

Fear of vaccine lurks

Many people are still hesitant to take the jab. Reasons range from inconclusive research, lack of safety at vaccine centres and doubts on the efficacy of vaccines

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Amid fears of the pandemic's third wave, administering vaccines, at least a single dose, to the maximum population remains the top priority of the government, besides improving the health infrastructure. Though a vast majority is willing to get vaccinated, a small section still remains unconvinced for a variety of reasons and are hesitant to get the jab. The scepticism is not confined to particular strata of society or faith, but spreads across the rich and the poor, the literate and the illiterate and people practising different religions.

Corporate lawyer Sonia Abrol, a Master of Corporate and Commercial Laws from the University of California, is not convinced to take a jab because of contradictory reports on the efficacy of the vaccines and "little clarity" on their processes.

"Sometimes there are reports that a vaccine is not approved by WHO or the other is not accepted by the European Union. So which vaccine should one get? There is little clarity on the process of these vaccines. How much are you protected? Or how many variants are you protected against? The research is not conclusive. So how does one take a call? How can you play with your body? It is a big risk. I feel I am so much safer not getting vaccinated than getting vaccinated," said the 34-year-old, a resident of Sector 9A in Gurugram.

Ms. Abrol, founder of law firm Sarvaya Legal, also sounded sceptical about the health infrastructure saying she was not sure whether the vaccination centres were properly sanitised or those



administering vaccines were themselves not infected. "In a nutshell, I am being extra careful and I feel there is no better vaccine than staying home and staying unexposed," summed up Ms. Abrol.

Implausible explanation

Panipat-based RTI activist P.P. Kapoor said that COVID-19 was a "big mystery" for him and seemed to be a weapon to trample the rights of the workers and distract people's attention from the real issues and government's failures. Not willing to take the jab, Mr. Kapoor argued that the number of COVID-19 cases rose and then went down without any plausible explanation. He added that even taking a vaccine does not guarantee full protection.

Maths post-graduate Rekha, a

resident of Rohtak, said her husband, a civic body employee, and in-laws took the vaccine, but she was reluctant to take it.

"I know people who got infected after taking the jab. Also, even a little overdose of vaccine can be harmful and so I am scared to take it. It also causes fever for a few days," said Ms. Rekha.

The 32-year-old said she had already got infected and recovered and was now confident that there was no need for vaccine.

Lack of faith

All India Mewati Samaj president Ramzan Chaudhary, a resident of Nuh, said that none in his village sewaka had got the jab except his family.

"We are soon going to hold a special camp in our village to get

people vaccinated. When I spoke to the fellow villagers to find out the reasons for not getting vaccinated, they told me that they feared that the vaccine might cause impotency and was anti-Islam. Many feared long-term harmful effects. We made them speak to Muslim doctors and mufis to address their fears and concerns.

There is widespread lack of faith against the vaccine in the villages in Nuh, despite the best efforts of the administration," said Mr. Chaudhary.

Namita Jaggi, Chairperson of Lab services and Infection Control and Chief Education and Research, Artemis Hospital said that vaccines against COVID-19 prevented severe disease and deaths and was the only tool for ending the pandemic.

"There is still widespread hesitancy fuelled by misinformation and mistrust. People, especially in rural areas, believe that vaccine will cause impotency, serious side effects and could even kill. Many female patients come to hospital and ask questions like if the vaccine would disrupt their menstrual cycle or could reduce their fertility. Even after getting appropriate answers, they do not take the vaccine. We know from psychology research and practical observations why people hesitate to vaccinate across all the countries. There are five universal reasons called 5C Model -- vaccine confidence, vaccine complacency, constraints, collective responsibilities and calculation," Dr. Jaggi added.

Urban disease

"People do not have confidence in the safety of the vaccine and mistakenly believe that it can cause life-threatening adverse reactions when no clear cut causality to vaccines has been proven. There is vaccine complacency among the community that they do not need to vaccinate because they will not catch the virus, especially in rural areas where people still believe this virus cannot catch them as they do not eat junk food and work in fields. According to them, this is an 'urban area disease'."

Then there are constraints like concerns about cost, time, I'm too busy, I've got a stressful life, or I work all day and where is the time to take the vaccine. Sometimes logistics are difficult. The fourth C is a collective responsibility which is all about if everybody else vaccinates, then I do not need to. The last and fifth C is calculation, where people do extensive research about the vaccine, read a thousand articles and weigh the benefits and still remain unsure about getting the jab," explained Dr. Jaggi.

She said the pandemic had been an infodemic with information thrust upon people from various sources, not fully researched or checked for authenticity. "Just as a jab inoculates a harmless form of the virus in order to avoid a severe disease in case we are exposed to it, an inoculation of a clear and transparent message would prevent vaccine hesitancy in individuals if they come into contact with misleading false information," said Dr. Jaggi.

67-year-old woman robbed in CR Park

Three held in connection with the case

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 67-year-old woman was allegedly attacked by bike-borne robbers in south Delhi's CR Park, the police said on Sunday.

Three persons -- Karan, Surjeet and Shuaib -- has been arrested in connection with the case, they said.

The incident happened when the victim, Indrajeet Kaur, went to visit her daughter's house in GK-II on July 3 evening, the police said.

At 9.45 p.m., her daughter dropped Ms. Kaur near her house. Ms. Kaur opened her bag to fetch house keys when a man riding a pillion on a motorcycle approached her and tried to snatch her bag.

"Ms. Kaur tried to resist the robbery following which the snatcher dragged her on the road. He then sped off with the bag, which contained around ₹500 cash, a mobile phone and a debit card. The victim has sustained bruises," an officer said.

The police said during the scuffle, the robber's helmet had dropped on the ground.

"Next morning, a man picked up the helmet," the officer said, adding that the entire incident was captured in a CCTV camera.

An FIR was registered under Indian Penal Code Section 392 (robbery) and probe was launched following which the arrests were made, the police added.

Auto driver, another held for robbing jawan in city

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Two men, including an autorickshaw driver, were arrested for allegedly robbing an Indian Army jawan in southeast Delhi's New Friends Colony, the police said on Sunday.

The accused, Rajiv Kumar (28) and Umesh (22), are both from U.P., they said.

The victim, Tawar Raj Singh, approached the police on April 13. He told them that the incident happened when he was going for duty in Punjab's Dappar from his village Goondi in Rajasthan via bus.

He reached Sarai Kale Kha bus terminal at 1 a.m. on April 13. He was waiting for a bus to reach Kashmeri Gate when an auto stopped at the spot.

He told the police that the auto already had one passenger. The driver told him that

he would drop him at Kashmeri Gate following which he boarded the auto.

Fled with pistol, ID card

The driver took him to an isolated spot and started beating him, the police said. The passengers also joined the driver and they robbed Singh of his bag that had 10 live cartridges of 7.6 mm pistol, uniform and his ID card.

The accused then fled the spot.

"Police analysed CCTV footage of the area and identified the auto. Later, a raid was conducted at Yakubpur village in Noida and Rajiv was apprehended. On his instance, his accomplice Umesh was also held," said DCP (South-East) R.P. Meena.

Nine live cartridges and the auto was recovered from them, the police added.

COVID patient with severe complications recovers after 50 days in ICU

He had developed ARDS, says doctor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A 38-year-old patient, who had developed severe complications due to COVID, recovered after 50 days in ICU and was discharged from a private hospital here, said authorities on Sunday.

The patient, an executive in a multi-national company was diabetic, and had been admitted to the Moolchand Hospital on May 7, when the city was battling a fierce second COVID wave.

He had severe bilateral pneumonia and had also developed Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), said Surabhi Awasthi, Director of Critical Care at the hospital.

According to hospital authorities, the patient's relatives had considered air-lifting him for extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) and lung transplant but were somehow convinced to continue the treatment at the facility.

"He was in the ICU for 50



A woman gets vaccinated in the city on Sunday.

■ R.V. MOORTHY

days and on ventilator support for nearly 35-40 days. After we could cure his lungs, he developed quadriplegia and could not move any limbs.

"We treated that condition with the help of a neurologist. Then the patient developed pneumothorax in which air gets filled inside the lungs but he managed to overcome everything," Dr. Awasthi said.

Currently, the patient has regained movement in his upper limbs but his lower limbs are still weak, the doctor said, adding: "He has a long road to recovery."

72 centres found flouting e-waste rules in city: DPCC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Seventy-two e-waste collection centres in the Capital have been found violating E-waste Management Rules and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been requested to take action against them, the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) said on Sunday.

The degree of non-compliance is "very high" looking at the findings of the inspections, the DPCC noted.

The apex pollution control body has also been asked to cancel Extended Producer's Responsibility (EPR) authorization granted to the producers attached with these non-compliant collection centres.

EPR is one of the main features of E-waste Management Rules under which brand owners and importers are responsible for recovering the material placed in the market for safe disposal at their cost.

DMRC implements custom-made project monitoring software

IPMS will assist in planning and execution at all stages

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro on Sunday announced that it has implemented a custom-made project monitoring software -- Integrated Project Monitoring Software (IPMS) -- for tracking the progress of its Phase 4 corridors in the city and the Patna Metro.

Through IPMS, all the stages of project planning and implementation right from the tender stage to revenue operation of each corridor will be monitored, including the issues of work front availability such as land availability, tree transplantation and shift-



The software can be accessed from anywhere, says DMRC spokesperson.

■ THE HINDU

ing of services and design status, the DMRC said.

The IPMS has the features of integration of other construction-related software and will monitor the

progress of work of all disciplines -- civil, electrical, mechanical, signalling and telecommunication contract package-wise at the chief project manager and project manager levels and corridor-wise at the directors and managing director-level, the DMRC said.

"The implementation of this software will enable easier round-the-clock monitoring of projects as the IPMS portal can be accessed from anywhere on mobiles, laptops, computers. This will also help in better record keeping and knowledge sharing among the engineers," a Delhi Metro spokesperson said.

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Three men were arrested for allegedly impersonating civic body officials and extorting money from shopkeepers in east Delhi's Mansarovar Park, the police said on Sunday.

The accused have been identified as Omparkash (55) from Seelampur, Vikas Panchal from Ram Nagar Extension and Sandeep Garg, a resident of Shahdara, they said.

'Accused took ₹3,000'

Thereafter, they threatened him for action against the shop and asked him to pay ₹3,000 for the settlement.

The complainant then paid the amount.

Sharma got suspicious and asked for their identity cards following which some heated arguments ensued between them. The accused

then fled the spot," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) R. Sathyasundaram said.

Modus operandi

During interrogation, Omparkash disclosed that he along with his accomplices Panchal and Garg, used to impersonate as civic body

officials and check the trade and other licenses of the shops and extort money from them by threatening the shopkeepers regarding cancellation of license etc., the DCP said.

Later, raids were conducted and, on his instance, his accomplices were arrested, the police said.

HC urges mercy, stays transfer of HIV positive BSF jawan

Vacation Bench expresses disapproval of force's decision to resist his voluntary retirement

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

"Justice, to which mercy is alien, is no justice at all." This remark came from the Delhi High Court while staying the transfer of an HIV+ Border Security Force (BSF) jawan, from Delhi to Cachar in Assam, considering his health condition.

A Vacation Bench comprising Justice C. Hari Shankar and Justice Subramonium Prasad also expressed disapproval of the BSF's decision to resist the voluntary retirement application submitted by the jawan.

"We cannot appreciate the insistence of the respondent [BSF] on the petitioner [jawan] joining duty at Cachar, in his precarious medical condition, even while keeping the application



pending," the High Court observed.

The court's order came on a plea by the jawan who has contested the June 9, 2021, order of the Force to transfer him to a Battalion in Cachar, which is located at the Indo-Bangladesh Border.

Undergoing therapy
The jawan contended that owing to his affliction, he is undergoing a Mega Highly Active Retroviral Therapy at the base hospital and at the

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi.

As travelling to Cachar and discharging duties would be severely deleterious to his health, and could also imperil his life, he applied for voluntary retirement on June 9. Meanwhile, a subsequent movement order was issued by the BSF, relieving him of his duties at Delhi with effect from June 21, and directing him to report at Cachar on or before July 5.

The BSF's counsel, however, submitted that the jawan ought to have submitted his voluntary retirement application at the Battalion in Cachar as he stood transferred to the said office. The counsel also argued that the jawan ought, in good faith, to have submitted his application of voluntary retirement at least

three months before the expiry of his tenure. He stated that there are as many as 17,129 BSF personnel who are in the Low Medical Category, of which 16,029 suffer from chronic diseases and 667 are HIV+.

The jawan submitted, since he was detected with HIV in 2007, he has always been posted in a place -- Delhi, Gandhinagar and Kolkata -- which has nearby access to specialist HIV treatment facilities.

The court noted that though it was "hopeful that a more compassionate approach would have been adopted by the respondents (BSF), keeping in view the medical condition of the petitioner; nevertheless, the respondents have chosen to contest the petition".

The court noted it was a matter of common knowledge that, over a

period of time, HIV being a progressive disease, the condition of the patient usually deteriorates. In this context, the jawan pointed out that he has a CD4 count of 215, which is a borderline count between HIV and AIDS. It also highlighted the Ministry of Home Affairs guidelines of September 28, 2017, which require that P-3 medical category BSF personnel be posted at a place that has a humidity level of less than 75% around the year and has access to specialist services nearby.

"The petitioner does not insist on retaining posting at Delhi. He has, very fairly and at the cost of his career, agreed to voluntarily retire, in accordance with the BSF Rules," the court said while staying the transfer and movement orders till the next date of hearing on September 6.

CMK

NIKHIL M BABU
NEW DELHI

The second wave of the pandemic saw a sudden spurt in the number of cases; it also saw a steep plunge after it hit the peak. The fluctuations were erratic. Test positivity rate (TPR) crossed 1% mark on March 20 but in little over a month, it peaked to 36% on April 22. Then, by May 31, the TPR had dropped below 1% mark to 0.99%.

Delhi's was not an exception. Experts said a similar trend was witnessed in some other States and attribute it to the type of virus variant as well as people's behavior patterns. However, they were also split on the issue of herd immunity and whether there can be a third wave in the city.

Jayaprakash Mulyil, an epidemiologist and former principal of Christian Medical College in Vellore, said whenever there is a sharp rise in cases, there will be a sharp drop in the number of cases. It was "expected".

"Second wave started at a time when people lost patience and started venturing out. There were Alpha and Delta variants at that time too. The Delta variant is more contagious and if one person gets infected, in most cases, the whole family will get infected. This was the reason for the sharp rise. Most parts of Delhi are a city and this also contributed to it," Dr. Mulyil said.

Susceptibility factor

After the rise, the cases started dropping suddenly. "Practically everyone who got infected during the second wave was those who did not get infected in the first wave. During the first wave everyone was susceptible."

But during the second, after a point the virus did not have enough susceptible people. That led to the sudden fall," he reasoned.

On the other hand, wherever the spike was not sharp, rather steady, it will take time for the cases to reduce. "For example, in Kerala there are still about 10,000 cases every day as they



RT-PCR test under way at GTK Road in the Capital; a woman getting vaccinated at a centre. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA



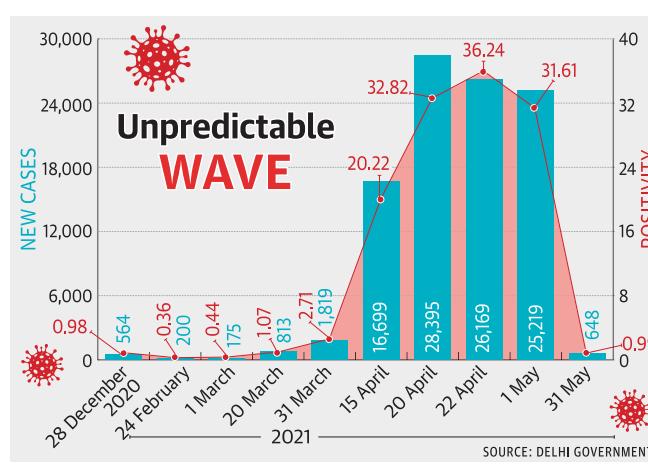
RISE AND FALL

did not see a sharp spike in cases like Delhi," he said.

Nandini Sharma, Head of Community Medicine Department of Maulana Azad Medical College in Delhi, attributed the rise to two reasons. First and foremost, it was a more contagious variant of the virus. Secondly, the virus got a chance to spread in Delhi as people were crowding. "The fall was sharp as the virus infected almost all susceptible people," Dr. Sharma said.

"Some other places would have a slower rise if they have a different variant of the virus and a different population density. Mumbai took almost double the time we took to reach the peak," she added.

Dr. Sharma said that the steep rise and fall is not unusual. "This is not something new and is one of the patterns of waves of an epidemic that we teach students. There are different patterns of waves of epidemics," she said.



Jugal Kishore, Head of Community Medicine Department at Safdarjung Hospital said it was "not an anomaly" as it occurs in other places too, though not everywhere.

"In U.K., there was a similar rise and fall in cases. It depends

The second wave of the pandemic has retreated almost as fast as it had peaked. Doctors, though, are divided about herd immunity and the possibility of a third wave

he said: "We need to know how much percentage of the population has been infected and how much is still susceptible to the virus. For that we need a sero survey."

As per current estimates, about 86% of people should have immunity by natural infection in cities to get herd immunity and the figure is 60% in rural areas, he said, adding that the immunity from COVID-19 infection is "long lasting".

However, Dr. Sharma said it is difficult to ascertain whether Delhi has attained herd immunity or not. "Assuming there is no new variant that can bypass immunity and infect people who have been already infected, we will attain herd immunity if 75-80% of the population has developed antibodies against COVID-19. Having said that, since it is a new virus, we are still learning about it," Dr. Sharma said.

He said if the government was detecting new cases faster during the second wave, then that would have also aided in a quick fall in cases as those people will be isolated and hence would not be spreading the disease.

Immunity and third wave

The quick drop in numbers in Delhi during the second wave could be a sign of herd immunity, observed Dr. Mulyil. About the possibility of a third wave, Dr. Kishore has a different take

on the third wave. "Only people who have not been infected by the virus are susceptible to it. In Delhi, majority have been infected. Also, till now there is no proof of any variant causing large scale re-infection. So, I don't think there will be a third wave in Delhi," Dr. Kishore said.

Less probability

But it cannot be ruled out altogether. "A third wave is possible, if the virus mutates and it is able to infect people who have been already infected," he said, adding that people who have developed natural immunity from COVID-19 have less chances of getting infected again, compared to those getting infected after taking the vaccine.

Attaining herd immunity for COVID-19, though, is more complex than initial assumptions. "In the beginning, we thought that if 60% of the population gets natural immunity then we will attain herd immunity. Later, the virus became more infectious and we thought that 80% of the population has to get natural immunity. But now we think that even if 80% of the population have natural immunity, the rest could be infected if a more infectious variant comes," he said.

Stadiums to open today sans spectators

Restrictions on educational institutions, religious gatherings remain in place



Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ PTI

Delhi Palam Today

40°C

A comfortable morning turns hot day with warm dry winds and few clouds.

41°C

Rise in day temperature.

Very hot day. Morning and evening would also remain warm with partly cloudy sky.

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THE HINDU
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THE HINDU

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic medalist

Sushil Kumar, who is currently lodged in Tihar jail in connection with the Chhatrasal Stadium brawl, requested the prison authorities for a television to get updates regarding wrestling, officials said on Sunday.

A senior jail official said

that Mr. Kumar has made a request through his advocate.

He has requested for a television set so that he would

get the updates about wrestling matches. He had also

requested for a few gym

equipment and protein sup-

plements in his diet but it

was denied. He is being given regular meal as other inmates.

Earlier, a Delhi court ex-

tended the judicial custody of Mr. Kumar till July 9. He

has been shifted to Tihar jail

number 2 from Mandoli jail,

where he was earlier lo-

gued.

Mr. Kumar and his ac-

complices allegedly assault-

ed wrestler Sagar Dhankar

and two of his friends Sonu

and Amit Kumar on the in-

tervening night of May 4 and

5 over a property dispute.

Dhankar, 23, succumbed to

injuries later.

He wants updates on wrestling matches

Citing report, Sisodia blames them for poor pupil-teacher ratio

Central report confirms

"The BJP government at the Centre has corroborated that the BJP-ruled civic schools have made a mess of the municipal schools in Delhi.

The mismanagement is so

stark that municipal schools are considered the worst in

the country. This is tarnish-

ing the image of Delhi. The

BJP with its poor governance and incompetence in municipal bodies has put the future of lakhs of children at risk," Mr. Sisodia said.

Delhi BJP spokesperson

Praveen Shankar Kapoor

said that despite financial

problems, the municipal

schools are better perform-

ing than the Delhi govern-

ment schools.

"Almost 50% of the munici-

pal schools are not follow-

ing Right to Education (RTE)

Act's mandate of pupil-

teacher ratio (PTR), while

98% of the Delhi government

schools are maintaining the

PTR," Mr. Sisodia said. He al-

leged that the PTR ratio at

civic schools were poor due to

the mismanagement of

BJP-ruled municipal schools

and it had been confirmed in

the MoE report.

"The BJD government at the

Centre has corroborated that

the BJD-ruled civic schools

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Man kills four relatives of his daughter's lover

Efforts on to nab accused: police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

A man allegedly killed four family members of a youth with whom his daughter was in a relationship in Punjab's Gurdaspur district, police said on Sunday.

The accused identified as Sukhjinder Singh, a resident of Balarwali village in Batala, got enraged when he came to know about his daughter's love affair with one Germanjeet Singh, who lives in the same village, they said.

Grandfather shot

The accused fired at them too resulting in the death of Mangal Singh, Jasbir Singh and Babandeep, the police said.

Germanjeet Singh and Jashan, who were injured in the incident, are stated to be out of danger.

Sukhjinder Singh is absconding and efforts are on to nab him, the police said.

Batala Superintendent of Police Gurpreet Singh said a case has been registered in this regard.

Similarly, the CEE by Ar-

'CM pushed Punjab into darkness'

SAD-BJP govt. had made the State power surplus, says Badal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

Shiromani Akali Dal leader Sukhbir Singh Badal on Sunday said the erstwhile SAD-BJP government had made Punjab a power surplus State but Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had pushed it back into darkness.

His remarks came a day after Capt. Amarinder said his government would soon announce a legal strategy to

counter the "ill-conceived"

power purchase agreements signed during the SAD-BJP rule which had put an "atrociously unnecessary" financial burden on the State.

The Chief Minister said of the 139 power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed during the SAD-BJP rule, 17 were enough to cater to the State's full electricity demand. The remaining 122 PPAs for 1,314 MWs of expensive power were inexplicably signed.

Punjab has been reeling under an unprecedented power shortage with urban and rural areas facing long hours of load shedding amid scorching heat.

The Congress-led government has been under fire from the opposition for not being able to provide sufficient electricity to consumers, especially to paddy growers for sowing their crop.

1 killed in M.P.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TIKAMGARH

A 30-year-old woman died and five people were left injured after their bus came in contact with a high tension electricity line in Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday, police said.

Chartered Accountant Exams and Army's CEE to be held under strict guidelines

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

The Haryana government on Sunday allowed holding of Chartered Accountant Examinations and Common Entrance Exam (CEE) by the Army Recruiting Office in Hisar even as the lockdown was again extended in the State for a week till July 12.

Extending the lockdown till 5 a.m. on July 12 to "continue the preventive and precautionary measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic", Chief Secretary-cum-Chairperson of Haryana State Executive Committee Vijai Vardhan, in a three-page order, said the Institute of Chartered Accountants was allowed to hold "Chartered Accountant Examinations" from July 5-20 strictly adhering to the COVID-related guidelines issued by them.

Similarly, the CEE by Ar-



People wait in queue to get the jab in Gurugram. ■ PTI

my Recruiting Office, Military Station Hisar, has also be allowed subject to strict observance of social distancing norms, sanitisation and COVID-appropriate norms.

The Haryana government had first imposed a week-end lockdown in nine districts – Gurugram, Faridabad, Rohtak, Sonipat, Karnal, Panchkula, Hisar, Sirsa and Fatehabad – from 10 p.m. April 30 to 5 a.m. on May 3. The entire State was then brought un-

der lockdown for a week on May 3 and the restrictions are being extended on a weekly basis thereafter.

Last week, the government had allowed the university campuses to open for research scholars, doubt classes and practical classes in laboratories.

All shops are allowed to open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and shopping malls from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. as part of the relaxations granted during a

series of earlier orders extending lockdown. The restaurants and bars, including those in hotels and malls, are allowed to open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. with 50% seating capacity.

50 people at gatherings

The gatherings at weddings, funerals/cremations are capped at 50 people. The gyms are also allowed to open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., but swimming pools and spas are closed.

All production units, establishments and industries are permitted to function with strict adherence to COVID-19-appropriate behaviour. The sports complexes are also permitted to open for sports activities, but spectators are not allowed.

Haryana recorded only 52 fresh cases on July 3 with the positivity rate for the day at 0.16 %.

'Curbs on people without jabs is like house arrest'

Gauhati HC questions Mizoram SOP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

spread the said virus to others...

"If vaccinated and unvaccinated persons can be infected by the COVID-19 virus and if they can both be spreaders of the virus, the restriction placed only upon the un-vaccinated persons, debarring them from earning their livelihood or leaving their houses to obtain essential items, is unjustified, grossly unreasonable and arbitrary," the court observed.

It said there is no reason to discriminate only against the unvaccinated people if the vaccinated and the unvaccinated cover their faces with a mask according to COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

The High Court said since the SOP requires all persons to adhere to the protocols, there should not be any discrimination against the unvaccinated as the protocols are also applicable to them.

Punjab BJP seeks meeting with CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

Punjab BJP chief Ashwani Sharma has sought a meeting with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh over the issue of alleged attacks on party leaders by people in the guise of farmers.

Party's State general secretary Jeevan Gupta on Sunday claimed many of the BJP leaders had faced "murderous attacks" in the last one year in the presence of police.

In some cases, police even registered cases against unidentified people, lamented Mr. Gupta.

He also pointed out that on July 2, some people under the guise of farmers destroyed paddy on the farm owned by BJP leader Harjit Singh Grewal in Barnala.

Fun time



Children playing football in a waterlogged field in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on Sunday. ■ PTI

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

Those who live uprightly enter a place of peace; they rest on their beds. - Isaiah 57:2

TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY



Date: 05.07.2009

KALVITHANTHAI Thiru. OORVASI D. SELVARAJ M.A., Ex-M.L.A.

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Mrs. Merlini Jemima Amirtharaj, B.E, MBA, Mr. S. Anandaraj, B.Tech, MBA, Mrs. Mercy Angel Anandaraj, B.Com, MBA,

Mrs. S. Rajapriya Joel Raja, M.A., Mr. S. Joel Raja, M.B.A., Mr. D. Victor, Mr. D. Gnanaraj

Odisha govt. constructs 10,000 rainwater harvesting structures

It will facilitate water conservation and groundwater recharge

STAFF REPORTER

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha has come up with more than 10,000 rainwater harvesting structures (RWHS) to facilitate water conservation and groundwater recharge in 114 towns in less than three-month time before onset of south-west monsoon.

A State-wide campaign on the theme 'Catch the Rain: Where it Falls and When it Falls' was launched on April 15 across all urban local bodies under Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan Yojana (MUKYA), an urban wage employment scheme for migrant labourers.

The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) department has selected 15,000 sites for RWHS. "As of now

10,176 RWHS have been completed. The department expected to achieve the figure of 12,000 by July 10," said the State government in a statement.

Water surplus State

Annual rainfall in Odisha varies from 1200 mm to 1800 mm making it a water surplus State.

The RWHS, which are being constructed in parks, playgrounds, open spaces and in vacant lands inside the institutions, have been planned in all the 2035 wards across 114 ULBs of the State.

To further strengthen transparency and accountability measures, the HUD department has decided to introduce social audit as a tool for performance improvement and outcome measurement on a pilot basis.

Man beaten to death in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KENDRAPARA

A physically challenged person died in Odisha's Kendrapara district on Sunday after he was allegedly beaten by a group of miscreants over a land dispute.

CENTRAL RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO : DRMWNP-24/2021 OF 30.06.2021

Sr. No. 1 : Jacketing to Abutment Pier and replacement steel girders by precast PSC Slabs on Bridge No. 7854/UP and DN, 29x14 m, on WARDHA-NAGPUR section. Approx. Cost : ₹ 1,22,19,401.29, Date & Time of Closing of Tender : 22.07.2021 at 15:00 Hrs. Complete details and instructions for e-Tendering and online participation for the above work is available on Railway's website : www.ireps.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager (Works) PM-46 Central Railway, Nagpur

SECURITY HELPLINE 162

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHAR (M.P.)

Two tribal sisters here were assaulted with sticks by their relatives for allegedly chatting with their uncle's sons over phone, police said on Sunday.

Video goes viral

Seven people were arrested in connection with the incident, which took place last month, after a video of it went viral on social media platforms, they said.

In the video, several people, including a woman, were purportedly seen hitting the victims with sticks and dragging them by their hair.

The victims, aged 19 and 20, were beaten up by their kin on June 22 in Pipala village, located around 70 km from Dhar district headquarters, Tanda police station in-charge Vijay Vaskale said.

"On June 25, we came across a video in which two women were seen being beaten up. While verifying the clip, we came to know that their family members were involved in this," he said.

The police found that their family members were angry over the women talking on phone to the sons of their maternal uncle, the officer said.

HPPWD Tender Notice

Sealed Item rates Tenders on PWD form 6&8 are invited by the Executive Engineer HP.PWD Nurpur on behalf of the Governor of HP from the approved and eligible contractors enlisted in HPPWD (B&R), so as to reach in his office on or before 17/07/2021 up to 11.00 AM and shall be opened on the same day at 11.30 AM in the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representative, if any. The tender forms can be had from his office through Challan payment (NR) in the Minor Head 0070-60-800-17 on HP e-challan up to 16/07/2021. Application for issue of tenders should reach in the office along with all the required documents on or before 15/07/2021. The earnest money in the shape of FDR duly pledged in the name of Executive Engineer, NurpurDivn. HP.PWD Nurpur must accompany with the application. Conditional tender and tender received without earnest money will summarily be rejected. The offer of the tender shall be kept open for 90 days. The XEN reserves the right to reject any tender without assigning any reason.

SL. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Time limit	Cost of tender form (Rs)
1.	C/O link road from Johar Pull to Charoh(Mehrka) Kms. 0/0 to 1/0 under MMGSY (Sh- Providing and laying 80mm thick ISI marked interlocking paver block in kms 0/100 to 0/275 length 175 mtr.	491114/-	10000/-	One month	350/-
2.	C/O link road from Johar Pull to Gahli to UprralaKatera Kms. 0/0 to 1/200 under MMGSY (Sh- Providing and laying 80mm thick ISI marked interlocking paver block in kms 0/050 to 0/225) length 175 mtr.	491114/-	10000/-	One month	350/-

Terms and Conditions:-

1. The contractor should produce copy of enlistment/renewal (Latest).

Executive Engineer
Nurpur Division, HPPWD, Nurpur.

HP / 2094/21-22

HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPAK

IN BRIEF



Telangana weavers to get life insurance cover

HYDERABAD
The Telangana government has decided to provide life insurance coverage to weavers with an assured sum of ₹5 lakh, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said in Sircilla on Sunday. To help weavers, the government has also decided to provide 50% subsidy on the yarn, colours and other inputs. Mr. Rao also announced disbursal of old age pensions for people aged above 57 years of age from next month.

Premature deaths of tribals being examined

KOZHIKODE
The Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights has ordered a comprehensive investigation into the suspected premature deaths at the Anakkampoyil tribal settlement in Kozhikode district of Kerala. The Commission members found that the average lifespan of those included in the list of premature deaths was 40. A study report submitted by the Tribal Extension Officer said the reasons for the majority of deaths were various liver diseases.

Mine planted by Maoists defused, say police

BHADRAGIRI-KOTHAGUDUM
A plot by Maoists to trigger a claymore mine blast targeting police personnel was thwarted in Telangana's Mulugu district on Sunday, the police said. During combing operations, a police team spotted an electric wire on an interior stretch in Kaushetvai village. The team alerted the bomb disposal squad, which unearthed iron pipes filled with gelatin powder, two detonators, electric wire and five grenades. The seized explosives were defused.

IB sounds alert on Bangladeshi nationals

Eight arrested in A.P. on Saturday say many have entered India; police looking into terror angle too

RAJULAPUDI SRINIVAS
VIJAYAWADA



Illegal trespassers: The Bangladeshi nationals being produced in a court in Vijayawada on Saturday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The eight Bangladeshi nationals arrested in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday with fake documents have reportedly admitted that several of their countrymen had entered Indian territory along with them.

Personnel of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), the Government Railway Police (GRP), and the Law and Order police of Rajahmundry and Vijayawada had arrested the Bangladeshi while they were travelling by the Howrah-Chennai and Howrah-Vasco da Gama Express trains.

During questioning, they reportedly said several persons from Bagerhat and other districts in Bangladesh had sneaked into India along with them.

Job search
Investigation officers suspect that many Bangladeshi are clandestinely staying in Kol-

kata, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Goa and other cities. "Due to poverty, many Bangladeshi are entering India illegally by road in search of work. However, terrorist groups are

luring them. Ultimately, a few of the intruders are turning into sympathisers and sleeper cells, and helping the banned organisations in creating unrest in India," a police officer said.

The Intelligence Bureau (IB), the Counter Intelligence (CI), the RPF, the GRP, the State Intelligence and the Law and Order police have sounded an alert following Saturday's arrest.

Embassy to be informed

"We are probing the terror angle too as the arrested persons have no passport and are carrying multiple fake identities. The Andhra Pradesh Police will apprise the Bangladesh Embassy on the arrest of eight persons at the Rajahmundry and Vijayawa-

da railway stations," an investigation officer told *The Hindu*.

Two of the arrested, Hyder Ali Khan and Md. Hassan, reportedly said they stayed in Bengaluru from 2017 to 2020, worked with an iron scrap dealer, and went back to Bangladesh during lockdown. "They returned to India with two others in June this year in search of work in Goa," a GRP official said.

"The intruders are in possession of fake ID cards with addresses in Bengaluru. They also have mobile phones with Indian and Bangladeshi numbers. The police are trying to find out who purchased train tickets for them and how they obtained PAN cards," a senior police officer said.

Karnataka Minister revives leadership debate again

Lead Dasara elephant is never permanent: Yogeshwar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU



C.P. Yogeshwar

Karnataka Tourism Minister C.P. Yogeshwar on Sunday likened the Chief Minister's position to that of the Dasara elephant carrying the golden howdah and indirectly revived the debate for leadership change in the State by saying the lead Dasara elephant is never permanent.

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru after calling on veteran politician and BJP MP representing Chamrajanager V. Srinivas Prasad at his residence, Mr. Yogeshwar said people respect the howdah, which carries the deity of Chamundeshwari. Hence, the Chief Minister should be

a capable person, possessing sensibilities and high ideals to meet the aspirations of the people. "For the elephant carrying the howdah, it is not just the weight [of the howdah] that is important; successfully reaching

the destination is equally

important," he said, before saying the lead elephant had often been replaced.

Mr. Yogeshwar said the jumbos Arjuna, Abhimanyu, and Balarama had all carried the golden howdah. "Just because the lead elephant carries the howdah, we can't have its calf do the same," he said, in an apparent taunt at B.S. Yediyurappa's son B.Y. Vijayendra. However, he said he would not like to speak about Mr. Vijayendra as the latter did not have a post in the government.

The Minister said Karnataka was well known for elephants and tigers and there would be no difficulty in finding a "capable elephant to carry the howdah".

SC to hear appeal against mandatory Ph.D. clause

Kerala HC made it must for some posts

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has decided to examine an appeal against a Kerala High Court decision that a Ph.D. degree is necessary to retain associate professorship in technical colleges after March 5, 2010.

A Bench led by Justice S.K. Kaul has issued notice to the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), State of Kerala and the Director of Technical Education.

The High Court had held that "after 5-03-2010, the qualification of Ph.D. is mandatory for the posts of Principals, Professors and Associate Professors (re-designated post of Assistant Professor)." The High Court

had held that a Rule which gave seven years' leeway to Assistant/Associate Professors to obtain their Ph.D. expired on March 5, 2010. Rule 6A(ii) of the Special Rules for Kerala Technical Education Service, 1967 (Special Rules) was introduced in 2003. The High Court held that it was not applicable after the cut-off date of March 5, 2010.

Three Associate Professors have approached the top court, saying that making the Rule redundant would lead to their demolition.

They said the Supreme Court had itself, in April 2016, said the Rule was in tune with the AICTE regulations. The court further implored the AICTE as a party in the case.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 16.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Thunderstorm with lightning at isolated places over Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Odisha, Assam, Meghalaya, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, interior Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	33...	25.8	Kozhikode	0.5...	31.5...	25.1
Ahmedabad	—	37.5...	27.5	Kurnool	5...	35.5...	25.6
Aizawl	—	—	22.9	Lucknow	—	35.4...	28.3
Allahabad	—	36.6...	28.2	Madurai	17...	38.2...	24
Bengaluru	—	31...	22.4	Mangaluru	0.7...	28.4...	23
Bhopal	—	35.7...	25	Mumbai	—	32.6...	27.2
Bhubaneswar	—	30.6...	26	Mysuru	—	30...	18.6
Chandigarh	—	36.4...	27.6	Patna	—	39...	26.2
Chennai	—	34.7...	26.7	Port Blair	—	31.9...	25.6
Coimbatore	—	33.6...	23.8	Puducherry	9.3...	33.2...	21.7
Dehradun	—	33.5...	23.8	Pune	—	32...	22
Gangtok	7...	21.2...	17.5	Raipur	5.4...	32.5...	25.4
Goa	40...	32...	24.7	Ranchi	35...	32.2...	21.1
Guwahati	33...	25.1...	19	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Hubbali	—	28...	22	Visakhapatnam	13...	31.4...	24.6
Hyderabad	—	33...	26.7	Shimla	—	28...	20.2
Imphal	—	30.2...	21.3	Srinagar	5...	28.8...	15.6
Jaipur	—	—	29.9	Thiruvananthapuram	0.7...	30.5...	24.4
Kochi	15...	31.8...	24.6	Tiruchi	—	37.3...	26.2
Kohima	—	26.2...	18.6	Kolkata	8...	31.9...	27.5
Kolkata	8...	31.9...	27.5	Visakhapatnam	13...	31.4...	24.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	.4	19	102	100	109	—
Bengaluru	.8	29	68	—	—	48
Chennai	.8	55	44	43	68	—
Delhi	10	84	101	177	178	—
Hyderabad	1.1	64	27	40	83	—
Kolkata	.9	28	55	76	78	—
Lucknow	.8	47	58	97	114	—
Mumbai	10	19	14	42	109	—
Pune	—	50	104	37	93	—
Visakhapatnam	13	46	28	42	72	—

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Amritsar, Punjab recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 218 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 13

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

THE HINDU

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Convert crisis into OPPORTUNITY

As students traverse problem mazes, they acquire the skills to face adversity and thereby develop resilience



Students can develop resilience and learn to redesign their lives to make meaning out of its tragedies

sibility, becoming accountable, and free of dependence. As students solve the problem maze independently, they acquire the skills necessary to deal with adversity. When failure or feelings of negativity occur, they learn to reframe their thoughts to think positively, and find options with divergent and convergent thinking. Most importantly, they learn coping strategies to face insurmountable problems, answering questions such as 'What are the options to solve this problem?' 'How to face the unexpected?' 'How to deal with a tragedy?'

Promoting factors
Students can develop resilience by developing a sense of autonomy to become independent and unique individuals. Autonomy can only occur through taking respon-

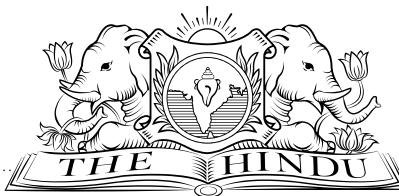
and failures, sharing what contributed to their success or failure. They can share personal experiences; describe the approaches they took to deal with situations and the outcomes, providing them a window into their own lives and that of their peers.

Emotional regulation and flexibility: Emotions have psychological and physical components. Students need guidance about their bodies, their propensities, and how the interactions affect their mood or mindset. They can learn self-regulation and ventilation of emotions to face the pressures of the body/mind/environment conflict.

Dealing with trauma: Coping skills such as preventing breakdown through channelling energy, not giving up hope, and having a positive attitude with realistic evaluation of situations, along with attitudinal change that teach flexibility.

Encourage new experiences: Students should be guided to seek new experiences (hobbies and explorative experiences) to upgrade their life participation.

As students use these tools and deal with crisis, the process enables them to increase their resilience and master life skills. As they



Covid shield

The change at the helm in Uttarakhand seems triggered by legal and political obstacles

Pushkar Dhami has replaced Tirath Singh Rawat as the new CM of Uttarakhand, in the second change of guard in the State within four months. Mr. Rawat was not a member of the State legislature, and would have had to be elected an MLA if he were to continue in office beyond six months. The BJP has put out a narrative of a legal limbo to explain the change, claiming that it had become impossible for him to be elected an MLA within the six-month timeframe. Mr. Rawat said in an exit statement that "given the constitutional crisis, I felt it was right for me to resign". He went on to add, "bypolls could not be held because of COVID-19", which was not his decision, or the BJP's to take. The Representation of the People Act 1951 mandates that a bypoll for any vacancy should be held within six months of that vacancy arising, provided that the remainder of the term is not less than one year, or the ECI and the Centre do not certify that holding that bypoll in that timeframe is difficult. The Act does not bar a bypoll even when the remaining term of the Assembly is less than one year, though it becomes optional in that case. In the past, the ECI has conducted bypolls for Assemblies that had less than one year of life remaining. It also remains unclear whether the ECI decided not to conduct bypolls to the two vacant seats in the Uttarakhand Assembly on account of COVID-19 or any other reason.

The change of guard appears to be a political decision of the BJP but the party does not want it to appear so. Over two terms, the BJP has had seven CMs in the State. For all its claimed mastery over matters political, the party picked the wrong horse in Mr. Rawat, an admission implied in his replacement. Far from putting the BJP house in order, Mr. Rawat's tenure of nearly four months aggravated the tensions within the State unit and embarrassed the party elsewhere. While a political party can run its affairs as it deems appropriate, backing up its decisions with speculation on how the ECI might act creates an unhealthy fog around the institution, which has had to deal with similar situations elsewhere too. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who is not a member of the State Assembly, needs to be elected to it within four months. The Assembly has seven vacant seats but there is no clarity regarding the ECI's plans to hold by-polls. For its own reputation and to demonstrate fairness in the conduct and timing of elections, the ECI must explain its thinking regarding pending bypolls. The pandemic has raised unprecedented challenges in the management of elections that the ECI has to adapt to. It must do so in a transparent manner and ensure that its actions or silence do not appear designed to accommodate political machinations.

Mixed bag

Restoring health of every constituent sector is a must for long-term growth in exports

India's merchandise exports reached an all-time quarterly high of \$95 billion in the three months ended June, providing welcome cheer on the economic front. That record was notched up during a quarter when the second wave of the pandemic hit its peak, and amid varying degrees of lockdowns, is all the more noteworthy. Exports last month surged 47% from June 2020 to \$32.5 billion. Even discounting the fact that the year-earlier period provided an anomalous base as the economy had just begun reopening from a protracted nationwide lockdown, growth in shipments was still a robust 30% when compared with the pre-pandemic June of 2019. Propelling the surge from the 2019 levels were non-rice cereals, which quadrupled; iron ore, which more than doubled; and organic and inorganic chemicals that rose 62%. Engineering goods exports had the biggest jump in dollar terms, adding \$2.73 billion in value, or 42% over June 2019, as the rising vaccination coverage and economic recovery in key developed markets including the EU and the U.S. bolstered demand. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was enthused enough by the export performance to posit that shipments of goods to overseas markets could touch the \$400 billion mark this fiscal, a figure which, if achieved, would represent an annual record.

Trade data, however, reveals that a significant driver of the export growth has been the runaway rally in commodity prices that have benefited from the accelerated reopening of major economies, as well as an increased appetite for raw materials and grains in China. On the other hand, the crucial job-generating export sectors including readymade garments, leather and leather products and tea all posted double-digit declines from June 2019 levels, reflecting the deeper structural problems that dog each one of them. If the tea industry has been facing a long-term downturn exacerbated by inadequate product variety, lack of marketing-savvy and sharp competition from rivals including Sri Lanka and Kenya, the leather goods segment has been put on the ropes by a combination of short-sighted policy measures, WTO-mandated withdrawal of export incentives and a pandemic-induced slowdown in orders. For a segment that provides large-scale employment, the recent imposition of an import duty on a key raw material has thrown the sector's very viability into question. With the Government dragging its feet on notifying the rates applicable under the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP) scheme, exporters are still unsure of how to price their products while bidding for orders. A container shortage and heightened congestion have also sent freight rates out of Indian ports soaring. Policymakers need to look beyond headline numbers and expedite action to restore the health of every constituent sector if economically enduring long-term growth in exports is to be ensured.

The problem now with the military synergy plan

The Indian military must note that consultative strategising is a prerequisite before a concrete structure is put in place



HARISH MASAND

It is indisputable that the Indian military continues to work in silos, like all governmental agencies in India, and a need was rightly felt and directions issued by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bring about jointness, leaving the task to the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of India. It is also indisputable that the aim is to bring about a synergy in operations while economising through the elimination of duplication and wasteful practices or processes. At the outset, it also needs to be clearly stated that, contrary to the recent media reports, debates and some opinions, the Indian Air Force (IAF) is not playing 'dog in the manger' and resisting the formation of theatre/functional commands. With my 40 years in uniform, as I understand the doctrine and philosophy of the IAF, it is keen to bring in the requisite reforms to improve the war-fighting capabilities of the Indian military as a whole while also economising.

Nuances of air power

The statement that the IAF wants to fight its own private war thus comes from people who do not understand the nuances and capabilities of air power and lack the expertise in its effective utilisation. In the current formulation of theatres, the objections from the IAF have essentially been due to air power being seen as an adjunct to the two surface forces, the Indian Army and the Indian Navy, and being divided into penny packets which would seriously de-

grade the effectiveness of air operations in any future conflict or contingency. It is better that such objections and dissenting opinions come out now before the structure is formalised than once it is set in stone and the use of air power is found to be sub-optimal under the military ethos of "an order is an order". We must remember that in war there is no prize for the runner-up. The nation would then end up paying a heavy price, with the Air Force carrying the burden and blame for the failures.

Political objectives

If war is the continuation of politics by other means, then it is essential to first define the political objectives flowing into a national security strategy before any effective use of force can be truly contemplated. The failures of the mightiest militaries in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and even our own Indian misadventure in Sri Lanka bear testimony to the lack of clear political objectives and appropriate military strategies.

It is, therefore, unfortunate that even after over seven decades after Independence, India still does not have a clearly articulated national security strategy. Only such a strategy can define the types of contingencies the military is expected to address, leading to appropriate military strategies, doctrines and required capabilities.

That would define the structures required for the conduct of synergised operations with the requisite communications and training requirements. Concurrently, such an intellectual exercise would identify duplication, wasteful resources and practices. This is what the CDS should have been pursuing before first freezing the structure and then trying to glue the pieces together or hammer square pegs in round holes.

As argued elsewhere earlier,



FILE PHOTO/S. SUBRAMANIAM

such an exercise may well result in identifying air power as the lead element, particularly since the Indian political aim, even in the foreseeable future, is unlikely to be occupation of new territories. A large, manpower-intensive army with unusable armour formations would then also come into focus.

Even the proposed air defence command conflicts with the domain commands in seamless employment of air power. It is due to the absence of such an intellectual exercise that the IAF does not wish to see its limited resources frittered away in fighting frontal defensive battles by a land force commander with little expertise in employment of air power. The Army fails to realise that offensive air power is best not seen, busy keeping the enemy air force pinned down elsewhere while giving own surface forces the freedom to manoeuvre and operate with impunity, as shown in 1971.

The Army-Air Force silo

Historically, the Indian Army has always kept the IAF out of the information loop and demonstrated a penchant to 'go it alone'. The charge that the IAF joined the party late during Kargil (1999) is also totally baseless and shows a lack of knowledge of events and a failure to learn from historical facts. Recorded facts and a dispassionate view would clearly show that the IAF began conducting reconnaissance missions on May 10 as soon

as the Indian Army just made a request for attack helicopters, without sharing full information. It is also surprising that a request for photo-reconnaissance of the entire area was not made to first gather essential intelligence on what the Army was facing, before launching foot patrols which were mostly ambushed with unnecessary casualties, instead of asking for armed helicopters. This despite the IAF pointing out the unsuitability of armed helicopters at these altitudes and their vulnerability.

The use of offensive air power close to the Line of Control also required that the political leadership be kept informed due to possibilities of escalation, something that the Army was unwilling to do. Even the Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) initially threatened to go it alone on his return from his visit abroad. As for silos, the CoAS himself admitted later that information was not shared even between the Director General of Military Operation (DGMO) and the Director General of Military Intelligence (DGMI) within Army headquarters, much less with the IAF. All this was despite the fact that the Defence Programme post-1962 was based on the assumption that China posed the major threat and that the IAF be made capable of assuming some of the Army's deterrence capability.

Echoes from Kargil

Seen in this light, the Chinese incursion into Eastern Ladakh last year is reminiscent of Kargil. While the response has been swift, it is evident that a clear intent to use combat air power, as against 1962, has significantly contributed in deterring China. However, such intent and a joint strategy would have been forcefully signalled by the presence of air force representatives in the ongoing negotiations

to restore *status quo ante*. The continuing build-up of the infrastructure for the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) in Tibet further emphasises the need for an air-land strategy, with air power as the lead element to deter or defeat the Chinese designs at coercion.

Address the structural gaps

Finally, theatre or any lower structure requires an institutionalised higher defence organisation, which has been sadly missing since the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) became defunct in the 1950s, leading to little regular dialogue between the political and military leadership, except in crises resulting in knee-jerk responses. This led to a remark from a scholar-warrior that, "it is ironic that the Cabinet has an Accommodation Committee but not a Defence Committee". In the current proposal, it appears that the CDS, as the permanent chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (CoSC), would also exercise operational control of the theatre/functional commands, a move that is unlikely to be palatable to the politico-bureaucratic leadership and which has, perhaps, called for further deliberations.

Prudence demands that instead of ramming down such structures without adequate deliberations and discussions with all stakeholders, we first evolve appropriate military strategies in a nuclear backdrop in concert with the political objectives. Thereafter, joint planning and training for all foreseen contingencies, with war-gaming, would automatically indicate the required structures with suitable command, control and communications.

Air Marshal Harish Masand is a retired fighter pilot from the Indian Air Force and a Vir Chakra awardee from the 1971 war

A crucial State and a key party's line of going it alone

BSP leader Mayawati's plan for the U.P. Assembly election has to be seen in the context of changing social, political times



BADRI NARAYAN

How does one read the recent move by Mayawati, chief of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), in declaring that the party will "go solo" in the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand Assembly elections? More importantly, how does one read this politically? In a series of Tweets recently, Ms. Mayawati had said, "The BSP wishes to clarify that, except Punjab, the BSP will not contest the assembly election in alliance with any party in U.P. and Uttarakhand, where the elections to the assembly are to be held at the beginning of next year. The BSP will fight the assembly elections in both the states on its own strength."

Eye on social groups

There may be multiple ways to understand her decision about the participation of her party in the important Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh. If one analyses the electoral history of the BSP, one may find that most of the time, the BSP has preferred not to form an electoral alliance with political parties but has been more inclined to form alliances with various social groups. The BSP believes that it represents a larger Dalit-Bahujan social base and has what it takes to offer other social communities

better political space when they join the BSP. The BSP has scripted most of its political victories through its strategies to associate various social groups around its Dalit social base, by providing them various forms of representation. It must be noted that it was when they began losing their capacity to form an alliance with various non-Dalit communities directly that they felt compelled to go in for alliances with political parties during the Lok Sabha/general election, in 2019.

Alliance with SP and after

In its early years, the BSP formed a successful electoral alliance with the Mulayam Singh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party (SP) during the 1993 Assembly election but the leadership in both parties realised later that their parties represent the interests of social groups that are contesting against each other at the grassroots due to various socio-political reasons. So, this electorally successful alliance could not work out when it came to governance due to inherent social contradictions with the aggressive rise of Other Backward Classes and Dalit communities that had political aspirations.

Therefore, Ms. Mayawati's decision cited above – about not forming an electoral alliance with any political party – needs to be re-read in the context of changed political time and social context. The fact is that Ms. Mayawati is struggling to keep her voter base intact. Her Dalit base faces problems on account of various possibilities of



fragmentation. A Hindutva aspiration is growing fast among a section of marginal communities, even as economically well-to-do and a leading section of marginal communities are looking for comparatively better space in various political parties with the aim of acquiring political power. A section of Dalit communities is also disillusioned with Ms. Mayawati despite her record of being a four-time Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. They are critical of her and ready to move towards exploring other political options in their quest for empowerment. So, this would mean an electoral alliance with any political party that brings them in close contact with the cadres and the leaders of alliance partners that may help prepare the conditions needed for their upward mobility.

Therefore, it is to preserve her voter base that Ms. Mayawati feels a need to go it alone in the election and inculcate hope among her voter base for their better political future. It would appear that Ms. Mayawati may be projecting herself as strong and aggressive just to make her voter base be confident and cohesive. Ms. Mayawati's recent political actions reflect that

her primary aim/priority in this election is to retain her voter base vote rather than form the government. She has also declared her position well in advance not to form an alliance with any political party to reduce any confusion among her followers following rumours. In a related Tweet, she had said, "A news channel is broadcasting news since yesterday that in the upcoming UP Assembly elections, BSP will contest along with (Asaduddin) Owaisi's party AIMIM. This news is completely wrong, misleading and devoid of any fact. There is not even an iota of truth in this. The BSP vociferously denies this."

Versus the BJP

Ms. Mayawati's stand may be guided by her compulsion and the need to save her electoral base but it is going to be beneficial for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the State in some sense. It is easy to understand that a fragmented and dispersed Opposition may not be able to present itself as a strong counter to the BJP. Voters against the BJP may remain fragmented even as the BJP is trying hard to expand its politics among various castes and social communities in the State. It can be seen trying to reach out and form alliances with various social communities and bringing them under its fold using three strategies: by providing them political space; nurturing the identities of various backward and marginal communities by providing them a sense of dignity, and distributing democratic and state-

sponsored resources to the various Bahujan communities. Ms. Mayawati's main challenge now is to prevent Hindutva politics from making inroads and saving her marginal and Bahujan base. It is interesting to observe that the BSP is constantly losing its capacity to attract other castes to join its Dalit-Bahujan base vote. Given this situation, it would be difficult for Ms. Mayawati to win a number of seats that may help her take over the reins of State power.

In my understanding, Ms. Mayawati's decision to 'ekala chalo', or go alone in the coming election is probably influenced by the party's earlier experience of electoral coalitions. In fact, an electoral coalition may not be successful unless it enables chemistry between social groups at the grass-root level. The conflict and contradiction between the social bases of allied partners may weaken the possibility of an electoral victory as seen during the last parliamentary election 2019, where the SP and the BSP contested together in Uttar Pradesh, only to perform so badly. Second, it is also the result of her main worry to keep her voter base intact. In fact, the Mayawati-led BSP is going to contest one of the toughest, if not the toughest, election in its political history. Let us see how she takes it further and performs in the forthcoming U.P. Assembly election, in 2022.

Badri Narayan is Director, G.B. Pant Social Science Institute (a Constituent Institute of the Central University of Allahabad), Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh



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.

The Rafale deal again

After a lull, the Rafale issue has taken centre stage again (Page 1, "French judge to probe Rafale deal", July 4). Anyway, the point of origin of any alleged financial irregularity emanates from France. In India, calling for a Joint Parliamentary Probe or constituting a commission would be an exercise in futility. It can at the most provide some fodder to the Opposition which is directionless in its fight against the Bharatiya Janata Party government. None of such probes in the past has seen the light of day, nor has there been any follow-up action taken even if the reports were made public. It would be an avoidable diversion at the

time of a raging pandemic. The Congress has no moral right to seek a probe as it stonewalled attempts to get to the truth in the Bofors deal. Moreover, *The Hindu*, which came out with a series of revelations on the Rafale deal, only pointed out the procedural lapses involved, rather than any intentional wrongdoing on the financial front.

V. SUBRAMANIAN,
Chennai

■ As the probe brings a certain industrial group and its business owner in the spotlight now, there will be questions on whether there was preferential treatment and a bypassing of mandatory procedures that are necessary to select a

manufacturing partner. The Congress may claim that its leader stands vindicated after his allegations but one hopes that the French probe does not turn out to be another Bofors deal that rocked the then Congress regime.

R. PRABHU RAJ,
Bangalore

Covaxin trial results
The long-awaited results of the Phase-3 clinical trials of Covaxin (Page 1, "Covaxin demonstrated 77.8% efficacy against symptomatic COVID-19", July 4) should be immediately sent for peer-review, and the results published in a scientific journal of repute, so that the claims can be cemented and controversies surrounding

this vaccine can be put to rest. The Centre should ramp up all vaccine production, ensure that the procurement of imported vaccines is speeded up, and inequities in distribution rectified to achieve its target of vaccinating a large percentage of the population by the end of the year.

Dr. BIJU C. MATHEW,
Thiruvananthapuram

Revenue stamps
A revenue stamp is required for receipts of amounts for ₹5,000 or above even though payment is made through banks. This meaningless colonial practice at times results in signed receipts becoming useless in case the gumming of revenue stamps is not proper as a major part

of the signature vanishes in case a poorly gummed revenue stamp drops off from the signed receipt. The Government should do away with the requirement of revenue stamps for any receipt either by cash or through a bank. If needed, special receipt papers printed at the government security printing press on the lines of stamp papers may be introduced at a cost

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The opening paragraph of a Business page interview with TVS Srichakra EVP P. Madhavan (July 4, 2021) erroneously said the tyre manufacturer planned to invest ₹1,000 in capital expenditure over the next three years. It should have been ₹1,000 crore.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552663; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturi Buildings, 859 &

How Chhattisgarh has stalled a historic judgment

The Salwa Judum judgment was delivered 10 years ago, but nothing has been done to implement it



NANDINI SUNDAR

Ten years ago, on July 5, 2011, Justices B. Sudershan Reddy and S.S. Nijjar delivered a historic judgment banning Salwa Judum, a vigilante movement started in 2005 and sponsored by the Chhattisgarh and Central government, ostensibly to fight against the Maoists. The judges also ruled that the use of surrendered Maoists and untrained villagers in frontline counter-insurgency operations as Special Police Officers (SPOs) was unconstitutional. It directed that the existing SPOs be redeployed in traffic management or other such safe duties. Other matters, especially prosecution of security forces and others involved in human rights violations, and rehabilitation of villagers who had suffered violence, were left pending, since the State had been asked to submit comprehensive plans for this.

Ten years on, nothing has been done to implement the judgment. Instead, the State government has merely renamed the SPOs. They are now known as the District Reserve Guard (DRG). Conversations with DRG members have revealed that most of them are captured or surrendered Maoists and are given automatic weaponry as soon as they join the police force. Some of them get one-three months of training, and some not even that. They commit the most excesses against their former fellow villagers, suffer the most casualties in any operation, and are paid much less than the regular constabulary, all the reasons the judges had outlawed their use. A contempt petition filed in 2012 is still awaiting hearing. Although 'final hearings' commenced in December 2018 before another bench of Justice Madan Lokur and Justice Deepak Gupta, the judges retired soon thereafter and there has been no hearing since.

New struggles

Much has happened on the ground since then. At its peak between 2005 and 2007, the Judum involved forcing villagers into government-con-



AARTI DHAR

trolled camps. Those who refused were punished by having their villages burnt. Hundreds of people were killed and their deaths were not even recorded as 'encounters'. Villagers fled to neighbouring States or into the forests around their villages. Sangham members – active but unarmed Maoist sympathisers – were either jailed or compelled to join the security forces as SPOs.

Today, the Judum camps are virtually empty with only the former SPOs and their families remaining, in now permanent houses. Villagers split between those who went to the camp and those who went to the forest are now reconciled. People have come back and started cultivation. An entire generation has grown up and, as we see in the movement against the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Silger, have embarked on new struggles.

Across the region, villagers are demanding schools and health centres. Instead, what they have got in abundance are CRPF camps. These have come up at intervals of less than 5 km, and roads are being bulldozed through what were once dense forests. The only Supreme Court direction to have been implemented since 2007, when the case began, was that security forces vacate the schools where they were camped. But that is because with its own larger takeover of public land and private fields, the CRPF no longer has any use for these ruined structures.

Villagers have tried out all the tools of getting justice but failed. The residents of Tadmetla, Timapuram and Morpalli, whose villages were burnt by the security forces in 2011, travelled hundreds of kilometres to give evidence before the Central Bureau of Investigation, which found in their favour, and filed a charge sheet

against some SPOs. In a rare moment, the National Human Rights Commission castigated the government for violations in village Kondasawli, in a case filed by lawyer Sudha Bharadwaj. The villagers of Sarkeguda, where 17 innocent people, including children, had been shot dead one night in June 2012, showed great courage and persistence in deposing before a judicial enquiry commission. But in all these cases, where the government and security forces have been indicted by independent inquiries, no steps have been taken to prosecute those responsible.

T.R. Andhyarujina and Ashok Desai, the lawyers who argued for the villagers pro bono in the Supreme Court, have passed away. And Justice Nijjar too. Ms. Bharadwaj has been in jail since 2018 on contested charges. Along with five others, I have survived a false charge of murder levelled by the police, and even been compensated by the NHRC for the mental trauma undergone, though our case is an exception. Podiyam Panda, former Communist Party of India (CPI) activist, who supported the Tadmetla villagers to demand justice, was arrested, allegedly tortured and is now a 'police informer'. The Maoists will not let him or his wife, the former sarpanch of Chintagufa, return to the village, even though all the people in Chintagufa and neighbouring villages want them back.

Promises not kept

In 2014, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government replaced the 10-year-old Congress government at the Centre. In 2018, a Congress government replaced the 15-year-old BJP government in Chhattisgarh. Mahendra Karma, the Adivasi face of a violent movement jointly run by the BJP and

Congress, was killed by the Maoists in 2013. The medical college hospital in Dimrapal is now named after him. S.R.P. Kalluri, a Bastar Inspector General of Police, was accused of many human rights violations. He was moved out of Bastar, but never prosecuted despite being named in an internal report by the CBI for burning Tadmetla.

When contesting the elections in 2018, the Congress promised to do something about the thousands of innocent villagers who are arrested en masse by the police as suspected Maoists and spend long years in jail before being acquitted. For these villagers, meeting their families is difficult and hiring lawyers drains their meagre resources. Even as a few dedicated human rights lawyers have tried to help, the scale of arrests is massive. Yet, the government's resolve in freeing prisoners – even during COVID-19 – is in stark contrast to its resolve in setting up security camps and arresting more people.

Deaths in encounters between jawans and Maoists periodically hit the national headlines. But extrajudicial killings of villagers and Maoists and killings of suspected informers by Maoists continue at a steady pace, rarely hitting any high publicity note. An estimate given to the press on June 28 at Sarkeguda claimed 187 deaths in fake encounters between 2015 and 2021.

Another promise made by the Congress – providing protection to journalists – also lies in shreds. The difficulties faced by activists of the Chhattisgarh Bachao Andolan and the CPI in reaching Silger and Sarkeguda show how the BJP's tactics continue. The villagers were told that COVID-19 restrictions meant they could not mourn the victims on the anniversary of the Sarkeguda massacre, but a day later, the administration laid out a red carpet and large crowds to welcome Congress MLA Kawasi Lakhma.

Unless both sides get serious about peace talks, another 10 years will pass. The 2011 Supreme Court judgment will be rendered even more meaningless, as will the idea of justice or the rule of law ever being possible in this land, in this time.

Nandini Sundar, Professor of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, is one of the petitioners in the Salwa Judum case

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

A dialogue for continuity and change

While editors seek inputs from readers, they also use editorial judgment to decide what changes should be made



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

One of the defining lessons I have learnt as a journalist in the last three decades is actually a life skill that one could deploy in any sector. It is about navigating change while retaining your core values and cardinal principles. Technology is galloping at an exponential rate; geopolitics is always shifting; and what was a sunrise sector has become a sunset sector in less than a decade, with a revenue model which has no relationship to influence, trust and reach.

Classic yet contemporary

At *The Hindu*, a phrase I often encounter is 'classic yet contemporary'. The headline for a feature on the food outlet, The Yellow Chilli, by Shonali Muthalay was "Classic yet contemporary" (January 9, 2014). A profile of eminent dancer and choreographer Akram Khan was titled "When classic meets contemporary..." (October 21, 2015). A piece on composer V. Dakshinamurti had the headline "Classic but always contemporary" (August 8, 2013). A short report on Pieter Louis Erasmus had the headline "Traditional yet contemporary" (July 30, 2011). Interestingly, the newspaper's design for its print as well as Internet edition, created by Garcia Media, had the governing theme, 'Contemporary-Classical'. Former Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's book on India's foreign policy is called *Continuity and Change*.

It is feedback from readers that shapes changes in the newspaper even as it retains its core values. Feedback helps to draw the crucial line between public interest and what the public is interested in, and ensures that the sacrosanct line balances the two contending, and often contradicting, interests. While editors seek inputs from readers, they also use editorial judgment to decide what changes should be made and what cannot be tampered with. The omnipresence of digital technology has led to the proliferation of cut-and-paste critique by various interest

groups. Editors are not swayed by amplification of such narrow interests.

For instance, this newspaper carried a report from its legal correspondent headlined "SC refuses to stay Vanniyar reservation" (July 3). In the report it was pointed out that the Tamil Nadu State law temporarily provides 10.5% special reservation to Vanniyar Kshatriyas within the quota for the Most Backward Classes (MBCs). The strap line provided the context for the report. It read: "Bill was passed barely an hour before model code of conduct kicked in".

Amplification of vested interests
We have received innumerable mails and phone calls questioning the use of the word 'temporary' in the report. R. Arul, a reader from Chennai, felt that the word was inserted by the newspaper and had no legal or legislative basis. If there is no legal basis for the use of the word 'temporary' with reference to the State Act, he said, the newspaper should retract the story. He also cited one of the guidelines issued by the Press Council of India: "The newspaper should promptly and

with due prominence, publish either in full or with due editing, free of cost, at the instance of the person affected or feeling aggrieved/or concerned by the impugned publication, a contradiction/reply/clarification or rejoinder sent to the editor in the form of a letter or note."

This letter from Mr. Arul was written in both English and Tamil. Within hours, we were flooded with letters. All these letters had copy-pasted Mr. Arul's arguments. This orchestrated amplification of vested interests failed to look at facts in a dispassionate manner. The report was based on a petition filed in the Supreme Court. It clearly stated that it was the previous Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu who had tabled the Bill. The Chief Minister had said then: "The reservation provided for in this Bill will be temporary. Once the caste-based census is completed, this will be revised based on the findings."

Readers who want to know the process that governs the selection of news can take part in the virtual Open House we have convened on July 17. We will be closing the call for this virtual meet on July 10.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

The heavy footprint of a light rail

A part of the land that has been earmarked for acquisition for the light rail in Kerala are wetlands

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

A light rail is a symbol of modernity that would surely appeal to the vanity of a society's establishment. What is less evident though is the cost at which it could come. These are not just the upfront costs of installing one but also the hidden environmental impact, which can vary enormously according to geography and the project's spread. A light rail project has found favour with the Government of Kerala. It's unique selling proposition, apparently, is that it will reduce very substantially the travel time between the two extremes of the State, namely the capital city of Thiruvananthapuram in the south and the town of Kasargod in its north. So far, the project has mostly drawn criticism from environmental groups but there are also economic considerations that must be brought to the table when judging its desirability. It may seem odd to say this as the economy is embedded in nature and we cannot ignore environmental cost. However, there are instances when the environmental impact of alternative projects is the same but the economic returns vary significantly and vice versa.

Environmental costs

What are the environmental costs of yet another rail line in Kerala? The land here is of an undulated topography combined with an often rocky surface that is prone to crumbling when dislodged. Excessive quarrying and construction have already left it vulnerable to torrential rain, as seen in the devastating landslides recorded across the State in recent years. Therefore, the first thought that comes to mind when contemplating another railway, light though it may be, is how it will impact the stability of the earth's surface along its course. So far, we have only considered the consequences of the land use at stake. However, natural capital comprises not only the earth's surface, and the services it renders to us, but also the ecosystem as a whole. It has been pointed out that a part of the land that has been earmarked for acquisition for the project are wet-



lands, including paddy fields. This should concern us. Paddy is the staple food of Malayalees. Its production in Kerala has been in decline for over half a century. Part of this is explained by economic factors but some part of it is due to the lack of an assured water supply. A double whammy of building over paddy fields and shrinking water bodies threatens food security. There is a recognisable pattern to the development strategy of the present government in Kerala. Two years ago, it had dismissed protests by the villagers of Keezhattur in Kannur District against a highway project that would destroy their paddy fields. It now has a chance to listen to citizens' concerns on the plan to install a light railway across the State, the consequences of which will be far more widespread.

Taking into account alternatives
It is not anyone's case that the government should not develop transportation. The point is that it should take into account all alternatives. Kerala already has a railway line that is two-laned for the most part. There is an international airport in every urban conurbation. It is well connected by road, with one of the higher road densities among States. But of the highest promise are the possibilities of transportation over water. There is at present an ongoing project for transportation through inland waterways. Finally, nothing prevents the government from developing a sea-borne ferry service connecting Thiruvananthapuram with Kasargod, and all the ports in between. This would leave the land untouched.

There is an irony in the pitch for a light rail by a Communist government. In the 1950s, when it was believed that land reforms would deliver the land to them, the peasants hopefully sang "we will (one day) harvest all the fields". Now, by their actions, the ruling class seems to be saying to the workers who installed them in power "we shall (one day) kill all the fields". Spoken in Malayalam, the statements rhyme.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches economics at Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana

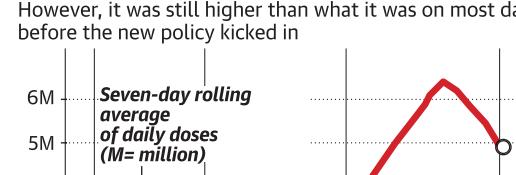
DATA POINT

Vaccination hits record pace

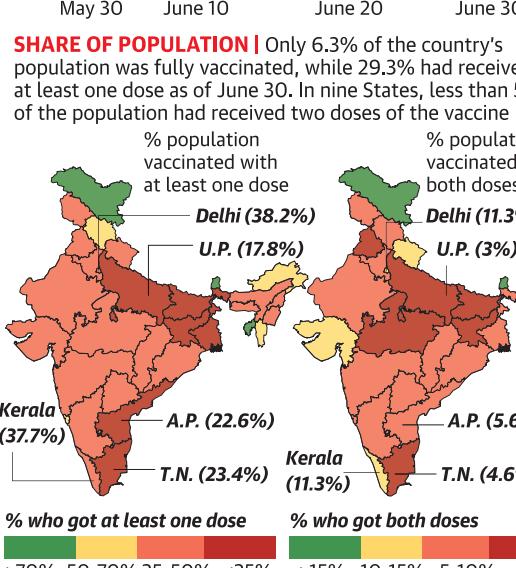
After the introduction of the new COVID-19 vaccine policy, the inoculation rate has increased significantly in India. From June 21 to 30, 5.57 million doses were administered every day on average, the highest for any 10-day period since the vaccination drive started. The seven-day rolling average of doses administered per day reached a peak of 6.44 million on June 26. However, the rate could not be sustained in the final days of June. By June 30, the average doses dropped below the 5 million-mark. The spike in doses was mainly due to a significant increase in the vaccination pace in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. Among the major States, only Andhra Pradesh recorded a decrease in the vaccination rate in the considered period. By *The Hindu Data Team*

Phases	Doses / day (mn)	Total doses by Dec. 31 (mn)
Phase 1 pace (Jan 16 - Feb 27)	0.34	119.18
Phase 2 pace (Mar 1 - Mar 10)	1.14	363.78
Phase 2 pace (Mar 11 - Mar 20)	1.89	587.57
Phase 2 pace (Mar 21 - Mar 30)	1.85	574.13
Phase 3 pace (Apr 1 - Apr 10)	3.65	1,071.89
Phase 3 pace (Apr 11 - Apr 20)	2.85	860.34
Phase 3 pace (Apr 21 - Apr 30)	2.49	766.80
Phase 4 pace (May 1 - May 10)	1.77	590.91
Phase 4 pace (May 11 - May 20)	1.92	625.11
Phase 4 pace (May 21 - May 30)	2.13	672.69
Phase 4 pace (June 1 - June 10)	3.00	861.89
Phase 4 pace (June 11 - June 20)	3.40	942.09
Phase 5 pace (June 21 - June 30)	5.57	1,365.78
Target pace (July 1 - Dec 31)	8.39	1889.41

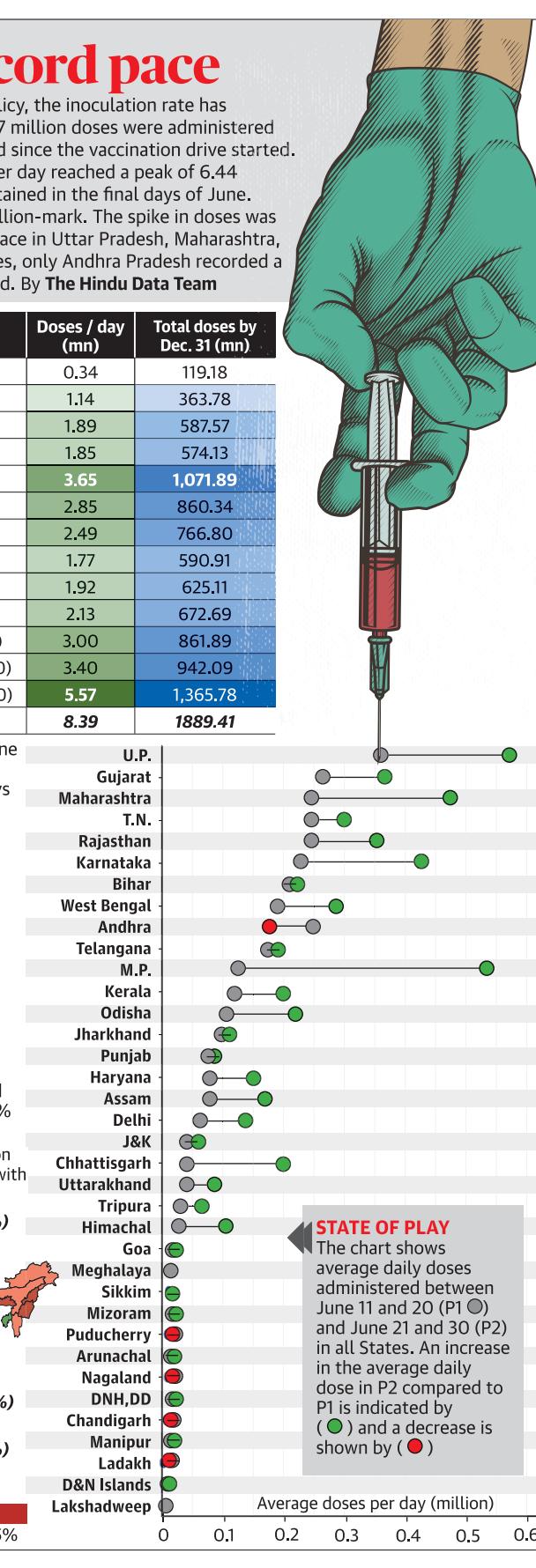
HIGHS AND LOWS | After peaking at 6.44 million on June 26, the average number of daily doses administered fell. However, it was still higher than what it was on most days before the new policy kicked in



SHARE OF POPULATION | Only 6.3% of the country's population was fully vaccinated, while 29.3% had received at least one dose as of June 30. In nine States, less than 5% of the population had received two doses of the vaccine



% who got at least one dose
>70% 50-70% 25-50% <25%
% who got both doses
>15% 10-15% 5-10% <5%



STATE OF PLAY
The chart shows average daily doses administered between June 11 and 20 (P1) and June 21 and 30 (P2) in all States. An increase in the average daily dose in P2 compared to P1 is indicated by (●) and a decrease is shown by (○)

The *Hindu*

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 5, 1971

Liberian ship sinks off Madras

A Liberian cargo ship "Ocean Glory" sank this morning [Madras, July 4] in the Bay of Bengal, 160 km. south-east of Madras. All the 31 members of the crew of the ill-fated vessel were, however, rescued by a British passenger-cum-cargo ship and brought to Madras safely. The 10,850-tonne ship is said to have suddenly developed a leak in the engine room which ultimately flooded the vessel. The ship had to be abandoned with all its cargo. It was loaded with sulphur and was sailing from the Persian Gulf to Visakhapatnam. The Captain of the British ship, "Chikka", and the Ennore Post and Telegraphs Wireless Station received messages from the 'distress ship' about the leakage and that it should be rescued immediately. The Wireless Station got in touch with the British ship and requested it to proceed toward the Liberian vessel to rescue the crew.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 5, 1921

FROM PAGE ONE

Pushkar Dhami sworn in as Uttarakhand CM

Ms. Arya, Mr. Dhan Singh Rawat and Mr. Yatishwaranand, who were Ministers of State in Mr. Tirath Singh Rawat's Cabinet, have been elevated to Cabinet rank.

Earlier Mr. Dhami met senior party leader and Cabinet colleague Satpal Maharaj at his residence with a bouquet of flowers amid reports that the senior leader and a few other MLAs of the BJP were sulking since Saturday as they were not happy with his election as the new leader of the BJP Legislature Party in Uttarakhand.

Visits predecessors

He also paid courtesy visits to his predecessors, Tirath Singh Rawat, Trivendra Singh Rawat and B.C. Khanduri, at their residences.

He takes over the reins at a time when Uttarakhand has just a few months to go for the Assembly election,

Congress calls for probe into Rafale deal

"After more than 24 hours of the decision by France to investigate corruption, influence peddling, money laundering, favouritism, there is one question every responsible and concerned Indian citizen asks: Why is the Government of India still silent," asked party spokesperson Pawan Khera at a press conference.

"It is not France that has been cheated or robbed, rather it is every single Indian taxpayer who has been cheated and robbed off," he added.

Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan tweeted, "France has shown zero tolerance towards corruption and not spared even their former President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Domestic air traffic sees steady improvement

But, from March began a decline that would touch a low of 39,370 passengers on May 18.

Booking in advance

According to travel portals *MakeMyTrip*, *Cleartrip* and *ixigo*, there is now a rise in the number of people booking tickets well in advance as opposed to last minute emergency travel.

"Round trip share is about 25% and the share of trips for travel over four weeks from date of booking has breached 10% level. We expect this trend to continue with reducing caseloads and increasing vaccination

levels," said a Cleartrip spokesperson.

According to ixigo's chief executive officer and director Aloke Bajpai, "The share of bookings for travel beyond 30 days has doubled in the last one week – a sign of growing confidence for travel in July."

This is despite the fact that the period from July-September is traditionally considered a lean season for travel as schools reopen after summer break.

"Seasonality in travel demand doesn't hold right now as there is a lot of pent up demand," Mr. Bajpai said.

Stan Swamy on ventilator support

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Sunday asked the Maharashtra Chief Secretary to ensure that imprisoned activist Father Stan Swamy received "every possible medical treatment".

Fr. Swamy had recovered from COVID-19, but continued to remain critical. Sources at Mumbai's Holy Family Hospital said, "He was put on the ventilator early [on Sunday] morning, but has improved a little."

His close associate, Fr. Joseph Xavier, also told *The Hindu* that Fr. Stan had improved now.

"[NHRC] has today issued a notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra, calling upon him to ensure that every possible efforts are made in providing him proper medical care," an NHRC statement said.

Farmers plan stir outside Parliament

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

due early next year.

Mr. Dhami is not only the youngest Chief Minister of the State, but also an appointment from Kumaon to the top post. He has worked his way in the BJP hierarchy first in student politics with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidya Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), in 1990. He was the officer on special duty to his political mentor and former Chief Minister Bhagat Singh Koshyari when the latter held the post he is holding now.

In Mr. Dhami's elevation, clearly an attempt is being made to strike the right caste and regional balance in Uttarakhand, as State BJP chief Madan Kaushik is a Brahmin from the Garhwal region and having a Thakur leader from Kumaon as the Chief Minister is being seen as a good move.

Before the session, the SKM plans to "send a warning letter to all Opposition parties to ensure that the session is used to support the farmers' struggle, and that farmers' demands are met by the government".

All Indians share the same DNA and cannot be differentiated on the basis of worship, says Bhagwat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Hopefully, the investigation in #RafaleScam by the French anti-corruption agency will unearth the truth and expose massive corruption – something which India could not do."

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge asserted that Mr. Gandhi's allegations of corruption had been "vindicated as scandalous details of the scam have been revealed".

"In 2019, the then CJI dismissed the need for an inquiry into the Rafale deal. However, the new revelations have substantiated the doubts regarding the dubious deal. A JPC must be immediately constituted to probe the matter," Mr. Kharge tweeted.

Karni Sena chief courts controversy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

During a mahapanchayat against "love jihad" and religious conversions at Pataudi here on Sunday, Karni Sena national president Suraj Pal Ammu made controversial remarks aimed at a religious community, adding that a resolution be adopted to "throw them out of this country".

Talking about the opposition to the construction of a mosque in Bhora Kalan village, he said the locals should root it out. Mr. Ammu said the cases of conversion and "love jihad" were rising in Pataudi. He said 17 girls were "victims of love jihad" in the area.

This is despite the fact that the period from July-September is traditionally considered a lean season for travel as schools reopen after summer break.

"Seasonality in travel demand doesn't hold right now as there is a lot of pent up demand," Mr. Bajpai said.

Four years on, delay derails Railways' CCTV project

Investigation reveals irregularities in tendering process of project envisaged under the Nirbhaya Fund



Under surveillance: CCTV cameras set up at the Katpadi railway station in Tamil Nadu.

2012. The dedicated fund was meant for projects specifically designed for the safety and security of women.

As part of the scheme, RailTel was allotted the execution of VSS at 983 railway stations across the country, at an estimated cost of ₹500 crore. It was described as one of the largest projects of its kind, involving the integration of Indian Railways and RailTel systems, with the collaboration of multiple agencies.

Though tenders were

Assam plans sub-groups to stabilise population

State has to manage population explosion, says Himanta

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The BJP-led government in Assam, eyeing a two-child policy in the long run, has decided to constitute eight sub-groups toward stabilising the State's population.

The decision was taken after a meeting between Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and indigenous Assamese Muslim leaders on Sunday.

"If we have to be among the top five States, we have to manage our population explosion," he told presspersons, adding that the participants of the meeting agreed on the "real threat" the population explosion in some parts of Assam posed to the development of the State in



Himanta Biswa Sarma

an "economic sense".

Dr. Sarma said Muslim leaders had sought the formation of sub-groups to achieve the goal.

Each group would work in specific sectors such as health, education, financial inclusion and women empowerment, besides population stabilisation.

"The inputs of these sub-groups will help us prepare a five-year road map when we meet again after three months," Dr. Sarma said.

Similar initiative

He said he would meet the organisations and leaders of Bengal-origin migrant Muslims within three days for a similar initiative, while the government would be conducting a series of meetings in the next three months on population management.

The Chief Minister underlined the cultural distinction between migrant Muslims who settled in Assam a little more than a century ago and indigenous Assamese Muslims who have a 600-year-old history.

Naravane to inaugurate Army memorial in Italy

He will visit U.K. and Italy this week

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Army chief General Manoj Naravane will inaugurate an Indian Army memorial in the Italian town of Cassino during an official visit to the U.K. and Italy from July 5 to 8, the Army said on Sunday.

"During the second leg of his tour, on July 7 and 8, the Army chief will be holding important discussions with the Chief of Defence Staff and Chief of Staff of the Italian Army. Additionally, the COAS [Chief of the Army Staff] will also inaugurate the Indian Army Memorial in the famous town of Cassino and will be briefed at the Italian Army's Counter Improvised Explosive Device [IED] centre of excellence at Cecchignola, Rome," an Army statement said.

Italy has pushed for a



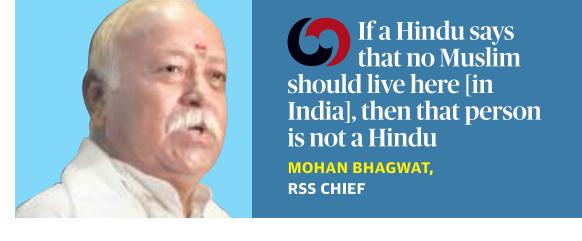
General Manoj Naravane

central role for India in the European Union's Indo-Pacific Initiative, which is congruent with India's own vision for the region.

During the visit to the U.K., Gen. Naravane will interact with the Secretary of State for Defence, Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of General Staff, among others, and will also be visiting various Army formations, the statement added.

Lynching is against Hindutva: RSS chief

All Indians share the same DNA and cannot be differentiated on the basis of worship, says Bhagwat



If a Hindu says that no Muslim should live here [in India], then that person is not a Hindu
**MOHAN BHAGWAT,
RSS CHIEF**

should live here [in India], then that person is not a Hindu. Cow is a holy animal, but the people who are going against Hindutva. Law should take its own course against them without any partiality," he said.

He urged members of the Muslim community in India to get over any fear that Islam was in danger in India.

"Don't get trapped in the cycle of fear that Islam is in danger in India," he said.

"It has been proven that we're the descendants of the same ancestors from the last 40,000 years. People of India have the same DNA," he said, adding that politics cannot unite people. "There are some things that politics cannot do, it cannot unite

be the dominance of Indians," the RSS chief said.

Decries lynching

He decried incidents of the lynching of minorities and stated that those who were indulging in such violence were "against Hindutva".

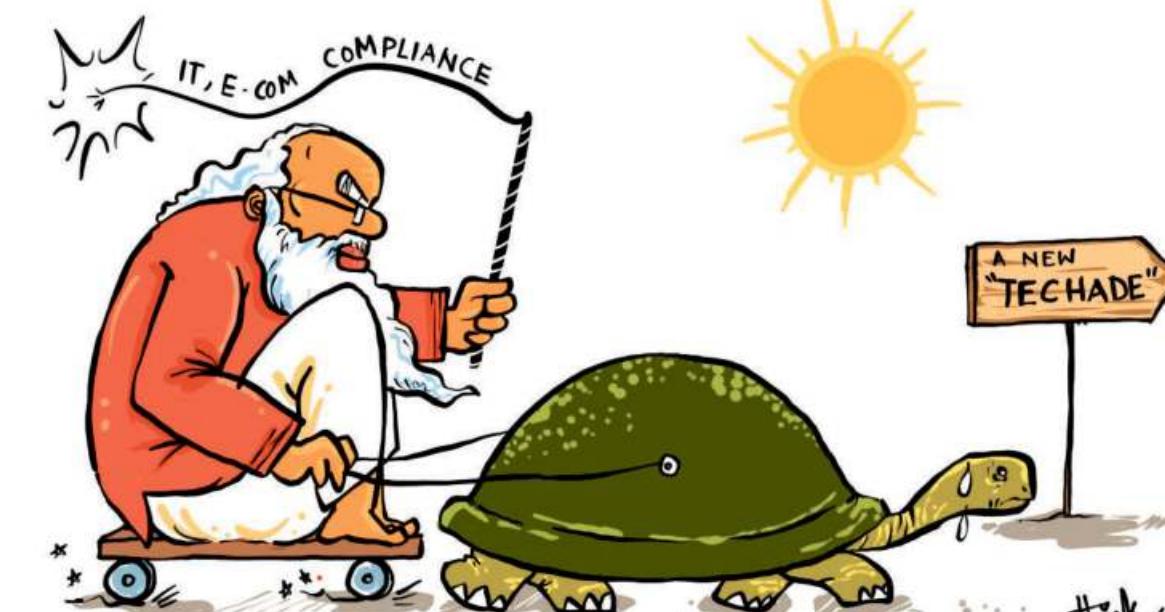
He added, however, that sometimes false cases of lynching had also been registered against people. "If a Hindu says that no Muslim

people. Politics cannot become a tool for uniting people, but can become a weapon to distort unity," he said. "The basis of unity should be nationalism, glory of ancestors," he added.

At the beginning of his speech, Mr. Bhagwat made it clear that this was not a novel outreach for him or any attempts at cultivating a vote bank.

He mentioned that he had also earlier met with clerics from Dar-ul-uloom Deoband, one of the leading Sunni Islamic seminaries, in the normal course of his meetings with people from different walks of life. He added that neither he nor the RSS was in politics to bother about image issues.

On the draw



Stan Swamy on ventilator support

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

More than four years after a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Indian Railways and RailTel for the installation of surveillance cameras at 983 stations across the country, the project envisaged under the "Nirbhaya Fund" to enhance safety of women passengers has stalled.

With no progress in the national project for years and an investigation initiated by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) revealing serious irregularities in the tendering process, the Ministry of Railways has now asked its General Managers to go ahead and install Video Surveillance Systems (VSS) at the railway stations earmarked for the purpose in their respective zones.

The Nirbhaya Fund was created by the Union government after the brutal gang-rape and murder of a 23-year-old woman in Delhi in

the competent authority. The Tender Committee was not strictly as per the prescribed Schedule of Powers.

The Tender Committee was found to be working beyond their jurisdiction on certain parameters like testing of some of the items like switches in the laboratory of the firm and that too without covering all parameters prescribed in the tender documents... The overall supervision and control on the process was found to be lacking on the part of the Board level officers," the System Improvement Report said.

When the technical bids were opened and taken up for scrutiny, the Finance Member of the Tender Committee recorded his dissent note. Even after the recommendations of the committee were changed, the Director

(Finance) "recommended discharge of the tender on the ground that the Tender Committee got influenced and guided by the Independent External

Monitor's report".

According to a Railway official, the zonal Railways were also asked to implement the VSS project even though an MoU for the same purpose was signed with RailTel. Some zones like the Central Railway even floated tenders and were on the verge of awarding the contract. "But it was later decided to ask RailTel to complete the work. It is not just the 983 stations, but the installation of surveillance cameras in hundreds of other railway stations and thousands of coaches in premium trains. Only a detailed investigation by an independent agency can reveal why and how the whole project got derailed and at whose intervention," the official, who preferred not to be quoted, said.

With no sign of the high-priority safety project taking off, the Ministry of Railways has asked Zonal Railways to install surveillance cameras on their own by floating tenders.

On 'excess deaths' in Rajasthan

SRINIVAS RAMANI
CHENNAI

In the article titled "Rajasthan 'excess deaths' 5 times official toll", published on Sunday, *The Hindu* had calculated 45,088 excess deaths in the State during the pandemic period based on State Civil Registration System data maintained in the Pehchaan application. But the State's registration toll in the CRS report released by the office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner for 2018 and 2019 were 4,43,173 and 4,51,315 respectively, nearly double the data in the Pehchaan system for the same years - 2,16,370 and 2,19,814 respectively. If the full CRS data for Rajasthan is analysed, the undercount factor may change and could go up further. The excess deaths calculations and undercount factor will be updated if and when the full CRS data for 2020 and 2021 is made available. In light of this, the article has been amended in the online edition with the headline, "Excess deaths in Rajasthan are at least five times the official COVID-19 tally", and the graphics and data conclusions have been accordingly updated.

APPEAL

1 year old Asmera Sajana needs your support in bringing a lasting change and a new life. She suffers from Langerhans Cell Histiocytosis and requires Rs.12,00,000/- towards Allogenic Bone Marrow Transplant at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai has acknowledged the donations sent through CHD.NEFT, Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063310, IFSC No. CNRB0016018) favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted through 80G IT. Please give us your e-mail ID.

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No.GF1, Cordel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycros Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044-42137401 / 2823524 / 7338978027 E Mail: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

WWS

CPI(M), CPI for JPC probe into Rafale deal, PM's role

Demand follows France's appointment of a judge in the case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) must be formed to investigate the truth behind the Rafale deal and look into the role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) said on Sunday. The demand follows a French judge's appointment to investigate the multi-million dollar deal.

The CPI(M)'s highest body discussed the issue at its meeting on Saturday. "The Polit Bureau reiterates its demand raised in September 2018 for the constitution of a Joint Parliamentary Committee to investigate the role of the Prime Minister and the government in this whole episode and establish the truth of the deal," said a statement.

It noted that France's public prosecution services had ordered an investigation by a French judge into the 2016 deal following a decision by its financial branch. Judicial investigation was formally opened into the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) on June 14. The



France's public prosecution services recently ordered a probe into the 2016 deal.

statement pointed to a French investigative website's expose of official papers that allegedly show that Rafale manufacturer Dassault Aviation entered into an agreement with Anil Ambani's Reliance Group on March 26, 2015, which was 15 days before PM Modi's announcement of the new deal that excluded state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

This reconfirms the apprehensions raised by the CPI(M) that the turnaround from the earlier purchase agreement is mired in deep corruption and money laundering, said the statement.

It also condemned the Essential Defence Services Ordinance, 2021, claiming that it aimed to prohibit "legitimate protests" in ordnance factories against the "naked

loot of national assets".

Communist Party of India (CPI) general secretary D. Raja told *The Hindu* that a Joint Parliamentary Committee is a must to reveal the truth. "It's not a new demand but we are merely renewing our old demand to probe the issue. We have always said that the deal bypassed our public sector undertaking and patronised and promoted a corporate house. When an investigation has been ordered in France, why is the Modi government mysteriously silent?" Mr. Raja asked.

Raking in revenue

The CPI(M) accused the Centre of "raking in revenue at the expense of ruining people's lives" by hiking excise duties on petrol and diesel and demanded that these duties be scrapped.

Noting that the price hikes have led to an inflationary spiral in the prices of essential commodities, it urged the Centre to give a direct cash transfer of ₹7,500 to all families outside the income tax-paying bracket and distribute free food kits.

Sidhu bats for free power in Punjab

He demands free electricity up to 300 units and 24-hour supply for consumers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu, who has been at loggerheads with Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, on Sunday argued in favour of providing free electricity up to 300 units and round-the-clock power supply to consumers in the State.

Mr. Sidhu's tweets come at a time when Punjab is reeling under an acute power shortage crisis, with urban and rural areas facing hours of load shedding in the peak summer months.

He said in a tweet: "Punjab already provides 9,000



Navjot Singh Sidhu

crore subsidy but we must do more for Domestic & Industrial consumer giving power at ₹3.5 per unit instead of surcharge inflated ₹10-12 per unit, along with 24-hour supply with No Power-Cuts & Free Power (Up to 300 Units). It is definitely

achievable." The dissident Punjab Congress leader's tweet follows Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's recent promise that 300 units of free electricity would be given to each household and a 24-hour power supply would be available if AAP came to power in the State.

Discarding PPAs

The cricketer-turned-politician has been targeting the Amarinder Singh government for not discarding the "faulty" power purchase agreements (PPA) signed when the Shiromani Akali Dal-Bharatiya Janata Party combine was ruling the

State. In another tweet, he said: "Let us start with Congress High Command's Pro-People 18 Point Agenda and get rid of the faulty un-negotiable Badal-signed Power Purchase Agreements through "New Legislation in Punjab Vidhan Sabha" fixing rates as per National Power Exchange with No fixed charges!"

On Saturday, the Punjab Chief Minister had said the PPAs that put an "atrocious unnecessary" financial burden on the State were already under review and his government would soon announce its legal strategy for them.

Mayawati and Cong. trade barbs in U.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Sunday said the 'C' in Congress stood for "cunning" as she attacked the party for accusing her of having an understanding with the BJP.

The Congress Uttar Pradesh unit had tweeted, "The 'B' in BSP means BJP." It was an apparent dig at the BSP for allegedly helping the ruling BJP and its ally secure 67 out of the 75 zilla panchayat chairperson posts in the State.

In response, Ms. Mayawati said the Congress was a party "running on oxygen" even in U.P. She said the Congress's reference to 'B' in the BSP as the BJP was highly objectionable.

The 'B' in BSP stands for Bahujan, which includes SCs, STs, OBCs, religious minorities and other oppressed classes, who were called Bahujans as they were in the numerical majority, she said. "The 'C' in Congress actually meant 'cunning' party, which formed governments at the Centre and in States for a long period through the votes of Bahujans but kept them helpless and like slaves."

OFB workers slam 'draconian' Ordinance

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Five federations of employees of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) have issued a resolution condemning the government's promulgation of the "draconian" Essential Defence Services Ordinance (EDSO), 2021, which bans civilian defence employees from going on strike, and urged its withdrawal. The Ordinance came ahead of

the planned indefinite strike by employees of the OFB against the decision to convert its 41 factories into seven government-owned corporate entities.

A joint resolution issued by the five federations after a virtual meeting on July 1 stated:

"The draconian steps taken by the Government to suppress and crush the democratic rights of the defence civilian employees is

retrograde, undemocratic, anti-worker and is totally unacceptable to the trade unions and the entire workforce of the defence industry." The meeting also unanimously resolved to observe July 8 as an "All India Black Day".

The resolution was sent to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Secretary, Defence Production, Raj Kumar. It appealed for "with-

drawing the EDSO and starting immediate negotiations" with them on the corporatisation of the OFB.

The joint meeting of the five federations condemned provisions such as the dismissal of employees without holding an inquiry, arresting employees who call the strike and participate in the strike, and punishing employees with imprisonment of up to two years.

Assam woman gets bail in sedition case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Gauhati High Court has granted bail to an Assam woman, who was booked for sedition for allegedly having lunch on a tablecloth resembling the Indian flag.

Rajina Parbin Sultana was arrested on May 16 by the police in Abhayapuri in Bongaigaon district. She was also charged under the Prevention to Insult of National Honour Act, 1971. Hearing her bail plea on June 8, the court noted: "It does not prima facie suggest to be an act to have the affect (sic) of subverting the Government by bringing that Government into contempt or hatred or creating disaffection against it."

Full surveillance



On the frontline: Women soldiers of Assam Rifles at Wasun in Ganderbal district of Kashmir on Sunday. The personnel have been deployed in some areas to help frisk women and children at checkpoints. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

India-U.S. partnership has a truly global significance: PM

Modi extends greetings to the U.S. on its Independence Day

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

India's strategic partnership with the U.S. has a "truly global significance", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on July 4. The message was part of Mr. Modi's greetings to U.S. President Joe Biden on the occasion of the 245th Independence Day of the United States, which was celebrated on July 4.

"Warm felicitations and greetings to President of the United States Joe Biden and the people of the USA on their 245th Independence Day. As vibrant democracies, India and USA share values of freedom and liberty. Our strategic partnership has a truly global signifi-

cance," Mr. Modi said.

The message from the Indian leadership came as the United States began the process of withdrawing its troops from neighbouring Afghanistan, ending a nearly two-decades-long military operation that began in 2001.

On July 2, the U.S. appointed Atul Keshap, a career diplomat, as the Charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi.

Prime Minister Modi and President Biden participated in the first-ever leadership summit of the 'Quad' arrangement on March 12. The U.S. leader had emphasised democratic values during his speech on that occasion.

It is understood that top-level greetings to China were not sent as India views the celebration as a party affair. Neither the BJP nor the Congress greeted the CPC, though Left parties congratulated China.

While BJP's Devendra

Tardy process blamed for job aspirant's death

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

After a 24-year-old job aspirant under the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) ended his life in Pune, political and student leaders have urged Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to ensure timely exams and provide jobs for unemployed students.

Student leader Kuldeep Ambekar said the confusion over the examinations for the last 20 months had resulted in a loss of faith in the ruling government.

Fadnavis urged Mr. Thackeray to overhaul the MPSC structure, NCP's Rohit Patwari said the results must be announced soon and the recruitment process streamlined immediately.

Student leader Kuldeep Ambekar said the confusion over the examinations for the last 20 months had resulted in a loss of faith in the ruling government.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATI RAJ
(An Organisation of the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India)
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500030
RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATION
Applications are invited from qualified and experienced persons for the following contract positions
Name of the Post **No. of Position**

1. Deputy PMA Head, NRO, DDU-GKY 1
2. Communications Manager, IEC, MoRD 1

For other details such as Job Description, Qualification, Experience, Work Location, Application Submission etc., please visit our website:

www.career.nirdpr.in ; www.nirdpr.org.in

Advt No.: DDU-GKY, NIRDPR-09/2021/01
Last Date : 26/07/2021

Addl. Project Director

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, PHED, REGION AJMER
PHONE NO. 0145-2624748 FAX NO. 0145-2627671
No. F.I/ Ar. MP/ 2021-2022 3972-4012 Dated : 29/6/21
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR WORKS
Following bids are invited from interested bidders online upto 20.07.2021. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>)

NIT No. Brief Description of works

39/2021-22 CONSTRUCTION OF OHRS'S PROVIDING, LAYING, JOINTING, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF RISING/ DISTRIBUTION PIPELINES OF VARIOUS SIZES/ TYPES TO PROVIDE FHTC CONNECTIONS AT 37 VILLAGES INCLUDING ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD OF MVS & SVS UNDER JIM IN THE JURISDICTION OF PHED SUB DIVISION NASIRABAD, DISTRICT RURAL DIVISION AJMER (Estimated cost of work- Rs. 3172.39 lacs) UBN No. PHE2122WLOBO4250

40/2021-22 PROVIDING, LAYING, JOINTING, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF RISING/ DISTRIBUTION PIPELINES OF VARIOUS SIZES/ TYPES TO PROVIDE FHTC CONNECTIONS AT 17 VILLAGES (14 SCHEMES) AND THERE DILINES INCLUDING ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD OF MVS & SVS UNDER JIM IN THE JURISDICTION OF PHED DIVISION BEAWAR, DISTT AJMER. (Estimated cost of work- Rs. 1498.62 lacs) UBN No. PHE2122WLOBO4252

NIB No. PHE2122A1899

Mukul Bhargava
Additional Chief Engineer
PHED, Region, Ajmer

DIPR/C/6325

O.P. Chautala's release adds to churn in Haryana politics

Farmers' stir, caste dynamics are key factors, say experts

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

The release of former Haryana Chief Minister and Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) supremo Om Prakash Chautala could not have come at a more opportune time for his party, which is struggling to keep itself relevant in the State politics.

The popularity of Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, who broke away from the INLD to float the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) before the 2019 Assembly election, has taken a beating during the ongoing farmers' agitation. The BJP, too, faces opposition from the farmers in its traditional stronghold along GT Road, presenting an opportunity for the INLD.

Political analysts are unanimous that the return of the old patriarch will boost the party's morale, but they do not expect any big turnaround in its fortunes. Former Haryana Agriculture University Professor and political analyst Ram Kan-

karwar said the "euphoria" among the party cadres and the media was understandable, but it would not be correct to read "too much" into the release in terms of the impact on the party's prospects, with the Jat and non-Jat divide being a new reality along GT Road, presenting an opportunity for the INLD.

"Historically, the INLD has opposed the Congress, but had tie-ups with the BJP. So, the possibility of an alliance, maybe post-poll, between BJP and INLD cannot be ruled out, if the JJP becomes politically weak. So, it will not be correct to write-off the INLD," he said.

"The politics in the State largely being caste-based, the presence of Mr. O.P. Chautala might cause the division of Jat votes. But that, too, will be limited with the Hoodas' strong influence among Jats in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Sonipat and Panipat districts. But it will give a new lease of life to the INLD. Ho-

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Crocs relocated from Gujarat lake

Move to ensure safety of tourists visiting Statue of Unity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

As many as 194 crocodiles have been relocated from a lake near the

Families flee as Taliban seize key district

Insurgents make gains in Kandahar, Badakhshan provinces; 300 military personnel flee to Tajikistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KANDAHAR

The Taliban have captured Panjwai district in the southern province of Kandahar after fierce night-time fighting with Afghan government forces, officials said on Sunday, sending scores of families fleeing from the area.

The fall of Panjwai, a key district in Taliban's former bastion of Kandahar, comes two days after U.S. and NATO forces vacated Bagram Air Base near Kabul, from where they led operations for two decades against the Taliban and their al-Qaeda allies.

Over the years, the Taliban and Afghan forces have regularly clashed in and around Panjwai, with the insurgents aiming to seize it given its proximity to Kandahar city, the provincial capital.

The leader of the Taliban, Hibatullah Akhundzada, hails from Panjwai.



Uncertain times: Afghan policemen on an armoured vehicle at a checkpoint in Panjwai district on Sunday. ■ AFP

The province of Kandahar is the birthplace of the Taliban, who went on to rule Afghanistan with a harsh version of Islamic sharia law until being overthrown by a U.S.-led invasion in 2001.

Panjwai district Governor Hasti Mohammad said Afghan forces and the Taliban clashed during the night, resulting in government forces retreating from the area.

"The Taliban have captured the district police headquarters and the governor's office building," he said.

Scores of families from Panjwai fled their homes. "The Taliban fired on our car as I was fleeing with my family. At least five bullets hit my car," Giran, a resident of Panjwai, said.

"The Taliban are on top of the mountains and firing at

any moving vehicles. The Taliban don't want peace."

Assadullah, a commander of border police in the area, said it was only the police force that was fighting against the insurgents. "The army and the commandos who have better military equipment are not fighting at all," he said.

Panjwai is the fifth district in Kandahar province to fall to the insurgents in recent weeks.

Poor morale'

Meanwhile, Taliban fighters are making gains in the country's northeastern parts with the capture of several districts in Badakhshan province from fleeing Afghan forces. "Unfortunately, the majority of the districts were left to the Taliban without any fight," said Mohib-ul-Rahman, a provincial council member.

In the last three days, 10

districts fell to the Taliban, eight without a fight, said Mr. Rahman.

He blamed the Taliban successes on the poor morale of troops, who are mostly outnumbered and without resupplies.

Hundreds of Afghan Army, police and troops surrendered their outposts and fled to the Badakhshan provincial capital of Faizabad, said Mr. Rahman.

More than 300 Afghan military personnel crossed into Tajikistan as insurgents advanced toward the border, Tajikistan's State Committee for National Security said in a statement.

In late June, the Afghan government resurrected militias with a reputation of brutal violence to support the beleaguered Afghan forces but Mr. Rahman said many of the militias in the Badakhshan districts put up only a half-hearted fight.

At least 45 killed in military plane crash in Philippines

Some of the 96 on board jumped out before craft hit ground

REUTERS

MANILA

A Philippines Air Force plane crashed and broke up in flames on a southern island on Sunday, killing at least 45 people after some jumped free, officials said, in the country's worst military air disaster in nearly 30 years.



Fatal fall: The wreckage of the Philippines Air Force plane after it crashed in Jolo town, Sulu province. ■ AFP

overshot the runway without touching down. It failed to regain enough power and height and crashed at nearby Patikul.

"A number of soldiers were seen jumping out of the aircraft before it hit the ground, sparing them from the explosion caused by the crash," the Joint Task Force Sulu said in a statement. It was not immediately clear how many jumped or whether they had survived.

Military chief Cirilito So-bejana said the plane had "missed the runway trying to regain power". The Department of National Defence said 45 people were killed, including three civilians on the ground, while 53 were injured, including four civilians. Five military personnel were missing.

Man who 'threatened' to bomb Indian mission held

Maldives police arrest him over tweet

MEERA SRINIVASAN

COLOMBO

Maldives police on Saturday arrested a man for "threatening" to bomb the Indian mission, days after India expressed concern over "malicious" media reports targeting its diplomats.

According to Maldivian media, the arrested man, in his early forties, is said to be a member of the ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP). The threat to the Indian mission was stated in a tweet that has since been deleted, local media said.

Police are investigating the development and have also enhanced security for

the resident Indian and Chinese missions, local media reported.

'Media attacks'

The developments have drawn attention in the wake of a recent letter that the High Commission of India in the Maldives sent to the country's Foreign Ministry, seeking action on persons behind "repeated attacks" on Indian diplomats in the media. Within days, the Foreign Ministry responded, issuing a statement urging the country's media to refrain from publishing "false news and accusations" against resident diplomats.

25 killed in Myanmar clashes

Villagers say Army personnel fired indiscriminately; junta says fended off ambush

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

YANGON

weapons cobbled together from household items.

The central Sagaing region has been the site of multiple skirmishes between defence forces and the military, and on Friday fighting broke out in Dapayin township.

Residents said that military trucks entered their area and opened fire on a village near the jungle hoping to flush out members of the local defence force.

"We heard the shooting of artillery 26 times," said a villager, who added that anti-junta fighters tried to retaliate but could not fend off the attack.

"They shot everyone who they saw on the road and in

the village. They did not just have one target," he said. Civilians were among the dead, he added.

Villagers waited until Saturday to venture out of their homes to assess the casualties, said a member of the local defence force who helped collect bodies.

Shot in the head'

"We firstly got nine dead bodies and buried them," he said, adding that eight more were found by a different team and also buried the same day. On Sunday, they found eight more bodies.

"I noticed from their bodies that most of them were shot in the head," he said.

Tigray rebels accept 'ceasefire in principle'

They seek exit of outside forces

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ADDIS ABABA

Army in November to topple the dissident regional authorities, which emerged from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

The 2019 Nobel Peace Prize winner accused them of orchestrating attacks on Ethiopian military bases.

After early successes and a premature declaration of victory, government forces were bogged down in a vicious and months-long battle with pro-TPLF fighters – the Tigray Defence Forces, or TDF. The Ethiopian Army was backed by troops from the neighbouring Amhara region and the army of Eritrea, which borders Tigray.

Chinese astronauts complete first spacewalk at new station

They are the first crew aboard Tiangong space station

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BEIJING

Chinese astronauts successfully performed the country's first tandem spacewalk on Sunday, working for seven hours outside the new Tiangong station in orbit around the Earth.

Tiangong's construction is a major step in China's ambitious space programme, which has seen the nation land a rover on Mars and send probes to the moon.

Three astronauts blasted off last month to become the station's first crew, where they are to remain for three months in China's longest crewed mission to date.

On Sunday morning, two of them exited the station for around seven hours of work in the first spacewalk at Tiangong, the China Manned Space Agency said.

"The safe return of astronauts Liu Boming and Tang Hongbo to the Tianhe core



Aiming high: A screen grab from a video released by CCTV shows a Chinese astronaut outside the Tiangong station. ■ AFP

module marks the complete success of the first spacewalk in our country's space station construction," the space agency said.

Their tasks involved elevating a panoramic camera outside the Tianhe core module, as well as testing the station's robotic arm which will be used to transfer future modules around the station, state media said.

The astronauts installed

foot stops on the robotic arm and, with its support, carried out other assembly work, added the space agency. In a video clip of Mr. Liu leaving the cabin, he exclaimed: "Wow, it's too beautiful out here."

Television footage showed the astronauts preparing for the spacewalk by donning gear and conducting health checks while exercising.

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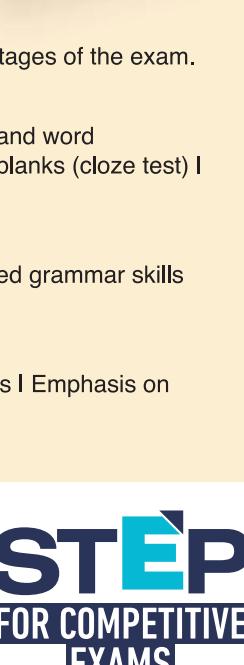
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Thousands in Brazil join anti-Bolsonaro protests

He is facing inquiry over 'Covaxin deal'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

RIO DE JANEIRO

Thousands of Brazilians took to the streets on Saturday to protest against President Jair Bolsonaro, who faces an investigation over an allegedly corrupt COV-19 vaccine deal.

It was the third day of demonstrations against the government, which is also confronting mounting pressure from a parliamentary inquiry into its handling of the pandemic that has claimed over 5,00,000 lives in the country.

Lima Mendes, a 47-year-old physician taking part in a Rio de Janeiro protest,

squarely blamed the government for the high death toll. "This government has killed more than 5,00,000 people...," she said.

In its first two months of hearings, the parliamentary panel of inquiry focused on the government's delays in ordering vaccine supplies.

The inquiry took a sudden turn, however, after a Health Ministry official, Luis Ricardo Miranda, said he had faced "atypical, excessive" pressure to approve the purchase of three million doses of the Indian-made Covaxin vaccine at a cost far higher than for other vaccines.

Cyprus hit by worst forest fire in decades, four dead

Greece, Israel send firefighting planes

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

AKRAKAPAS

forced the evacuation of 10 villages.

"Everything was a nightmare and pure hell here; the village was surrounded by fire," said Akis Giorgiou, 45, from Arakapas.

By late Sunday afternoon, the government reported a "reduction of (fire) outbreaks" thanks to "effective water drops by Greek and Israeli aircraft".

The Egyptian government said the four dead were farm workers from the North African country, while Cyprus vowed in a tweet to "stand by the victims' families... offering every support".

The blaze killed four Egyptian labourers, destroyed 50 homes, damaged farms and power lines, and

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ASK US



ARATI KRISHNAN

Q. My dad's post office senior citizens savings scheme deposit will be maturing. Please suggest an investment option that gives better rates without risks.

SRINIVASAN

A. The post office Senior Citizens Savings Scheme, being government-backed, is one of the safest options one can think of in the current environment, protecting principal.

Its interest rates have also been consistently higher than those on options like bank and NBFC deposits. It is best that your father renews his investment for 5 more years in this scheme. While deposits with top banks today offer rates of just 5-5.5%, SCSS rates are currently at 7.4% per annum. In debt investments, any option that offers much higher rates than government bonds usually carries risk to principal. Today, the 5-year government bond offers an interest of about 5.7%. You should therefore be wary of any instrument, that isn't government backed and yet offers much higher rates.

Given the impact that COVID-19 second wave has had on banks, NBFCs and firms, any entity that sources deposits at high rates would be quite risky.

Q. I am a 25-year-old student with a science background. I want to invest ₹500 a month in MF SIPs for good returns over 1-3 years.

BASTABIK DAS

A. Most people think of stock markets when referring to MFs. However, there are also MFs that invest in government securities, company bonds, money-market instruments, gold and stocks listed overseas, apart from combinations of these. If you would like to invest in stock or equity MFs, which can deliver high returns, you need to be prepared to risk capital losses and also for a long waiting period of 7 years or more to make good returns. This is because stock markets move in cycles and may fall sharply after delivering bumper performance in some years. As we have seen stock markets rise steadily in recent years, a correction may be in the offing. In that case, you may make low or even negative returns with holding periods such as 1-3 years. The category of MFs that best fits a 1-3 year holding period is debt funds which invest in bonds, with a fixed interest rate. You can consider ultra-short term or short-term bonds funds for SIPs, after checking if their portfolios are invested in sovereign bonds and highly rated corporate bonds. However, all MFs are market-linked, where you can lose capital to market swings. As you're just starting on your investing journey and may not have a high risk appetite, consider investments such as Post Office or bank recurring deposits to build savings.

Q. I hail from a lower middle-class family. I want to start investing ₹1,000 a month in stocks. I am interested in learning both fundamentals and technical analysis. Please suggest the best, inexpensive resources.

SHANMUGANATHAN

A. It is quite usual for investors to develop a sudden passion for stocks, believing that it's an easy road to riches. When a correction unfolds and stock prices tumble, the real risks of stock market investing hit home! We suggest you make a start by investing in index MFs that passively mimic the movement of indices like the Nifty 50, Sensex30, Nifty100 and Nifty Next 50 as this is a low-cost route to getting a feel of the market. Before you look at fundamental or technical analysis, it is essential to understand the foundations and concepts of equity investing. To make a beginning, you can read a combination of global and India-specific books on the subject. Peter Lynch's One Up on Wall Street and Beating the Street, Stocks to Riches and Value Investing by Parag Parikh, A.K. Narayan's How to Invest Right and Prosper, Monika Halan's Let's Talk Money and Warren Buffett's annual newsletters at Berkshire Hathaway are some easy-to-understand books that can set you on the right path. You can also follow blogs like FundooProfessor Dr. Vijay Malik who deals with fundamental analysis. You can attend free investor awareness events conducted by MFs, SEBI and the bourses.

Q. My parents, aged 56 and 51, are Haryana government staff. Will they get any health insurance cover?

RACHIT GOEL

K. Nitya Kalyani answers

A. Most State government health insurance schemes are quite comprehensive. Please go through the prospectus or similar documentation to learn their scope and also see if optional extra covers are available on payment of extra premium. This information, should be readily available with the relevant personnel and human resources departments of your parents' service.

If you find the scope of their coverage lacking, you can enhance coverage by buying an additional hospitalisation policy or a top-up policy. If the government scheme has no viable option for retirees, then a commercial policy will serve the purpose. Buying it now when your parents are in their early and mid-fifties is a lot easier and they would have worked off the initial waiting period for coverage of pre-existing conditions well-before they retire.

Regarding health insurance for senior citizens, many companies now offer options, but you will find them dwindling as age advances. Taking a supplementary independent policy a few years before retirement appears to be a prudent idea.

(K. Nitya Kalyani is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Adding firepower to the TERM PLAN

SAJJA PRAVEEN CHOWDARY

A term life insurance plan is a cost-effective, pure-protection life insurance product that has become essential given unprecedented times such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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Under such a plan, the policyholder pays a small amount as premium and if the he or she dies within the policy tenure/term, the financial dependents of the policyholder receive a large cover amount as a payout.

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For example, a 25-year old person can get a life cover of ₹1 crore for 25 years at a premium of about ₹500 per month.

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The payout amount can be used by the dependents to meet daily expenses, repay loans and pay one-time expenses such as children's education and/or for wedding.

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Apart from the regular death benefit, a term life insurance plan also provides additional financial benefits provided you have bought the necessary riders. Riders are like accessories that are to be purchased along with the base policy.

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Attaching the right riders to your term-life insurance plan gives the plan extra firepower, making it more comprehensive and beneficial for you, the customer. The cost of the riders is

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For instance, say Amit Kumar has a ₹1 crore cover along with a critical illness rider of

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England demolishes Ukraine to swagger into last four

Harry Kane gets into stride with a brace as the Three Lions book a clash with Denmark for a place in the title round

EURO 2020

REUTERS

Harry Kane struck twice as England thrashed Ukraine 4-0 on Saturday to reach its first European Championship semifinal since 1996 and set up a clash with Denmark.

The England captain raced onto a Raheem Sterling through ball to fire in the opener from close range after four minutes at the Stadio Olimpico, England's earliest goal in a Euros match since 2004.

Harry Maguire headed home a second less than a minute into the second half and Kane soon nodded in his side's third as Ukraine's resistance crumbled.

Completing the rout
Substitute Jordan Henderson completed the rout with his first international goal to ensure England's comfortable passage into the last four.

Gareth Southgate's side will face Denmark at Wembley on Wednesday for a place in the final after the



Heading home: Harry Kane nods in England's third as it ran riot against an abject Ukraine. • AFP

Danes defeated the Czech Republic 2-1 in Baku.

Fans had barely settled in their seats by the time England took the lead with a well-worked move.

Sterling cut in off the left wing and slid a through ball into a pocket of space behind the defence for Kane to race through and guide into the net with a neat finish.

Ukraine mustered its first effort when Kyle Walker gave the ball away in midfield and Roman Yaremchuk raced through to draw a good save by Jordan Pickford from a

Top goalscorers

Ronaldo (Portugal) 5	Schick (Czech Rep) 5	Benzema (France) 4	Forsberg (Sweden) 4	Lukaku (Belgium) 4
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(Up to the quarterfinal stage)

tight angle, while England's Declan Rice and Jadon Sancho had shots beaten away by Georgiy Bushchan before halftime.

Flexing muscles

But England flexed its muscles after the break and ended the game as a contest within five minutes of the restart, helped by two fine assists from Luke Shaw.

The left-back whipped a free-kick onto Maguire's head for a close-range finish in the first minute of the second half before steering a perfect delivery towards Kane for a simple close-range header four minutes later.

The goal sent Kane level with Alan Shearer as England's second-top scorer at major tournaments with nine goals, behind Gary Lineker on 10, and he was denied a hat-trick when his ferocious volley was palmed away by the diving Bushchan. England made it four from the resulting corner when Ukraine again failed to deal with a set-piece delivery as Henderson nodded in from six yards to score his first goal for his country on his 62nd cap.

The results: **Quarterfinals:** Ukraine 0 lost to England 4 (Kane 4, 50, Maguire 46, Henderson 63).

By The Numbers

■ 2 - Gareth Southgate will be just the second manager to take England to the semifinals of both the World Cup and the Euros, after Alf Ramsey in 1966 and 1968

■ 3 - England is the first side in tournament history to score three headed goals in a single match

■ 4 - England has scored four goals in a knockout match of a major tournament (World Cup/Euros) for only a second time; after the 1966 World Cup final against Germany

■ 7 - The Three Lions have kept seven consecutive clean sheets for the first time in their history

Zico runs Olympic Torch Relay in Ibaraki



Zico carries the Olympic torch. • OLYMPICS.COM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KASHIMA (JAPAN) The Olympic Torch Relay kicked off its leg in Ibaraki Prefecture on Sunday as Brazilian football legend Zico ran as one of the last torchbearers here.

He joined Kashima Antlers (known as Sumitomo Metal Kicking Team) in 1991 as a player, and stayed with the club until July 1994.

In 2002, he was appointed the Japan National coach and led the team to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. He is currently the Technical Director of Kashima Antlers.

Indian team for World Jr. tennis final

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has selected a three-member boys' team with coach Sajid Lodi as captain for the ITF World Junior tennis under-14 Finals to be held in Prostejov, Czech Republic, from August 2 to 7.

The Asia-Oceania qualification event could not be held. Considering the previous three years results, the ITF had selected Japan, Thailand and Indonesia for the boys' event from the region.

The tournament, featuring 16 teams, will be played on a league-cum-knockout basis on clay courts.

The team: Reethi Pranav, Krish Tyagi, Tejas Ahuja. **Reserve:** Manas Dhamine. **Captain:** Sajid Lodi.

South Africa clinches series

SA IN WI

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE ST. GEORGE'S (GRENADA)

South Africa capitalised on the misfiring power-hitters of the West Indies to claim a series-clinching 25-run victory in the final T20I of their five-match contest to clinch the series 3-2 here on Saturday.

Defending a total of 168 for four, thanks to half-centuries from Aiden Markram and Quinton de Kock, the Proteas limited the hosts to 143 for nine.

The scores: South Africa 168/4 in 20 overs (Quinton de Kock 60, Adrien Markram 70) vs West Indies 143/9 in 20 overs (Evin Lewis 52, Shimron Hetmyer 33, Lungi Ngidi 3/32). **Toss:** South Africa. **MoM:** Markram; **Mos:** Shamsi.

South Africa won by 25 runs, takes five-match series 3-2.

Third ODI abandoned

SL IN ENGLAND

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BRISTOL

Heavy rain prevented England completing a likely whitewash of its one-day international series against Sri Lanka on Sunday.

The third and final ODI was abandoned in the afternoon with no result before England could reply to Sri Lanka's 166 all out in 41.1 overs.

The scores: Sri Lanka 166 in 41.1 overs (Dasun Shanaka 48, Tom Curran 4/35) vs England. **Toss:** England.

Match abandoned due to rain. England won the three-match series 2-0.

Full crowds allowed from quarterfinals

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WIMBLEDON

Crowds at Wimbledon's Centre Court and No. 1 Court can increase to 100% capacity for the singles quarterfinals through the end of the tournament.

The All England Club said on Sunday that will mark "the first full outdoor stadiums at a sporting event" in Britain since the start of the coronavirus pandemic last year.

Wimbledon was cancelled in 2020 because of the COVID-19 outbreak, the first time in 75 years that the oldest Grand Slam tennis tournament was not held.

The club said the rise from what has been limited to 50% full crowds at the two main arenas comes after "the successful staging of the first week of The Championships" and with government approval.



Stretched: Daniil Medvedev outslugged Marin Cilic in a bruising third-round clash. • REUTERS

THE RESULTS

Third round: Men: 2-Medvedev (Rus) bt 32-Cilic (Cro) 6-7(3), 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

Mixed doubles: Second round: 10-Klaasen (RSA) & Jurak (Cro) bt Divij & Murray Sharan (GBR) 3-6, 7-6(1), 6-3.

Fallen seed

■ **Men:** 32-Cilic

lost to 10th seeds Raven Klaasen of South Africa and Croatia's Darija Jurak in the mixed doubles second round on Saturday.

MANIC MONDAY LINE-UP

Women

- 20-Gauff (USA) vs 25-Kerber (Ger)
- 1-Barty (Aus) vs 14-Krejcikova (Cze)
- Raducanu (GBR) vs Tomljanovic (Aus)
- 7-Swiatek (Pol) vs 21-Jabeur (Tun)
- 18-Rybka (Kaz) vs 2-Sabalenka (Blr)
- 8-Pliskova (Cze) vs Samsonova (Rus)
- 30-Badosa (Esp) vs 19-Muchova (Cze)
- 23-Keys (USA) vs Golubic (Sui)

Men

- 1-Djokovic (Srb) vs 17-Garin (Chi)
- 6-Federer (Sui) vs 23-Sonego (Ita)
- 16-Auger-Aliassime (Can) vs 4-Zverev (Ger)
- Fucsovics (Hun) vs 5-Rublev (Rus)
- 14-Hurkacz (Pol) vs 2-Medvedev (Rus)
- 10-Shapovalov (Can) vs 8-Bautista-Agut (Esp)
- 7-Berrettini (Ita) vs Iashvili (Blr)
- 25-Kachanov (Rus) vs Korda (USA)

Revathi tops trials

STAN RAYAN

KOCHE

S. Dhanalakshmi provided the big surprise by finishing third in the women's 400m trials in Patiala on Sunday evening. The trials were held to select the three girls (including a reserve) for the 4x400m mixed relay team for this month's Tokyo Olympics.

V. Revathi won in 53.55s, while V. Suba finished second. Jisna Mathew and V.K. Vismaya finished fourth and sixth.

A trial for three athletes was also held to pick the reserves for the men's 4x400m relay and Sarthak Bhambri topped the event.

The results: 400m: Women: 1. V. Revathi (53.55s), 2. V. Suba (54.26), 3. S. Dhanalakshmi (54.27), 4. Jisna Mathew (54.31), 5. Kiran (55.21), 6. V.K. Vismaya (55.34). **Men:** 1. Sarthak Bhambri (47.73s), 2. Alex Anthony (47.83), 3. P. Naganathan (48.24).

O'Connor soars to Alpine stage win

TOUR DE FRANCE

REUTERS

TIGNES

Defending champion Tadej Pogacar kept a close eye on his challengers as he retained the overall leader's yellow jersey in the Tour de France after the ninth stage, a 144.9km mountain trek from Cluses in the northern Alps on Sunday.

Australian Ben O'Connor of the AG2R-Citroen team won the stage from the breakaway, ahead of Italians

Matteo Cataneo and Sonny Colbrelli.

Slovenian Pogacar, who claimed the yellow jersey on Saturday, was in control all day and responded to a late attack by Ecuador's Richard Carapaz, his main rival for the general classification, in the final climb.

With his maiden Tour stage win, O'Connor climbed up to second in the overall standings, two minutes and one second off the pace, with Colombian Rigoberto Uran in third.

Reyan triumphs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh's Bhavani Kolla took the third spot after being tied with Maharashtra's Vivaan Saroogi at 9.5 points. The event, suspended after seven rounds due to server issues, resumed on Sunday and the last four rounds were completed.

The match went into the tie-breaker after Ding crushed Carlsen 3-0 in the second set, to make amends for the loss of the first set on Saturday.

For the third place, Mag-

It has not been an easy journey: Mithali

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Mithali Raj's answer was brief. "I am just happy," she said smiling, at the post-match presentation, on becoming the all-time leading scorer in international women's cricket.

Her bat, though, had spo-

ken quite a bit earlier on Saturday at Worcester, where she made an unbeaten 75 off 86 balls to lead India to a four-wicket win in the final ODI against England. When she moved to 15 during that innings, with a boundary over the head of bowler Nat Sciver, she went past Charlotte Ed-

wards's 10,273 international runs, across formats.

At a virtual press conference, Mithali spoke about how her long journey over the last 22 years took her to the top of batting charts in women's cricket. "It has not been an easy journey," she said.

The skipper said there were times when she wanted to give up for various reasons. "But something kept me going, and here I am after 22 years of cricket," she said. "The hunger for scoring runs for India has never dried up. I

am still passionate to go out there and win games for India."

She said there was still room for improvement in her batting. "I am working on that and I have a few months before the World Cup (starts)," she said. About her two previous innings in the series drawing criticism for slow strike-rate, she said, "I have played for a long time and I have a certain responsibility to the team. "I am not here to please people, but to do the role assigned to me."



On top: Mithali became the all-time leading scorer in international women's cricket. • GETTY IMAGES

Aronian claims Asian rapid chess title

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI

Levon Aronian cruised to a 2-0 shutout of Vladimir Artemiev in the second set to win the Goldmoney Asian Rapid online chess title on Sunday. Coupled with Aronian's 2.5-1.5 victory in the first set

on Saturday, these twin triumphs ended Artemiev's resistance, with two games to spare.

The match ensured Aronian's place in the 10-player Champions Tour Final in September.

For the third place, Mag-

her (Mithali's) records speak for themselves. What she has achieved is comparable to the achievements of the great Sunil Gavaskar and Sachin Tendulkar. It is safe to say that she will be lonely at the top for a long time. I don't see her record being broken anytime soon

SHANTHA RANGASWAMY
Former India captain

Mithali Raj shows that in our excitement over young talent, we shouldn't lose patience with our experienced stars. Encourage youth but don't write off seniors, one of cricket's oldest lessons

TV PICKS

Wimbledon 2021: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
Copa America 2021: Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 4.30 a.m. (Tuesday)
NBA: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 6 a.m. (Tuesday)

IN BRIEF

Bucks book shot at title

LOS ANGELES
Milwaukee Bucks powered into the NBA Finals for the first time since 1974 on Saturday with a series-clinching 118-107 win over Atlanta Hawks.
The result: Eastern Conference finals: Atlanta Hawks 107 lost to Milwaukee Bucks 118 (Bucks win series 4-2). AFP

Merritt, Niemann share lead; Lahiri slips

Detroit
Anirban Lahiri slipped to T-7 on day three at the Rocket Mortgage Classic here on Saturday. American Troy Merritt and Joaquin Niemann shared the lead on 14-under 202. Australia's Cam Davis shot six birdies for a 67 to trail by just one shot. PTI

Kyriacou wins title; Tvesa finishes T-32

Arnhem
Australia's Stephanie Kyriacou won the Big Green Egg golf open with an 18-under 270 here on Saturday. India's Tvesa Malik finished T-32 and Diksha Dagar T-53. PTI

Bhullar improves, Shubhankar 57th

Kilkenny
Gaganjeet Bhullar shot a two-under 70 to tie 21st even as Australian Lucas Herbert took a one-stroke lead at the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open here on Saturday. Shubhankar Sharma's 72 puts him at three-under T-57. PTI

Aditi moves up to T-37; Ko shoots to the top

Dallas
Aditi Ashok shot two-under 69 on Saturday to rise to tied 37th at the Volunteers of America Classic golf tournament here. She is now two-under over three rounds. South Korean Ko Jin-Young shot a five-under 66 to take the lead at 14-under. PTI

Messi inspires Argentina into semifinals

Ospina is Colombia's hero in penalty shoot-out win over Uruguay

COPA AMERICA

ASSOCIATED PRESS
RIO DE JANEIRO



Free-kick king: Lionel Messi, right, shows why he is so good with this strike against Ecuador. ■ AP

The other semifinal will feature defending champion Brazil and Peru.

Two penalty shootout saves by goalkeeper David Ospina put Colombia in the semifinals after a 0-0 draw with Uruguay in regular time

and kept alive its hopes of a first Copa title since 2001.

The results: Quarterfinals: Uruguay 0 drew with Colombia 0 (Colombia won 4-2 on penalties).

Argentina 3 (De Paul 40, Martinez 84, Messi 90+3) bt Ecuador 0.

Shivpal smells a medal

Dutee, Bhavani take pragmatic approach

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Shivpal Singh feels Indian javelin throwers have the potential to win a medal at the Tokyo Olympics.

Shivpal, who threw the spear 85.47m in South Africa in March 2020 to qualify for the Olympics, was addressing a virtual press conference organised by the Bhubaneswar-based KIIT University to felicitate the Olympics-bound athletes and sports medicine specialist Dr. Sudeep Satpathy on Sunday.

"I have gathered a lot of experience since my last Olympics in 2016. I did 11.17s (in 100m) in the Indian GP and will aim at doing 11.10s so that I can reach the semi-finals. That will be my first target," said Dutee.

C.A. Bhavani Devi, the first Indian fencer to qualify for the Olympics, was proud of her achievement.

"It's a dream come true for me. It has taken 15 years of hard work to reach here. It is a matter of great pride for the fencing family of the country," said Bhavani, who will move from Italy to France next week to continue her training.

First-ever podium finish for Team MRF in ERC

MOTORSPORTS

SPORTS REPORTER
CHENNAI

With a second-place finish at the Rally Liepaja, Team MRF Tyres registered its first-ever podium in the European Rally Championship (ERC) on Saturday.

"We had to push for the whole rally. This series is very strong with some of the best drivers competing and we had to fight hard at every stage. Getting our first-ever podium in the ERC is very satisfying for me and Team MRF Tyres," said Breen.



Day to remember: Team MRF Tyres which finished second at the Rally Liepaja. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SEMIFINAL LINEUP

Brazil vs Peru 4.30 a.m. (Tuesday, July 6)
Argentina vs Colombia 6.30 a.m. (Wednesday, July 7)

Live on Sony Ten 1, 2 & Sony 6 (SD & HD)

By The Numbers

- 4 - Messi leads the scoring chart so far in this tournament
- 58 - Messi's goals via free-kicks for club and country
- 76 - Messi's tally of international goals for country, one shy of Pele's record

Angad, Mairaj complete their vaccination

from their training base in Italy.

While Asian champion Angad required a second dose, as he had taken the first shot on April 1, Mairaj had not been given any dose till July 1. Thus, Mairaj was administered the Johnson & Johnson single

dose vaccine, and Angad got his second shot of Covishield.

All efforts to have the vaccine in Italy itself had proved unsuccessful, despite the government and national federation communicating the urgency to the authorities concerned.



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We are still in the middle of a war. Not the kind that is fought with guns and bombs, but one that has claimed many lives nonetheless. In a time like this, it is important to stay brave and not lose strength. And few events represent human perseverance better than the Olympics.

THE LAST TIME PEOPLE HAD TO WAIT FOR MORE THAN 4 YEARS FOR THE OLYMPICS, THE WORLD WAS AT WAR.

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GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA

RFP FOR SETTING UP OF URBAN CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN HYDERABAD, TELANGANA

Government of Telangana intends to set up an **URBAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (UCE)** in a sprawling **45 acres** campus on the **outskirts of Hyderabad**. This will have at least about 20 acres of open/green space.

One of its kind, this center will act as a National/Regional level think tank on urban issues and will have, among others, R&D facilities on urban issues, a hub for urban innovations and a center for urban start-ups, training & conference facilities and will act as a state/national/regional level center for hosting conferences/ workshops on urban issues. It will also act as a repository of and will house urban innovations and all the latest in this sector. The center will have classrooms, conference halls, auditoriums & full-fledged accommodation facilities along with gymnasium & sports facilities for the campus. The center will also house live-models of the latest innovations /best practices in urban sector in about 5 acres of land on a dynamic basis.

UCE campus (all structures/ buildings/ designs)

will be based on concept of sustainable development and innovative architecture. The entire campus will be a green campus & will have inbuilt elements of energy saving design, optimum usage of natural light, landscapes and using space in eco-friendly innovative manner.

Reputed architectural firms / consortium of design firms/individuals specializing in architecture, design, landscape / individual architects (local/national/international) who have ideas to make a difference and are looking for proper platform are encouraged to participate in this design proposal.

A nominal fixed remuneration will be paid by Govt. of Telangana to all such designs which are accepted at initial stage and additional remuneration will be paid to shortlisted design concepts.

Design needs to be submitted within 8 weeks. A committee of experts will shortlist top 5 designs and these will be asked to make detailed presentation.

Details of the project, concept and requirements are available at

<https://www.hmda.gov.in/Excellence.php>

<https://nium.org.in/rfpurban/>

Site inspection & queries would be facilitated.

The last date for submitting proposal is 30th August, 2021

Email:

1. dg@nium.org.in
2. prisecy_maud@telangana.gov.in

Arvind Kumar, IAS

Principal Secretary to Government, Telangana



Issued By: Commissioner, I & PR Department, Government of Telangana