she said.

This is the third day of the monsoon session of Parliament that the actor's death has featured during Zero Hour.

On Monday actor-MP Ravi Kishan raised the issue of proliferation of drugs in the film industry (an angle being probed in the Sushant case), while on Tuesday, actor-MP Jaya Bachchan said in response there was no basis to paint the entire film industry as delinquent because of one case.

LS nod to amend banking Act

Congress MP raises concerns

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed an amendment to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, which will bring cooperative banks under the direct supervision of the RBI and bring them under some of the same governance norms as commercial banks.

It will also allow the RBI to amalgamate or reconstruct a stressed cooperative bank without first imposing a moratorium, thus protecting the interests of the depositors, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, moving the Amendment Bill in the House.

The Bill replaces an ordinance to the same effect promulgated on June 26.

Debate on control

Replying to the debate on the Bill, Ms. Sitharaman sought to refute accusations from Opposition MPs that

the Central government was taking over control of the cooperative banks.

"We were concerned that the pandemic would further stress the financial health of more cooperatives, so we took steps to safeguard the interests of the depositors," she said. Addressing concerns that the RBI has failed to curb crisis situations among commercial banks as well, the Finance Minister noted that 430 cooperative banks had been delicensed and liquidated over the last two decades, while not a single commercial bank has gone into liquidation under the oversight of the RBI.

Congress MP Manish Tewari said the RBI was a conflicted body as it carried out multiple roles and urged that banking reform begin with spinning off its other responsibilities as the Central government's banker so that it can fulfil its primary role as a banking regulator.

Centre silent on sending farm Bills to committees

SOBHA NAIR
NEW DELHI

The government did not agree to the Opposition demand to send the three agriculture-related Bills and the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill to the parliamentary standing committees.

At the informal meeting chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Opposition leaders from the Rajya Sabha, the government refused to make this commitment.

According to sources, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, in a passing reference, said if the Opposition needed more time to debate on various subjects, then the monsoon session must be extended by another five days.

Sources also said that the government had so far not agreed for a debate on the border stand-off with China in either House of Parliament.

On Tuesday, Congress members staged a walkout when Speaker Om Birla refused to give them an opportunity to seek clarifications.

At the informal meeting, the government was also represented by Railway Minister Piyush Goyal and Leader of the Rajya Sabha Thawarchand Gehlot.

From the Opposition, Congress's Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma and Jairam Ramesh, Trinamool Congress's Derek O'Brien, DMK's Tiruchi Siva, TRS's K. Keshava Rao, RJD's Manoj K Jha and CPI(M)'s Elamaram Karim were present.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
TRIVANDRUM (WORKS BRANCH)
E-Tender Notice

No.V/W/TVC/9/2020 Dated 15/09/2020

1. Kochuveli :- Augmentation of water supply arrangements. Approx. value ₹183.52 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹2,41,800. Period of completion in 18 months.

2. Proposed Electronic Interlocking Buildings at OCR, KPY, STKT, PRND and PRND-STKT. Approx. value ₹220.30 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹2,60,200. Period of completion in 15 months.

3. TVC Division - Provision of office accommodation for SSE/IE/Signal & Tele in S&T branch at NNN, KCVL, KPY & SRTL. Approx. value ₹54.07 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹1,08,200. Period of completion in 12 months.

4. Kochuveli - Trivandrum - Connections from WRP to high pressure jet coach washing plants storage tank. Approx. value ₹16.20 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹32,400. Period of completion in 6 months.

5. Kochuveli : Repairs to the roof of sick line/I/OH shed. Approx. value ₹60.81 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹1,21,600. Period of completion in 6 months.

6. Widening of cutting and forming cess in Trivandrum - Nagercoil section. Approx. value ₹350.94 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹3,25,500. Period of completion in 24 months.

7. TVC Division:- Proposed under Water inspection of specified bridges and other structures. Approx. value ₹8.19 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹16,400. Period of completion in 6 months.

8. DEN/North Jurisdiction:- Proposed GSM based flood level monitoring system in bridge No. 132 at km.64/375. Br.No. 296 at km.58/17, Br.No.161 at km.88/450 & Br.No.148 at km.92/647. Approx. value ₹23.20 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹46,400. Period of completion in 12 months.

9. Quilon Sub Division:- Periodical cleaning of open well, cleaning of OHT, GLRs, sewer lines septic tank etc. Approx. value ₹61.82 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹1,23,600. Period of completion in 6 months.

10. Proposed Telecom OFC Repeater Room at VAK, MQU, KZK, KCVL, PVU, KYJ & ALPP. Approx. value ₹65.12 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹1,30,200. Period of completion in 12 months.

11. Kalamasseri:- NAD siding-Complete track renewal (s) of existing track with 52kg rails on SC sleepers for a length of 5.03km - Track Works. Approx. value ₹214.90 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹2,57,500. Period of completion in 9 months.

12. Replacement of aged & obsolete interlocking with EI at Kumbalam, Thuravur, Cherthala, Marakkulam and Alappuzha (5 stations) in TVC Division. Approx. value ₹269.64 lakh. Earnest Money Deposit ₹2,84,800. Period of completion in 15 months.

Tender Closing date and time:
SI No: 1 to 6 : 07/10/2020 at 11:00 hrs

SI No: 7 to 12 : 14/10/2020 at 11:00 hrs

Details of approximate value of tender, EMD & location are given on the portal, www.reps.gov.in.

Senior Division Engineer/North
Trivandrum-14

Follow us on : twitter.com/GMSRailway

The Andhra Pradesh Dairy Development Co-Operative Federation Limited.

BAP MUSEUM, GOVERNMENT, BUCKINGHAM PET, VELAYAWADA
PHONE NO:0866-2956499, Email ID: mdap.apdcf@gmail.com

e-Tender No:11/PMS-HYD/MKTG/2020-21 Date: 16.09.2020

e-Tender No Description of the Tender

11 APDCF - Tenders are invited on e-Procurement Platform by the AP-DCDF from Private /Public Limited Company/ Partnership /Proprietary concerns for Procuring, Processing, Packing and Marketing of MILK & CURD on VIJAYA Brand in Hyderabad Market. Interested participants can log in to www.apeprocurement.gov.in and submit their bids on e-Procurement Platform on or before 03.10.2020. For details contact: Sri J. Rakesh, Manager(Marketing) Mobile No: 96180 09495, Email ID: managermarketing.apdcf@gmail.com

Sr.-MANAGING DIRECTOR

सेन्ट्रल माइन प्लानिंग एंड डिजाइन इन्स्टीट्यूट लिमिटेड
CENTRAL MINE PLANNING & DESIGN INSTITUTE LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Ltd.)
Gondwana Place, Kanke Road, Ranchi - 834031, Jharkhand, India

NOTICE

"All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on websites of Coal India Ltd. www.coalindia.in/ respective Subsidiary Company (CMPDI), www.cmpdi.co.in, CIL e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in>"

DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE SERVICES
Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru-560009
Tel.: 080-22870943, e-mail: dirhfw@gmail.com

No.: DD/EMRI/108-Ten. Inv/38/2020-21 Date: 15.09.2020

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Director, Health and Family Welfare Services, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru-560009, invites Proposals from eligible Service Providers, for Operations and Maintenance of 108-Arogya Kavacha Services (Medical Emergency Response Services) under Public Private Partnership in the State of Karnataka for a period of Seven years. Tender No: DD/EMRI/108-TI/38/2020-21 Dated: 14-09-2020.

Further details are available in Government of Karnataka e-Procurement portal, <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>. Interested service provider may submit their proposal in the e-procurement portal of Government of Karnataka, by 29-10-2020 before 17:00 Hours.

For any further information contact: 9449846947 / 9449843133.

Sd/- Director
Health and Family Welfare Services
Bengaluru
DIPR/DDU/YC/1131/2020-21

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY

Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560 064
Website: www.nvf.indianrailways.gov.in

TENDER NOTICE NO. RWFS/SP1/007/2020-21 dt 16.09.2020

On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Materials Manager invites electronic Tenders from Interested Vendors for supply of the following items on the Indian Railways E-Portal - www.reps.gov.in. The Tender documents and the Corrigenda to the Tenders, if any, will be available on the Portal only.</

Supreme Court questions police over Dua case delay

'Why was an FIR registered in H.P. for migration in U.P. and Bihar?'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned the Himachal Pradesh police about the unexplained delay in registering an FIR against veteran journalist Vinod Dua accusing him of sedition.



Veteran journalist Vinod Dua is accused of sedition.

• FILE PHOTO

Mehta said electronic media was a potent medium with widespread viewership. People were alarmed, panic stricken. Journalistic freedom is sacrosanct, but it should not be abused, he said.

Earlier, Mr. Dua, represented by senior advocate Vikas Singh, had contended that criticism of the government did not amount to sedition.

Mr. Dua has moved the Supreme Court to quash an FIR accusing him of sedition registered in the Kurnalsain police station located on the outskirts of Shimla in May.

Solicitor General Tushar

SC for quick trial in cases against politicians

Over 2,500 criminal cases are pending

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday resolved to ensure that pending criminal trials against sitting and former legislators, which run to over 4,000 across the country, will be completed in a time-bound manner.

"Are you serious about completing these trials in a time-bound manner?" a three-judge Bench led by Justice N.V. Ramana asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, for the Centre.

"We are 100% serious," Mr. Mehta replied emphatically.

There are over 2,500 criminal cases pending against sitting legislators.

The Bench specifically asked about the status of cases registered by the Central agencies such as the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate against politicians.

Cases range from corruption to money laundering.

Amicus curiae and senior advocate Vijay Hansaria and advocate Sneha Kalita replied that some of these cases were stuck at the stage of framing of charges.

In his latest report to the apex court, Mr. Hansaria suggested the setting up of one special court in each district to exclusively try politicians.

He recommended that chief justices of each high court be requested to furnish an action plan for expeditious disposal of these cases within a year.

He said corruption cases should be given "topmost priority."

Mr. Mehta recommended various measures such as expiration of any stay orders within one month, appointment of more special court judges, infrastructure, etc.

Congress faults govt. for taking loan from China-linked bank

Centre's doublespeak and hypocrisy on ongoing border tensions with China is clear, says party

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The much-touted policy of the Modi government to crack down on Chinese business relationships with India stands exposed, the Congress said at a press conference here on Wednesday.

The party said that by the government's own admission in Parliament, India took two loans amounting to ₹9,202 crore from the Beijing-based multilateral development bank called the Asian Infrastructure Invest-

ment Bank (AIIB).

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, who is now abroad, accompanying his mother Sonia Gandhi for her treatment, tweeted, "Understand the chronology: PM said- no one crossed the border. Then, took a huge loan from a China-based bank. Then, Defence Minister said- China occupied our land. Now, MOS Home says there's no infiltration. Is Modi Govt with Indian Army or with China? Modi ji, why are you so

scared?"

At a press conference addressed by Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera and Rajya Sabha MP Syed Nassir Hussain, the party said that the government's double speak and hypocrisy on the issue of the ongoing border tensions with China on the eastern border in areas such as South Pangong, Razun La and the finger area is clear.

The government informed the Parliament on Tuesday that India took two loans amounting ₹9,202

crore from AIIB. Mr. Khera pointed out that the AIIB was formed in 2016, is headquartered in Beijing, and with 26.6% voting share, China is the largest shareholder of the bank.

"The first loan of \$500 million was taken on May 8, amidst reports of Chinese incursions at multiple points in eastern Ladakh, including the Pangong lake. The second loan of \$750 million was taken on June 19, four days after the Galwan massacre where we lost 20

of our bravehearts. Incidentally, it was also the same day when Prime Minister Modi lied to the country by saying that no one had entered our territory," Mr. Khera added.

App ban
All this, Mr. Khera said, was being done when the government has banned Chinese-owned mobile applications in the name of cracking down on Chinese-run business establishments.

"The nation is shocked at

such brazen duplicity of the Modi government in handling China's territorial aggression," he added.

The Congress also flagged an answer by Minister of State for Home Affairs (MoS) Nitin Gadkari to an unstarred question, in which he categorically denied any infiltration by China during the last six months.

Mr. Khera said that this was a "shameless insult to the martyrdom of our brave soldiers on the night of June 15 in the Galwan valley".

aavin THE COIMBATORE DIST. CO-OP. MILK PRODUCER'S UNION LTD
PACHAPALAYAM, KALAMPALAYAM (Post), COIMBATORE - 641 010.
Phone No.0422- 2607975; Fax : 0422-2607975 ; Email : aavinbe@gmail.com
Marketing Office : 0422-2545529 & 2544777 ; Email : aavinbenkg@gmail.com
Ref.No.8220/MKG/Tender/20-23

TENDER NOTICE

Date : 15.09.2020

The C.D.C.M.P.U.LD invites Two Part Tenders for the engagement of hired PUF Insulated vehicles for a period from the date of issue of work order to 31.03.2023 for operating 11 PUF Insulated vehicles Sale of tender documents from 18.09.2020 to 08.10.2020 against payment of Rs. 250/- inclusive of taxes. The EMD amount of Rs.30,000/- for each milk supply route and Rs.10,000/- for each local milk supply vehicle should be enclosed with tender document. Last date for submission is 09.10.2020 up to 2.00 PM and Technical bid opening on 09.10.2020 at 3.00 PM at the above address. Tender documents can be downloaded at free of cost from www.tenders.tn.gov.in and www.aavinmilk.com. The General Manager has every right to accept/cancel/postpone the tenders without assigning any reasons.

DIPR/3453/TENDER/2020

GENERAL MANAGER

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT
NABARD AND RURAL ROADS, CIRCLE, CHENNAI
TENDER NOTICE

Short Tender Notice No.14/2020-2021/SDO/Dated 16.09.2020
For and on behalf of Governor of Tamilnadu Percentage Tender through online only will be received upto 05.10.2020 - 15.00 hours by the Superintendent Engineer (H) NABARD and Rural Roads,Chengalpattu Circle for One Individual work in respect of Chengalpattu (H) NABARD & Rural Roads Division under Upgradation of Panchayat Union roads and Panchayat Roads to ODR Standards.
Details of Name of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 21.09.2020 onwards in the Government website <https://tntenders.gov.in>. If any Changes / Corrections / Amendments etc to the tender, it will be published on the above Government website only.
Superintendent Engineer (H)
NABARD and Rural Roads Circle, Chengalpattu-1.

DIPR/3460/TENDER/2020

CMYK

10 NEWS

A ND-NDE

10 NEWS

A ND

'India's presence at Afghan talks vital'

U.S. special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad met Jaishankar and Ajit Doval for a 90-minute discussion

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

The Intra-Afghan Negotiations (IAN) under way in Doha are an "Afghan-led and Afghan-owned" process at last, U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said, calling India's decision to take part in the event involving the Taliban an "important step". However, he said neither the U.S. nor India can "impose" what political system Afghan representatives choose to adopt after the talks, nor is it yet certain that the start of talks will see the declaration of a ceasefire soon.

"India has always said there should be an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process and [External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar] repeated that stand," Mr. Khalilzad said in an exclusive interview to *The Hindu*, shortly after his visit to Delhi on Tuesday.

"You could say that before it was an American-led Af-

We obviously are not seeking to impose our political system on the Afghans, they have to decide that through negotiations, whether it is for an electoral democracy or some other formula

ZALMAY KHALILZAD, US Special Envoy



ghan process...but now it is an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process, with the delegations sitting across the table from each other, without a foreigner sitting in the room, for the first time. These groups, or warring parties, are now talking with each other to negotiate a roadmap for the future of their country," he said.

During his brief visit, Mr. Khalilzad and his U.S. delegation met Mr. Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval for a 90-minute discussion on the IAN process. While he welcomed India's decision to join the

event and to send a senior level delegation there, Mr. Khalilzad declined to comment on whether India has now decided to open talks with the Taliban directly and whether this was discussed.

Keeping the momentum

In his speech at the IAN, Mr. Jaishankar had urged the negotiators not to lose the 'progress' that Afghanistan has made in the last two decades after the fall of the Taliban and the establishment of a democratic country. When asked, however, the U.S. special envoy for Afghanistan Reconciliation said it was up

to the Afghan negotiating teams to decide.

"We obviously are not seeking to impose our political system on the Afghans, they have to decide that through negotiations, whether it is for an electoral democracy or some other formula," Mr. Khalilzad said on concerns that the Taliban will seek to impose Islamic Sharia code and dismiss the democratic process as they did from 1996 to 2001.

"But there are universal values that we will watch, and we hope they will include, including the freedoms for minorities, women, rule of law, ending corruption, democracy, elections and a free press. We will see what they do...If they don't respect those values, we will have to reassess at that juncture," he said.

Mr. Khalilzad's comments run counter to a statement by Afghanistan's First Vice

President Amrullah Saleh that there would be no compromise on the "political framework" of Afghanistan.

"If [Taliban] want to violate the framework, it will harm them and their supporters," Mr. Saleh was quoted as saying on Monday, adding that he had been assured of that by the U.S. delegation which includes Mr. Khalilzad and U.S. National Security Senior Director Lisa Curtis.

The differences underline

Mr. Khalilzad's task in the next few weeks as he continues to shuttle between Doha, where the Taliban negotiators are based, Kabul where he is speaking with the Ghani government, and Islamabad where he reportedly sought the Pakistan Army chief's assistance in ensuring flexibility from the Taliban leadership based there on ensuring a reduction of violence, during a visit on Monday.

New Parliament project: Tata's ₹861 cr. bid is lowest

Larsen and Toubro Limited submits a bid of ₹865 crore

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

Tata Projects Limited's financial bid of ₹861.9 crore for the construction and five-year maintenance contract of a new Parliament building was the lowest of the two bids opened by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) on Wednesday, according to the bid documents.

After seeking pre-qualification bids, in which seven companies applied, the CPWD, in June, narrowed the field to three potential bidders and gave them till 3 p.m. on Wednesday to submit their bids. While the Tata's bid was 8.4% less than the CPWD's estimated cost of ₹940 crore, Larsen and Toubro Limited submitted a bid of ₹865 crore, which was 8.07% less than the estimat-



Up for revamp: An aerial view of the Central Vista in New Delhi. Its redevelopment was announced last year. ■ FILE PHOTO

ed cost. The third bidder, Shapoorji Pallonji and Co. Ltd., did not submit its bid by the deadline, an official of the Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) Ministry said.

An official spokesperson of Tata Projects Limited confirmed it was the lowest bidder and said it was likely to win the contract.

Citing security concerns and the nature of the pro-

ject, the CPWD had opted for pre-qualification of potential bidders before inviting financial and technical bids. The project, which is a part of the HUA Ministry's larger Central Vista redevelopment plan announced last year, is scheduled to be completed in 21 months from the start of construction, according to the CPWD's invitation for bids.

Murder of Suresh Raina's kin: 3 arrested

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab police on Wednesday said it had solved the case of attack and murder involving cricketer Suresh Raina's kin, with the arrest of three members of an inter-State gang of criminals.

Punjab Director General of Police Dinkar Gupta said that 11 other accused were yet to be arrested for the attack that took place on the night of August 19 in village Tharyal of Pathankot.

Mr. Raina's uncle Ashok Kumar, a contractor, had died on the spot, while his son Kaushal Kumar succumbed to injuries on August 31 and wife Asha Rani is in hospital in critical condition

No evidence against Rhea: rights panel

Commission says there is nothing to prove that she entered the morgue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

In what may come as some relief to actor Rhea Chakraborty, who is lodged in the Byculla jail, the Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission on Wednesday held that "there is no evidence showing that Rhea is entering the morgue or the post-mortem room."

Commission chairman M.A. Sayeed told *The Hindu*, "The Commission has received explanations and responses from the Mumbai Police and Cooper Hospital along with some documents. There was no breach of rules from either the police or the hospital. There-



Rhea Chakraborty

fore, no case for intervention is made out by the Commission."

Mr. Sayeed said, "Relying on the rules and guidelines placed on record which virtually prohibit entry of any

stranger except the official in the post-mortem room or morgue or in the storage room. We did not find any evidence, showing that the lady (Rhea) is entering the morgue or the post-mortem room."

'Only a TV clip'

"Except for just a channel (television) clipping, there was no evidence showing that the lady (Rhea) is entering the morgue. It only shows that she was coming out of the mortuary premises and does not show that she was coming out of the post-mortem room," he said

"As per the Cooper Hospital Dean's report she

might have been present in the waiting area and then paid her homages to the departed soul when the body was brought for delivery to his (Sushant) sister," Mr. Sayeed added.

On August 26, the Commission sent show-cause notices to the police and the hospital for 'allowing' Ms. Chakraborty to enter the hospital's mortuary when Sushant's post-mortem was being conducted.

A huge controversy broke out after a video clip showed Ms. Chakraborty, along with three others, was seen at the hospital for 45 minutes on June 15 a day after Sushant died.

Plea to make Punjabi official language in J&K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Partap Singh Bajwa has asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to include Punjabi as one of the official languages in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Union Cabinet had recently approved a Bill to include Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi as official languages in the newly created Union Territory.

The Centre's move of not including Punjabi has invited sharp criticism from political parties in Punjab.

'Why publish details of couples who want to wed?'

Demand a violation of privacy: petition

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked for the government's response to a plea that wide publication of the personal details of a couple who want to wed under the Special Marriage Act is a violation of their privacy.

The details being published include their names, date of birth, age, occupation, parents' names and details, addresses, pin codes, identity information and phone numbers. This was a peculiar requirement of the Act, intended to help consenting adults, especially those who belong to different religions or castes, to marry.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde issued notice to the government on the writ petition filed by Nandini Praveen, a law student from Kerala, who is represented by advocates Kaleeswaram Raj and Nishe Rajen Shonker.

However, Chief Justice Bobde expressed certain *prima facie* reservations about the plea to do away with the publication of details.

"You don't understand the purpose of the law [Special Marriage Act]... Normally they [people who want to marry under the Act] do not belong to the same community... You are saying 'privacy,' that the whole world will come to know..."

She was nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 2006 but had to vacate her seat following the office of profit controversy. In April 2007, she was renominated.

During the decades of the Nehru-Gandhi rule, Vatsyayan was the go-to person for showcasing Indian cul-

ture for whose benefit this is enacted will suffer the moment it is deleted," Chief Justice Bobde remarked orally.

Chilling effect
Mr. Raj, however, responded that the publication of confidential details through a public notice has a chilling effect on the right to marry, particularly in the backdrop of honour killings and violence committed against those who enter into inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. "In other words, couples are asked to waive the right to privacy to exercise the right to marry," he pointed out.

The senior lawyer said the petition was not challenging the authority of the Marriage Officer to conduct an enquiry into a couple's antecedents. "But why publish the confidential details?"

"You don't understand the purpose of the law [Special Marriage Act]... Normally they [people who want to marry under the Act] do not belong to the same community... You are saying 'privacy,' that the whole world will come to know..."

But what if somebody runs away with somebody's wife or daughter... Why should they [the husband or father] not come to know? The people

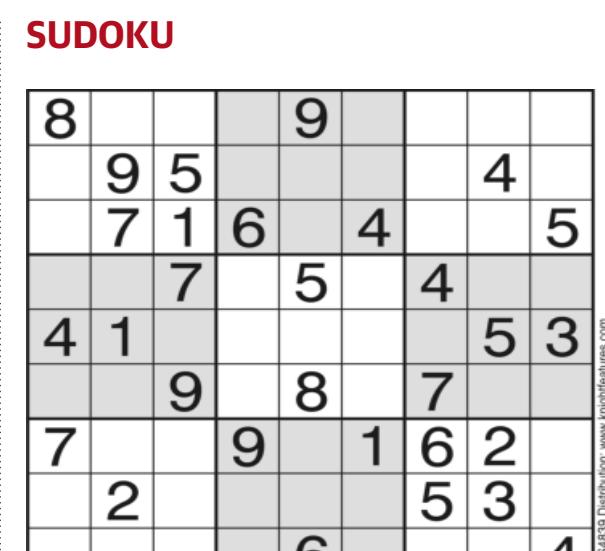
for whose benefit this is enacted will suffer the moment it is deleted," Chief Justice Bobde remarked orally.

Not against change, the former representative of India to UNESCO's executive board would often underline that any experiment should be to augment Indian classical forms, not to dilute or distract the new generation from its essence.

Her canvas was not limited to dance, though. This is evident in her vast corpus of writings, such as *Plural Cultures and Monolithic Structures: Comprehending India, Dance in Indian Painting and The Indian Arts, Their Ideational Background and Principles of Forms*.

During the decades of the Nehru-Gandhi rule, Vatsyayan was the go-to person for showcasing Indian cul-

SUDOKU

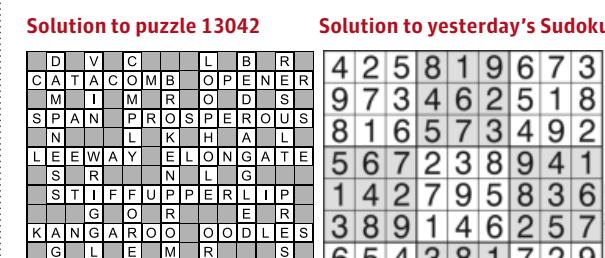


DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

No. SS439 Date: 2020-09-17

Solution to puzzle 13042

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



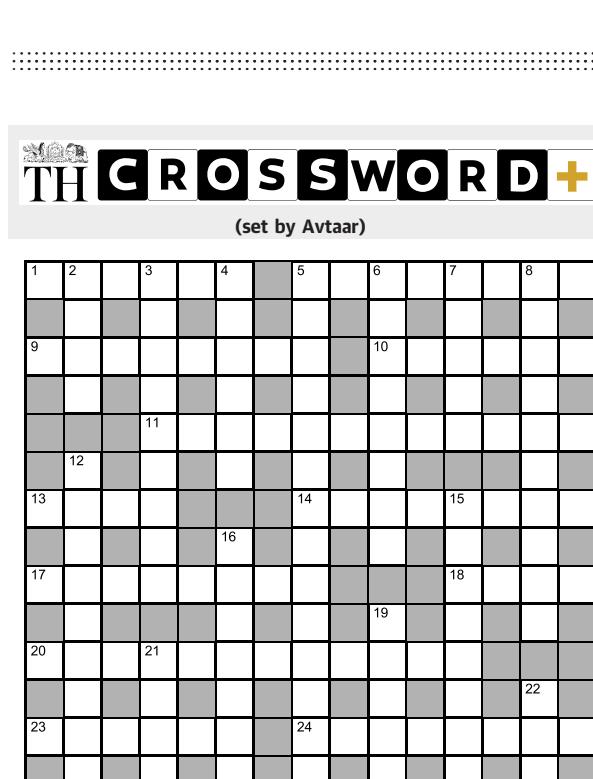
FAITH

Bhakti and prapatti

The Supreme Brahman is the final goal of all who practise Bhakti yoga. Meditation on the Lord with total love and devotion continuously without getting distracted by the pulls of the world is the main characteristic of this yoga. Krishna explains that those who worship Him thus are very dear to Him and He becomes their saviour to release them from samsara. In a discourse, Asuri Sri Madhavachariar drew attention to the fact that prapatti or surrender to the Lord, like bhakti yoga, is also a sure means to moksha.

Prapatti is the path for those who realise their inability to engage in the arduous demands of bhakti yoga. Prapatti is a complete, self-sufficient and direct sadana to moksha. The prapanna seeks the all powerful and compassionate Lord who alone can grant moksha. Prapatti is known as 'nyaya' 'vidya' and it is mentioned in the Vedas. 'Nyaya' means entrusting someone or something to a reliable person. Prapatti is pledging oneself to God with the knowledge of one's undying relationship with the Lord. This is the Sesa-Seshi bhava, where He alone is the Master and all else in creation is His possession.

Prapatti has five 'angas' or distinguishing features. The prapanna has to have the firm commitment that he will do only what is 'anukula'; that is, abide by God's wishes at all times and also refrain from 'pratikula', that is, not do anything that will cause Him displeasure. Being fully aware that there is no way for him owing to his inabilities, insufficiencies and the enormous burden of karma and sin, he places total faith, 'Maha vishwas' in the Lord to guide him out of samsara. This honest awareness of one's own helplessness absolves him of any sense of 'I' and 'Mine'. The Lord out of His divine grace leads him out of samsara.



ACROSS
1 Reform of the old Indian bureaucracy's code of conduct (6)
5 Climb over mountains to live in the countryside (8)
9 Guy handin' out instrument (8)
10 A girl screwed on the head of CFL bulb (6)
11 Man on the street grabs Miss India, disregarding metro's chief police officer (12)
13 Student drops out of study to make money (4)

(set by Avtaar)

TH CROSSWORD + 13043

Get your brain out of lockdown mode!
Try solving a puzzle today!
@ <https://qrqo.page.link/jjpTn>



SCANT TO PLAY

CM
YK

AN-DO-NDE

All dressed and ready to attend a wedding? First, put on your VR headset. Pandemic-led innovation is helping the wedding industry, along with fashion and hospitality, as events pick up steam

SANGEETHA DEVI DUNDOO

The big fat Indian wedding has become leaner, adapting to the new COV-19 normal.

While weddings have been taking place during Unlock 3.0 with up to 50 real-time guests, now Unlock 4.0 permits social gatherings with a ceiling of 100 guests. After months of lockdown, bookings are accelerating, with weddings bringing cheer to families, as well as the hospitality, fashion and textile sectors.

Actors Prachi Trehan, Manish Raisighani, Nikhil Siddhartha, Nithin and Rana Daggubati, director Sujeth and producer Dil Raju were among those who tied the knot in the last few months. In Bengaluru, weddings of former Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy's son and that of actor Nikhil Gowda were in the spotlight.

There have been several other weddings, away from the celebrity cliques.

Masked getaways

Families now opt for toned down celebrations with fewer ceremonies, at hotels that promise to adhere to hygiene protocols. The norms include maintaining a registry of guest details, temperature checks, individual sanitiser bottles, fresh masks, frequent cleaning of touch points and restrooms, and distanced seating arrangements.

Renu Basu, senior vice president, global sales and marketing IHCL (the parent company of Taj Hotels), states that among the Taj hotels, the properties in Rajasthan, Karnataka and Telangana were among the first to host weddings after lockdown. "Resorts and hotels at drivable distances from cities, for instance, Mahabalipuram from Chennai, Dam-dama, Rishikesh and Corbett from Delhi as well as the hotel in Nashik that's a few hours from Mumbai are witnessing a significant number of social celebrations, including weddings," she says.

Grand Hyatt at Bolgatty Island, Kochi, has been hosting 10-12 weddings a month, says general manager Shrikant Wakharkar: "This is the peak season for weddings in Kerala and we abide by Government regulations to make people feel secure by providing a sanitised



VR-ENABLED WEDDINGS

Bengaluru-based firm LifeVR which provided the tech support for Rana Daggubati's wedding, had facilitated a similar VR webcast of actor Venkatesh Daggubati's daughter Aashritha's wedding in 2019. For Rana's wedding, guests were sent VR headsets with customised messages, an explanatory video and text instructions: "We sent them test links prior to the event," says Abhilash Jain, technical director of LifeVR.

The company has so far enabled 300 VR weddings and Abhilash says, "VR is the future for sport, cinema and events but it's still a niche segment. The pandemic is making a few more people consider the option."

The firm will be hosting VR webcasts of weddings in Jaipur, Udaipur and other cities in the coming months. "When ceremonies are smaller with limited guests, the emotions can be captured better. For VR, it's important to film in such a way that the viewers, while feeling like they are transported to the actual venue, do not feel dizzy watching through the headset," adds Abhilash.



WEDDINGS 2.0



environment."

The Leela Goa is gearing up to host 15 destination weddings between October 2020 and April 2021. The families that have booked these weddings are from Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad. General manager Shridhar Nair says the fear

psychosis which loomed large in the early phase of the pandemic is waning: "People want to enjoy their special occasion while taking precautions. We will be offering Bureau Veritas (an inspection and certification company) certified sanitisation for the events."

In Delhi, Amaara Farms has been hosting weddings in its open-air venues. "When we hosted the first wedding after the long lockdown, there was a lingering fear; but the families soon began enjoying their special occasion. Enquiries are on the rise now. Most weddings we have hosted involve either the bride or the groom's family from Delhi and others driving down to

reach the venue," says founder Shivan Gupta. He notes that there has been a shift in conversation, moving away from the ostentatious nature of the event to focus on safety and hygiene.

Hotels now offer e-concierge and virtual tours of locations. The F&B services have also been tweaked. Guests are asked to keep their masks on while going to the buffet counters. A few properties offer pre-plated starters and main courses instead of buffets.

Like many other sectors, the hospitality sector also bore the brunt as business plummeted during lockdown. To attract more guests, hotels stated that they are offering wedding packages at prices 10% to 20% lower than that

I do (Clockwise) Welcoming with masks and sanitisers, Amaara Farms, Taj Goa, Taj Udaipur, and bridal ensemble by JJ Valaya • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

of 2019. Sanitisation and hygiene come at no additional costs.

Dressing up for Zoom

Miriam Matthen who recently got married at the Hyatt Bolgatty Island talks with happiness when she recollects her wedding.

Originally scheduled as a destination wedding in April 2020, lockdown forced the families to change plans four times and finally, she was glad that the ceremony could be organised

in her home town. Friends and family participated in the celebrations via an online link. "Some of them even dressed up to keep with the celebratory mood," she says.

Masks in white and gold fabric that is synonymous with *kasavu* saris of Kerala, greeted the 50 guests at their flower-draped open-air venue, anchored by the hotel's villas.

When bridal couture spells luxury, the accompanying masks too have to look the part. Designers are busy making customised masks that match the ensembles, with *zardoz* and all finery. Masks with embroidery and embellishments that match the *lehenga* or sari, are now part of the trousseau.

Samhita Gadde who got married mid-August at a resort on the outskirts of Hyderabad says her family and that of the groom were concerned that none of the invitees fall sick, having come across news reports of families testing positive after attending social gatherings.

"We had a small gathering but booked a hall that would, in normal circumstances, accommodate 1,000 people," she says. The pre-wedding ceremonies like the *mehendi* were held outdoors. Their initial plan, before the pandemic, was to have around 3,000 guests. "But the scaled-down celebration turned out to be fun; we could talk to all the guests. We had a live webcast for those whom we couldn't invite," she says.

Bengaluru-based Nilma Dileepan, a wedding designer, has been organising weddings with small gatherings at venues as varied as backyards of homes to a presidential suite of a five-star hotel.

"Around 75% of the people have cut down their budgets and millennials are enjoying the simple weddings that they always wanted. Sometimes the requests are for arrangements within ₹50,000 or a lakh of rupees. There's more attention to masks, sanitisers, chair décor and other props. Couples are also open to mindful, sustainable choices like using local flowers in terracotta pots and chalk boards as opposed to flex boards," she says.

Bridal couture

The fashion and textile industry which is still dealing with piles of pending stock from lockdown is also limping back to action, thanks to weddings.

In mid-July, Tarun Tahiliani showcased his bridal-festive collection 'Pieces of You' through a live fashion show on Instagram.

Couturier JJ Valaya who recently launched his e-commerce portal notes that buyer interest is back. Valaya admits that many in the fraternity thought this year would be a washout and had decided to focus on the next season. But he was pleasantly surprised when the footfall at his stores showed an increase: "People are connecting through the video walk-through. I recently dressed-up a bride from Sri Lanka, whose wedding ensemble was decided and arranged for, online."

The ancient in the everyday

The calligraphy is put on merchandise like mugs and notebooks • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

from Shrishti College of Design. Urue hopes to get the decks in production by mid-October.

"At the beginning of lockdown, I attended an online course (with a coupon provided by the college) on Islamic culture which had a chapter on the *Quran*. The chapter talked about how the *Quran* was written in a calligraphic style," he says. This rekindled his interest in the ancient writing technique. "Then, I thought if I can copy an ancient text from Persia, why can't I do it for our own language?" says the artist.

This led to his exclusive work with *Aathichoodi* in Tamil calligraphy: but it does not involve just copying the verse. Design elements pertinent to the moral of each verse characterise the calligraphy. For example, in 'Nandru Karudhu' (which translates to 'think/analyse well'), a verse from *Puthiya Aathichoodi* written by Subramania Bharati, the design finds itself enclosed in a more contemporary thought bubble.

While reading about *Aathichoodi* and *Avaiyai Arvind* realised the graphical quality of ancient Tamil literature: "If you take Avaiyai, she speaks about 'nga pol valai'. She says that bend like the letter 'nga' in front of elders. She is giving us a very symbolic expression of the letter itself," says Arvind.

This particular verse inspired his series on the Sangam Age. He writes 'cholar' by incorporating a tiger (emblem on the flag of Chola dynasty) motif, while 'cherar' is beautifully inscribed with the symbol of a bow that replaces 'che'.

He has also done an animal series in calligraphy featuring animals whose names are derived from Tamil literature.

Check @urue designstudio on Instagram and on Facebook for more details.



Etched in the past

A new studio creates contemporary design with Tamil calligraphy that draws from ancient texts

GOWRI S

At first glance, they are difficult to decipher. On a closer, second look, the dots, curves and the 'akku' unique to the Tamil script – albeit stylised – reveal themselves. In straight, thick lines, they are inscribed in a calligraphic style which is satisfyingly contemporary. And, interestingly, what lends content to this style is ancient Tamil literature:

Avaiyai's 12th Century text, *Aathichoodi*, a collection of 109 single-line quotations arranged in alphabetical order that preaches everything from good habits to the importance of discipline.

An avid reader of Tamil literature, Chennai-based artist Arvind Sundar draws a lot from ancient texts in his calligraphic practice. His lockdown interest has now evolved it into an on-

line design studio, Urue (which means, 'to create'), which he runs along with photographer Mahesh Thiru. Urue strives to create a contemporary design space exclusively for Tamil literature.

The studio's upcoming project is a pack of playing cards demarcated by the four dynasties that ruled Tamil Nadu – namely, the Chola, Chera, Pandya and Pallava dynasties. The King, Queen and Jack cards of each suit will be illustrated as belonging to these dynasties.

"The kings are portrayed in their war attire with the royal insignia, while the queens take up different roles pertaining to medicine, literature and battle. There will be two female Jacks and two male Jacks in each set," says Arvind.

The playing cards project is done in collaboration with designer Meena Priya



Free miles



Mumbai-based Bombay Running on taking up unconventional races like The Speed Project to try and set the bar for running communities across India

PRADEEP KUMAR

It usually takes a day or, at best, a week for New Year's resolutions to start cracking. Tushar Motwani, however, did the unthinkable. With 10 days to go for his birthday in December 2012, Tushar, and his friend Deepak Oberoi, resolved to run 10 kilometres a day. They have not stopped running since.

Alongside Bhuvandee Chowdhary, Tushar and Deepak are the co-founders of Mumbai-based Bombay Running, a strong community of runners that includes everybody from the average to the athletic. Tushar says that there are various chapters of the running community who stay connected on location-based WhatsApp groups and who commune for runs on all days of the week; some of the runners also take part in decentralised and/or unsanctioned rac-

es, like the do-it-yourself race, The Speed Project (TSP).

Six runners of the Bombay Running community took part in this race earlier this month, which had participants from across the world run relay style. The target? Run as much distance as they can within a time limit of 31 hours and 15 minutes (which is the current record time set during a TSP run between Los Angeles and Las Vegas).

Bombay Running's Amit Lahekar, Anil Korvi, Aman Mehla, Manoj Rane, Priyanka Bhat and Payal Khanna ran 502.47 kilometres in the time afforded to them, which placed them third on the global list.

"The idea of participating in TSP was to put Bombay Running and India on the global running map. A lot of people run for their own pride or to achieve the targets they set for self. With races like TSP, it is not something everyone can do-



cause you need to get people together, train with them as a group and then participate," says Tushar, over a Zoom call from Mumbai.

What's next for Bombay Running? "We came in third and we have now set the bar for others. For us, it will be about taking up newer challenges. The bottomline is about developing consistency and a habit. Even today, Deepak gives me a wake up call at 5 am and we go on a run together. It is about the community that we can build through our runs," Tushar adds.

Unlike Aman, Amit Lahekar (28) was inspired to take up

running when he came in contact with two marathoners at a book promotion event in Pune a few years ago. "I love sports but I couldn't get far playing cricket and football. So I took to running wanting to fare better," says Aman, who has now run a handful of marathons and even participated in the Bombay-Goa chase, an unsanctioned run similar to TSP.

Helping them prepare for TSP was Daniel Vaz, head coach, Nike Run Club India. "It was hard to train during lockdown. Coach Dan gave us endurance training and gave us new workouts to help us add more speed and to survive the time. We used to train and do simulation runs from morning 5 am till 10 pm," says Anil Korvi, adding that the team eventually set on the strategy of sprinting for three minutes before switching so that "the fatigue build-up isn't as high" as compared to doing a 5K or marathon run. This also allowed individual runners the time to recover while their relay partners went on their sprints.

running

from

ancient

texts in his caligraphic

practice. His

lockdown

interest has

now evolved it

into an on-

line

design

studio,

Urue

(which

means,

'to create')

, which he runs

along

with

photographer

Mahesh

Thiru.

Urue

strives to create a

contemporary

design space exclusively

for Tamil

literature.

The

studio's

upcoming

project

is

a

pack

of

playing

cards

demarcated

by

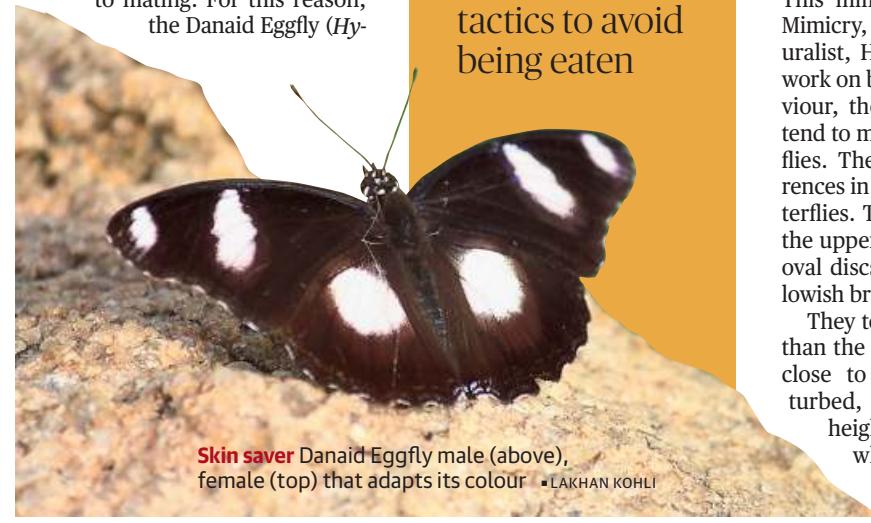
the

IN OUR BACKYARD Mimic to SURVIVE

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

During the first year of our nature trails back in 2016-17, when I pointed out Danaid Eggfly butterflies to people, we saw far more males than females. In time, I realised that not being able to see females was because they have a greater responsibility towards the survival of their species, while the male's role is restricted to mating. For this reason, the Danaid Eggfly (*Hy-*

With attack-based defences practically absent in butterflies, the Danaid Eggfly uses other tactics to avoid being eaten



Skin saver Danaid Eggfly male (above), female (top) that adapts its colour ■ LAKHAN KOHLI

polimnia misippus) has an evolutionary adaptation.

The females mimic (in appearance) the similar-sized Plain Tiger, a toxic butterfly with the toxic Milkweed as its host plant.

The vibrant colours of the Plain Tiger advertise its unpalatable nature to predators around, so the Danaid female sends out the same signal, regardless of it not being toxic. This mimicking is called Batesian Mimicry, named after an English Naturalist, Henry Walter Bates for his work on butterflies. To aid this behaviour, the females also sometimes tend to move with plain tiger butterflies. There are very minute differences in appearance of the two butterflies. The males are elegant with the upperside black and large white oval discs on both wings, with yellowish brown undersides.

They tend to fly higher and faster than the females, who prefer being close to the ground. When disturbed, the males quickly gain height to reach a tree branch, whereas females tend to move to nearby bushes. A scheduled butter-

fly protected under the Wildlife Protection Act of India, 1971, the Danaid Eggfly belongs to the largest family of butterflies, Nymphalidae. The butterflies in this family are also called Brush-footed Butterflies, where the forelegs (first pair of legs) are reduced in size and covered with long hair, much like brushes.

Butterflies need both nectar-rich plants (like Periwinkle or Sadabahar) as food sources as well as host plants (where they lay eggs) to survive. These butterflies are known to frequent urban parks and botanical gardens to feed on flowering plants, though they prefer open country, both scrubland and moist areas.

When the females are ready to lay eggs, they look for host plants like the Philippine Violet (*Barleria cristata*), also commonly known as Vajra Danti in Hindi.

The best time to see butterflies is when the sun is up and shining.

The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl About Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He is the Delhi-NCR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds. He formerly led a programme of WWF India.



Beyond boundaries Ankith Gupta ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Bangla, Italian, Kannada, Swedish, Spanish, Tamil, Nepali, Jamaican, and Telugu.

But the song would not have shaped the way it has now, had it not been for the pandemic, says Ankith.

"Though the idea was conceived in November last year, I had little time, due to my regular school activities. Lockdown gave me that time."

Ankith has worked with interna-

tional artistes like VARIN, Almukhtar, Swat, Obeka, Loud Silence (Hindi and Bangla), Ilon (Italian and Jamaican), Yaaru, Filip Winther, Young S.C.O, King Sinister, Lay G and BFAB on this track. "I had to coordinate with all these artists across various time zones to communicate and execute. Though the song's framework was ready, access to recording theatres for these artists was a huge challenge."

Ankith has been a hip-hop convert from the time he heard 'Lollipop' by Lil Wayne. "My main influences are international producers like Kanye West, Metro Boomin, Murda Beatz, DJ Khaled and Dr. Dre," he says. Closer home, he regards AR Rahman and Hip-Hop Tamizha as musicians he looks up to. "My ambition is to showcase India on the hip-hop field," says Ankith, who has 30 singles and EPs on music platforms and is planning a monthly release henceforth.

The longest hours

How 16-year-old musician Ankith Gupta put together '7500', a hip-hop track that features 14 languages

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

To what extent would you go for a seven-minute song? Chennai-based Ankith Gupta did what most musicians would not; spend 7,500 hours putting it together.

The hip-hop artist, who is currently studying in Class XII at Sishya, is ready with a multi-language song titled '7500', denoting the time he worked on it, spread across nine months. Based on the theme that music has no language, the song, which released on Wednesday on all leading musical platforms and on YouTube, covers 14 languages and

has already bagged the certificate for a 'song composed by an individual in maximum languages' from the India Book of Records and Asia Book of Records. The song is the result of Ankith's quest for artistes across the world to collaborate with. He narrowed in on 12 musicians, whose work he really liked. "When I looked at the names, it suddenly stuck me: 'Why not use all of these 12 singers in a single song and make them sing in their native language?'"

That question lingered and helped him conceive '7500', featuring 14 languages including English, Arabic, Malayalam, German, Hindi,

and Telugu.

But the song would not have shaped the way it has now, had it not been for the pandemic, says Ankith.

"Though the idea was conceived in November last year, I had little time, due to my regular school activities. Lockdown gave me that time."

Ankith has worked with interna-

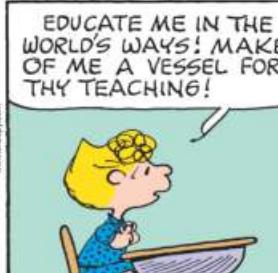
tional artistes like VARIN, Almukhtar, Swat, Obeka, Loud Silence (Hindi and Bangla), Ilon (Italian and Jamaican), Yaaru, Filip Winther, Young S.C.O, King Sinister, Lay G and BFAB on this track. "I had to coordinate with all these artists across various time zones to communicate and execute. Though the song's framework was ready, access to recording theatres for these artists was a huge challenge."

Ankith has been a hip-hop convert from the time he heard 'Lollipop' by Lil Wayne. "My main influences are international producers like Kanye West, Metro Boomin, Murda Beatz, DJ Khaled and Dr. Dre," he says. Closer home, he regards AR Rahman and Hip-Hop Tamizha as musicians he looks up to. "My ambition is to showcase India on the hip-hop field," says Ankith, who has 30 singles and EPs on music platforms and is planning a monthly release henceforth.

POOCH CAFE



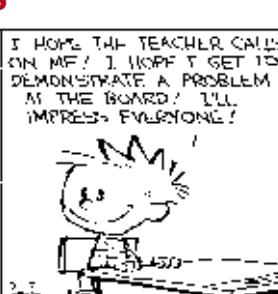
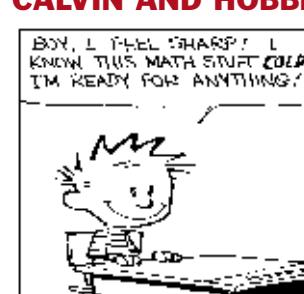
PEANUTS



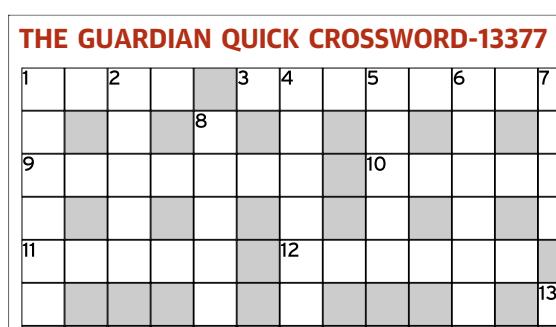
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



To play the Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudokus & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

- 6 Riding a bike (7)
7 Squirrel's nest (4)
8 Artificial limb (informal) (3,3)
13 Lawyer (8)
15 Get better (7)
16 Overseas (6)
18 Army unit (5)
20 Mannequin (5)
21 Rear – endorse (4)

■ Across

- 1 Insects (4)
3 Duplicitous (3-5)
10 Come down (7)
12 Meaty soup (6)
14 Giving up criminal activities (5,8)
17 Geronimo's people (6)
19 Code for R (5)
22 Love affair (5)
23 Finder of a magic lamp (7)
24 Memento (8)
25 Potter's material (4)

■ Down

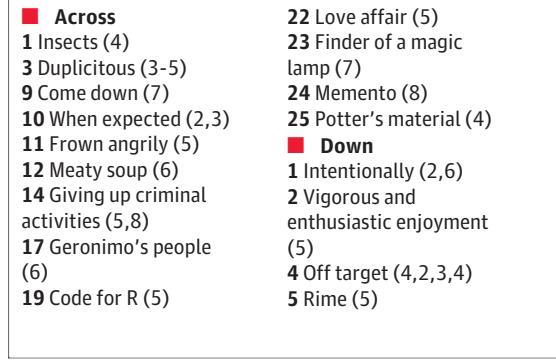
- 1 Intentionally (2,6)
2 Vigorous and enthusiastic enjoyment (5)
4 Off target (4,2,3,4)
5 Rime (5)

The solution will appear on September 24, 2020
Solution No. 13376

WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



CM YK

Air strikes accompany Israel-Gulf pacts

Israeli aircraft bomb targets in Gaza after militants in the Palestinian enclave launch rockets

REUTERS
JERUSALEM/GAZA

Militants in Gaza launched rockets into Israel and Israeli aircraft hit targets in the Palestinian enclave in an explosive backdrop to the signing of pacts for formal ties between Israel and the two Gulf Arab countries.

The Israeli military said it launched about 10 air strikes in Hamas Islamist-run Gaza early on Wednesday and that 15 rockets had been fired from the territory at Israeli communities near the border, where sirens sounded before dawn.

'Not surprised'

On Tuesday, a rocket from Gaza struck the coastal Israeli city of Ashdod, wounding two people, at the same time as Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed agreements at the White House to establish diplomatic



Ominous signs: Smoke and flames are seen following an Israeli air strike in the southern Gaza Strip on Wednesday. ■ REUTERS

ic relations. "I'm not surprised that the Palestinian terrorists fired at Israel precisely during this historic ceremony," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said before his flight returning to Israel.

"They want to turn back the peace. In that, they will

not succeed," he told reporters.

"We will strike at all those who raise a hand to harm us, and we will reach out to all

those who extend the hand of peace to us."

Deal a betrayal

Palestinians, who seek an independent state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, view the U.S.-brokered deals as a betrayal of their cause.

No casualties were reported on either side of the Israel-Gaza frontier. The military said eight of the rockets launched on Wednesday were intercepted by its Iron Dome anti-missile system.

In a statement, the military said targets in Gaza included a weapons and explosives manufacturing factory and a compound used by Hamas for training and rocket experiments.

Without naming specific factions, the Islamic Jihad group in Gaza said that in response to the air strikes, the "resistance" fired rocket salvos at Israel.

Japan's new PM Suga pledges to tackle virus, kickstart economy

We will carry forward Abe's policies, he says



Yoshihide Suga

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Japan's new Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga pledged on Wednesday to keep coronavirus infections under control and kickstart an economy in recession, as Shinzo Abe left office after a record-breaking tenure.

In his first remarks after being elected by Parliament earlier on Wednesday, Mr. Suga emphasised his will be a cabinet of continuity, seeking to further the policies championed by Mr. Abe.

"We need to carry forward the policies that the Abe administration was pushing, I feel that is the mission for which I have been called," Mr. Suga told reporters. He sidestepped questions on the possibility of a snap election to consolidate his position, saying that "what the public wants right now is that we manage to

end the pandemic soon and at the same time we steadily restore the economy".

"Achieving both the prevention of the spread of infection and rebuilding the economy is what they desire most... We hope to do our best on this issue first."

He dwelled little on political ideology or foreign policy goals, instead pledging administrative reform, an end to "bureaucratic silos", and greater digitalisation of government.

He said he would seek continued strong ties with Washington and stable relations with China and Russia. But he offered no details and

made no mention of ongoing tensions with South Korea, or any specifics of his defence strategy, particularly towards North Korea.

The 71-year-old takes the top job after decades in politics, most recently in the role of Chief Cabinet Secretary, where he was a key enforcer of government policy as well as spokesman.

A long-time Abe adviser, Mr. Suga has said his run was inspired by a desire to continue his predecessor's policies. His new Cabinet is full of familiar faces, with Mr. Abe's Foreign and Finance Ministers staying on, and the outgoing premier's brother appointed to lead the Defence Ministry.

Mr. Suga won an easy victory in a vote in Parliament, where his Liberal Democratic Party holds a commanding majority. But he now faces a raft of tough challenges, from immediate problems like the pandemic and the postponed Olympics, to longer-term issues including a declining population.

ELSEWHERE



EU chief takes aim at Turkey, Russia

BRUSSELS
The European Commission's President on Wednesday urged the EU to stop being naive when dealing with big powers, while singling out Turkey and Russia for criticism. Ursula von der Leyen, who took over as EU chief last year promising to make the bloc more "geopolitical", said the EU needed to take "clear and swift" foreign policy decisions instead of getting bogged down in internal horse-trading. She warned Turkey not to bully Greece and Cyprus over energy resources in the eastern Mediterranean. AFP

Maduro behind crimes against humanity: UN

GENEVA
Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his top Ministers are responsible for probable crimes against humanity, including extrajudicial killings and the systematic use of torture, UN investigators said on Wednesday. The International Fact-Finding Mission, created by the United Nations Human Rights Council a year ago, in its first report, "found reasonable grounds to believe that Venezuelan authorities and security forces have since 2014 planned and executed serious human rights violations," mission chairperson Marta Valinas said. Some of those "violations, including arbitrary killings and the systematic use of torture, amount to crimes against humanity," she said. AFP

Maldives defends ties with India

Govt. says critics can't 'stomach' strengthening relations between the two sides

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

Apparently responding to the growing anti-India refrain from the political opposition in the Maldives, Foreign Minister Abdulla has said that those "unable to stomach" the strengthening bilateral ties were resorting to such criticism.

Speaking at an event to launch a street-lighting project supported by India, the Foreign Minister said: "This connection is with the people of the two countries. A connection indicating a heart-to-heart relationship. We acknowledge that."

His remarks come at a time when the jailed former President Abdulla Yameen-led Progressive Party of Maldives-People's National Congress (PPM-PNC) combine has been protesting "foreign military presence in Maldivian soil".

Following a recent agitation by a group of youth, the PPM-PNC said it was "appalled by Police crackdown and indiscriminate mass arrests at peaceful motorbike rally".

Amid speculation among sections that Indian military might arrive at Hanimaadhoo in Haa Dhaalu Atoll, in addition to the Indian officers that are already in Maldives to operate the helicopters gifted to Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) by the Indian military, the Chief of Defence Force Major General Abdulla Shamaal has asserted that "no foreign armed forces" are present in the Maldives.

On the other hand, India's engagement has significantly grown since President Solih came to power, particularly in development partnerships.

Last month, India announced a \$500 million package – including a grant of \$100 million – in addition



Strong bond: Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, left, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in this file photo.

Twitter, beginning an "#Indiaout" campaign that trended for some time.

Given that during President Yameen's time in office, Malé-New Delhi relations turned rather sour, while his government was accused of an evident China slant, ruling party sources accuse the political opposition for triggering the social media campaign.

China has been a close development partner and lender. Malé has been trying to renegotiate some \$1.4 billion it owes to Beijing.

On the other hand, India's engagement has significantly grown since President Solih came to power, particularly in development partnerships.

In the last few weeks, some Maldivians also took to

New Delhi's earlier line of credit of \$800 million announced in 2018.

However, countering the recent anti-India rhetoric, largely from its political rivals, is only one of the many challenges facing President Solih's government.

Economic impact
Two years into office, the Solih administration has a massive challenge in the economic impact of Covid-19 that has brutally hit the Indian Ocean island nation's high-revenue tourism sector.

India has announced \$250 million special financial assistance to help the Maldives as it tries to cope with the economic strain gravely aggravated by the pandemic.

According to the UNDP, the Maldives is amongst the worst affected countries in Asia region and potentially

globally, due to the impact of Covid-19.

In its latest outlook the Asian Development Bank has also observed that output in Maldives is expected to shrink by a fifth in 2020, the sharpest GDP forecast revision in the sub-region, then grow by 10.5% in 2021.

Despite possible travel bubbles, including with India, opening up the country may not be easy for the Solih government, as Coronavirus cases continue to rise. Over 9,000 cases and 33 deaths have been reported so far.

Tensions within

Meanwhile, some in government fear the simmering tensions within the ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) – apparently between President Solih and Speaker and former President Nasheed may pose yet another serious challenge, especially after Mr. Nasheed sought the removal of certain Ministers – accusing them of corruption.

The Speaker has also been pushing for a parliamentary system. There is concern within the government that his moves might undermine the President, who is trying to work with the coalition partners," according to a government legislator, who spoke to *The Hindu* from Malé, requesting anonymity.

"Be it on the economy, or on democracy, our government hasn't been able to deliver much yet and the pandemic has made it worse. At such a time, the tensions within may prove damaging," added the MP.

Indian Americans favour Joe Biden, says survey

66% back Democratic nominee, while 28% support Trump

SIRRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

A significant majority of Indian Americans are expected to vote for Democratic nominee Joe Biden, as per a new report released on Tuesday by Indiaspora, a non-partisan diaspora organisation and AAPI Data, an organisation that conducts data and policy research.

Sixty-six percent of Indian American voters favour Mr. Biden as their candidate of choice in the presidential election, 28% favour the incumbent Donald Trump, while 6% are undecided.



Joe Biden

ly crucial in battleground states (those with close races)

such as Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Texas and Arizona.

"I think Democrats absolutely should be concerned about making sure they conduct sufficient outreach to Indian Americans... because every vote is going to count, especially in those battleground states," Raja Krishnamoorthi, a legislator from Illinois, said during a panel discussion that accompanied the launch of the survey report. He was responding to a question on whether Democrats should be worried about Indian voter turnout.

Fifty-four percent of Indian Americans identify as Democrats, 16% as Republicans and 24% as Independents, as per the report. The survey results are derived from AAPI Data's 2020 Asian American Voter Survey, which consisted of 1,569 (+/- 2% margin of sampling error) Asian American voters (including 260 registered voters identifying as Asian Indian) margin of sampling error of +/- 6%.

Republicans have touted the bonhomie between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Trump in the hopes of swaying some voters towards Mr. Trump. On the Democrat side, Kamala Harris's Indian roots have been talking point at diaspora campaign events.

In terms of voter turnout, 56% of Indian Americans had been contacted by the Democratic party in 2020, compared to 48% for Mr. Biden relative to other Asians.

"Asian Americans saw a record high level of midterm election turnout in 2018," Mr. Krishnamoorthi said during the release of the Asian American Voter Survey.

"With a majority saying that they are even more enthusiastic than usual about this election suggests that we will see record turnout for Asian Americans for a presidential election in 2020."

SSC, UPSC, IBPS, PSC... EXAMOPHOBIA?

Join us for a free webinar
to know why STEP for Competitive Exams is your one stop solution to ace English requirements for any exam!

During this webinar, you will:

- Understand how this course will help you ace the English section in competitive exams
- Get a Demo of the course
- Interact directly with our English Experts

60% OFF for attendees

STEP for Competitive Exams helps you crack competitive exams with a tailor-made online course that improves:

- Reading & Writing
- Comprehension
- Listening skills
- Vocabulary & Interview preparation

Scan the QR code

Date: 17th Sep | Time: 7 pm to 8 pm
Visit BIT.LY/S4CE6WEB

STEP
FOR COMPETITIVE
EXAMS

MARKET WATCH

	16-09-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	39,303	0.66
US Dollar	73.52	0.16
Gold	53,030	0.02
Brent oil	41.96	5.22

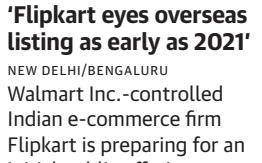
NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	353.55	0.90
Asian Paints	2012.10	-5.45
Axist Bank	446.00	-3.55
Bajaj Auto	3037.95	100.60
Bajaj Finserv	6145.95	30.40
Bajaj Finance	3521.50	8.10
Bharti Airtel	481.75	-3.80
BPCL	413.05	-1.35
Britannia Ind	3844.50	110.40
Cipla	752.60	10.15
Coal India	123.85	-0.25
Dr Reddy's Lab	4627.90	185.55
Eicher Motors	2163.75	23.15
GAIL (India)	91.85	-0.25
Grasim Ind	720.40	0.00
HCL Tech	789.25	-3.45
HDPC	1768.15	9.40
HDPC Life	598.60	4.40
Hero MotoCorp	3056.20	19.05
Hindustan	183.80	7.05
Hind Unilever	2143.50	19.05
ICICI Bank	374.70	3.15
IndusInd Bank	621.65	-11.75
Bharti Infratel	200.15	-2.35
Infosys	1001.75	19.30
Indian Oil Corp	82.70	0.45
ITC	180.65	-1.15
JSW Steel	288.65	-0.95
Kotak Bank	1325.40	1.45
L&T	921.80	11.85
M&M	639.45	26.00
Maruti Suzuki	7057.95	5.15
Nestle India Ltd.	16197.80	156.85
NTPC	89.65	-1.45
ONGC	73.05	-0.75
PowerGrid Corp	171.95	-1.35
Reliance Ind	2324.55	5.70
State Bank	198.20	-1.95
Shree Cement	20387.85	322.60
Sun Pharma	518.50	12.10
Tata Motors	151.45	3.05
Tata Steel	404.60	-0.65
TCS	2503.00	11.60
Tech Mahindra	792.00	0.85
Titan	1811.70	7.15
UltraTech Cement	3974.90	43.45
UPL	528.50	-1.20
Wipro	312.15	4.80
Zee Entertainment	215.85	-1.60

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on September 16		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.32	73.64
Euro	87.06	87.44
British Pound	94.68	95.10
Japanese Yen (100)	69.71	70.02
Chinese Yuan	10.85	10.90
Swiss Franc	80.86	81.25
Singapore Dollar	54.01	54.26
Canadian Dollar	55.70	55.94
Malaysian Ringgit	17.74	17.84
Australian Dollar	53.73	53.96

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



'Flipkart eyes overseas listing as early as 2021'
NEW DELHI/BENGALURU
Walmart Inc.-controlled Indian e-commerce firm Flipkart is preparing for an initial public offering overseas as early as 2021, which could value the firm up to \$50 billion, sources familiar with the firm's plans told Reuters. Flipkart, which vies with players such as Amazon.com, will be aiming for a valuation in the \$45-\$50 billion range, according to one source. REUTERS

'Total tax collection falls 22.5% till September 15'
MUMBAI
Total tax collection of the Centre, including advance tax collection for the second quarter, fell 22.5% to ₹2,53,523 crore till September 15 of the current fiscal as compared to the year-ago period, according to a source in the income tax (I-T) department. For the same period a year earlier, total tax collection stood at ₹3,27,320 crore, the I-T source told PTI. PTI

ONGC exits Sudan over non-payment of dues
NEW DELHI
India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp. (ONGC) has exited Sudan oilfields after the African nation refused to pay for oil it lifted from the fields. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), the overseas arm of the state-owned firm, as also its Chinese partner CNPC and Malaysia's Petronas have withdrawn from the block. Sudan's dues towards OVL totalled \$431 million, an official said. PTI

SEBI allows REITs, InvITs to list on bourses in IFSC
NEW DELHI
Markets regulator SEBI allowed investment vehicles — REITs and InvITs — to list on stock exchanges operating in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). Besides, SEBI has asked bourses in the IFSC to evolve a detailed framework prescribing the initial and continuous listing requirements for InvITs and REITs whose units are proposed to be listed. PTI

Recovery not yet entrenched, may be gradual'

RBI Governor Das says upticks seen in some sectors appear to be levelling off, cites rising COVID-19 infections as challenge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said while there were some signs of 'stabilisation' in the pandemic-hit economy, a recovery was yet to take firm root and would probably take longer to gain momentum.

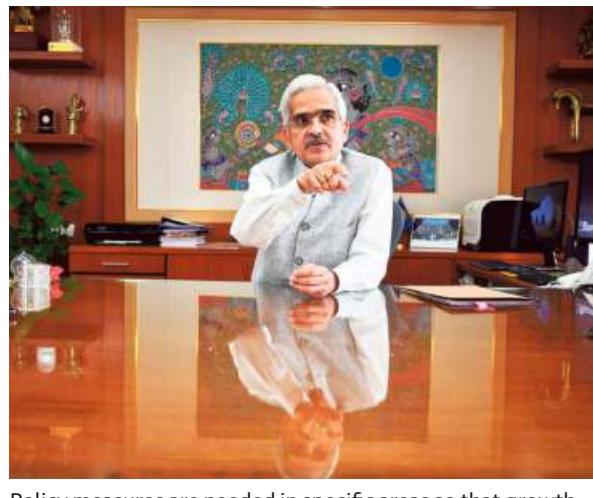
Observing that high frequency indicators of agricultural activity, manufacturing PMI and private estimates for unemployment pointed to some stabilisation of economic activity in the second quarter, Mr. Das said, "the recovery is, however, not yet fully entrenched and moreover, in some sectors, upturns in June and July appear to be levelling off".

"By all indications, the recovery is likely to be gradual as efforts towards reopening

of the economy are confronted with rising infections," the RBI chief told members of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry's national executive committee in a speech, the text of which was shared on the central bank's website.

A protracted nationwide lockdown and local restrictions in several States aimed at slowing the spread of the novel coronavirus notwithstanding, the total number of COVID-19 cases raced past the 50-lakh mark this week.

Noting that the immediate policy response had been to ensure stability, including the RBI's own steps of cutting policy interest rates and enabling targeted infusion of liquidity, Mr. Das said looking ahead policy measures were required in specific focus areas to make sure that



Policy measures are needed in specific areas so that growth seen after the recovery is sustainable, says Mr. Das. ■ FILE PHOTO

the growth that emerged after the recovery from the crisis remained durable.

Highlighting five critical areas that would determine India's ability to sustain

growth in the medium-run, he said these include human capital, in particular education and health; productivity; exports, which is linked to raising India's role in the

global value chain; tourism; and food processing and associated productivity gains.

"Indian banks and the financial system would need to respond proactively to opportunities arising from the NEP (new education policy) for new financing," he asserted, adding that the health sector should adopt a more comprehensive approach similar to the NEP.

He also said that in a vastly altered landscape for trade, India had an opportunity to expand exports by focusing on global value chains.

"There is a need to move up the value chain," he said referring to the need to prioritise greater value addition to farm output.

Answering a question he said the restructuring window allowed for COVID-19-impacted companies was a

balancing act to safeguard the interests of depositors, lenders and borrowers.

Depositors' interest'

"The primary concern of any bank is protection of depositors' interest because ultimately it is depositors' money. There are crores of depositors while borrowers could be in lakhs only. There are small depositors, middle class and retired people who depend on their deposit income and their interest has to be protected," he said.

Besides depositors, the aspect of financial stability also had to be kept in mind.

"Both these sides need to be balanced. The revival of such [COVID hit] businesses will also ensure that NPA levels are kept low and there will be quicker economic recovery," he added.

Trade deficit with China dips to \$5.5 bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The trade deficit between India and China in April-June this fiscal year fell to \$5.48 billion from \$13.1 billion a year earlier, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

In a written reply, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said bilateral trade between the countries too dipped to \$16.55 billion during the first three months of 2020-21 from \$21.42 billion. He said the Centre had worked to "balance trade with China by increasing exports to China and reducing our... imports from China."

In a separate reply, the Minister said currently, about 550 products were under the restricted/prohibited category for imports.

Builders urge govt. aid to ensure SMEs' survival

Centre needs to spend, says HCC chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The construction industry is facing a survival issue and many small- and medium-sized construction firms and builders would be out of business without timely action, said Ajit Gulabchand, CMD, Hindustan Construction Company and past president of The Builders' Association of India (BAI) at a webinar.

"Many existing projects have got delayed due to paucity of funds," he said. Hence many projects were facing cost overruns, he added.

Painting a gloomy picture for the infrastructure, housing and construction indus-

try, he said the government's planned expenditure of ₹100 lakh crore in the next five years would help this industry overcome some of the challenges.

However, he said it would be impossible for the industry to offer 30% collateral that banks were now seeking for sanctioning loans.

BAI has recommended a few measures, including on taxation and regulation for revival of the sector, to the Centre. "Loans for the construction industry should be treated at par with agriculture, and regulated accordingly. GST for both infrastructure and housing projects should be 5%," said M. Mohan, President, BAI.

Desi Tea Time plans to invest up to ₹30 crore

Tea franchiser to boost processing

M. SOUNDARIYA PREETHA
COIMBATORE

Desi Tea Time, a tea franchise chain, which runs stores under Tea Time and Cafe Club brands across the country, plans to invest ₹25 crore to ₹30 crore to step up its processing facilities and make new products.

Inaugurating a 2,200 sq ft franchise outlet here under the two brands, S. Uday, MD, Desi Tea Time and S. Kabilan, CEO, said the investment will go into tea estate, tea processing facility, research and development, and new products.

The firm is looking at expanding to almost 2,000 outlets in two years. On an average, sales at each outlet is ₹7,000 to ₹10,000 a day.

The company now sources tea leaves from over 200 farmers in the north eastern States and the tea is processed at two factories with which it has tie-ups.

"We plan to start working with tea growers in the southern States soon," Mr. Kabilan said.



the firm is looking at expanding to almost 2,000 outlets in two years. On an average, sales at each outlet is ₹7,000 to ₹10,000 a day.

The company now sources tea leaves from over 200 farmers in the north eastern States and the tea is processed at two factories with which it has tie-ups.

"We plan to start working with tea growers in the southern States soon," Mr. Kabilan said.

Rentals decline in key metros as pandemic drives people to smaller towns, outskirts

Luxury segment hit the most with 30-40% correction, mid-segment by 5-10%

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Rental housing in key metros has taken a hit with reverse migration due to the pandemic and on account of prolonged work-from-home (WFH) assignments, besides salaried job losses.

On the other hand, it has picked up in sleepy towns and peripheral areas both in terms of demand and occupancy rates, according to analysts.

"Over 10,000 people have vacated their rental homes in the last 3 months and have gone back to smaller cities and home towns," said Amarendra Sahu, CEO, Nestaway Technologies, a home rental company with more than 60,000 homes across 16 cities. He said COVID-19 had

caused massive disruptions in the home rental industry, especially in cities, as there had been a massive reverse migration of youth to their home towns. An estimated 50% tenants had left Bengaluru, as per reports.

"When the economy goes down, house rents also go down. But this adverse im-

pact is short-lived. Over 70% of the people will come back and then rents will move up," Mr. Kapur said.

Commenting on the trend, Ritesh Mehta, senior director and head - West India, Residential Services, JLL, said, "While we are witnessing some correction in rental values due to COVID-19, the real financial impact is yet to be seen in the next couple of quarters."

"While there has been relaxation in terms of daily utility bills and maintenance, loans have moratoriums. The real crash crunch will see from October to April when individuals would be burdened with liabilities to fulfil expenses vis-a-vis an uncertain drop in income," he added.

Pankaj Kapur, managing director & CEO, Liases Foras said the

TV PICKS

Rome Masters: Sony Six (SD & HD), 2.30 p.m.
Tour de France: Eurosport (SD & HD), 4 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Harikrishna in joint lead

NEW DELHI
P. Harikrishna led jointly with Levon Aronian after three rounds of the St. Louis rapid and blitz online chess tournament on Tuesday. The standings (after three rounds of rapid; two points for a win, one for a draw): 1-2. Aronian, Harikrishna (5 each); 3-4. Nepomniachtchi, So (4 each); 5. Carlsen (3); 6-9. Nakamura, Perez, Firouza, Xiong (2 each), 10. Grischuk (1).



Diack found guilty of doping cover-up

PARIS
The former head of IAAF, Lamine Diack, was on Wednesday found guilty by a French court of corruption in covering up Russian doping cases and sentenced to four years in prison, of which two years were suspended. Diack, an 87-year-old Senegalese, who led the IAAF, now renamed World Athletics, from 1999 to 2015, was also fined €500,000. The presiding judge in the court said Diack was unlikely to go to jail. AFP

LPGA Tour cancels two more events

HONG KONG
The LPGA Tour has cancelled events in South Korea and Japan because of Coronavirus, meaning the elite women's golf circuit has been forced to scrap all seven 2020 Asian tournaments in the latest blow to the continent's hard-hit sporting calendar. The announcement follows the axing of next month's Buick Shanghai LPGA in China and Swinging Skirts Championships in Taiwan because of stringent anti-virus measures. AFP



Another trophy for Dustin Johnson

MAMARONECK (USA)
One week after he captured the FedEx Cup and its \$15 million prize, Dustin Johnson was voted PGA Tour player of the year for the second time in the last five years. He also won the Jack Nicklaus Award, which comes with a bronze of Nicklaus famously raising his putter, in 2016.

Johnson joins Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, Nick Price and Fred Couples as the only players to win the award multiple times since it began in 1990. AP

Bangladesh's Saif Hassan tests positive again

DHAKA
Bangladesh batsman Saif Hassan has returned positive again in his second COVID-19 test. Hassan's second sample was taken exactly a week after he first tested positive, a Bangladesh Cricket Board source confirmed to ESPNcricinfo. ANI



Coman in isolation after coronavirus contact

MUNICH
Bayern Munich forward Kingsley Coman is in isolation at home ahead of the new Bundesliga season after he had contact with a person infected with the coronavirus, the club said. Bayern didn't say how long he would need to spend in quarantine, but that he had tested negative for the coronavirus on Sunday. ANI

THE ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE DOSSIER



FINALIST	P	W	L	NR
2009	181	84	93	4
2011	24	8	15	1
2016	23	14	8	1
vs. CSK	24	12	12	-
vs. DC	25	9	16	-
vs. KXIP	20	8	10	2
vs. KKR	14	6	8	-

* Royal Challengers' remaining matches were against Deccan Chargers (11), Gujarat Lions (5), Pune Warriors (5), Rising Pune Supergiant (4), and Kochi Tuskers Kerala (2).

TOP PERFORMERS

BATTING

Most runs:

Kohli (542, 169 innings)

Highest: Chris Gayle (175* vs. Pune Warriors, 2013, Bengaluru)

Best average: Marcus Stoinis (52.75 - 211 runs, 6 n.o., 10 innings)

Best strike rate: Moeen Ali (165.92 - 297 runs, 179 balls, 14 innings)

Most 100s: Gayle (5),

Kohli (5)

Most sixes:

Gayle (239)

Note: Batting: Best average (min. 100 innns); Best strike rate (min. 125 balls)



BOWLING

Most wickets: Yuzvendra Chahal (100, 82 innnings)

Best bowling: Anil Kumble (5/5 vs. RR, 2009, Cape Town)

Best average: Pawan Negi (17.40 - 20 wickets, 348 runs conceded, 21 matches)

Best strike rate: Negi (14.2 - 20 wickets, 47.2 overs)

Best economy rate: Daniel Vettori (6.31 - 86.4 overs, 547 runs conceded, 22 matches)

Most four-fors: Kumble (3)

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

ROYAL CHALLENGERS' 2020 FIXTURES

Sept. 21	vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 24	vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 28	vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 3	vs. RR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 5	vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 10	vs. CSK	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 12	vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 15	vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 17	vs. RR	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 21	vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 25	vs. CSK	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 28	vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 31	vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Nov. 2	vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi

SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO

THE SQUAD: Virat Kohli (Capt.), Devdutt Padikkal, AB de Villiers, Gurkeerat Singh Mann, Shivam Dube, Chris Morris, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Navdeep Saini, Dale Steyn, Umesh Yadav, Moeen Ali, Pavan Deshpande, Mohammed Siraj, Pawan Negi, Aaron Finch, Parthiv Patel, Josh Philippe, Shahbaz Ahmed, Isuru Udana, and Adam Zampa.

COMPILATION BY G. PRASAD

Can RCB end years of frustration?

Needs to shed over-reliance on Kohli-de Villiers and improve its efficiency at the death

IPL COUNTDOWN

ASHWIN ACHAL

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) has always been packed with star power and backed by a loyal fan base. But the ultimate prize – an IPL trophy – has proven to be frustratingly elusive.

In seasons past, the side has been dragged down by a few recurring failings – an overdependence on Virat Kohli and A.B. de Villiers,

and a dearth of death bowlers and middle-order finishers.

In the December player auction, the franchise did not do enough to address these issues. While the mauling Aaron Finch and informant Devdutt Padikkal add substance to the top-order, the list of finishers – led by Chris Morris, Moeen Ali and Shivam Dube – lacks that explosive quality.

The RCB arsenal is missing the devastating detonation provided by the likes of Andre Russell, Rishabh Pant, Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard, all of whom can consistently win matches from tight situations.

The death bowling responsibility falls on pacer Navdeep Saini, who has great control over yorkers and bouncers. Saini, however, lacks support. Dale Steyn, on a comeback trail at 37, is effective with the new ball but leaks runs towards the end of the innings. Umesh Yadav

and Mohammed Siraj do not inspire confidence at the death, as, in seasons past, they have not shown the required temperament and skill in the face of heavy fire.

Clever mix

Wiry Sri Lankan left-arm seamer Isuru Udana, with his clever mix of slower deliveries, could be called in to keep the late runs in check. The middle overs, with dependable leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal in action, does not

pose much concern. With pitches subject to wear and tear as the season rolls on, the spin contingent – consisting of Chahal, leg-spinner Adam Zampa, left-arm spinner Shahbaz Ahmed and offies Washington Sundar and Moeen – will play a big role.

RCB must shun the old unreliable formula of banking on star players Kohli and de Villiers to conjure up victories. It is time for new match-winners to step up and be counted.

Bairstow takes England to 302

AUS IN ENGLAND

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MANCHESTER

Jonny Bairstow's century powered England to 302 for seven in the third and final ODI against Australia at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

The opener could only stand and watch from the other end as left-arm quick Mitchell Starc took two wickets with the first two deliveries of the match, removing Jason Roy and Joe Root.

Bairstow, however, counter-attacked, smashing Josh Hazlewood for two fours and lofting Cummins for six.

Eoin Morgan, who had survived the hat-trick ball from Starc, made 23 before driving leg-spinner Adam Zampa to Starc at mid-off. Zampa also sent back Jos Buttler, the batsman chipping to extra-



Bairstow. AP

cover after scoring just eight.

Bairstow, however, continued to make merry, reaching his century in style with

a six off a 90mph delivery from fast bowler Pat Cummins. It was his 10th century in 83 matches and Bairstow shared a fifth-wicket partnership of 114 with Sam Billings, whose 57 followed his 118 in the first ODI.

Chris Woakes' late assault – 53 not out off 39 balls with six fours – and his partnerships with Tom Curran (19) and Adil Rashid (11 not out) pushed England past the 300-mark.

No Smith again
Australia was again without Steve Smith, the team management insisting that he was being rested purely as a precaution.

The scores: England 302/7 in 50 overs (Jonny Bairstow 112, Sam Billings 57, Chris Woakes 53 n.o., Mitchell Starc 3/4, Adam Zampa 3/51) vs Australia.

AP

Keep athletes on vaccine priority list: AFI chief

Gopi Chand calls for multiple mini-leagues for elite sportspersons

S. DIPAK RAGAV

CHENNAI

Athletics Federation of India president Adille Sumariwalla on Wednesday said the federation was working with the government to ensure athletes are high up in the priority list to receive a vaccine when it is ready.

"We have already discussed this with the government. If they need to go to the Olympics, we need to ensure our athletes should get it [the vaccine] in the first batch," Sumariwalla said during a webinar jointly organised by IDBI Federal Life Insurance, Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and FIT India.



Adille Sumariwalla.

The former Olympian also added that athletics events in the country might resume only in January with intensive training set to begin in October.

"We have just chalked out our detailed calendar and

we are hoping to see competitive action from January onwards.

"Due to the delay [in the start of the Olympics] we are confident of a much better show as our young athletes will be more mature and better prepared," said Sumariwalla.

National Badminton Coach P. Gopi Chand proposed multiple mini-leagues for top athletes within bio-secure bubbles to kickstart sporting activity.

Create a bubble

"Sport across the world has started and we cannot be left behind. It may not be possible to hold the same kind of tournaments like in the past. We can look at a league in each sport among elite players by dividing them into groups as per their levels. We can create a bubble and ensure they don't need to travel much," Gopi said.

Monchengladbach is set to be played in front of around 10,000 spectators," the official handle of Borussia Dortmund tweeted.

As per the new guidelines, 20 per cent of the stadium can be used and

strict hygiene requirements need to be followed.

Away fans will not be allowed to attend, though a game would be forced back behind closed doors if the infection rate is too high over a seven-day period.

Lopez wins, goes third

Champion Egan Bernal pulls out



Go, Lopez, go! Miguel Angel Lopez pushes ahead, cheered on by excited fans. AP

TOUR DE FRANCE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MERIBEL

Colombia's Miguel Angel Lopez won stage 17 of the Tour de France on Wednesday to climb third in the overall standings as race leader Primoz Roglic extended his advantage.

The race ascended to 2,304m altitude atop the Col de la Loze where Slovenian rookie Tadej