



Jaishankar calls out China for differing rationale on LAC row

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IAF objects to uniform, language used by Anil Kapoor in new film

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Good Brexit deal is still possible with EU, says Boris Johnson

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Parthiv Patel retires from all forms of cricket

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## NEARBY



Three militants killed in Pulwama encounter

SRINAGAR  
Three alleged Al-Badr militants were killed and a civilian was injured in an encounter in Pulwama, south Kashmir, on Wednesday. "Terrorists fired indiscriminately upon a joint search party in Pulwama's Tiken area. Zamir Sadiq Lone, a civilian, in whose house the terrorists were hiding, was injured," IGP Vijay Kumar said.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

**Level Up IAS**  
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8826486658, 8826496658

## Curbs remain on CM's movement, says AAP

NEW DELHI  
AAP national spokesperson Raghav Chadha said that one entry to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence remained closed even on Wednesday. "Today [Wednesday] also, in a way, there was a restriction in his [Mr. Kejriwal's] right to free movement. One door was opened yesterday [Tuesday] evening," said Mr. Chadha, terming the situation an unannounced "emergency".

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

# Farmers reject amendment proposals, plan to intensify stir

They plan to block roads to Agra, Jaipur by Dec. 12

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ  
NEW DELHI

Farmer leaders on Wednesday rejected the Union government's proposal to amend the farm laws and vowed to intensify their agitation until they are repealed. They plan to block the capital's highways to Agra and Jaipur by December 12 and hold a nationwide dharna two days later.

The Centre delivered its written proposal to the farmers' leadership at the Singhu border point on Tuesday afternoon, two weeks after the tens of thousands of farmers began their protest, camping on Delhi's borders.

The proposal offered a written assurance that government procurement at minimum support price would remain, along with proposals to amend the laws to deal with the concerns raised by farmers regarding parity between State-run and private mandis, registration of traders, and dispute resolution mechanisms.

"There is nothing different in this from what has been said during the discussions, which we have repeatedly rejected. The government wants to dress up its old proposals in new clothes. It's an



In memoriam: Farmers observing two minutes of silence for a comrade who died while protesting at the Singhu border in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

## Opposition team meets President

The government should not misunderstand that farmers would give up their agitation on the farm legislation without their demands being met, said former Congress president Rahul Gandhi after a delegation of Opposition leaders met President Ram Nath Kovind. ▶ PAGE 4

insults to farmers," said Kranthikar Kisan Union president Darshan Pal.

He outlined plans to step up the pressure. "By December 12, we will jam the Delhi-

## 'PM should talk to farmers'

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday reiterated his demand that Prime Minister Narendra Modi enter into a "direct dialogue" with farmers protesting against the three contentious agriculture sector laws passed by Parliament. ▶ PAGE 4

Jaipur highway. On that day, we will make toll plazas across the country free for a day," he said, adding that farmers were calling for a boycott of Jio mobile connec-

## Punjab scientist declines award

Varinderpal Singh, an agriculture scientist with the Punjab Agricultural University, refused to accept an award being presented to him by a Union Minister to express his solidarity with the farmers agitating against the Centre's farm laws on Wednesday. ▶ PAGE 4

tions and other products and services of the Reliance and Adani conglomerates.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGES 3, 4 & 9

Cabinet nod for public WiFi networks

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal for setting up public WiFi hotspots across the country via public data offices or PDOs, which could even be a kirana shop or a paan shop.

The move, aimed at helping accelerate the uptake of broadband Internet services, will not require the PDOs to get a license or pay a fee.

The public WiFi Access Network Interface, which will be called 'PM-WANI', was first recommended by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in 2017. This will involve multiple players, including PDOs, Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOA), app providers, and a central registry.

PODs – comparable to a PCO or a cybercafe – will establish, maintain, and operate WiFi access points and deliver broadband services to subscribers, while the PDOAs will be aggregators of PDOs and perform functions such as authorisation and accounting. The app provider will develop the app to register users and discover PM-WANI compliant WiFi hotspots nearby. The details of all three will be maintained by the registry.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGES 3, 4 & 9

# SII, Bharat Biotech emergency vaccine clearance on hold

DGCI seeks more data on their efficacy

JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI

India may have to wait longer for a locally produced vaccine as an expert committee of the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has kept on hold, pending more evidence, proposals by the Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech requesting emergency use authorisation (EUA) for their vaccine candidates Covishield and Covaxin.



Vials of Covishield being inspected at the Serum Institute of India. ■ FILE PHOTO

A volunteer in Chennai, who reportedly had a severe adverse reaction, a person connected with the approval process told *The Hindu* on condition of anonymity. The latter, however, does not find mention in the official minutes.

A volunteer in Chennai last month sued the SII for what he believed was an adverse neurological reaction from being administered the vaccine. SII denied the link and counter-sued the applicant. While ICMR officials have said that an "initial" investigation showed the reaction wasn't due to the vaccine, a fuller explanation is not yet available from the government.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
ANOTHER REPORT ▶ PAGE 8

# Rules governing CAA still under preparation

First official response from the MHA

VIJAITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

A year after the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) was passed by the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has said that the rules governing the Act are still "under preparation". Without the rules being notified, the Act remains ineffective.

This is the first official response from the MHA on the rules of the contentious Act that saw vociferous protests and riots from December 2019 till early March. As many as 83 persons were killed in various incidents in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya and Delhi.

The MHA's response came in reply to a question filed by *The Hindu* under

# Cattle, buffalo meat residue found in Indus Valley vessels

First such study of absorbed lipid residue in pottery

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI

A new study has found the presence of animal products, including cattle and buffalo meat, in ceramic vessels dating back about 4,600 years at seven Indus Valley Civilisation sites in present-day Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

The study, which was published on Wednesday in the *Journal of Archaeological Science* and conducted as part of the Two Rains project of the University of Cambridge and Banaras Hindu University, analysed the lipid residue in pottery found at the ancient sites.

About 50-60% of domestic animal bones found at Indus Valley sites come from cattle/buffalo, the study said. "The high proportions of cattle



The remains found at the Indus Valley site in Rakigarhi, Haryana, in 2017.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Our study of lipid residues in Indus pottery shows a dominance of animal products in vessels, such as the meat of non-ruminant animals like pigs, ruminant animals like cattle or buffalo and sheep or goat, as well as dairy products."

She said the analysis of lipid residues involved extraction and identification of the fats and oils that were absorbed in the vessels.

"Lipids are relatively less prone to degradation and have been discovered in pottery from archaeological contexts around the world. However, they have seen very limited investigation in ancient ceramics from South Asia," she said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

# Sportsmen provide free laundry service to farmers

They work 12-hour days with two washing machines, and give away essential toiletries to the protesters

JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

Sportsmen, current and former, from Punjab and Haryana take turns washing an estimated 2,000 pairs of clothes daily at a makeshift laundry set up by them near the exit of a vacated shopping mall on the fringe of the farmers' agitation at the Singhu border.

The laundry comprises two washing machines and over half-a-dozen plastic tubs, used for soaking garments both before and after being machine-washed.

The collective also provides everything from hair oil and toothpaste to undergarments and shawls to the protesting farmers from their open camp at the Kessel Grand Mall, located at the beginning of Kundli in



Sportsmen wash clothes at a makeshift laundry set up near the Singhu border protest site. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

Haryana's Sonipat.

"How do you like our set-up?" asked Nishant Singh, a young kabaddi player in charge of receiving dirty garments and handing over washed ones to their rightful owners.

"We also have mosquito repellent coils, creams and

ex-kabaddi player. Prabhjot Singh Jhaj, a kabaddi coach from Phagwara, said the collective has been offering its services for the last five days.

"Ours is the only laundry here so far. A few days ago, sportsmen from the rural parts of our State [Punjab] and Haryana – hockey, kabaddi and the like – decided to do something to help the farmers who set up camp here two weeks ago, and we have been here since," Mr. Jhaj said.

"We work 12 hours a day. Both machines work non-stop for 12 hours each and so do we. Our service will continue till the agitation continues," he said as he squeezed water from a shirt. Gurdeep Singh Deepa, an

also from Phagwara, said players from different sports took turns to offer their services at the camp.

"We have sportsmen – both current players and former ones from each State – taking turns to do seva here. We took different career decisions but what binds us with the agitating farmers here is that our fathers were farmers just like them," Mr. Deepa said.

"These laws will destroy the average farmer in ways that are irreversible. We cannot watch that happen. We have represented our State and sometimes even the country in the name of pride and honour. This time we are here for the farmers' honour, even if by cleaning their dirty clothes," Mr. Deepa added.

# Quarantine posters not required: SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court clarified on Wednesday that State governments and Union Territories are not required to paste posters outside the homes of quarantined CO

VID-19 patients.

The apex court, however, added that such posters can be affixed only in specific cases when the competent authority issues specific directions under the Disaster Management Act.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 9

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## COVID-19 positivity less than 5% for eighth day

Capital records 2,463 fresh infections

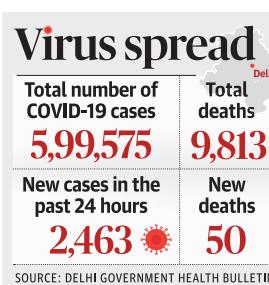
STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Capital witnessed 2,463 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 5,99,575, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday.

Also, 50 more deaths have been reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of deaths to 9,813. Of the total cases, 5,69,216 people have recovered and there are 20,546 active cases. A total of 72,079 tests were done in the past 24 hours.

"Today overall positivity is 3.42% this is less than 5% for last 8 days. Less than 5000 cases for last 12 days. Today's death numbers are lowest since 1 Nov. Continue to observe all precautions," Health Minister Satyendar Jain tweeted.



# 30K girls not getting ₹1 sanitary pads for 7 months

Scheme has been restructured to give 10 pads but is stuck as Delhi govt. is yet to float a new tender for procurement: official

NIKHIL M BABU  
NEW DELHI

Nineteen-year-old Yogita, daughter of a rickshaw puller, said she was happy when she started getting a pack of six sanitary pads for ₹6 last year from the government. But it did not last long. "Just before the lockdown, we stopped getting pads from *didi* [ASHA worker]. Now, sometimes I buy pads from outside, else use old clothes," Yogita, who lives in a rented one-room house, told *The Hindu*.

Under the government's Udaan scheme, like Yogita, 30,000 out-of-school girls used to get six sanitary pads for ₹6 a month. But the scheme has not been functional for the past seven to eight months as the government has not floated a tender for new suppliers, according to officials and multiple ASHA workers.

Most of the beneficiaries of the scheme are from economically backward backgrounds.

"The scheme has been restructured to give 10 sanitary pads free of cost to about 70,000 out-of-school girls a month. A tender for procuring the sanitary pads will be floated soon," a Delhi government official said.

#### No comments

When contacted, a Delhi government spokesperson did not offer a comment on why the scheme is not operational.

Yogita said she had got the sanitary pads through an ASHA worker for seven to eight months since April last year. "It was very helpful. Now even though we don't have much money, we are forced to buy it from the bazaar," she added.

Surbhi Singh, a gynaecologist and founder of Sacchi Saheli, an NGO working for women's health and education, said that the girls going back to using old cloth pieces can be problematic.

"It is not that sanitary pads are better than cloth, but an old cloth piece has to be washed and dried in the sunlight before using it. This has to be done again before reusing it too. But due to



Under the Udaan scheme, 30,000 out-of-school girls used to get six sanitary pads for ₹6 a month. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ogist and founder of Sacchi Saheli, an NGO working for women's health and education, said that the girls going back to using old cloth pieces can be problematic.

"It is not that sanitary pads are better than cloth, but an old cloth piece has to be washed and dried in the sunlight before using it. This causes skin and vaginal infection," Dr. Singh said.

shame and lack of information, many women do not wash it and dry it properly. This causes skin and vaginal infection," Dr. Singh said.

#### Target was 50K girls

It is part of the Central government's Menstrual Hygiene Scheme (MHS), wherein funds are given to State governments to purchase the sanitary pads. The

scheme was implemented under the name of Udaan by the Delhi government from April 2019. Though the target was to reach 50,000 adolescent girls a month, the government was able to distribute it to about 30,000 girls on an average.

The scheme was also aimed at creating awareness about safe and hygienic menstrual health practices.

After the scheme was started in 2019, the Delhi government decided to increase the number of pads to 10 from six and also give the pads for free. The contract, which was signed last year with a private company, expired in March and a new tender has not been floated yet.

#### Reason: pandemic

The official said that there were delays due to the pandemic as well as the govern-

ment's decision to change the specifications of the pads and purchase those with better quality.

"The Delhi government will bear the extra cost when increasing the number of pads from 6 to 10 while also making them free," the official added.

Dr. Singh said the government should "definitely restart" the scheme. "In Scotland, sanitary pads are given for free to every woman. But in India, it is not given for free to even poor people," she added.

In December 2019, the Delhi High Court had asked the Delhi government and civic bodies here to keep providing sanitary pads for free to schoolgoing girls and those who dropped out and continue with their awareness programmes and schemes to promote menstrual hygiene.

## 'Review decision over ICU beds reservation for COVID-19 patients'

HC tells govt. as around 50% of reserved beds lie vacant

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the AAP government to review its decision to reserve 80% of ICU beds for COVID-19 patients in 33 private hospitals here.

Justice Navin Chawla gave the direction to the government after he was apprised by the counsel of a private hospitals' association that around 50% of the ICU beds

reserved in private hospitals for COVID-19 patients are lying vacant.

Senior advocate Maninder Singh, representing Association of Healthcare Providers, referred to figures of beds in private hospitals, as updated on the Delhi government's website, and said of a total of 1,527 COVID-19 ICU beds with ventilators and 3,554 COVID-19 beds without ventilators,

508 and 1,852 beds respectively were lying vacant as no December 8.

The senior counsel argued that there was no justification of continuation of the Delhi government's September 12 order.

Taking note of the submission, the High Court asked the Delhi government to submit its response before the next date on December 15.

## Municipal bodies rapped for landfill fires

Air quality continues to be in 'very poor' category, expected to deteriorate slightly

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The air quality of Delhi and Noida was in the "very poor" category on Wednesday and Gurugram's continued to be in the "poor" category, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data. The air quality of the national capital is expected to deteriorate slightly and remain in the "very poor" category on Thursday.

The air pollution was high in Delhi because of fog and the local surface-level winds

were calm, which does not help in the dispersion of pollutants.

The AQI of Delhi was 358, as per CPCB's 4 p.m. bulletin, which is an average of the past 24 hours. The values for Gurugram and Noida were 296 and 394 respectively.

Also, AAP leader and chairperson of the Environment Committee of the Delhi Assembly, Atishi, on Wednesday pulled up the officials of the BJP-led East Delhi Municipal Corporation and North Delhi Municipal Corporation

for having "no plan" to deal with fires at Ghazipur and Bhalswa landfill, resulting in air pollution.

"At this rate, it will take you 25 years to tackle just the Ghazipur landfill. The salaries that you and I draw come from the taxpayers' money. We will not tolerate any negligence in the duties you have towards the people of Delhi as commissioners of the Municipal Corporations of Delhi," Ms. Atishi said.

The environment committee then asked the commis-

sioners of the municipal corporations to submit plans and time lines to bring the landfills to ground level.

"Municipal commissioners have been asked to report on the action taken against the engineers on duty, under whom the fires occurred, in the last five years. It was also decided that the DPCC principal secretary should submit a report on the punitive actions that can be taken against the commissioners if the default is repeated," an official statement said.

## Light rain and clouds to greet the Capital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Capital is in for cloudy weather with light rain over the next two days, according to a forecast issued by the Met Department. The forecast shows that the city can expect a partly cloudy sky with very light rain/thundershowers towards evening/night on December 11 and a partly cloudy sky with very light rain/thundershowers on December 12 as well.

The weather is likely to clear up thereafter, with mainly clear sky with shallow to moderate fog in the morning on December 13.

The change in weather is likely to bring a drop in the maximum temperature, which over the past few days has been above normal for the season. The minimum temperature is likely to rise by a few notches due to the cloud cover.

On Wednesday, the maximum temperature was 29 degrees Celsius, which is five degrees more than the normal for the season. The minimum temperature is likely to rise by a few notches due to the cloud cover.

Since October, the city has seen only 0.6 mm of rainfall, which is a shortfall of 98% from the average.

## Lab damage due to negligence of JNU admin, claim students

They demand removal of scrap and renovation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Students from the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences at Jawaharlal Nehru University have written to Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadesh Kumar informing him about severe damage to the Luminescence Dating Facility at the Special Centre for Nano Science while they were away during the lockdown period.

They stated that many students had collected their samples from highly precarious terrains in the higher and lesser Himalayas from Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand as well as Eastern Himalayas in the Teesta headwaters that have all gotten destroyed due to alleged negligence by the administrator.

Students alleged that, even before the lockdown, they had raised the issue regarding the condition of the lab but had received no response from the administration.

This, they claim, led to the students having to pay from their pockets for the upkeep of the lab which technically should have been the duty of the administration.

They stated that many students had collected their samples from highly precarious terrains in the higher and lesser Himalayas from Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand as well as Eastern Himalayas in the Teesta headwaters that have all gotten destroyed due to alleged negligence by the administrator.

"We demand removal of the scrap and initiation of the renovation of the lab," the students said.

## Haryana Police arrest 16 dreaded criminals

3 of them carried bounty on their heads

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

The Haryana police have arrested 16 criminals, involved in several heinous crimes over the past 10 days, during a crackdown on the dreaded criminals across the State.

Those arrested include three carrying bounty on their heads and four allegedly involved in highway robberies.

The police have also arrested most wanted Ankit from Jind district carrying a reward of ₹1 lakh.

Gurugram police had nabbed four dreaded criminals involved in highway robberies at a gunpoint near the Rajasthan border following a brief encounter.

In Kurukshetra, a Special Task Force team has arrested three accused, including a most wanted criminal identified as Vicky alias La.

The police have also arrested most wanted Ankit from Jind district carrying a reward of ₹1 lakh.

## Families of Delhi riot victims recount tales of horror at CPI(M) report launch

Yet to receive the promised govt. relief, they demand justice

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

At a virtual event for the launch of report by the CPI(M) Delhi State Committee on the north-east Delhi riots, families of some of the victims demanded justice and also stated how they had not received the promised compensation from the Delhi government.

Ram Suhag, father of 15-year-old Nitin Paswan who was killed on February 26 during the riots, recounted how he had to visit several hospitals before finding his son.

"My son was killed by the police. Why did they fire a teargas shell when there were no mobs? I am still waiting for the report to find out how my son died. Even the compensation that we received from the Delhi government was ₹5 lakh instead of ₹10 lakh. We were told that because my son was a minor we are not entitled to ₹10 lakh," said Mr. Suhag.

#### Failure of agencies

Agaz Hussain, father of 22-year-old Ashfaq Hussain who died on February 25 said, "All that we want now is justice from the country's legal system for all these children. It was not a communal riot. Rather it was one which was started by enemies of the country. We have lived in harmony for several years and continue to do so."



Damaged shops at Shiv Vihar after the north-east Delhi riots. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

overnment has to take responsibility. If it has failed to do its duty, then it is our responsibility to remind the government to do its job."

Stating that there had been "construction of hatred," by senior leaders of the Central government, during the Delhi poll campaigns which preceded the riots, activist Harsh Mander said that there was indeed a "conspiracy" behind the riots but it was not the "conspiracy" as mentioned by the police.

CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat added, "Today's India is seeing a mass violation of human rights. There was a political agenda behind the riots – to send a signal that protests against the CAA-NRC were not welcome. It was a message that if you protest, you'll be punished."

## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR DIRECTORATE OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT, J&K

(CAMP OFFICE: MMAB District Hospital Anantnag ) Phone No: 0192-227624 e-mail gmcanantnag2018@gmail.com

e- NIT No. 11 GMCA of 2020. Dated: 07/12/2020

Owing to certain technical issues, tender Notice invited vide e-NIT No. 11/11/2020 dated: 25.11.2020 for supply of Medical Books to Central Library, Govt. Medical College, Anantnag is hereby cancelled.

Accordingly, fresh e-tenders through www.jktenders.gov.in, on behalf of Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of J&K under two bid system, are invited from eligible and qualified bidders for supply of Medical Books to Central Library, Govt. Medical College, Anantnag:-  
Important Dates and cost of EMD & Tender Fee:-  
Sr.No Particulars Date and time  
1 Date & Time of floating of bid 08.12.2020 03: 30 PM  
2 Date & time of online bid submission.(Any query to clear can be done through e-mail Id on gmcanantnag2018@gmail.com from 09.12.2020 to 15.12.2020 Start Date & Time End Date & Time  
3 Date & time of online Technical bid opening 30.12.2020 2:00 PM  
4 Earnest Money Deposit Rs. 30,00/- (= Rupees thirty thousand)  
5 Cost of tender document Rs. 500/- (= Rupees five hundred only)

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including Schedule of Requirement and terms and Conditions are available on the website: www.gmcanantnag.net and www.jktenders.gov.in.

NO:GMCA/Plg/171/2020-21/3779-81  
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## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTRIC DIVISION, JPCL BATOTE

Email pddbatote@gmail.com Website: www.kpdg.gov.in, Telephone No: 0198-244231 Fax: 0198-244231

### EXTENSION NOTICE-II

Due to poor response, the e-NIT no-39 of 2020-21 Dated- 16.11.2020 for SUPPLY, ERECTION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR IMPROVEMENT OF HT/IT NET WORK BY WAY OF REPLACING STRANDED CONDUCTOR, BARBED WIRE/ WORK-OUT POLES/TREES ETC AT VILLAGE JAGALI IN BLOCK RAIGARH, RAMBAN DISTRICT UNDER BARBED WIRE PROGRAMME UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ELECTRIC DIVISION JPCL BATOTE is hereby extended upto 12.12.2020 at 14:00 noon and tender opening date will be 14.12.2020 at 12:00 Noon.



A long stretch on GT Karnal National Highway gets blocked as farmers in large numbers continue to arrive at the Singhu border to join the ongoing protest on Wednesday. ■ V. V. KRISHNAN

## 'Stir to continue till better sense prevails'

Farmers in no mood to relent, agitation could intensify with efforts being made to bring more farmers

JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

Following hours of deliberations at a tile showroom serving as a makeshift meeting hall, which is a short distance from the bustle of the highway occupied by agitating farmers, 41 leaders representing them declared that the ongoing protest would continue till "better sense prevailed" on the Central government.

Moreover, they stressed that the agitation would "intensify" over the coming days with efforts being made to bring more farmers from across the country to the gates of New Delhi to send a louder and clearer message about their resolve.

### 'No compromise'

"We have ruled out all amendments to the Farm Laws and there is nothing less than their being repealed that we will settle for. The agitation will continue and intensify further," Prem Singh



Farmers protesting at Ghazipur border in Delhi on Wednesday. ■ R. V. MOORTHY

Bhangu, president of All India Kisan Federation, announced after the meeting.

"The government will have to accede to our demand and repeal the three black laws; there is no other way that the agitation will end," said Harjinder Singh of the Azad Kisan Sangharsh Committee, Punjab.

Despite being aware that another discussion aimed at breaking the deadlock bet-

ween 31 representatives and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday evening had been inconclusive, leading to the cancellation of the sixth round of talks between them and the Centre scheduled for Wednesday, most farmers exuded confidence about the laws being repealed sooner or later.

Not long after homage was paid, and two minutes' silence observed, to honour

the memory of around a dozen farmers who had lost their lives over the last four months while participating in the agitation a rousing call was made to gather more reinforcements aimed at increasing both the length and breadth of the existing gathering on the highway from the biggest stage at the protest site.

Farmers said India's reputation is being hit across the

world and "international pressure" on the Centre to remedy the situation would pave the way forward. Others warned they would not only march to New Delhi but also "even beyond" to achieve an end to the Farm Laws.

"Farmers and those too from Haryana and Punjab are double jeopardy for this government - we don't believe in stepping back, we only move forward," said Amolak Singh from Tarn Taran.

"We will march to Maharashtra if required but not an inch backward," said Jagdeep Singh.

"We are used to getting up and bathing with cold water at 4 a.m. to go for daily prayers; their water cannons can do nothing to us," said Manvinder Singh from Doda. "As far as their smoke bombs are concerned, our boys have flung the ones thrown on them from open jeeps as soon as they land when they tried to stop us 12 nights ago," he said.

## One entry to Kejriwal's house closed, restrictions still on: AAP

Chadha terms situation an unannounced 'emergency'

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

AAP national spokesperson Raghab Chadha said that one entry to party chief and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence remained closed even on Wednesday.

"Today [Wednesday] also, in a way, there is a restriction to his right to free movement. One door was opened yesterday [Tuesday] evening. But on Wednesday also, on directions of Home Minister Amit Shah, Delhi Police has put restrictions on Arvind Kejriwal's movement," Mr. Chadha said.

"We will march to Maharashtra if required but not an inch backward," said Jagdeep Singh.

He termed the situation as an unannounced "emergency". Delhi Police is under the ambit of the Central government.

On Tuesday morning, AAP had alleged that Mr.



Security personnel outside Arvind Kejriwal's residence in New Delhi ■ PTI

Kejriwal was kept "under house arrest" by the "Central government's Delhi Police", a claim which was denied by the police.

Later on Tuesday evening, Mr. Kejriwal had met party leaders at his residence and said that he wanted to go to the border to support the farmers, but the Central government did not allow him to go.

"The entrance that eve-

ryone uses to enter the CM's residence and meet him remains closed even now. Access to that entrance has been blocked as 4-5 members of the BJP are camping outside the CM's residence with active assistance from Delhi Police. The CM's right to free movement, which is a fundamental right, has been curtailed. It is for all of the media to see," Mr. Chadha said.

### Not afraid'

"For the act of lending his voice, his might, his support to the farmers, for being a 'sewaadaar', why would the 'chowkidar' have any problems at all? The BJP can try all their tactics, but you should know that no matter what you do, we 'sewaadaars' will never be afraid of the 'chowkidar,'" he added.

### IN BRIEF

#### BRPL to hold online Lok Adalat on power theft

NEW DELHI

BSES Rajdhani Power Limited on Wednesday announced that it is organising an online Special Lok Adalat for an amicable on-the-spot settlement of power-theft cases in south and west Delhi.

#### Timings DELHI

THURSDAY, DEC. 10
● RISE 07:03 SET 17:26
● RISE 01:59 SET 14:14
FRIDAY, DEC. 11
● RISE 07:04 SET 17:26
● RISE 03:04 SET 14:52
SATURDAY, DEC. 12
● RISE 07:05 SET 17:26
● RISE 04:10 SET 15:33

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	29	10
Safdarjang	29	10
Palam	25	12

**Delhi Palam Today**  
27°C Mist and shallow fog during morning and comfortable day. Pollution would remain moderate.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
26°C A cool morning and clouding would increase towards evening. Chances of thunderstorm/light rain at some areas towards night.

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#### THE HINDU

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## BJP MPs, MLAs sit with Mayors outside CM's house

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs and MLAs on Wednesday sat with the Mayors of the three municipal corporations who continued to camp outside Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's official residence for the third consecutive day here.

This, even as the party lodged a police complaint against Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Durgesh Pathak, alleging that they were conspiring to kill corporation leaders. The complaint was filed citing a video clip featuring both Mr. Sisodia and Mr. Pathak.

"Who are we to beat the Mayors? The BJP has a habit of mixing random audios with random videos to defame and malign the image of the people. But they cannot divert attention from the issue of farmers. If they think that they will do all this to divert attention from

## Mayors and Kejriwal indulging in shadow-boxing'

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Wednesday said that the Mayors of the BJP-ruled municipal corporations of Delhi and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal were indulging in shadow-boxing by levelling charges and counter charges to cover up their failures and fool people.

Delhi Congress chief Ch. Anil Kumar said the Mayors' dharna outside the official residence of the Chief Minister, seeking ₹13,000 crore due to the civic bodies from the Delhi government and the Chief Minister's claim that he was detained in his house by the police, were staged to divert the people's attention from the farmers' protest.

"The Chief Minister's refusal to meet the Mayors protesting outside his house, and then claiming that the police had put him under home detention to prevent him from joining the nationwide bandh called by the protesting farmers was a big lie. Neither does he want to clear the dues nor support the farmers' cause openly," Mr. Kumar said. He alleged that the MCDs were short of funds despite a BJP government at the Centre, and the corporations having several sources of income due to corruption.

## Minor held for creating fake profile of ex-Miss India

17-year-old accused, who was threatening the victim, was arrested in Rajasthan

### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Police apprehended a 17-year-old boy from Rajasthan for allegedly creating a fake profile of a former Miss India on a social media platform and sharing obscene posts about her, the police said on Wednesday.

The woman, a resident of Greater Kailash here, lodged a complaint that someone had created a fake

account of hers on Instagram using her name and pictures and was also sharing obscene comments and

posts about her.

The complainant also alleged that the accused was threatening her, the police said.

During investigation, it was found that the account was being operated from Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, a senior police officer said.

"On Monday, the accused was apprehended from Chittorgarh. The mobile phone and SIM card

used in the commission of crime were recovered from his possession," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said.

The accused used to make such fake profiles on social media platforms and used to send obscene messages and comments from those

DELHI POLICE

account of hers on Instagram using her name and pictures and was also sharing obscene comments and

posts about her.

The complainant also alleged that the accused was threatening her, the police said.

During investigation, it was found that the account was being operated from Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, a senior police officer said.

"On Monday, the accused was apprehended from Chittorgarh. The mobile phone and SIM card

used in the commission of crime were recovered from his possession," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said.

The accused have been identified as Chima Vitalis, a resident of Nagercoil, and Srimathi (25), who belongs to Tamilnadu, they said.

Amphetamine, weighing 10.5kg, was meant to be supplied in Bengaluru, Karnataka, for the rave parties to be held on the eve of New Year, the police also said.

The Nigerian national had come to India eight years ago, the police said.

## International kingpin held for forgery, cheating and criminal conspiracy

Accused carried out money laundering, hawala transactions

### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi police arrested an international kingpin, Naresh Jain, for offences of cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy, said a senior police officer on Wednesday.

O.P. Mishra, Joint CP (Economic Offences Wing) said that the case was registered on the complaint filed by Enforcement Directorate, wherein it is alleged that Naresh and his accomplices were carrying out illegal activities, such as large-scale money laundering, hawala transactions, FEMA violations etc.

Forged documents were used for getting dummy companies incorporated,

opening and operating bank accounts and getting mobile connections for carrying out the sham transactions. The syndicate has been operating off-shore bank accounts opened in the name of shell companies in countries like Hong Kong, Singapore and Dubai, etc. Based on the FIR registered by the EOW, the ED also initiated proceedings under the provisions of PMLA.

"During investigation, we found that hundreds of trading and tour travel companies and firms were incorporated in the name of persons recruited by him for the purpose of carrying out the circular trading, accommodation entries to show bogus turn over and hawala

transactions. It has emerged that the bogus entities were being run from offices opened at various obscure places in Delhi with multiple entities registered at common addresses," said Mr. Mishra.

The accused was carrying out the activities in conspiracy with the unscrupulous importers/exporters against hefty commissions. Such importers procure false 'Bills of Entries' from foreign exporters at very low rates to evade the import duties and pay the substantial balance amount towards such imports through the bank accounts of the shell companies being operated/controlled by Naresh and his associates, he added.

A 40-year-old foreign national, along with an Indian woman, was arrested at New Delhi railway station for allegedly carrying drug worth over ₹10 crore in international market, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused have been identified as Chima Vitalis, a resident of Nagercoil, and Srimathi (25), who belongs to Tamilnadu, they said.

Amphetamine, weighing 10.5kg, was meant to be supplied in Bengaluru, Karnataka, for the rave parties to be held on the eve of New Year, the police also said.

The Nigerian national had come to India eight years ago, the police said.

## North civic body waived ₹2,457 crore of SDMC

### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

AAP on Wednesday alleged that the BJP-ruled North Delhi Municipal Corporation had waived ₹2,457 crore of the SDMC. "MCD employees are not getting salaries and this is happening due to cor-

## Selja, Chautala meet farmers

They extend support to the stir for repealment of farm laws

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM  
Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee president Kumaari Selja and Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) secretary-general Abhay Singh Chautala on Wednesday reached the Tikri border in Bahadurgarh, extending support to the farmers' agitation and demanding that the Central government withdraw the three controversial farm laws.

Ms. Selja alleged that in its six years tenure, the BJP government sitting at the Centre, had only made plans to ruin the farmers. "This dictatorial government neither heard the Opposition nor heard the voice of the farmers and imposed these black laws. When the farmers started raising their voice against these laws, the government is trying to suppress them by adopting va-



INLD leader Abhay Chautala at Tikri. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

rious repressive policies," she said.

Mr. Chautala, who reached the border accompanied by a large number of farmers, said he had not come to the dharna site and openly protested in the House due to which the government came on the backfoot in the Legislative Assembly.

Centre of Indian Trade Unions, Haryana, vice-president Satvir Singh also addressed the farmers at the Tikri border.

in protest against these Bills.

He said the INLD was the only party that proposed a "Call For Attention" motion against the Bills in the Assembly session and openly protested in the House due to which the government came on the backfoot in the Legislative Assembly.

Centre of Indian Trade Unions, Haryana, vice-president Satvir Singh also addressed the farmers at the Tikri border.

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## Punjab scientist declines award

Varinderpal Singh said he can't receive it when farmers were out on the roads

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Varinderpal Singh, an agriculture scientist with Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), who refused to accept an award from a Union Minister to express his solidarity with farmers amid their ongoing agitation against the Centre's farm laws, on Wednesday told *The Hindu* that it was the attempt by a section of media to label farmers as "terrorists" that prompted him to decline the award and voice his concerns on the issues surrounding farmers.

"Farmers have been struggling and agitating for their just demands peacefully and a section of media tried to label them as 'terrorist'. I was heartbroken and pained on hearing that the *annadata* (provider of food) was being labelled as a 'terrorist' – this is shameful act on part of



■ Varinderpal Singh

such media people. I chose the platform [the award event] to let my voice be heard louder on farmers' issues. I wanted to convey to the government that they should listen to agitating farmers," said Dr. Singh.

Dr. Singh, a principal soil chemist at the PAU in Ludhiana, Punjab, was chosen for the 'FAI Golden Jubilee Award for Excellence' for best work done in plant nutrition. On

December 7, at an event held by the Fertilizer Association of India in New Delhi, Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers D.V. Sadanand Gowda was present to give him the award.

### 'Conscience didn't allow'

Dr. Singh, however, refused to accept the award from the Union Minister, saying his "conscience did not allow him to receive the award when farmers are on the roads".

Dr. Singh said that he would continue to support farmers through his research.

Notably, when his name was announced at the event, Dr. Singh went up the stage and stated a few advantages of the PAU-leaf colour chart (PAU-LCC) technology for which his team was chosen for the award. He then said, "I have great gratitude for the honourable Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, and Director General, FAI, so kindly accept my apologies. I regret for any inconvenience. My only feelings are that we shall jointly work for the Government of India, so that we can build our India into a great nation."

"I support farmers," he chanted before leaving the stage without the award.

that at this time of crises for the nation, when our farmers are on the roads, my conscience does not allow me to receive this award. So, I wish that we shall work together for the nation and the government shall listen to our dear farmers. The work I did is only for the farmers and for the nation, so I feel I would be guilty if at this moment I receive this award. But I have great gratitude for the honourable Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, and Director General, FAI, so kindly accept my apologies. I regret for any inconvenience. My only feelings are that we shall jointly work for the Government of India, so that we can build our India into a great nation."

In a series of tweets, Mr. Gehlot said no stakeholders were consulted before the farm laws were brought.

"Mr. Modi has clearly failed to resolve the grievances of farmers," he said.

He asked why had the Centre brought the laws when the nation was facing recession and unemployment.

PM should hold talks with farmers'

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPIUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday reiterated his demand that Prime Minister Narendra Modi enter into a "direct dialogue" with farmers protesting against the Centre's agriculture sector laws. "Mr. Modi has maintained a complete silence...had he taken the correct decision, the farmers would not have been forced to launch an agitation."

In a series of tweets, Mr. Gehlot said no stakeholders were consulted before the farm laws were brought.

"Mr. Modi has clearly failed to resolve the grievances of farmers," he said.

He asked why had the Centre brought the laws when the nation was facing recession and unemployment.

## High Court orders probe into Dalit man's murder

Victim's family forced to compromise

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPIUR

Raghav Sharma, Udayal Anjana, Sukhram Bishnoi and Ashok Chandra.

Mr. Dotasra said the Congress' base had expanded in the panchayat polls and affirmed that the party would perform better in the upcoming elections by keeping "good synergy" between the government and the organisation.

While the results for all the 4,371 Panchayat Samiti members' seats were announced, the result for Jhalawar Zila Parishad was put on hold because of repolling ordered at a booth.

The BJP candidates were in the majority in 13 of the 21 Zila Parishads and the party may form one more district board with the help of RLP. The Congress won the majority of seats at 5 Zila Parishads.

The Rashtra Loktantrik Party (RLP), an ally of the BJP which fought elections independently, also made its presence felt by bagging 60 Panchayat Samiti and 10 Zila Parishad seats.

The Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP), an ally of the BJP which fought elections independently, also made its presence felt by bagging 60 Panchayat Samiti and 10 Zila Parishad seats.

The Congress suffered defeat in the home constituencies of some of its senior leaders, including Pradesh Congress Committee president Govind Singh Dotasra, former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot and Ministers

Bayana for post-mortem.

Though a criminal case relating to murder and unlawful assembly was registered at Rudawal police station the next day, no accused has so far been arrested. The investigating officer reportedly intends to file a final report with the finding that no case of murder was made out. The victim's family has alleged that the police investigation was botched up.

Mathesh's brother, Sunil Kumar, alleged in his writ petition moved in the High Court that the police were putting pressure on the family to reach a compromise with the accused. Even the panchayat leaders held a meeting and took a "unanimous decision" that the case would not be pursued.

## Too many cattle robbing rhinos of nutrition in 'Mini Kaziranga'

Death of two rhinos points to crisis in Assam's Pobitora



A pair of one-horned rhinos and cattle graze side by side.

■ FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

"Our team that conducted autopsy found bad quality food and high load of worms

that made the rhinos, one a calf and the other old, die of weakness. This is a serious problem compounded by the grazing cattle, about 2,000 of which have become resident herds, moving out only if the sanctuary is flooded," Kushal Kowar Sarma of Guwahati's College of Veterinary Science said.

Amit Sahai, Assam's Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), said Pobitora was not facing a food crisis per se, but malnutrition because of non-availability of grasses that were palatable and nutritious to the rhinos.

"We have constituted an expert committee comprising leading veterinarians and rhino experts. The panel has been given a month to assess if malnutrition or any pathogenic problems caused the deaths and come up with a prescription for us to work on," he told *The Hindu*.

The Forest Department, he added, had also asked the Morigaon district authority to contain the population of the cattle that had provided an unhealthy competition to the rhinos as well as some 100 wild buffaloes of the sanctuary.

## BJP wins seats unopposed in Arunachal

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

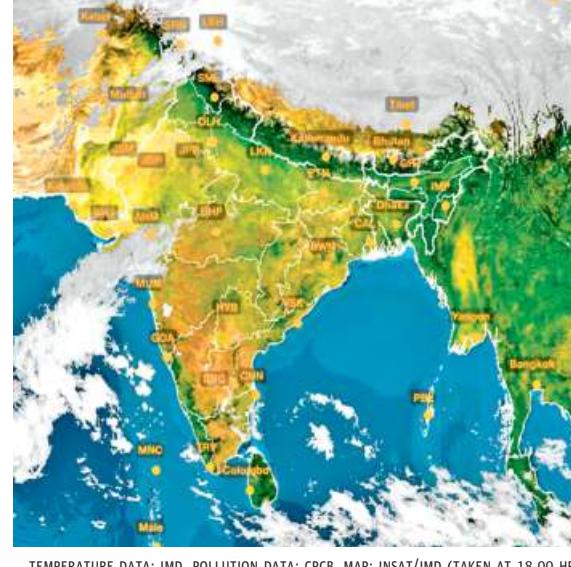
GUWAHATI

The Bharatiya Janata Party has bagged more than 5,300 of a total of 8,677 panchayat seats uncontested ahead of the local body polls in Arunachal Pradesh on December 22.

Five of the party's candidates for the

**WEATHER WATCH**

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

**Forecast for Thursday:** Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Kerala and Mahe. Dense/very dense fog likely in isolated pockets over Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	... 21.8	15.7	15.7	Kozhikode	... 34.0	25.4	25.4
Ahmedabad	... 34.3	16.0	16.0	Kurnool	... 32.7	21.1	21.1
Aizawl...	... 22.0	8.8	8.8	Lucknow	... 27.2	11.6	11.6
Allahabad	... 29.5	12.0	12.0	Madurai	... 4.2	30.6...	23.1
Bengaluru	0.7 ... 25.4	19.4	19.4	Mangaluru	39.3 ... 34.9	21.2	21.2
Bhopal	... 31.1	14.2	14.2	Mumbai	... 36.0	20.8	20.8
Bhubaneswar	... 31.2	17.6	17.6	Mysuru	1 ... 28.0	21.2	21.2
Chandigarh	... 26.7	10.9	10.9	New Delhi	... 29.0	9.6	9.6
Chennai	9 ... 30.0	24.0	24.0	Patna	... 20.0	14.6	14.6
Coimbatore	8.2 ... 30.0	21.2	21.2	Poornima	... 30.6	23.7	23.7
Dehradun	... 27.2	10.5	10.5	Puducherry	5.8 ... 29.2	22.8	22.8
Gangtok	0.2 ... 14.7	8.1	8.1	Pune	... 31.0	16.5	16.5
Goa...	... 34.5	24.8	24.8	Raipur	... 32.0	16.2	16.2
Guwahati	... 26.2	13.4	13.4	Ranchi	... 27.8	12.1	12.1
Hubballi	... 28.0	21.0	21.0	Shillong	... 17.2	8.7	8.7
Hyderabad	... 30.1	13.8	13.8	Shimla	... 20.4	11.4	11.4
Imphal...	21.3 ... 7.8	7.8	7.8	Srinagar	... 4.9	2.2	2.2
Jaipur	... 30.0	14.9	14.9	Thiruvananthapuram	... 32.9	24.4	24.4
Kochi	... 33.4	21.2	21.2	Tiruchi	2.6 ... 31.0	22.4	22.4
Kohima	... 18.6	6.4	6.4	Vijayawada	... 30.8	18.4	18.4
Kolkata	... 25.6	17.4	17.4	Visakhapatnam	... 30.4	19.4	19.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	22	156	43	173	157	...
Bengaluru	14	49	14	35	65	...
Chennai	11	9	29	85	—	...
Delhi	15	109	44	412	202	...
Kolkata	5	102	13	116	131	...
Lucknow	13	86	101	314	202	...
Lucknow	5	114	61	410	348	...
Mumbai	4	34	26	243	—	...
Pune	—	81	4	160	113	...
Visakhapatnam	14	116	39	156	172	...

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Dharlera, Haryana recorded an unhealthy AQI score of 440, indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ramanagara, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 30.

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

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**NO<sub>x</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

## HC extends all interim orders till January 31

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday extended all interim orders relating to eviction, demolition and disposition passed by courts across Maharashtra and Goa till January 31 in view of the COVID 19 pandemic.

The direction is in continuation of the High Court's previous orders that all such orders will remain in abeyance till January 31. A Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta along with Just-

tices A.A. Sayed, S.S Shinde and KK Tated was hearing a suo motu petition.

The plea said, "To ensure that persons suffering orders of dispossession, demolition, and eviction are not inconvenienced by reason of disability to approach the courts of law because of the restrictions on movements, we consider it just to extend the interim orders passed by this court on this writ petition till January 31, 2021, or until further orders, whichever is earlier."

## Maldives appoints new Honorary Consul

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

MUMBAI

The Republic of Maldives has appointed technocrat-turned-entrepreneur and philanthropist Bobby Mohanty as its Honorary Consul. The President of India has ratified the appointment and his jurisdiction is Mumbai.

India-Maldives bilateral trade now stands at \$290.27 million, with the trade balance is in favour of India. However, the present level of commercial exchanges and trade has almost stagnated, needing an effort to boost trade and investment.

Indian exports to Maldives include medicines, radar apparatus, rock boulders, aggregates, cement and agriculture and poultry products. Mr. Mohanty will strive to enhance trade, investment and diplomatic ties between the two countries in key areas.

## Bison strays into residential area in Pune; dies after rescue

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

PUNE

A gaur (Indian bison) strayed into a residential area in Pune city on Wednesday, triggering panic. The animal died after being captured by a forest team, officials said.

At 7.30 a.m., locals spotted the animal in Mahatma residential society in Kothrud area and alerted the forest department, he said. A team of police personnel were also deployed to control the crowd which came out to see the animal.

"The forest team used tranquil-

## NCB seizes drugs worth ₹2.5 crore; two arrested

### Raids in case linked to Sushant's death

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

MUMBAI

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has arrested two suspected suppliers of drugs from separate areas in Mumbai during raids in the drugs case linked to actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death and seized charas worth ₹2.5 crore, an official said.

The official claimed it was the "biggest seizure" in the drugs case linked to Rajput's death in which his girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty is an accused. She is currently out

on bail. The arrested accused are identified as Jinen-dra Jain alias Rigel Mahakal and Mohammad Azam Jumman Shaikh.

Mr. Mahakal was picked up late Tuesday night after raids in areas, including Lokhandwala, by an NCB team led by its zonal director Sameer Wankhede. His name had cropped up during questioning of some drug peddlers in the case.

He allegedly used to supply drugs to Anuj Keshwani, also an accused in the case.

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PUNE

isers and managed to rescue the bison around 1 p.m.," another forest official said, adding that the animal had some injuries on its mouth and it will be given medical aid before being released into a forest. However, the bison later died.

"The death is not because of injuries, but it could be because of high stress and an increase in body temperature of the animal," Divisional Conservator of Forests Rahul Patil said. He added that they are trying to ascertain the exact cause of death.

"The forest team used tranquil-

## 5,111 more recoveries, 4,981 new cases recorded in Maharashtra

State reports 75 deaths; active cases stand at 73,166; spike of 716 cases in Mumbai

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

MUMBAI

Maharashtra's COVID-19 tally on Wednesday rose to 18,64,348 as it recorded 4,981 new cases, a State Health Department official said. With 75 more fatalities, the State's death toll has reached 47,902.

A total of 5,111 patients were discharged from hospitals after treatment, taking the tally of recoveries in the State to 17,42,191. There are currently 73,166 active patients in the State.

### Surge in Mumbai division

Mumbai city reported 716 new cases during the day, which pushed its overall case load to 2,87,898, while its death toll rose to 10,929 with 15 more deaths being reported during the day.

Mumbai division, which comprises Mumbai city and its satellite towns, reported 1,441 new cases, which pushed the total case tally to 6,43,708. A total of 18,649 people have died so far in the region, the official said.

The cumulative case tally in the Pune division stood at 4,64,638, while the total death toll at 10,992, he said.

Nashik division's cumulative case load stood at 2,52,076, and the total death



**Working with caution:** A health worker collects a swab sample during a rapid antigen testing campaign, on the outskirts of Mumbai, on Wednesday. ■ REUTERS

toll at 4,637.

Kolhapur division has so far reported 1,14,793 cases and 3,921 deaths, Aurangabad division 69,525 cases and 1,760 deaths, Latur division 76,494 cases and 2,314 deaths, Akola division 60,474 cases and 1,447 deaths, and Nagpur division 1,80,816 cases and 4,066 deaths, the official said.

The State has so far conducted 1,44,723 novel coronavirus tests.

### Only one new case in Dharavi

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

MUMBAI

The cumulative tally of COVID-19 cases in Dharavi rose to 3,736, with just one new infection being reported on Wednesday, a civic official said.

The area had reported

just one new case on De-

cember 4 too.

Of the 3,736 COVID-19 patients, 3,410 have already recovered, while there are 15 active cases.

Spread over 2.5 square kilometres, Dharavi is considered to be the largest slum in Asia with a population over 6.5 lakh.

## MVA govt. names rural prosperity scheme after Sharad Pawar

Move ahead of NCP chief's 80th birthday

**STAFF REPORTER**

MUMBAI

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government on Wednesday decided to name a rural prosperity scheme after the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief, Sharad Pawar, who celebrates his 80th birthday on December 12.

The State Cabinet has approved the Sharad Pawar Gram Samridhi Yojana, which will be a combination of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and the Maharashtra State Employee Guarantee Scheme.

The scheme aims at transforming the rural economy by doubling farmers' income by 2022. The scheme will prevent rural migration by providing individual and collective work such as constructing cattle stables, goat farming sheds, poultry sheds, and NA-

DE



## The road taken

Salem greenfield highway may now be a *fait accompli* after SC verdict

**B**y upholding notifications intending to acquire agricultural land for the proposed Chennai-Salem greenfield highway, the Supreme Court has both paved the way for completing the land acquisition process and sought to ensure that environmental clearances are obtained before its construction. It has ruled that it will be premature to expect the authorities to obtain environmental approvals at the stage of identifying the land linked to the proposed alignment of a highway, but, once the land was notified for acquisition and surveyed for feasibility, they would have to apply for all statutory clearances. It would be at the stage of entertaining objections that questions such as whether the project was truly a 'public purpose' could be dealt with. However, the land could be taken over and construction begun only after the competent authorities give their clearances, along with measures for mitigating and remediating possible environmental damage. The judgment of the Madras High Court, which had taken a nuanced position in favour of environmental protection, agriculture and preservation of rural livelihoods over the economic benefits of a new highway on virgin land, has been set aside in the process. The High Court had shown greater sensitivity to possible livelihood and ecological concerns. It had favoured early judicial intervention, relying on judgments from the U.S. that spoke out against letting projects advance to such a stage that there is irreversible commitment of resources.

The three-judge Bench has now ruled that the High Court was wrong in holding that clearances under environmental and forest laws were required even before the initial land acquisition notice. It goes on to uphold the Centre's power to notify any stretch of land, including greenfield land, and not merely a pre-existing road, as a national highway. As part of a growing body of jurisprudence on sustainable development, the top court had laid down in *Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board* (2006) a general principle that in future, before acquiring land for development, the possible adverse environmental impact should be "properly comprehended" and the acquisition done in a way that did not impair it. In a departure from this dictum, it now says the statutory framework governing highways and the process laid down for acquiring land for highway projects did not provide for a prior clearance requirement. The Court's line of reasoning based mostly on development-centric statutes is something of a disappointment when it could have taken, even at this stage, a holistic view of the need for sustainable development. True, it has left open the question whether the clearances obtained after the lands were notified for acquisition are valid; and the principle that construction of the highways cannot begin without such clearances also stays. But it is not inconceivable that the Court's position may have rendered the project a *fait accompli*.

## Testing limits

Australia and India have shared the honours so far, setting the stage for the Test series

**I**t has been a long cricketing summer Down Under for the Indian team and the current tour has another six weeks left. In these days of rush-hour cricket, the previous template of early arrival and languid warm-up matches no longer holds relevance. But the need to be in bio-bubbles during the pandemic demands that teams land a fortnight in advance, go through their mandatory health-checks before being medically certified to play. India arrived in Australia on November 12 and in the intervening period played three One Day Internationals (ODIs) and three Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is). Australia seized the ODIs at 2-1 and India responded with an identical scoreline in the subsequent T20Is, the last of which concluded at Sydney on Tuesday with the host securing a 12-run victory. Swept aside by the gargantuan totals that Australia posted in the ODIs, Virat Kohli's men slowly found their collective voice, which turned into a roar in the shortest format. In a mixed-bag first month out in Australia, India can cherish the success of Hardik Pandya, specifically with the bat, and the steady exploits of left-arm seamer T. Natarajan, hailing from Chinnappampatti, a village near Salem in Tamil Nadu. However, connoisseurs would perhaps say that the tour begins only now as the series involving four Tests looms ahead.

Countering Australia in its backyard is an arduous task. Starting its intermittent tours of Australia in the 1947-48 season when Lala Amarnath led the troops, India registered its maiden Test series victory (2-1) only during the 2018-19 face-off. But Australia missed Steve Smith and David Warner, who were benched following the ball-tampering crisis. The current Australian team includes them now though an injured Warner has been ruled out of the first Test commencing at Adelaide on December 17, incidentally a day-and-night contest. But Smith is in ominous form and in Marnus Labuschagne, Tim Paine's men have their next batting star. India will have Kohli just for the first outing before the skipper takes his paternity leave and there is no clarity yet on Rohit Sharma's return. When Kohli departs, the batting will lean on Cheteshwar Pujara, stand-in captain Ajinkya Rahane, K.L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal and Hanuma Vihari to counter Mitchell Starc and his snarling colleagues. Pujara, all patience and the long-vigil, amassed 521 runs during the last tour and an encore would be most welcome. The bowling rests on speedsters Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami besides R. Ashwin, if spin comes into play. Bumrah and Shami weren't at their best in the limited-overs clashes and they need to get their mojo back if India is to make a strong fist against a doughty opponent.

# The reality of an India at the crossroads

Faced with the perception of the country becoming a 'diminishing democracy', policymakers must take note of the drift



M.K. NARAYANAN

**I**ndividual events are often an indicator of broader trends. Any vision of the future is again significantly linked to what is taking place in the present. For now, most if not all, of what is taking place does not seem to hold out any great promise for India.

Policymakers need not take public opinion as the sole indicator of what is likely to happen, but it is important to acknowledge public fears and reassure people, especially in periods of uncertainty. Increasingly, in recent weeks, India has begun to resemble a war zone, but neither any reassurance nor any attempt at building a 'consensus' addressing current concerns is taking place.

Meanwhile, the world press is replete with stories of India's 'diminishing democracy' in which, apart from the organs of state, even India's highly regarded criminal justice system and the courts have come in for a share of criticism. This is beginning to shake the confidence of even the most die-hard supporters of Indian democracy, who are beginning to look inward to try and ascertain if Indian democracy is more fragile than is apparent.

**S**tate of economy, world ties India cannot afford to ignore the reality of the situation in which it finds itself. The Indian economy is in recession, and is among the worst performing among major nations. Among key currencies, the Indian Rupee is one of the very few which is depreciating, while the Euro, the Australian and Canadian Dollars, the South Korean Won and the Swiss Franc have become much stronger recently. India also claims to be among the worst affected by ransomware attacks. Meanwhile, India is turning increasingly protectionist, coming up with banal explanations to ex-

plain this away, contrary to conventional wisdom.

In the meantime, the atmospherics surrounding India's external relations are quite depressing. China remains intransigent and has made known its unwillingness to reach a reasonable settlement of the Line of Actual Control dispute. India-Pakistan relations could hardly be worse and China has chosen at this moment to sign a new Military Memorandum of Understanding to boost the China-Pakistan relationship. India's forays in its Near Abroad in West Asia are yet to yield results, even though, on the surface, relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia are better. The reality, nevertheless, is that India does not have enough traction to be able to manoeuvre between different power centres in West Asia which are at various times in conflict. Consequently, India will find it increasingly difficult to steer between the Scylla of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt on the one hand and the Charybdis of Turkey, Qatar and Iran on the other.

**S**igns of rigid policies Far more serious, however, are concerns being voiced about India's democratic credentials both within the country and abroad. India might well claim that the numbers of terror attacks have reduced, levels of Maoist violence have come down, and the situation in India's Northeast is much better than before, but many people across India are seeking proper answers to the question as to whether India is forfeiting its democratic visage for a more doctrinaire and a more rigid set of policies. In August-September last year, this issue had briefly surfaced when Delhi decided to dilute Article 370 of the Constitution, and restructure Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh into two Union Territories. It possibly passed muster at the time as something that was already included in the ruling party's manifesto.

Concerns, however, began to be felt soon after, in the wake of the clampdown in Kashmir, and the



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

incarceration of almost the entire top leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party and the National Conference party. The anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests across the country thereafter seemed to confirm such fears. Compounding this situation lately has been the attempt to impose a sort of 'guided democracy' in J&K, through the instrument of elections to the District Development Council, in the course of which the Opposition Alliance has been smeared with epithets such as "unholy global 'gathbandhan'" working against the national interest, etc.

### Electoral wins at any cost

What is evident today is that every election – whether to State Assemblies, District Councils, or even local panchayats – are turning into conflict zones, leading to extremely tense situations. In many instances, they have become tinderboxes for communal, caste, political and other forms of violence. Winning at any cost has become the sole motif of certain parties, especially India's principal political party. While States such as West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh feature prominently in the media in relation to cases of communal and political violence, the reality today is that no State is exempt from this pattern of aggressive electioneering.

Apart from political polarisation, arousing feelings of majority versus the minority have become the stock-in-trade of some parties in elections. Encouraging majoritarian attitudes obscuring ground realities, has hence, become a pernicious trend. The recently con-

ducted elections to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation was a classic example. Employing majoritarianism as a tactic, incidentally leading to a polarisation of votes, did produce electoral dividends – but it comes at a high cost. Such tactics cannot but have serious consequences for India as a secular democratic republic.

The coarsening of India's democratic fabric is again well-evident in several other areas. Constitutional protection and principles of natural justice as also freedom of the individual, all seem to be coming under strain lately. One bizarre aspect is the current campaign against 'Love jihad', a term which finds no mention in any lexicon. On the pretext that 'Love jihad' is a euphemism for conversion, and some States have taken legal steps to prevent it. New laws have also been enacted to enforce this dictate. All this despite the existence of judicial pronouncements declaring the inherent right of any individual to choose whom to marry, irrespective of caste, religion or creed.

Equally worrisome is the extent to which India seems to be regressing when it comes to the treatment of political prisoners in jails. The plight of Jesuit priest, Father Stan Swamy, a victim of Parkinson's disease, which made the headlines is only one instance. Many other cases have come to light, demonstrating an increasingly indifferent and disdainful approach towards political prisoners, especially those perceived to oppose the prevailing order. Labelling dissenters as urban naxals and the like, and being indifferent to their plight when in custody, marks a sharp decline from past democratic practices.

### Social media clampdown

India may not be the leading country when it comes to disinformation threats, but under the label of fighting fake news and the social media's pernicious use of fake news, India is beginning to clampdown on social media platforms and enact draconian laws towards this end. Kerala, a Left bastion, even sought to introduce an ordinance mandating a jail term for

any offensive social media post, making the police the arbiter to determine the nature of social media abuse. Fortunately, this has been withdrawn, but the genie is out of the bottle and quite a few States appear to be contemplating similar measures against fake news.

### Farmers' protest

If the perception that India is becoming an illiberal democracy where dissent is at a discount needs any reinforcement, one has only to look to the groundswell of protests against the new Farmers' Bills. This has galvanised a very substantial segment of farmers across the country and also provided an opportunity to Opposition parties to combine and back the nationwide Bharat Bandh by farmers on December 8. This is yet another instance of imposing a measure without due discussion and acceptance by those affected. The most vivid images flashed across India today are those of farmers from the Punjab and nearby environs, laying a near siege to the National Capital.

The farmers' protest has become a cause célèbre today. Initially, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau expressed sympathy with the Punjab farmers, but adding further grist to this was the joint letter signed by 36 British Members of Parliament to the U.K. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and the comment by Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesperson for the Secretary General of the United Nations that "people have a right to demonstrate peacefully, and authorities need to let them do so". The Indian diaspora in the West is currently backing the farmers' movement. Far more than how matters turn out is the impression this conveys of an India that is intent in pursuing its pre-determined course of action, paying little heed to peoples' demands and protests, much in the nature of autocratic and dictatorial regimes rather than a democracy.

**M.K. Narayanan is a former National Security Adviser and a former Governor of West Bengal**

# Thousand days of nutrition, and a billion dreams

The single greatest threat that blocks the promise of India at a foundational level is malnutrition



ARJAN DE WAGT

**H**ow far India goes in realising its billion plus dreams over the next decade or two will be determined by how well it nourishes the physical well-being and mental potential of its people, particularly its children. If one has to pick the single gravest threat that blocks the promise of this young nation at the foundational level, it has to be arguably malnutrition.

Malnourished children tend to fall short of their real potential – physically as well as mentally. That is because malnutrition leaves their bodies weaker and more susceptible to illnesses. In 2017, a staggering 68% of 1.04 million deaths of children under five years in India was attributable to malnutrition, reckoned a *Lancet* study last year (<https://bit.ly/3m1t8P8>).

### Heavy burden

Children who survive malnutrition do not do as well as they could. Without necessary nutrients, their brains do not develop to the fullest. No wonder then, they end up performing poorly at school than they otherwise would. Malnutrition places a burden heavy

enough for India, to make it a top national priority. About half of all children under five years in the country were found to be stunted (too short) or wasted (too thin) for their height, estimated the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey, carried out by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with support of UNICEF three years ago (<https://bit.ly/33ZQdII>).

The country has been making progress on nutrition for the last two decades, but it was after the Prime Minister launched the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition (POSHAN) Abhiyan in 2018, that a holistic approach to tackle malnutrition started gathering momentum. Under it, the government strengthened the delivery of essential nutrition interventions so that more children have the right start in life for optimum growth, health, development and a prosperous future.

### Post-COVID challenges

As the flagship programme (POSHAN) Abhiyan completes 1,000 days this week, it is time to renew our commitment to nutrition for two reasons. First, because it conveys the deeply symbolic value of the first 1,000 days from conception of a child till the child turns two years old, marking the most crucial period for nutrition interventions in a lifecycle, which once missed could result in irreversible damage to the child's physical and

mental well-being. Second, focus on nutrition is critical as COVID-19 threatens to derail the gains India has made in nutrition in more than one way.

For one, COVID-19 is pushing millions into poverty, reducing incomes of many more and disproportionately affecting the economically disadvantaged, who are also most vulnerable to malnutrition and food insecurities. Second, pandemic-prompted lockdowns disrupted essential services – such as supplementary feeding under anganwadi centres, mid-day meals, immunisation, and micronutrient supplementation which can exacerbate malnutrition.

It is in this challenging backdrop, leaders from academia, civil society, development partners, community advocates and the private sector have come together as part of 'commitment to action' to seek and support the government in a six-pronged action that can save and build on the advances India has made in nutrition.

These clear action points include commitments around sustained leadership, dedicated finances,

multi-sectoral approach and increased uninterrupted coverage of a vulnerable population under programmes enhancing nutrition.

One reason POSHAN Abhiyan succeeded in galvanising action so fast was because it was led by the Prime Minister himself. That example must be sustained so that leadership of food and nutrition security rests with the Prime Minister at the national level, a Chief Minister at the State level, a district magistrate at the district and panchayat at the village level. This was already imperative for POSHAN Abhiyan to succeed, but it has now become critical as COVID-19 compounds an already complex challenge.

In terms of policies, vision, strategies, India already has some of the world's biggest early childhood public intervention schemes such as the Integrated Child Development Scheme, the mid-day meal programme, and Public Distribution System. India needs to ensure coverage of every single child and mother, along with 12 months of Poshan Maah (Nutrition Month), 52 weeks of breastfeeding weeks and 365 days of take-home ration.

### Financial commitments

To ensure this, the country needs to retain its financial commitments for the nutrition schemes it already runs and earmark additional funds to preserve nutritional security in vulnerable commun-

ities, particularly women and children in slum areas, migrants, the population in tribal areas and districts with malnutrition rates. Pandemic spurred challenges have also negatively hit other proven underlying drivers of malnutrition. For instance, economic insecurities often force girls into early marriage, early motherhood, discontinue their schooling, and reduce institutional deliveries, cut access to micronutrient supplements, and nutritious food which largely tend to be perishable, all of which may worsen malnutrition. Accelerating efforts to address these will be needed to stop the regression into the deeper recesses of malnutrition.

However, to truly grasp the depth and breadth of the COVID-19-caused nutrition crisis, the country must track nutrition indices through data systems. Evidence generated through data will also serve well to track the positive impact of POSHAN Abhiyan, and course correct on the long journey to a well-nourished India. It takes time for nutrition interventions to yield dividends, but once those accrue, they can bring transformative generational shifts. Filling in the nutrition gaps will guarantee a level-playing field for all children and strengthen the foundations for the making of a future superpower.

**Arjan De Wagt is Chief, Nutrition, UNICEF India**

**AP** 

## 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.

### Central Vista project

All right-thinking persons will agree that the Central Vista project is ill-timed. The vanity of the government in going ahead with this exorbitant project speaks volumes about its attitude and the hollowness of its concern for the poor. The government needs a good reason to justify what genuine public interest is going to be served by this project. At the moment it is obvious self-aggrandisement.

S.N. SHUKLA,  
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

■ Will mere structural changes to the temple of democracy change the way real democracy is functioning? What is really needed is revamping the way MPs function in Parliament. A minimum mandatory days of sitting and necessary discussion on topics are what a majority of Indians desire from our MPs. The Central Vista project runs the risk of cost overruns if timely clearances do not come by. Substantive democracy is needed more through a respect for democratic principles than the planning

of physical structures.

HARSAHIB SINGH,  
Ludhiana, Punjab

### Unable to vote

Kerala's Chief Electoral Officer Teeka Ram Meena could not vote in the Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation polls, having missed his name in the voters' list. He said his name was there in the old list and so thought he would be able to cast his vote. Last year he had voted in the Lok Sabha election. There was a report that said 'missing voter names resulted in low

turnout in the recently conducted GHMC elections in Hyderabad'. At least in Kerala, the voters' list used was one prepared for the 2015 LSGI polls, despite requests made by many, including the Opposition to use the list used for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Who wanted the old list used is not clear. Anyway, the question was explained away by attributing it to 'practical difficulties'. Preventing the right to vote, for none of a voter's fault, is fundamentally undemocratic. The

responsibility should squarely rest with the Election Commission. Here is the relevance of a "single voters' list" for all elections – Lok Sabha, Assembly and LSGIs – would prevent chances of ruling parties making their own choices from the available lists to suit narrow political interests.

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

An Editorial page article titled "The ground has fallen out from beneath the farmer's feet" (Dec. 8, 2020) incorrectly states that freedom of farmers to carry on their trade is Constitutionally protected under sub-clause (f) of Article 19(1). It is actually sub-clause (g) of Article 19(1).

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Updating the list shall be a routine procedure

# Why quarterly growth numbers are not robust

Official figures on GDP overestimate growth as they are based only on limited organised sector data



ARUN KUMAR

Analysts are surprised that GDP has contracted by only 7.5% in real terms in the second quarter of 2020-21 while it had declined by 23.9% in the first quarter. This welcome news has raised hopes of a quicker economic revival if there is no second wave of COVID-19 in the winter months. Whether or not this comes about depends on how correctly the quarterly numbers reflect the state of the economy. Doubts on this score have been raised at several levels.

The Ministry of Finance, based on high frequency data, such as freight traffic, electricity consumption, GST collections and recovery of core sector production from the lows, has argued that the economy is rapidly recovering. The government's press note announcing the Q2 GDP numbers also has a similar table. While all this is fine, there is less satisfactory news that is not contained in official pronouncements.

#### Methodological issues

In the press release, points 9 and 10 suggest that the full extent of data usually used to project quarterly growth rates were not available and so "some other data sources" were used. It admits that "these were clearly limited" and states that estimates are "likely to undergo revisions". This was also stated in the press note when the Q1 numbers were announced. It is not clear why in spite of the economy unlocking since June, the data are still limited or why alternative data had to be used.

Be that as it may, there are two implications of these statements. First, the data of Q1 and Q2 are not only not comparable with each other but also with the data for 2019-20. The shortcomings in the data cannot be rectified later since if the data were not available/ not collected, they cannot be obtained later. So, there cannot be certainty about the speed of economic recovery.

Second, the method of calculation of quarterly growth rates was already



"The higher growth rate of the economy actually masks the decline in the unorganised sector." Workers hang dyed yarn for drying at a textile mill in Guntur. ■ PTI

flawed. Are these flaws getting aggravated due to the lack of routine data? The biggest flaw is that almost no data from the unorganised sectors, except for agriculture, are available to calculate the contribution of this component of the economy to the GDP. It was implicit in the method of estimation that this component could be proxied by the data from the organised sectors of the economy. This was never a good assumption. After the shock to the economy due to the lockdown, this is even less valid. Demonetisation in 2016 had already disrupted this link between the organised and the unorganised sectors. Now the disjunction is much greater.

#### Impact of a shock on estimation

The non-agriculture unorganised sector was disproportionately impacted by demonetisation. This was a result of the fact that this sector consists of tiny units that work with cash. So the cash shortage impacted it far more than the organised sector which uses formal money markets, like banks, and can use digital transactions. So, the proportionality between the two sectors was disrupted.

Further, small units with little capital exhaust it quickly if they are shut down even for a week. So, they find it difficult to restart.

The effect was that the unorganised sector declined while the organ-

ised sector recovered. The trend was further aggravated by the implementation of the flawed Goods and Services Tax (GST) which favoured the organised sector, and demand shifted from the unorganised sector to the organised sector. It was not that the unorganised sector became formalised; it just withered.

The growth of the organised sector since demonetisation has been at the expense of the unorganised sector. The higher growth rate of the economy actually masks the decline in the unorganised sector. For instance, higher GST collections reflect the growth of the organised sectors. As former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had famously said, 5% of the units pay 95% of the GST. Clearly, growth of the economy has been much less than what is implied by the official GDP numbers.

The lockdown has aggravated this tendency of overestimation of GDP. A lockdown implies a voluntary shutdown of economic activity (but for production of essentials). It impacted both the organised and unorganised sectors of the economy. Most small and tiny units exhausted their working capital and are finding it difficult to revive. But this is not captured in official data which are based on limited organised sector data – the high frequency data quoted by the official agencies.

In many instances, the organised

sector is doing well at the expense of the unorganised sector. For instance, e-commerce has grown rapidly at the expense of brick-and-mortar stores since demand has shifted due to people's fear of going out. So, while trade has declined, data will indicate growth since it is available only from e-commerce and big stores. In fact, the higher the growth shown in official data, the more it signals the collapse of small retail stores.

All sectors of the economy have an organised and an unorganised component. For instance, one can buy branded Parle biscuits or from a local bakery. In the textile sector there are the branded items and the ones produced in power looms and handlooms. The capacity utilisation in this sector is reported to be about 70% to 80%. While the larger units started operations, the smaller ones are languishing due to lack of working capital. So, if the data are taken only from the larger units, there would appear to be normalcy and the decline of 20% to 30% will not be captured.

#### Not all data are captured

As the lockdown was eased, more of the organised sector was able to restart business but not the unorganised sector. Many businesses in the organised sector too have not been able to recover to last year's level, such as education, health, hotels, airlines, travel and tourism. This has a knock-on effect on all kinds of small producers. Further, employment is hit and that means demand in the economy also does not recover and especially for the produce of the unorganised sectors. Much of this is also not captured since the data used are from the large units and the corporate sector data from the stock markets. In brief, the quarterly growth numbers are not robust and now more so due to the shock of the lockdown. So, while the economy is recovering, it is difficult to say how quickly because of non-comparability. The impression being created of a return to normalcy masks the crisis persisting in the lives of large sections of the citizenry.

Arun Kumar is Malcolm Adiseshiah Chair Professor, Institute of Social Sciences, and author of 'Indian Economy's Greatest Crisis: Impact of the Coronavirus and the Road Ahead'

# Stirring the pot in Venezuela

The U.S.-propped extreme opposition's boycott helped the Maduro-led PSUV win in the recent legislative elections



VIJAY PRASHAD

plaints of fraud. "The electoral system is not the problem," said Anibal Sanchez, one of the leaders of Esperanza por El Cambio, an opposition evangelical party; "the problem is the normal unfairness of running against an incumbent".

#### State of the economy

The final results gave the left and right opposition parties a third of the vote, with the remainder won by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), led by Mr. Maduro. On the night before the election, Mr. Maduro talked about why the opposition won a convincing victory in the legislative elections in 2010, when even the extreme opposition participated in the polls. There were many reasons why the opposition won then, many of them drawing from local disputes which is natural in a legislative election; but it was important for the PSUV to recognise, Mr. Maduro told me, that "we made mistakes. Let's be clear". Oil prices had collapsed, and the entire Venezuelan reliance upon dollars earned from the sale of crude oil meant that the social projects of the Bolivarian Revolution had begun to fail. This came alongside the tightened U.S. illegal sanctions pushed by the U.S. administrations of George Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump.

Now, with the low oil prices, the U.S. sanctions, and the pandemic, the Venezuelan government has had to be creative in salvaging productive economic activity and in fighting the pandemic. Residues of Chavismo – the great respect for Hugo Chavez personally and the commitment to the Bolivarian Revolution – fuel the movement of people to the polls and to reject the attempt to overthrow this government with a coup.

The National Assembly will begin its term on January 5. This is 15 days before the new U.S. President Joe Biden will be inaugurated. It is unlikely that the U.S. will be able to make an attempt to overthrow the government in what Mr. Maduro calls the "dying days of the Trump presidency". Leaders of the PSUV and the various opposition parties told me that they will rush to re-strengthen the institutions of the Venezuelan state from January 5 and set a project in place before Mr. Biden begins what is expected to be his attack on Venezuela. Mr. Maduro said that he welcomes a dialogue with Mr. Biden. The U.S., he said, is welcome to withdraw the sanctions and to discuss how to move forward. This is unlikely, since Mr. Biden has already taken a forceful position against Mr. Maduro by calling him a "thug". This is a pity.

Vijay Prashad, Director of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, was an electoral observer for the CNE in Venezuela for the December 6 elections

# New paradigm for Dravidianism

Dravidian politics might soon face one of its greatest modern-day challenges – Hindutva

NARAYAN LAKSHMAN

With the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly election approaching from the horizon, Dravidian politics might soon come face to face with one of its greatest modern-day challenges – Hindutva. With the recent visit of Home Minister and BJP leader Amit Shah to Chennai, it has become imperative to ask how the stalwarts of the Dravidian movement, the AIADMK and DMK, will deal with the challenge of the saffron party.

Before delving into the present scenario, it is important to first grapple with the legacy of Dravidianism. When the DMK seized control of the political landscape in 1967, it may not have imagined that its ascendant philosophical chassis, which was premised on the assertion of a unique Tamil ethnic identity comprising linguistic, scriptural, and broader cultural nuance, would dominate the State for well over half a century.

#### Flexible and accommodative

The reasons for the resilience of Dravidian ideology are manifold and include, importantly, its deeply flexible and accommodative impulse. This allowed numerous Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes, comprising largely of small-property owners, to be pulled into the tent of the DMK's 'assertive populism', a demanding, even strident, political movement that pushed back on the erstwhile hegemony of Brahminism, Hindu, the political diktats of a faraway New Delhi, and caste Hinduism. Mass welfare policies gained enormous momentum in parallel, and became entrenched, institutionalised forms mediating redistributive conflicts at the State level.

The innate flexible quality of Dravidian politics also allowed it to morph over time to tolerate, even encourage, political leadership of multiple vectors within its ambit. Thus, when M.G. Ramachandran broke off from the DMK and started the AIADMK, he was able to score remarkable victories at the hustings, premised upon a rainbow social coalition of Thevar, Dalits, and a smorgasbord of other middle castes.

This nimbleness and capability for political innovation played a crucial role in sustaining the relevance of



#### DATA POINT

### Death count

In December, the number of daily COVID-19-related deaths in the U.S. shot up to the levels seen in April. However, the U.S.'s Case Fatality Rate (CFR = deaths/cases) is on the decline, like in most other nations. India's share of global deaths has been reducing since the September peak, with its CFR remaining low at 1.5%. Within India, the CFR is on the decline in most high-burden States except Punjab. Delhi's and West Bengal's share in India's deaths have recorded a sudden spurt. By Naresh Singaravelu & Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**SHARE OF DEATHS** | The tables list the % of new deaths in 10 nations and 10 Indian States with the most deaths as on December 8, as a share of total deaths in the world and India, respectively. In December, 21% of the world's deaths occurred in the U.S. Among the Indian States, the death burden in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and T.N. eased over the last few months, while in Delhi and W.B., it increased. Notably, the combined share of the top 10 nations/States is on a decreasing trend

Country	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	States	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
U.S.	15%	16%	17%	14%	13%	14%	21%	Maharashtra	46%	37%	33%	36%	31%	21%	18%
Italy	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	6%	6%	Delhi	19%	6%	2%	3%	5%	17%	16%
Brazil	23%	20%	16%	14%	9%	5%	6%	W.B.	3%	5%	6%	5%	8%	10%	11%
Mexico	13%	11%	10%	8%	8%	5%	6%	U.P.	4%	5%	6%	7%	5%	5%	6%
Russia	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%	5%	Punjab	1%	1%	4%	6%	3%	4%	4%
India	9%	11%	16%	20%	13%	6%	4%	Gujarat	7%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%
France	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%	6%	4%	T.N.	9%	14%	12%	7%	7%	4%	3%
U.K.	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	4%	Karnataka	2%	11%	12%	9%	10%	4%	3%
Iran	2%	4%	3%	3%	5%	5%	3%	M.P.	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Spain	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	3%	2%	A.P.	1%	6%	9%	6%	4%	2%	1%
Top 10	71%	66%	65%	65%	60%	58%	60%	Top 10	93%	91%	87%	83%	77%	70%	67%

**CFR** | The tables show the CFR at the end of each month of the countries/States listed above. The CFR is on a decreasing trend in most countries/States. In Punjab alone, it is increasing

Country	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	States	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Mexico	12.3%	11.0%	10.7%	10.4%	9.9%	9.5%	9.3%	Punjab	2.6%	2.4%	2.7%	3.0%	3.1%	3.2%	3.2%
Iran	4.8%	5.5%	5.7%	5.7%	5.7%	5.0%	4.8%	Maharashtra	4.5%	3.6%	3.1%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%
U.K.	14.2%	13.5%	12.3%	9.3%	4.6%	3.6%	3.5%	Gujarat	5.7%	4.0%	3.1%	2.5%	2.2%	1.9%	1.9%
Italy	14.5%	14.2%	13.2%	11.4%	5.7%	3.5%	3.5%	W.B.	3.6%	2.3%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%
Spain	11.4%	9.9%	6.3%	4.1%	3.0%	2.7%	2.7%	Delhi	3.1%	2.9%	2.5%	1.9%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%
Brazil	4.3%	3.5%	3.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.7%	2.7%	M.P.	4.2%	2.7%	2.2%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%
France	14.8%	13.4%	9.6%	5.3%	2.6%	2.3%	2.4%	T.N.	1.3%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
U.S.	4.9%	3.4%	3.1%	2.9%	2.5%	2.0%	1.9%	Karnataka	3.0%	1.9%	1.7%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%
Russia	1.4%	1.7%	1.7%												



## Withdraw farm laws, Akali Dal asks Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Wednesday urged the Centre to immediately and unconditionally withdraw the three controversial farm Acts and accept all the other demands made by the agitating farmers.

Senior Akali leader Bikram Singh Majithia said the SAD fully backed the farmers' rejection of the proposals sent by the Centre, adding that these proposals were nothing but "delaying and diversionary tactics and tricks which have rightly been rejected by the farmers".

Asking the Central government to "abandon its stubborn refusal to listen to the farmers and announce unqualified and unconditional acceptance of their demands", Mr. Majithia said, "If the farmers don't want these, it is absolutely unreasonable, wrong and undemocratic to thrust these upon them."

## U.K. PM gets it wrong in the Commons

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Wednesday seemed to confuse two separate issues when Labour MP Tammanjeet Singh Dhesi, who has been leading a drive to keep the protests by Indian farmers against the government's farm laws in the news in Britain, repeated one of his previous Twitter statements on the issue in the House of Commons during the weekly Prime Minister's questions session.

Mr. Johnson, in response, said, "Our view is that, of course, we have serious concerns about what is happening between India and Pakistan but these are predominantly matters for those two governments to settle."

Mr. Dhesi later posted the exchange on Twitter, adding, "But it might help if our PM actually knew what he was talking about!"

## SC seeks A-G's inputs in Maratha quota case

It asks if a State legislature can specify a group as backward for reservation benefits

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, examining the Maratha quota law, sought the assistance of Attorney-General (A-G) K.K. Venugopal on Wednesday to decide whether a State legislature can specify a particular community as "socially and educationally backward" for granting reservation benefits in education and jobs.

The Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan will examine if the

## Opposition team meets Kovind

Delegation urges President to persuade the Centre to accept farmers' demands

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The government should not misunderstand that farmers would give up their agitation on the farm laws without their demands being met with, said former Congress president Rahul Gandhi after a delegation of Opposition leaders met President Ram Nath Kovind.

The delegation comprised Mr. Gandhi, NCP leader Sharad Pawar, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, CPI general secretary D. Raja and DMK leader T.K.S. Elangovan.

"We urge upon you, as the custodian of the Indian Constitution, to persuade 'your government' not to be obdurate and accept the demands raised by India's annadata," a joint memorandum signed by the five leaders read.

"Our point to the President was that this was passed in an undemocratic manner and a proper consultation and discussion would have prevented this



T.K.S. Elangovan, Rahul Gandhi, D. Raja, Sitaram Yechury, and Sharad Pawar in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

kind of situation. The farmers are carrying out a very heroic and courageous strike and keeping this in mind the government should immediately repeal the laws," Mr. Yechury told reporters.

Mr. Gandhi said the way the laws had been imposed on farmers, it was an insult to them. Farmers have lost faith in the government, which is why they have taken to the streets. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi claims that these laws are in favour of the farmers. If that is the

case, why are they on the streets? Why is the farmer angry? Because the target of these laws is to hand over the agricultural system to the PM's select few friends," he stated. "The government should not have any misunderstanding that the farmers will cow down. India's farmers are not going to move and are not going to give up," he added.

Mr. Pawar said the most disturbing aspect of the three laws was the fact that there was no provision to implement the MSP at all," he said.

plement a minimum support price (MSP). "The Bills do not protect the farmers' interest. For the last 12-13 days, in this cold, the farmer is on the street and very peacefully they are expressing their unhappiness. It is the duty of the government to resolve the issue and despite discussions nothing has happened."

Mr. Raja said no one should live under the illusion that these laws would impact only the farmers who are agitating for the past two weeks. "These laws will subject the agricultural workers to live in horrific conditions. We cannot remain mute spectators when farmers are on the streets fighting for justice," he said.

Mr. Elangovan pointed out that two years ago, the government promised to implement the MS Swaminathan Commission's recommendations. "This Bill has negatively that promise considering it does not mention the MSP at all," he said.

At a press conference at the BJP's headquarters in

## 'Rajasthan local polls win is a mandate given by farmers'

They have given the govt. a decisive victory, says Javadekar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday claimed that its win in the local body election in Rajasthan and election victories in other States after the three farm Bills were passed by Parliament were a "mandate" accorded by farmers for the agricultural reforms initiated by the Modi government.

In a tweet, BJP president J.P. Nadda said the party's win in Rajasthan symbolised "the trust the poor, farmers and labourers" have in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

**Trend reversed**  
Senior party leader and Union Minister Prakash Javadekar stressed that people, especially farmers, had given the government a "decisive" victory.

At a press conference at the BJP's headquarters in



Prakash Javadekar

New Delhi, Mr. Javadekar said the victories in rural Rajasthan should be especially noted. The BJP won 353 of 636 zila parshads and 1,990 of 4,371 panchayat samitis, leaving the Congress behind.

By opting for the BJP, Mr. Javadekar said, voters had reversed the trend of the State's ruling party winning most seats in the local polls.

The Congress is in power in the State.

"This is a huge victory. This is farmers' mandate for farm reforms," said Mr. Javadekar.

The Central government had engaged in talks with the protesting farmer union leaders with an open mind, he observed, and expressed the confidence that a resolution would be reached.

### 'BJP everywhere'

Mr. Javadekar noted that the BJP had recently put up impressive shows in a spate of elections, from the Bihar Assembly polls to bypolls in a number of States, besides local elections in Hyderabad and Arunachal Pradesh.

"Be it the northeast, east, south; whatever direction you go it is the BJP everywhere," he said. The wins had come after the farm laws, COVID-19 and economic troubles and "despite the misinformation campaign" by the Opposition, he said.

## BJP rules out change in Tripura leadership

Cancel rally on December 13, party chief tells CM

NISTULA HEBBAR  
NEW DELHI

The national leadership of the BJP on Wednesday stepped in to defuse the crisis in the Tripura government, with party president J.P. Nadda and State *prabharti* (in-charge) Vinod Sonkar urging Chief Minister Biplab Deb not to go forward with a support rally on December 13.

Mr. Sonkar ruled out a change in leadership in the State at present, but having met all party MLAs during his recent visit to Agartala, he said the party would "sort the organisational issues out". He also confirmed that both he and Mr. Nadda had asked the Chief Minister to

desist from the public meeting.

Things had taken an ugly turn for Mr. Deb in the State when Mr. Sonkar, recently appointed State *prabharti*, had been greeted with slogans of "Biplab hatao" (remove Biplab) when he landed at the BJP office in Agartala. Party workers surrounded Mr. Sonkar, who then decided to speak to each MLA in confidence. A few months ago too, at least six MLAs led by Sudip Roy Barman had landed in Delhi seeking a meeting with the national leadership.

An emotional Mr. Deb on Tuesday declared that he would be holding a rally to demonstrate public support for his government.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BALASORE  
Tel: 06782-262249, Fax: 262931, email: eersws\_bs@nic.in, eerswsbs@gmail.com  
**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Tendering**  
**Identification No. 16 Dt. 24.11.2020**

1. Nos. of Work	: 11 Nos. RPWS schemes in Balasore District.
2. Estimated cost	: Rs.67.08 lakhs to Rs.213.61 lakhs
3. Period of completion	: 330 days
4. Availability of bid document to Portal	: Dt.11.12.2020 at 10.00 hours to 19.12.2020 up to 17.00 hours through online.
5. Seeking of Clarification	: Dt.11.12.2020 at 10.00 hours to 15.00 hours
6. Date of opening of Bid	: Dt.24.12.2020 at 11.00 hours in the O/O E.E., RWSS, Division, Balasore.
7. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Tender	: Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Balasore

**Bid Cost & Bid Security** will be receipt through electronic payment by NEFT/RTGS.  
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal : <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>

**O-629:** Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Balasore.  
OPR-25013/11/0007/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA  
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF,  
WATER RESOURCES, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR.  
**e' Procurement Notice No.CELMB 03 OF 2020-21**

1. Name of the Work	: Construction of Flood Protection Embankment on Ghenshaliorje right from Jhankarpali to Jharbandhali RD 00 M to RD 5500 M under NABARD Assistance RIDF-XXV.
2. Amount put to Tender	: Rs.10,83,06,907.00
3. Bid Document Cost	: Rs.10,000.00 (online)
4. E.M.D.	: Rs.10,83,100.00 (online)
5. Class of Contractor	: Special Class & Super Class
6. Period of Completion	: 18 Calendar months (548 Days)
7. Other details are as follows.	

Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender On-line for bidding Date of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I)  
From To  
Chief Engineer FC & Basin Manager, LMB, Bhubaneswar CELMB BOL 02 OF 2020-21 15.12.2020 10.00 hrs 30.12.2020 17.00 hrs 31.12.2020 11.00 hrs

8. e-mail Id : [celmbbsr@yahoo.co.in](mailto:celmbbsr@yahoo.co.in)  
Further detail conditions can be seen from the Govt. website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

**Chief Engineer FC & Basin Manager, Lower Mahanadi Basin**  
OPR-3225/21/0004/2021

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU  
DEPARTMENT OF HANDLOOMS AND TEXTILES  
**TENDER NOTICE FOR PURCHASE OF POLYESTER TEXTURISED YARN**

Sealed tenders with two cover system in the prescribed format are invited only from the interested eligible parties for the Purchase of Grey and Dyed Polyester Texturised yarn Under Free supply of Uniform Scheme for the Academic Year 2021-2022.

S. No.	Variety of yarn	Required Quantity in MT	Required Earnest Money Deposit (Rs.)	Sale Period	Last date and time for receipt of tender	Date and time of opening of Tender	Supply Period
1.	155/34D Grey PTY	752.00	3,00,000/-	10.12.2020 to 11.01.2021 upto 10.30 a.m.	11.01.2021 upto 11.30 a.m.	11.01.2021 at 12.30 p.m.	105 Days
2.	130 D Dyed PTY	959.00					105 Days

Eligibility of the Tenderer and Other conditions are stipulated in the Tender Schedule.

1. The tender Schedule can be downloaded at [free-of-cost](http://free-of-cost) from Government tender website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) and used for bidding.

2. **If requested to send through Post:**  
By Demand Draft - Rs.5700/- in favour of "Yarn Committee for FDS 2014" payable at Chennai City (inclusive of 12% GST).

Interested tenderers are requested to submit the tender schedule duly filled, in separate covers and it should be sent a sealed envelope superscribing "Tender for Purchase of Polyester Texturised Yarn" addressed to "The Joint Director(Uniforms)/Tender Inviting Authority, O/o Director of Handlooms and Textiles, Kuralagam, II Floor, Chennai-600 108".

Contact : Joint Director (Uniforms)  
Telephone : 044-25341539  
Mobile : 9443742935

email ID : [tenderwing2020@gmail.com](mailto:tenderwing2020@gmail.com)

Joint Director (Uniforms) / Tender Inviting Authority

DIPR/4538/Tender/2020

The Maharashtra legislature had violated the Constitution (One Hundred Second Amendment) Act of 2018 to provide the Maratha community reservation.

### Contentious Act

The Constitution Amendment Act introduced Articles 338B and 342A in the Constitution. Article 338B deals with the newly established National Commission for Backward Classes. Article 342A empowers the President to specify the socially and educationally backward

communities in a State. It says that it is for Parliament to include a community in the Central List for socially and backward classes for the grant of reservation benefits.

However, the Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Act of 2018 has declared the Marathas as socially and educationally backward.

"We are of the view that looking into the issues raised in this appeal and the consequences to the followed, it is necessary that

final hearing of this appeal be completed as early as possible. One of the issues before this Constitution Bench being interpretation of Constitution (One Hundred Second Amendment) Act, 2018, let a notice be issued to the Attorney General for India," the Constitution Bench directed on its first day of hearing.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, for Maharashtra, said the 50% restriction on reservation is "not cast in stone".

The Bench scheduled a hearing on January 25, 2021.

Legal Correspondent  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court clarified on Wednesday that State governments and Union Territory administrations are not required to paste posters outside the houses of quarantined COVID-19 patients.

"No State or Union Territory is required to paste posters outside the residence of COVID-19 positive persons, as of now. The State governments and Union Territories can resort to the above exercise only when any direction is issued by the competent authority under the Disaster Management Act, 2005," a three-judge Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan cleared the air on the issue in an 11-page order.

The order came on a petition filed by advocate Kush Kulra, who said such posters entail the violation of the fundamental right to privacy of patients.

### Details publicised

Mr. Kalra had argued that these placards divulge, even "widely publicise", the names of the patients and other details to strangers, other residents of the colony or apartment complex, as well as household staff of neighbours, vendors,



**Privacy concerns:** An official pasting a COVID-19 notice outside a house in Bengaluru. ■ FILE PHOTO

passers-by and others.

In its order, the Bench referred to the Centre's submission that its guidelines on home isolation for patients have no mention of pasting posters outside their residences. The government had referred to its "Revised guidelines for home isolation of very mild/pre-symptomatic/asymptomatic COVID-19 cases" in July in this regard.

The Centre had said that its November 19 letter to States and Union Territories does not contain any instruction or guidance on affixing posters or signage outside the residences of those found COVID-19 patients. The court noted that the Delhi and Punjab governments have already withdrawn orders to paste posters.

### No such direction

"Neither any such direction has been issued by the Government of India nor it is obligatory to any

**The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd.**  
(A Govt. of India Enterprises)  
Livelihood Business Incubation Centre, Industrial Estate,  
PO, Udyog Nagar, Naini, Prayagraj, U.P.  
Ph.: 052922455, 77540059 Email: ibainai@nsic.co.in

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
The National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC) invites sealed offers through Tender under two Bid system from eligible bidders for Supply and Installation of machine Tools & Equipment like Fashion Designing, Cosmetology, Mechanic Diesel, Electrician, for their Naini LBI-Centre. Last date of submission of Tenders is 23.12.2020 up to 15.30 Hrs.

For details, please visit NSIC's website:  
<https://www.nsic.co.in/tender/Current-Tenders.aspx>

Manager (Centre Head – Prayagraj)

**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL(NAAC)**  
(An Autonomous Institution of the University Grants Commission

# 'China ties hit like never before'

Beijing has given five different explanations for its build-up on LAC: Jaishankar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Wednesday China had given India "five differing explanations" for deploying large forces at the LAC, adding this violation of bilateral pacts had "very significantly damaged their relationship that is now at its most difficult phase" in the last 30-40 years.

The comments by Mr. Jaishankar during an online interactive session organised by Australian think tank Lowy Institute came against the backdrop of the over seven-month-long military stand-off between India and China at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

"We are today probably at the most difficult phase of our relationship with China, certainly in the last 30 to 40 years or you could argue even more," Mr. Jaishankar said, highlighting various aspects of the bilateral ties in the last three decades.

"The relationship this



We are very clear that maintaining peace on the LAC is the basis for the rest of the relationship. You can't have the kind of situation you have on the border and say let's carry on with life in all other sectors of activity. It's just unrealistic  
S. JAISHANKAR  
External Affairs Minister

year has been very significantly damaged. We are very clear that maintaining peace and tranquillity along the LAC is the basis for the rest of the relationship to progress. You can't have the kind of situation you have on the border and say let's carry on with life in all other sectors of activity. It's just unrealistic," he said.

Mr. Jaishankar further said, "We have this problem because from 1988, our relationship had its hiccups, we had our issues and differences but the direction of the ties broadly were positive."

The External Affairs Minister said the relationship progressed in trade, travel

"Now for some reason, for

which the Chinese have to date given us five differing explanations, the Chinese have violated it. The Chinese have literally brought tens of thousands of soldiers in full military preparation mode right to the LAC in Ladakh. Naturally the relationship would be profoundly disturbed by this," he said.

## Galwan clashes

Referring to the Galwan Valley clashes in eastern Ladakh in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed, Mr. Jaishankar said the incident "completely changed national sentiment."

The Minister also said the "very big issue" was how to get the relationship back on track. He also mentioned various diplomatic and military engagements between the two sides in the last few months.

"We have multiple layers of communication. Communication is not the issue, the issue is the fact that we have agreements and those agreements are not being observed."

Russia hit out at the four-nation quadrilateral strategic dialogue or Quad, calling it a "devious policy" by western powers to engage India in "anti-China games". While Moscow has expressed concerns about the U.S. Indo-Pacific policy and criticised the Quad, comprising the U.S., Australia, Japan and India, as a "divisive" and "exclusivist" concept, this is the first time it has suggested that India-Russia ties could be affected by it.

"India is currently an object of the western countries' persistent, aggressive and devious policy as they are trying to engage it in anti-China games by promoting Indo-Pacific strategies, the so-called "Quad", while at the same time the West is attempting to undermine our close partnership and privileged relations with India," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said at Moscow-based think tank Russian International Affairs



Sergei Lavrov

Council. "This is the goal of the U.S.'s very tough pressure on New Delhi in the MTC [military and technical cooperation] area," Mr. Lavrov stated, which diplomats said indicated growing MTC between India and the U.S.

In the past month, India hosted military exercises with all the members of the Quad, and signed the final pending 'foundational agreement' BECA, which facilitates Indian and U.S. militaries in sharing intelligence. The incoming Biden administration is also expected to press harder on India against

its purchase of the S-400 anti-missile system from Russia, which could attract U.S. counterparts.

However, former diplomats suggested that the remarks signalled gaps in understanding between Moscow and New Delhi.

[Mr.] Lavrov's comment suggests that the two sides, despite a regular dialogue at the highest levels, have not developed enough understanding of India's point of view and its security concerns about Indo-Pacific and the Quad to avoid a public statement of this nature," said former Foreign Secretary and former Indian Ambassador to Russia Kanwal Sibal, pointing out that India had not expressed concerns about Russia's growing strategic ties with China publicly.

"If Russia is concerned about the U.S. pulling India into its orbit, it should express some public concern about China's unacceptable territorial aggression against India," Mr. Sibal said, adding that India had maintained its independence in ties with the U.S.

## IN BRIEF



**Mamata synonymous with intolerance: Nadda**

KOLKATA  
BJP president J.P. Nadda on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, saying she was synonymous with intolerance. Mr. Nadda, who is on a two-day visit to the State, said West Bengal had seen witnessed the highest political violence.

**Doctor with disabilities moves NHRC for salary**

NEW DELHI  
A doctor with disabilities working at a COVID-19 testing centre since June, has moved the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), alleging that his employer, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation, had not paid him salary for six months. Dr. Sumit Anand, who was left with locomotor disabilities from a surgery in 2018, filed the complaint on Tuesday.

**MNF sweeps Lai district council polls in Mizoram**

GUWAHATI  
The Mizo National Front (MNF) took the wind out of the sails of an "upbeat" BJP by sweeping the Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC) polls in Mizoram. The Zoramthanga-led MNF, the State's ruling party, won 20 of the 25 seats. The BJP managed a solitary seat, as did the Congress.

**ED files chargesheet in Embraer aircraft deal**

NEW DELHI  
The Enforcement Directorate has filed a chargesheet against Embraer SA (Brazil) and others in connection with the \$210 million Embraer deal in 2008 for sale of three aircraft to the DRDO. Among those arraigned are Interdev Aviation Services Pte. Ltd., KRBL Limited, its director Anoop Kumar Gupta and his nephew Anurag Potdar.

**Don't allow tech firms in financial sector: plea**

NEW DELHI  
The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre and the Reserve Bank of India to respond to a petition seeking a legal framework for regulating operations of tech companies such as Facebook, Google and Amazon in India's financial sector. The petition said unregulated operations could adversely affect the nation's financial stability.

**Ensure 'country of origin' tag, HC tells Centre**

NEW DELHI  
The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre if e-commerce entities such as Flipkart, Amazon and Snapdeal, are complying with the requirement of displaying 'country of origin' on products offered for sale on their websites. A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan directed the Centre to verify 24.

## Three militants killed in Pulwama

4 civilians injured after grenade explodes in Baramulla

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR



**Checking terror:** Security personnel moving towards the encounter site in Pulwama on Wednesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Three alleged Al-Badr militants were killed and a civilian was injured in an encounter in Pulwama of south Kashmir on Wednesday.

"Terrorists, who were offered the surrender option, fired indiscriminately upon a joint search party in Pulwama's Tiken area. Zamir Sadiq Lone, a civilian, in whose house the terrorists were hiding, was injured," Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Vijay Kumar said.

All the three trapped militants were killed in the encounter. They were identified as Mehraj-ud-Din Lone, Umer Ali, and Owais Farooq. "The trio was affiliated to Al-Badr," Mr. Kumar said.

These militants were behind the planning and execution of several major terror attacks on security forces. "Arms and ammunition, were recovered," the police said. The bodies were not handed over to the families for burial due to CO-

VID-19. "The bodies shall be sent to Baramulla in north Kashmir for burial. The nearest family members shall be allowed to participate in the last rites," the police stated.

### Grenade attack

In another incident, terrorists hurled a grenade at a Sashastra Seema Bal vehicle

near Singhpora around 9:55 a.m. in the Pattan area of Baramulla. "The grenade missed the intended target and exploded on the road. Four civilians received splinter injuries and were hospitalised," the police added.

Peoples Conference leader Imran Reza Ansari has demanded a probe into the gre-

nade attack. "It raises many questions. Listening to the senior superintendent of police's statement in which he says 'there is no militant presence in his jurisdiction'. To me, it seems a conspiracy so that voters don't come out to vote in huge numbers. An impartial enquiry is needed," he tweeted.

The authorities also stopped mediapersons from interacting with Ms. Mufti by erecting barricades on the high-profile Gupkar Road, housing the official residence, Fairview, of the former Chief Minister.

Earlier, Ms. Mufti was stopped from visiting the family of incarcerated PDP leader Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra in Pulwama. On Tuesday, her scheduled visit to "evicted families" of Budwag was also disallowed.

Senior Congress leader Saifuddin Soz condemned the action on Ms. Mufti. "She is put under house arrest illegally and undemocratically," Mr. Soz said.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, also criticised the authorities for the treatment meted out to Ms. Mufti. "Putting restrictions on mainstream political leaders has sadly become the order of the day," he said.

## Buddhadeb on ventilator support

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

Former West Bengal Chief Minister and Communist veteran Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee was put on ventilator support at a private hospital on Wednesday. The 76-year-old leader was brought to the hospital in an unconscious state with his oxygen level dropping alarmingly.

Though his oxygen level improved, the concentration of carbon dioxide in his blood remains a concern for doctors treating him at Woodlands Hospital.

An RT-PCR test has ruled out COVID-19 infection. The hospital has set up a five-member medical board for his treatment.

## IAF moves court against RTI disclosure

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) moved the Delhi High Court on Wednesday challenging a Central Information Commission (CIC) direction to provide an RTI activist details regarding every foreign visit undertaken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on IAF aircraft.

The IAF, in its plea, said the information sought to be disclosed by the CIC in its July 8, 2020 order was "extremely sensitive in nature" as it related to details of the Prime Minister's security apparatus. "It can potentially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India," IAF said.

## Delete scenes in Anil Kapoor film, says IAF

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Raising objection to the "inaccurate" donning of its uniform and the language used by actor Anil Kapoor in the trailer of a new Netflix film AK vs KA, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has written to Netflix asking them to delete the objectionable scenes.

Netflix tweeted saying their intention "would never be to disrespect" the armed forces of India in any regard. Mr. Kapoor too put out a video to "sincerely offer humble apology for unintentionally hurting anyone's sentiments." The movie, directed by Vikramaditya Motwane, is to premiere on December 24.

## Not viable to extend moratorium: RBI

For every borrower, there are lakhs and lakhs of depositors, SBI counsel tells SC

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that extending the loan moratorium date was "not viable".

Appearing before a three-judge Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan, the RBI, represented by senior advocate V. Giri, referred to clause 3 of its August 6 circular for 'Resolution Framework for COVID-19-related Stress' to point out that lending institutions, guided by their respective board-approved policy, would pre-approve resolution plans for eligible borrowers. But lenders would ensure that this resolution was provided only to the borrowers



The August circular was meant to help borrowers hit by pandemic, says RBI.

stressed on account of COVID-19.

The board-approved policy shall, *inter alia*, detail the eligibility of borrowers in respect of whom the lending institutions may be willing to consider the resolution, and

lay down the due diligence considerations to be followed by the lending institutions to establish the necessity of implementing a resolution plan in respect of the borrower concerned, the RBI reiterated in court on the August 6 circular.

Borrowers needed to only invoke their interest in the benefits enumerated under the circular, Mr. Giri said.

"So, borrowers have to only come and say that they want to take the benefit of the RBI circular of August 6," the Bench queried.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for the Centre, suggested that the RBI could even, once again, clarify the contents of the circular for the benefit of borrowers,

which include corporate and industry sectors stressed by the pandemic. The RBI said the framework issued by it on August 6 was aimed at facilitating revival of real sector activities and mitigating the impact on the ultimate borrowers, which were under financial stress owing to the pandemic.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, for the State Bank of India, said that "for every borrower, there are lakhs and lakhs of depositors".

The court had been prodigies almost everyday for loan relief, but now it was time to leave the fiscal policy to the government, he said.

The court scheduled the case for further hearing on December 14.

## About 4,800 'non-citizens' in NRC: affidavit filed in High Court

Some 19.06 lakh out of 3.3 crore were excluded from the complete draft National Register of Citizens published in August 2019

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) authorities have submitted to the Gauhati High Court an affidavit reportedly containing the details of "illegal foreigners" whose names had crept into the updated list of citizens released in 2019.

"Yes, we have submitted an affidavit. I am not allowed to say anything beyond this," NRC State Coordinator Hitesh Dev Sarma told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

Some reports citing unspecified officials said there are about 4,800 ineligible people erroneously figuring



Villagers checking their names in the final list of the NRC. ■ FILE PHOTO

in the NRC.

The NRC authority had on February 19 written to the Deputy Commissioner and

District Registrar of Citizen Registration of all the districts, seeking details of all such ineligible people, often referred to as "Bangladeshis" in Assam.

The ineligible persons were specified as DV (doubtful voters), DF (declared foreigners), PFT (cases pending in Foreigners' Tribunal or FT), DVD (DV's descendants), DFD (DF's descendants) and PFDT (descendants of cases pending in the FT).

A 2009 petition before the Supreme Court by the NGO Assam Public Works led to the updating exercise through a notification in December 2013.

The apex court-monitored exercise that cost at least ₹1,600 crore saw some 55,000 officials sifting the applications of 3.3 crore people across 2,500 NRC Seva Kendras on the basis of documents to establish them as residents of Assam.

The demand for updating the NRC was first raised in 1980 during the anti-foreigners Assam agitation spearheaded by the All Assam Students' Union.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, unhappy with the number of excluded people, wants the NRC reverified.

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PRIYADARSHINI PAITANDY

In the '80s and early '90s, as winter began to make its presence felt, December meant picnic season in India. The entire family – parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins – would either pack themselves in a car or rent out the campervan-like Matador (a popular road trip vehicle in the '90s) for a day trip to the zoo, city monuments or parks, or a weekend away from the hubbub of their cities.

Large mats, bedspreads or sheets would be laid out on the ground while the family played Frisbee, Ludo, or Monopoly before settling down for a packed lunch: sandwiches, oranges, plum cake and flasks of tea. Over the past decades, with far-flung families, busy lifestyles, staycations and exotic vacations, picnics have become an old-fashioned relic of the past.

Until now.

#### Extended picnic parties

With the pandemic limiting parties and travelling, and Work From Home norms giving families more time together, the picnic is seeing a revival. Since March, in India, a number of working professionals have moved back to their home towns and are using this year to bond with their extended families. Additionally, with the threat of COVID-19, open-air activities that allow for physical distancing are being rediscovered. In such a scenario, picnics are the top contenders for wholesome family entertainment.

Chennai-based Exoticamp, which offers overnight camping

# The charge of the PICNIC brigade

Fill your hamper with hot tea and goodies, grab those gingham sheets and gather the troops as the big fat family outing makes a strong comeback this year

activities, noticed a spurt in demand for short-day trips this year. Although one-day getaways did not feature in their itinerary, in September they introduced trips to destinations around 100 kilometres away, so families and friends could picnic outdoors and return the same day. "That way you don't travel too far but get as far away from the crowd as possible," says Sam Suresh, co-founder, Exoticamp.

Their destinations include Kollidam backwaters, Arambakkam's mini waterfall, and Nagalapuram, to hike and kayak. Families can bring their own umbrellas, mattresses and food. "So far we have received more than

250 clients. These primarily include families with kids and the elderly, who want to get away from home," he explains.

After many months of lockdowns, people who are cautious about travelling but still crave the great outdoors are rediscovering their backyards. Bengaluru-based Bhawna Rao and Shwetha Gupta, who started The Picnic Company in October this year, have a chock-a-block schedule till end of December. They call themselves "the anywhere picnic company" because they create these experiences in gardens, backyards and farms (they have tied up with five so far). "We love the outdoors and want to encourage people to go out and eat, play and relive

Instagram."

the nostalgia," says Bhawna.

The duo sets up the space – the theme varies for families, romantic couples and friends; there are long tables or small tables scattered around with a mat in the centre or candles placed around – and disappears, after which the families arrive. They also take care of the picnic hamper, which offers a choice of Indian, Oriental and Mediterranean cuisine, the latter being the most popular with its cheese platter and hummus.

The Picnic Company's clientele is diverse. "A lot of mothers want to take their kids for picnics, there are teen birthdays, bridal showers...," says Bhawna.

She adds that they cap the number at 14 guests, to ensure each event is relaxed and intimate. The setup focusses on nostalgia and is charming with low tables, cushions, crockery, flowers and props... another advantage for millennial influencers – these curated picnics look great on Instagram.

Kolkata-based Rishi Mukherjee says they are also a fantastic way to explore the countryside.

He recalls lazy afternoons spent in the gardens of Victoria Memorial. While his parents filled the boot of the car with every imaginable finger food, a three-year-old Rishi was in charge of carrying along his favourite toy: a large air-filled red and black football that occupied most of his day. "Over the last few years we tweaked this old practice a bit. During winters my wife and I started doing road trips and staying overnight at farm houses and resorts just outside of Kolkata," says Rishi.

#### Charm of the countryside

This year, they have altered the itinerary. "Instead, we thought of doing a day-long picnic as we are not comfortable staying anywhere because of the pandemic," says the 31-year-old. So, he and his wife drove to Jhargram, a municipality four hours away from the city, with acres of green land and deciduous forests. "It also features farm houses, an old palace, temple and a

#famjam A spot of calm away from the city: a cosy picnic setup; chilling with man's best friend and a day spent kayaking • EXOTICAMP AND THE PICNIC COMPANY



small zoo. There are enough shaded nooks to settle down with your picnic basket, read a book, listen to music and sing along," he says.

#### TAKE ME ALONG

It can be a bummer when you reach your destination and realise you've left your charger, BBQ grill or mats at home. It helps to keep a check-list handy before setting out. Start planning ahead and keep tossing important things into a bag, starting a week in advance.

Picnic basket

Cooler/ grill

Mats/ Bedspread

Napkins, plates, glasses

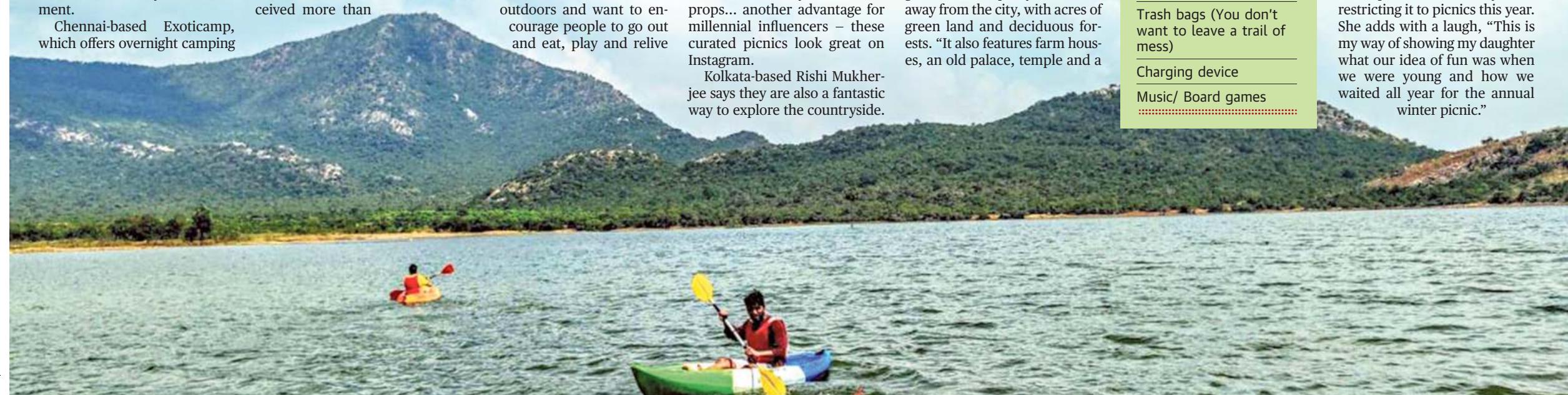
Knives/ Bottle openers

Trash bags (You don't want to leave a trail of mess)

Charging device

Music/ Board games

"Sometimes it's cathartic to just take the day off work and drive outside the city. The stretch around Damdama Lake in Sohna district (Haryana) has enough spots to stop and relax with a cup of chai. We rent out hoverboards – from websites like Rent Bean – as they are easy to fit into the car," says Delhi-based Pooja Bhatia, who usually loves doing weekend trips to different parts of the country but is restricting it to picnics this year. She adds with a laugh, "This is my way of showing my daughter what our idea of fun was when we were young and how we waited all year for the annual winter picnic."



## Portion control



Tiny bowls of sambar, even tinier bondas sizzling in a palm-sized pan... the Miniature Cooking Show channel is unexpectedly therapeutic

Small wonder The channel has 331K followers on Facebook and 1.76 lakh subscribers on YouTube • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

APARNA NARRAIN

What was Saran going to do that was different? His USP was that he knew the hill like the back of his hand. "When I was younger, I remember how in the summer, a slight drizzle would fall on the mountain peak early in the morning," he says. It was like magic.

"The mountain transforms during each season; the vegetation around it keeps changing too," he adds. For instance, he explains that there are some flowers that bloom on the slopes only during summer. "I decided to document this side of Arunachala, one that was constantly changing," he says.

The pandemic, says Saran, has been a blessing in disguise for the temple town. Every month, thousands of people descend on Tiruvannamalai on full-moon nights to go around the hill. The past few months, however, the path around the mountain has been empty and silent. "The day after *pournami*, one can see a trail of black smoke [owing to the influx of tourists] in the city from the mountain," he says. This year though, he saw only white mist, a sight that Saran waited for years to see.

To see the videos and photos, visit his YouTube channel and Facebook page @Saran Dashnamoorthy

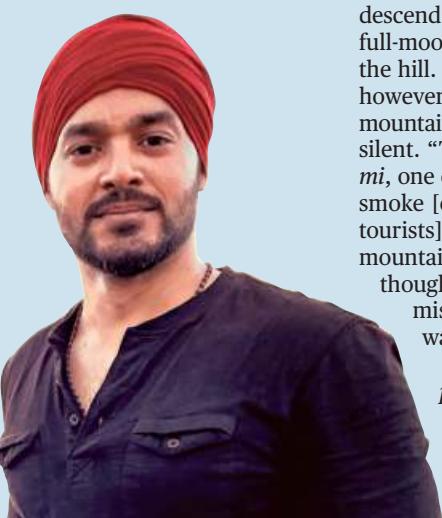
share the joy of seeing the *deepam* with everyone."

Saran started out as a tour guide when he was 18. "I accompanied foreigners on their trips up the hill," he explains. He picked up English in the process and life was good; he got to do just what he loved. "But around 2012, restrictions came into place and people where not freely allowed to climb the hill," he adds.

With a budding interest in photography, he decided to invest in a camera. And besides, "I often took tourists to spots that promise great views from the hill," he says. So he knew where to start. But Arunachala has long been photographed from every possible angle:

The lamp on the hill, was first lit on November 24, and was kept alive till Wednesday. "It consists of a gigantic copper cauldron that can hold 1,000 litres of ghee," says Saran, adding: "It is lit every evening at 6 pm; several metres of cotton *gada* cloth is used to light it."

The flame can be seen several kilometres away and Saran trekked two-and-a-half kilometres up hill every day to photograph it. "I wanted to



aging. Viewers can see Ranjitha's hand stir and sauté in the video to prove that the cooking is in miniature."

Says Saravanan, "We started a regular cooking channel in 2017 with a family friend and called it The Village Foods. We didn't know how the YouTube algorithm worked then; we used to post nearly 20-minute long videos. Eventually, I figured out how YouTube and Facebook worked. My sister, who was into hand-crafting dolls and stitching clothes for them, showed interest in starting a channel. We thought why not combine the two? That's how the Miniature Cooking Show was born."

Saravanan says that viewers get the real deal; they do not employ camera tricks while filming. "On camera, it is easy to show a miniature object as a full-size one, but not the other way around. So, for every video, we have to find or create miniature food. For example, we found a tiny orange in the local market which we used for our orange juice video. To make miniature *paneer*, we buy the regular kind from a local shop and cut it into small cubes and make a miniature version of our pack-

ing. Viewers can see Ranjitha's hand stir and sauté in the video to prove that the cooking is in miniature."

While the duo pays attention to algorithms while deciding on the recipes to showcase, Ranjitha says they have also featured their mother's *sambar*, chicken *kuzhambu* and vegetarian thali recipes and dishes from Maharashtra and Gujarat cuisine.

Of course, cooking in miniature does pose a few challenges. She says, "I work with small quantities and tiny vessels. Sometimes, the tealight candle [that provides the flame] just won't light or sometimes the clay utensils burst. But it has become easier since I keep doing it."

As for what she thinks draws viewers to their videos, she says, "It is because it's something new. People even see our utensils and ask us where we bought them." The duo gets the clay utensils custom-made from local potters. Saravanan adds, "Children can learn cooking from our videos." But the best part is that the videos remind people of their childhood.

Follow the Miniature Cooking Show on Facebook, YouTube or [miniaturecookingshow.com](http://miniaturecookingshow.com).

AKILA KANNADASAN

Every day, the little boy woke up to the sight of the Arunachala hill.

It was also the last thing he saw before going to bed. He scoured every inch of the mountain by foot; learned of every crevice, valley, cave, and spring that it bore. He grew up climbing the mountain, bathing in its ponds, and falling asleep on its cold stone surface. Years later, when he realised he needed to make a living – he did not have an education to back him – the mountain came to his rescue.

Saran Dashnamoorthy narrated his story over phone from atop Arunachala: he was on his way to shoot the *deepam* in its peak. This year, owing to the pandemic, entry to Tiruvannamalai was restricted

# Farm forward

SUNALINI MATHEW

Last month, Andaz Delhi launched the AnnaMaya Artisan Awards to celebrate local talent and artisanal processes that feed into the plant-forward way of life. These are brands they use in their kitchens and offer at their tables. Here are a few that won, and how you can get access to them.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

## Artisanal Palate

Arjun Kapoor was in IT in the US and his wife Nivriti Rohatgi Kapoor was in marketing, until they came back to Noida in 2016 to start the brand that markets what Kapoor calls "the base of all cooking, whether savoury or sweet": salt, sugar, spice blends, vanilla pods. Their Himalayan Pink salt comes from Pakistan via their supplier in Amritsar, and the sugar from Uttarakhand. Neither is chemically altered, he says. There are 12 salt variants (Smoked Italian Herbs & Aged Balsamic, Smoked Onion Garlic Chilli Pepper see the highest demand) and eight demerara sugars (Cinnamon & Vanilla, Espresso & Dark Chocolate are the most popular).

At [artisナルpalate.com](http://artisナルpalate.com), ₹149 upward, available countrywide



### Bliss Box

Started in 2018, Anju Kalhan, a yoga instructor in Delhi, says her food journey started with fitness. "At a gym class someone asked me, 'What do you eat?' From there, she began to think of constructing a brand around healthy ingredients. "A lot of people know they have to eat healthy, but they don't know how," she says. Her besan laddoo and granola are the most popular items, but she also does snacks: biscuits like chana-sattu-almond, ragi-cashew, jowar-saunf; snacks like bajra mathri; and breads on order. She uses 'A' ghee instead of oil or butter and jaggery instead of sugar.

At [blissbyanju.com](http://blissbyanju.com) on Instagram or Delhi's The Earth Collective on Saturday and Sunday, 9 am to 2 pm; ₹300 upward

## Darima Farms

Based in Mukteshwar, Uttarakhand, the farm, set in 100 acres of the Amaravati Orchard Estate, has been making cheese since 2017. Co-founders Saurabh Vinayak, who is a real estate developer in the hills, and Arvind Chawla, a management professional, began the venture so people would make the progression from ultra-processed cheese to the artisanal variety with no artificial preservatives or chemicals. "There was a health aspect, and the passion and belief that there is this niche which exists," says Chawla, adding that it was also about the community since they source milk from the villages around and employ the residents in the cheese making process. "The younger generation is running to the cities, and they are people who have lived clean good lives," he says of the sense of alienation that people from hill villages feel in cities and job in glass-and-steel buildings. They began selling at farmers' markets in Delhi-NCR, went on to supplying hotels, and are now present in about 23 cities across India (including Kanpur, Indore, Amritsar). Their most popular varieties are chilli bomb zara and gruyere. From 200 kilograms a month for the first few years, they now produce 1,000 kilograms.

At [darimafarms.com](http://darimafarms.com); home deliveries in Delhi-NCR; ₹360 for 200 grams

## Earthspired

Six years ago, Arun Nagpal, Manoj Khanna (in Mumbai), and Gurveen Kaur Sood, all having worked in the corporate sector, got together to form a social enterprise, Mrida, Sanskrit for soil. The aim was to establish a business while providing small and marginal farmers who were growing millets and amaranth, with market linkages, for "sustainable livelihood opportunities," says Nagpal. Then in 2017 Earthspired grew out of the need to have value-added products under the umbrella of a brand. They introduced flour that was a mix of different grains (foxtail millet, soya, amaranth and more), protein rich, but not too different in texture so people would not have to change their eating habits: a roti or a waffle could still be made. "Wheat has 11 grams of protein in every 100 grams. Our mix has 23 grams per 100 grams," says Iksha Chhabra, food technologist and nutritionist who is the group's business head. They then introduced cookies, "further up the value chain" as Nagpal puts it, and then ready to cook (upma, khichri) and ready to eat snacks (puffed amaranth). They work with farmers primarily in Uttarakhand, and also in Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. Earthspired is taught as a case study at INSEAD, under the topic 'Building a Brand for Social Impact'.

At [earthspired.com](http://earthspired.com); available countrywide; ₹99 upward



## POOCH CAFE



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## Tijara Organic Farm

About 90 km from Daula Kuan, Delhi, is Tijara, in Rajasthan, where Sneh Yadav set up her farm in 2011. She spent over two years converting it into an organic, biodynamic area, growing about 40 types of crops at a time. "Initially institutional buying was zero, only individuals and stores were accepting our produce," she says, of the many years of struggle, before the chefs at AnnaMaya launched in 2016 with seasonal, local vegetables and grains from Tijara. "They would tailor dishes according to what we grew, so every month they'd have a new menu," she says. That same year three-Michelin star chef Alain Passard visited the farm and cooked with its produce. Explaining the concept of a biodynamic farm, Yadav, who holds a post graduate degree in plant genetics, says that 80% of the farm's requirements have to be generated from within. "My food, my cow's food, the soil's food, all have to come from the farm." There are certain herbs and minerals added to the soil that are cultures of good bacteria. It's a holistic approach to farming, started by Rudolf Steiner, in the early 1924. The farm has been OneCert organic certified for the past eight years, and currently also have from-the-kitchen foods.

At [tijaraorganic.com](http://tijaraorganic.com) on Instagram; ₹500-800 minimum order if in the delivery radius



For that child  
who loves to

**READ**

**Keeping busy** Proprietor Aashti Mudnani at Bengaluru's Lightroom Bookstore (above); Tara Books' Art Sparks published during lockdown (below)

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Voices... Many Stories', has helped augment its online reach and the retail sales of its books.

Champaca Books in Bengaluru introduced subscription and gift boxes, opening up new avenues for revenue. "Our readers continue to support us online, and enjoy our curated Champaca book subscription, where we send out a theme-based selection on a monthly basis. There's also a monthly book club anchored by Somak Ghoshal, for our advanced subscribers. Our gift boxes boast hand-picked book bouquets, and customers can add cookies, stationery etc. for personalised presentation. We can't say if business has improved, but it has changed for sure," says Nirica Srinivasan, who prefers the moniker, bookseller, at Champaca.

Its vibrant children's library and cafe are not as busy anymore, but that has meant a more purposeful presence on social media. "Pre-pandemic, we hosted a lot of interactive events for children and adults that were anchored around books and Nature. Now, we have transitioned to hosting online events across genres with historian Manu Pillai, journalist Rohini Mohan, Kenyan debut author Wanjiru Koinange, and author Roxane Gay, among others," adds Nirica.

Opportunity notwithstanding, not everyone has embraced digital interaction with equal measure. At Lightroom Bookstore, the sound of pages rustling is still preferred to the click of a button. "We are staunchly a physical store and prefer face-to-face interactions over virtual ones," maintains Mudnani, as her team navigates the changing landscape of storytelling and story selling.

How independent book shops and publishers found creative ways to stay in touch with readers, in a year dominated by lockdowns and distancing

ANISHA MENEZES

Along a lush, tree-lined avenue, in Cooke Town, Bengaluru, Lightroom Bookstore now wears its silence uncomfortably. Proprietor Aashti Mudnani says the lockdown and paranoia around the pandemic has fundamentally altered that. "While we have managed to stay afloat, things aren't the same anymore. Despite support from many quarters, the pandemic has created a big change for us, not just economically."

Bookstores that would come alive during the summer holidays, wore a sombre look this year. With no in-person children's literature festivals either, publishers were forced to reassess business plans.

V Geetha, editorial director at Tara Books, Chennai, spent the time curating content and coalescing cultural collaborations. She explains, "Our new handmade book, *The Deep*, featuring work by young Warli artists Tushar and Mayur Vayeda, was produced during the pandemic. We also published *Art Sparks*, an art education book meant for the Indian school system. In collaboration with the Indo-Korean Cultural Centre (INKO), there are a series of presentations lined up, focussing on books that have found their voice in Korean."

The publishing house has cobbled together silkscreen books well," says Meghaa.

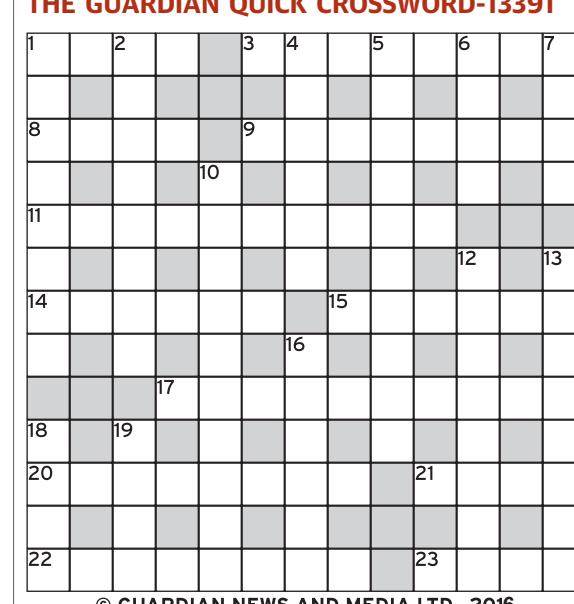


and riso prints of indigenous artwork, while handling online orders and occasional store pick-ups. Meghaa Gupta, manager, Rights and Business Development at Tulika Publishers, says the lockdown forced the Chennai-based company to look at digital sales and collaborations with a keen eye.

"Digital activity picked up substantially, with authors and translators engaging in online storytelling sessions. We launched virtual booktivities based on the Thumb Thump series for young readers. Tulika released multiple pandemic-themed books as well," says Meghaa.

The publishers added *The Monster At The Window* as a storytelling video, set against the backdrop of the lockdown, and delightfully found takers in Taiwan, where it was narrated by Chen Ming Hsiang (@Uncle-FatStory). Naturalist and author Zai Whitaker penned her e-book, *Zyrus the Virus*. Tulika's digital campaign, 'Many Languages... Many

## THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13391



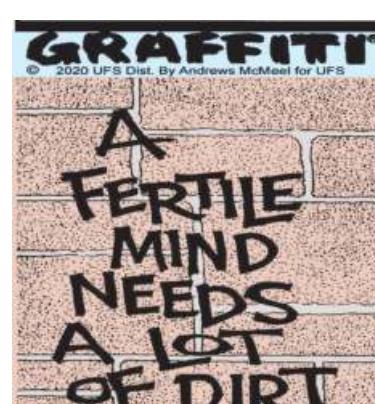
To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code

- job (10)
- 12 William McGonagall's kind of poetry? (8)
- 13 In mint condition (5,3)
- 16 Tidy – tree (6)
- 18 Lady's finger (4)
- 19 Diplomacy (4)

The solution will appear on December 10, 2020

Solution No. 13390

S	T	O	C	K	E	X	C	H	A	N	G
R	E	R	X	I	N	L					
M	E	M	H	Y	D	R	O	G	E		
E	M	O	H	O	R	O	T	I	E		
M	E	T	O	I	E	M					
B	O	A	B	U	R	R					
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P	A	R	O	T							
R	O	T									
O	T										
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**GRAFFITI**  
© 2020 UFS Dist. By Andrews McMeel for UFS  
**HEALTH CAPSULES** by Brian Smith  
HOW IMPORTANT IS SOCIAL INTERACTION TO HEALTH?  
ONE STUDY PUBLISHED IN THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY REVEALED THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE DISCONNECTED FROM OTHERS WERE ROUGHLY 3 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DIE DURING THE 9 YEAR STUDY. OTHER STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT BY SIMPLY LEARNING SKILLS OF EMOTION REGULATION, ONE CAN IMPROVE PHYSICAL HEALTH.  
Health Capsules © 2010 Brian Smith, Inc. All rights reserved.

- 22 Blood vessels (8)
- 23 Lose velocity (4)
- Down
- 1 Disguise (4)
- 3 Young person over twelve (8)
- 8 Speak indistinctly (4)
- 9 Albumen (3,5)
- 11 Hollywood (10)
- 14 With it (6)
- 15 Passion (6)
- 17 Be responsible for a false start (4,3,3)
- 20 Sudanese capital (8)
- 21 English church architect, d. 1723 (4)

STOCK EXCHANGE  
ERXINL  
MEMOHYDROGEN  
TOIME  
KOOKABURRA  
TILLIM  
PARROT HEYDAY  
LOAJ  
WEBBROWSER  
HLLDAS  
DEMOLISHVOTE  
RCNAE  
FOIRKLITTRUCK

# U.S. Supreme Court rejects bid to overturn Pennsylvania result

Trump allies argued that the expansion of vote-by-mail was unconstitutional

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

The U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a case filed by allies of President Donald Trump seeking to overturn the results of the vote in Pennsylvania, which Democratic candidate Joe Biden won by some 81,000 votes.

The case, filed by U.S. Congressman and Trump ally Mike Kelly of Pennsylvania and Republican lawmakers from the State, argued that a 2019 State law, which expanded vote-by-mail, was unconstitutional because it was not enacted with a constitutional amendment.

#### Court order

The Supreme Court's one sentence rejection of injunctive relief for the plaintiffs did not note any dissents. "The application for injunctive relief presented to Just



Raising objections: Supporters of Donald Trump protesting near the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia. ■ AP

tice Alito and by him referred to the Court is denied," the order read.

Mr. Trump, who has made numerous unsubstantiated claims on widespread electoral fraud, has been banking on the conservative-heavy Supreme Court, hoping that the three judges he put on the bench, including Amy Coney Barrett who was appointed days before the elec-

tion, would come through for him. The court's decision came on a day when the election's 'safe harbour' deadline was reached – a date by when States have the option of securing (from Congressional scrutiny) the results of the vote, having settled all election disputes.

The U.S. Congress will meet on January 6 to officially count the 538 Electoral

College Votes. Mr. Biden has 306 votes, while Mr. Trump has 232 votes; 270 votes are needed to win the election.

#### Texas case

The State of Texas brought a lawsuit on Tuesday to the Supreme Court asking for the vote in four key battleground States won by Mr. Biden to be overturned, arguing that the States had unlawfully expanded mail-in voting due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The case, announced by the State's Republican Attorney General, asked that the court block Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin from using the results of the election to appoint electors to the Electoral College, which votes on December 14 to formally confirm the next President of the United States. Texas has also asked for this date to be pushed back.

## Pak. Oppn. lawmakers plan to resign en masse

They are seeking fresh elections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The political crisis in Pakistan has deepened after an 11-party Opposition alliance announced that its lawmakers will resign en masse by the end of this month from Parliament to paralyse the government and force Prime Minister Imran Khan to call early snap polls.

The decision was taken after the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), formed in September this year to overthrow the government, held a marathon meeting in Islamabad.

PDM chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman announced on Tuesday night that a consensus was reached on resigning from Parliament.

All lawmakers will submit their resignation letter to their party chiefs by 31 December," he said, flanked by PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz and PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The exact timing of stomping out of assemblies would be decided later, Mr. Rehman said.

Soon after the election in 2018, he had urged the Opposition leaders not to take oath to join Parliament due to alleged rigging. But his idea was overruled by other

ers, chiefly by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistani Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

The PPP government in the Sindh province was considered as a hurdle as it was not sure if it would sacrifice its government to help the Opposition alliance.

The leaders also agreed to go ahead with a rally in Lahore on December 13 as a show of power to the government. It will be the sixth rally after similar gatherings held in Gujranwala, Karachi, Quetta, Peshawar and Multan, which attracted large crowd despite hurdles created by the government.

#### Imran stands firm

Prime Minister Imran Khan has rejected the demand to step down or call early elections and consistently advocated that the Opposition was protesting to put pressure to stop probes in corruption cases against their leaders. Speaking to a group of senior journalists and columnists on Tuesday, he said that "by-election will be held on the vacant seats" and no concession would be given to the protesting parties.

**Private discussions**  
Mr. Brownback was responding to a question that asked about the changes to India's citizenship laws and why India was not designated a

We watch the situation in India very closely. The Secretary traveled there multiple times. These issues have been raised in private discussions at the government – high government level, and they will continue to get raised

SAM BROWNBACK  
U.S. AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



CPC. "There were several recommendations made by the commission that the Secretary did not follow, and this was one of them. And we watch the situation in India very closely. The Secretary travelled there multiple times. These issues have been raised in private discussions at the government – high government level, and they will continue to get raised," Mr. Brownback said.

"I can't go into the decision-making process that the Secretary went through. He's well aware of a lot of the communal violence that's happening in India; he's well aware of the statute that has been enacted and the issues associated with the Modi government. And as I said, he's raised it at the highest levels,

but just decided at this point in time not to place them on a CPC or a Special Watch List."

#### Countries on the list

On Monday U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had announced that Myanmar, China, Eritrea, Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan would be on the CPC list, while Comoros, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Russia were placed on a Special Watch List for having engaged in or tolerated "severe violations of religious freedom".

Responding to another question on whether the U.S. was showing "favouritism" by placing Pakistan, but not India, on the CPC list, Mr. Brownback said that India doesn't have problems."

"The statute that you talked about or that was asked about earlier is a problem. The violence is a problem. We'll continue to raise those issues, but those are some of the basis as to why Pakistan continues to be on the CPC list and India is not," he said.

Brownback said that in Pakistan, a lot of the religious freedom violations were done by the government, while in India, some of it was done by the government but "much" of it was communal violence.

#### Communal violence

"Pakistan – a lot of their actions are done by the government. In India, some of them are done by the government and the law that was passed, and much of it's communal violence. And then when that takes place, we try to determine whether or not has there been effective – been police enforcement, judicial action after communal violence takes place," the diplomat said.

Mr. Brownback said half of the world's people that are locked up for apostasy or blasphemy were in Pakistani jails. "That doesn't mean that India doesn't have problems."

"The statute that you talked about or that was asked about earlier is a problem. The violence is a problem. We'll continue to raise those issues, but those are some of the basis as to why Pakistan continues to be on the CPC list and India is not," he said.

## Netanyahu's rival mounts a challenge

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

A leading rival of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the right-wing Likud party resigned from Parliament on Wednesday to challenge the premier in polls which could be held as early as March.

Gideon Saar, an influential figure in conservative Israeli politics, had challenged Mr. Netanyahu in a Likud leadership race a year ago, but decisively lost the primary. With a Netanyahu-led coalition now edging towards collapse, risking a fourth Israeli election in less than two years, Mr. Saar announced his break with Likud and his plans to form a new party.

"I will create a new movement with the goal of replacing Netanyahu," Mr. Saar said in a virtual press conference late on Tuesday. He officially resigned from Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, on Wednesday, ahead of embarking at the Elysee Palace with Mr. Castex announcing the outcome in the early afternoon.

The legislation will be discussed at a Cabinet meeting at the Elysee Palace with Mr. Castex announcing the outcome in the early afternoon. But the government's staunch defence of the foundations of the French state that date back to the French Revolution has caused un-

## Macron unveils draft law to tackle 'radical Islamism'

Critics fear it could target all Muslims

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS

President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday sought his Cabinet's blessing for a draft law aimed at combating "radical Islamism" after a spate of attacks, which critics fear risks targeting all Muslims.

Mr. Macron argues the legislation is needed to shore up France's staunchly secular system but the plan has further stirred up social tensions over the consequences for Europe's largest Muslim community.

"The enemy of the Republic is a political ideology called radical Islamism, which aims to divide the French among themselves," Prime Minister Jean Castex told Wednesday's edition of *Le Monde*.

He argued that rather than targeting Muslims it aimed to "free Muslims from the growing grip of radical Islamism".

The legislation will be discussed at a Cabinet meeting at the Elysee Palace with Mr. Castex announcing the outcome in the early afternoon.

But the government's draft law to strengthen republican values, mostly secularism and freedom of expression.



Emmanuel Macron  
eas even among allies, with the U.S. envoy on international religious freedom saying he was concerned by the legislation.

"There can be constructive engagements that I think can be helpful and not harmful," Ambassador Sam Brownback told reporters. "When you get heavy-handed, the situation can get worse," he said.

#### Republican values

The text was originally titled the "anti-separatism" bill, using a term Mr. Macron uses to describe ultra-conservative Muslims withdrawing from mainstream society. Following criticism of that term, it is now called a "draft law to strengthen republican values", mostly secularism and freedom of expression.

## Good deal is still possible with EU, says British PM Johnson

Talks are blocked over the issue of fair competition

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Wednesday said a post-Brexit trade deal was still possible, as he prepared to head to Brussels to meet European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen.

"A good deal is still there to be done. I look forward to discussing it with Commissioner von der Leyen to night," he told Parliament.

But Mr. Johnson undermined hopes of a breakthrough by again taking aim at European efforts to ensure Britain still abides by competition rules after January 1.

The so-called level playing field has been a key stumbling block in the talks, as has the extent of EU access to British fishing waters.

Mr. Johnson said Brussels' proposals on fishing would



Stalemate continues: British PM Boris Johnson, left, with European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen. ■ AFP/FILE

mean Britain would be "the only country in the world not to have sovereign control over its fishing waters".

"These are not terms that any Prime Minister of this country should accept," he told lawmakers in his weekly question and answer session.

Britain formally left the EU on January 31, nearly four years after a referendum on membership that divided the country and paralysed politics.

The end of a transition pe-

riod, designed to allow both sides to thrash out the terms of their new relationship, is approaching on December 31, making agreement on a deal more urgent.

Whatever happens, Britain will leave the European customs union and single market. Mr. Johnson said deal or no deal, the country will "prosper mightily".

By retaking control of U.K. money, borders and laws, "we will seize all of the opportunities that Brexit brings", he said.

Iran says ready to return to nuclear deal

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

TEHRAN

Iran is ready to return to full compliance with a 2015 nuclear deal with major powers as soon as the other parties honour their commitments, President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday.

The agreement between Iran and major powers has teetered on the brink of collapse since outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of it in 2018 and reimposed crippling unilateral sanctions.

US President-elect Joe Biden has expressed readiness to return to the agreement.

"Just as soon as the 5+1 or 4+1 resume all of their commitments, we will resume all of ours," Mr. Rouhani said.

He was referring to the five veto-wielding permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany with whom Iran reached the nuclear deal.

## UAE approves Chinese COVID-19 vaccine

'Sinopharm vaccine has 86% efficacy'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

DUBAI

The United Arab Emirates on Wednesday officially registered the coronavirus vaccine produced by Chinese drug giant Sinopharm, saying it was 86% effective according to analysis of third-phase trials.

The Health Ministry "has announced the official registration" of the vaccine, state news agency WAM said, without elaborating on how it would now be used.

The vaccine has been undergoing third-phase trials in the Emirates since July, and it was approved for emergency use for health-care workers in September.

"The announcement is a significant vote of confidence by the UAE's health authorities in the safety and efficacy of this vaccine," WAM said.

UAE health officials have reviewed Sinopharm's interim analysis of the third-phase trials which shows it is 86% effective against coronavirus, the report said.

"The analysis also shows the vaccine to have 99% seroconversion rate of neutralising antibody and 100% effectiveness in preventing moderate and severe cases



of the disease. Furthermore, the analysis shows no serious safety concerns."

China has four vaccine products in the final stages of development, three of which – including Sinopharm – use an inactivated form of the novel coronavirus to boost immunity.

This means they only need to be refrigerated and can be easily distributed compared to jabs developed by rivals Pfizer and BioNTech or Moderna, which have reported efficacy of 95% and 94% respectively but need to be transported at minus 70 to 20 degrees Celsius. However, Chinese drugmakers have not released any data on their vaccines' safety or efficacy.

Email ID: serv\_sundergarh@gmail.com

GOVT. OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, SUNDARGARH

...  
Bid Identification No. Online-PMGSY/RWSESN-01 of 2020-21

No. 2415 // Date: 07.12.2020

Construction of road & CD works under PMGSY Programme.

> 88 Nos. individual packages

> Varies from Rs.85.22 lakh to Rs.1149.38 lakh.

12 calendar months for works above Rs.5.00 Cr. & 11 calendar months for works below Rs.5.00 Cr. upto Rs.3.00 Cr. and 9 calendar months for works below Rs.3.00 Cr. as specified in DTCN.

5. Other details

Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. No. of Packages Availability of tender On-line for bidding

From To

1 PMGSY / RWSESN-01 of 2020-21 88 Nos. 4 5

Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh

OIPR No. 25133/11/0010/2021

Further details can be seen from the website: www.pmgstenders.gov.in

Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh

OIPR No. 25133/11/0010/2021

O-694

Notice Inviting Bid

Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL)

## MARKET WATCH

	09-12-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	46,104	1.09
US Dollar	73.57	0.04
Gold	49,221	-0.42
Brent oil	49.37	1.06

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	463.90	0.55
Asian Paints	2522.30	83.40
Axis Bank	634.20	13.55
Bajaj Auto	3306.55	-19.65
Bajaj Finserv	9010.65	41.25
Bajaj Finance	4944.15	52.00
Bharti Airtel	503.05	-0.55
BPCL	395.45	4.70
Britannia Ind	3627.10	-18.30
Cipla	762.40	-3.60
Coal India	134.70	0.45
Divis Lab	3725.40	35.40
Dr Reddys Lab	5056.90	41.70
Eicher Motors	2547.25	-0.95
GAIL (India)	122.50	0.75
Grasim Ind	920.25	-5.55
HCL Tech.	870.55	6.75
HDFC	2306.70	-3.05
HDFC Bank	1407.20	30.90
HDFC Life	652.60	1.10
Hero MotoCorp	3190.70	22.75
Hindalco	241.00	-4.70
Hind Unilever	2292.20	32.20
ICICI Bank	511.50	3.10
IndusInd Bank	928.50	11.80
Infosys	1175.20	21.85
Indian Oil Corp	93.95	2.90
ITC	205.40	2.95
JSW Steel	361.85	-0.80
Kotak Bank	1883.55	9.75
L&T	1181.00	9.60
M&M	755.00	1.00
Maruti Suzuki	7709.25	-53.45
Nestle India Ltd.	17569.15	49.70
NTPC	98.30	0.10
ONGC	91.20	0.45
PowerGrid Corp	192.70	1.10
Reliance Ind	2026.95	33.20
SBI Life	858.00	4.20
State Bank	270.35	-1.55
Shree Cement	24420.70	-355.05
Sun Pharma	569.55	0.85
Tata Motors	182.70	0.90
Tata Steel	609.35	-4.10
TCS	2810.80	13.50
Tech Mahindra	929.50	-2.80
Titan	1426.15	-1.70
UltraTech Cement	5144.80	-72.95
UPL	492.60	19.80
Wipro	359.50	-4.20

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.36	73.68
Euro	88.99	89.39
British Pound	98.68	99.12
Japanese Yen (100)	70.48	70.79
Chinese Yuan	11.23	11.28
Swiss Franc	82.64	83.01
Singapore Dollar	54.94	55.18
Canadian Dollar	57.42	57.68
Malaysian Ringgit	18.03	18.13
Australian Dollar	54.84	55.09

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



## Maruti to increase prices from Jan. on input costs

NEW DELHI  
Maruti Suzuki on Wednesday said it will increase the prices of its vehicles from January to partially mitigate the impact of high input costs. Maruti did not provide any details on the price increases, which would vary for different models.

Separately, India's largest carmaker unveiled a digital platform that will offer buyers financing options from multiple financiers.

## India sees spike in AI adoption in 2020: PwC

BENGALURU  
India witnessed the highest increase in the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven technologies in 2020 compared with the U.S., U.K. and Japan, said PwC India. Over 90% of Indian enterprises surveyed by PwC are implementing or planning to invest in AI solutions or technologies to address business challenges brought in by the pandemic, as per the consulting firm.

## Titan arm gets SEBI nod for commodities trading

BENGALURU  
Titan Commodity Trading, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Titan Company, set up for trading in various commodities, has received the approval of admission as a trading member on the Multi Commodity Exchange of India and SEBI's approval for the same, Titan said in a filing on Wednesday. Titan Commodity will trade in all types of direct commodities and precious materials.

## Aurobindo gets USFDA nod for generic sedative

HYDERABAD  
Drugmaker Aurobindo Pharma has received final approval from USFDA to manufacture and market Dexmedetomidine HCL 0.9% sodium chloride injection. The product is indicated for sedation of initially-intubated and mechanically-ventilated patients in an intensive-care setting and non-intubated patients prior to and/or during surgical and other procedures.

# Discretionary consumption will bounce back in 2021: CEA

'Vaccines could help bolster spending in sectors affected by the pandemic'

## VIKAS DHOOT

NEW DELHI

Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian expects discretionary consumption to bounce back in 2021, along with spending on sectors affected by social distancing norms, given the promise of COVID-19 vaccines bringing the pandemic under control.

The CEA also said the advent of the Joe Biden administration and a change in the U.S.' stance on trade would benefit India.

"There are two key areas that we would be watching – climate change and trade. I expect the Biden administration to go back to the traditional, more long-run think-



**Jab of hope:** The pandemic is likely to come under control in the next year, says the CEA. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

ing on this and that would be good for the world. India, especially, would be benefiting from the change in stance on trade because it has always played by the rules in the world order," Dr. Subramanian said.

I do expect India to work closely with the Biden administration to bring about more prosperity to the world," he said in a discussion on 'Who will lead the global recovery?' at the 2020

## Sensex, Nifty scale new peaks on vaccine hopes

Consolidation phase ahead: analysts

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices on Wednesday rose to new record highs buoyed by hopes of early approvals for COVID-19 vaccines and sustained buying interest from foreign institutional investors (FIIs) in banking and energy stocks.

Analysts, however, urged discretion, cautioning investors that the market may be headed for a phase of consolidation.

The BSE Sensex rose to an intraday peak of 46,164, up 555 points, before settling at a record closing high of 46,104, a gain of 495 points or 1.09%.

Top Sensex gainers included Asian Paints, up



3.37%, Kotak Bank up 2.67%, Axis Bank up 2.19%, HDFC Bank up 2.15% and Infosys up 1.85%.

Similarly, NSE Nifty 50 rose 136.15, or 1.02%, to an all-time high of 13,529.10.

The top gainers included UPL up 4.59%, Asian Paints up 3.65%, IOC up 3.29%, Kotak Bank up 2.66% and HDFC Bank up 2.34%.

## TCS's buy-back of ₹16,000 cr. opens Dec. 18

SEBI told to place results before SC

## LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to appoint an observer for overseeing the e-voting process, scheduled in the last week of December, for winding up of Franklin Templeton's six mutual fund schemes.

"SEBI shall appoint an observer regarding the e-voting of unit holders which is scheduled between December 26 [and] December 29, 2020," a Bench of Justices S. Abdul Nazeer and Santosh Khanna said.

The results of the e-voting would not be announced, but produced before the court in a sealed cover along with the report of the observer appointed by the SEBI.

"SEBI would also file a copy of the final forensic audit

report before this court in a sealed cover. It is made clear that the trustees are undertaking the exercise of e-voting and SEBI, in terms of our directions, is appointing an observer," the court noted.

The court directed that the interim order passed on December 3 staying redemption payment to the unit holders would continue till the next date of hearing. The court listed the case for hearing next in the third week of January.

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"SEBI would also file a copy of the final forensic audit

## Majority want WFH in 2021 as well: Cisco study

Office-goers like 'increased autonomy'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Indian office-goers like the 'increased autonomy,' 'dispersed team' effect, and 'faster decision-making' brought in by the work-from-home regime and now a majority of them want to stay with it in 2021 as well, according to Cisco Systems.

Working from home may have been an adjustment at the start of the pandemic lockdown, but a large percentage of employees want to hold on to the positives, including the 'overall flexibility' of work that emerged out of the pandemic brought new normal.

Most employees believe their employers' 2021 budget should prioritise around investing in technologies needed for remote work.



study titled 'Workforce of the Future.'

Over 14,000 respondents across 14 markets in the Asia Pacific, including more than 1,000 respondents from India, were part of the study released on Wednesday.

"With positive development around COVID-19 vaccine, economies moving towards normalcy and equity markets doing well, there is uncertainty over the direction of gold prices going ahead," said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director manager research at Morningstar India.

In comparison, the category saw a net inflow of nearly ₹8 crore in November 2019, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed.

"With positive development around COVID-19 vaccine, economies moving towards normalcy and equity markets doing well, there is uncertainty over the direction of gold prices going ahead," said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director manager research at Morningstar India.

## 'Appoint observer for Franklin MF e-voting'

SEBI told to place results before SC

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday granted permission to nine States to borrow an additional ₹23,523 crore for successfully implementing the 'One Nation One Ration card' reform.

Separately, the Union government released a fresh tranche of ₹6,000 crore to States as a back-to-back loan for meeting the GST compensation shortfall for this year. The States that have completed the reform of the public distribution system and have been granted additional borrowing permission for 0.25% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) are Gujarat, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana,

Milken Institute Asia Summit on Wednesday morning.

The use of vaccines could help hasten herd immunity and the pandemic was likely to come under control in the coming year, he said.

"Sectors that have been affected by the need for social distancing will definitely see demand coming up. Moreover, crises are periods where economic uncertainty increases and... households typically go into a savings mode. That affects discretionary consumption. I do expect that to revive as well, and a lot of pent-up demand on discretionary consumption and sectors affected by social distancing," Dr. Subramanian added.

# Tatas counter Mistry's claim of mismanagement

Valuation of SP Group share in Tata Sons rose, SC told

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The Tatas on Wednesday countered in the Supreme Court, the accusation of mismanagement of Tata Sons and said that even according to the claim of Shaporji Pallonji (SP) group, valuation of the latter's 18.37% stake in the company rose from ₹58,000 crore in 2016 to ₹1.75 lakh crore in 2020.

The Tata firms told the top court that unless the losses were so enormous and there was a lack of probity which left no other option but to remove the majority shareholders of the company, the NCLAT could not have reached the conclusion including that of restoring Cyrus Mistry as executive chairman.

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"Sectors that have been affected by the need for social distancing will definitely see demand coming up. Moreover, crises are periods where economic uncertainty increases and... households typically go into a savings mode. That affects discretionary consumption. I do expect that to revive as well, and a lot of pent-up demand on discretionary consumption and sectors affected by social distancing," Dr. Subramanian added.

## IN BRIEF



## Ramkumar wins his second UTR Pro event

NAPLES (FLORIDA) Ramkumar Ramanathan beat Cristian Camilo Rodriguez Sanchez 7-5, 4-6, [10-8] to win his second title in the UTR Pro tennis event at the Sanchez Casal Academy here. In the UTR pro tennis event at Melbourne, Y. Pranjala was beaten 6-0, 3-6, 7-5 by Storm Sanders in the second league match.

**Other results:** Semifinals: Ramkumar bt Jacob Bickersteth (USA) 6-1, 6-1; Quarterfinals: Ramkumar bt Janmagnus Johnson (USA) 6-1, 6-2.

## Ankita &amp; Gorgodze in doubles quarterfinals

DUBAI Ankita Raina and Ekaterine Gorgodze of Georgia beat Reka-Luca Jani of Hungary and Aleksandra Krunic of Serbia 7-6(5), 6-3 to reach the doubles quarterfinals of the \$100,000 ITF women's tennis tournament here.

**Other results:** First round: \$15,000 ITF, Cairo: Women: Aya El Sayed (Egy) bt Smriti Bhasin 6-1, 3-6, 6-2; Elina Avanesyan (Rus) bt Jennifer Luikham 6-1, 6-2. Doubles: Sara Akid & Rita Atik (Mar) bt Clara Vlaeselaer (Bel) & Snehal Mane 6-1, 6-4; Lamis Alhussein Abdell Aziz (Egy) & Anastasia Zolotareva (Rus) bt Pia Lovric (Slo) & Saumya Vig 7-6(16), 6-3.

**Men:** Mariano Navone (Arg) bt Muthu Adithiya Senthilkumar 6-1, 6-2; Juan Pablo Paz (Arg) bt Sidharth Rawat 6-2, 6-4; Hady Habib (Lbn) bt Manish Suresh Kumar 6-1, 6-3. **Doubles:** Hady & Jose Fco. Vidal Azorin (Esp) bt Yash Chaurasia & Tushar Madan 7-5, 6-4; Erik Crepaldi (Ita) & Adam El Mihdawy (Us) bt Anirudh Chandrasekhar & Manish Suresh Kumar 6-7(5), 6-4, [10-2].

**Joshna reaches a landmark on PSA Tour** CHENNAI Joshua Chinappa became the first Indian woman, and the second player after Saurav Ghosal, to take part in 400 PSA Tour squash matches. She reached the landmark at the CIB-Black Ball Open in Cairo. Joshua, seeded 10th, defeated Julianne Courtice of England 10-12, 11-6, 11-9, 12-10 in the first round. Ghosal has played in 444 matches.

## MCFC keeps winning

## SPORTS BUREAU

Table-topper Mumbai City FC continued its dream run with a 2-1 win over Chennaiyin FC, its fourth consecutive victory in five matches, at the GMC Stadium, Bambolim, on Wednesday.

**The result:** Mumbai City FC 2 (Hernan 45, Le Fondre 75) bt Chennaiyin FC 1 (Sylvestri 40). **Thursday's match:** SC East Bengal vs Jamshedpur FC, 7.30 p.m.

## Leipzig sends United to Europa League

Juventus bests Barcelona for Group G honours; Racism rears its ugly head; Lazio makes the grade

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PARIS

Manchester United was knocked out of the Champions League after a 3-2 defeat by RB Leipzig on Tuesday, while Paris Saint-Germain's qualification for the last 16 was overshadowed by a racism row involving a match official that caused its game against Istanbul Basaksehir to be suspended for 24 hours.

Cristiano Ronaldo scored two penalties as Juventus blew away Lionel Messi's struggling Barcelona 3-0 to wrest first place in Group G away from the Spanish giant.

Andrea Pirlo's Juventus avenged a 2-0 home loss to Barcelona in October when Ronaldo was sidelined with COVID-19, edging its opponents on head-to-head record and heaping more pressure on Ronald Koeman.

Weston McKennie scored



Final nail: Justin Kluivert scores Leipzig's third that confirmed United's drop. ■ REUTERS

in between Ronaldo's two spot-kicks at the Camp Nou.

## Moukoko's record

Borussia Dortmund striker Youssoufa Moukoko, aged 16 years and 18 days, became the youngest player in Cham-

pions League history as he came off the bench in a 2-1 victory away to Zenit Saint Petersburg.

Lazio also secured a spot in the knockout rounds for the first time in two decades following a tense 2-2 draw at

home to Club Brugge.

Meanwhile, UEFA opened disciplinary proceedings into the match between PSG and Basaksehir when players walked off in protest after the Turkish club accused a match official of racism. The

incident was sparked when Basaksehir's assistant coach Pierre Webo was shown a red card for protesting against a refereeing decision and the Turkish side then alleged that the Romanian fourth official Sebastian Coltescu used a racist term towards the Cameroonian.

## The results:

**Group E:** Rennes 1 (Rutter 86-pen) lost to Sevilla 3 (Kounde 32, En-Nesyri 45+2, 81); Chelsea 1 (Jorginho 28-pen) drew with Krasnodar 1 (Cabella 24).

**Group F:** Zenit St. Petersburg 1 (Driussi 16) lost to Borussia Dortmund 2 (Piszczek 68, Witsel 78); Lazio 2 (Correa 12, Immobile 27-pen) drew with Club Brugge 2 (Vormer 15, Vanaken 76).

**Group G:** Dynamo Kiev 1 (Popov 60) bt Ferencvaros 0; Barcelona 0 lost to Juventus 3 (Ronaldo 13-pen, 52-pen, McKennie 20).

**Group H:** Paris St-Germain vs Istanbul Basaksehir (Match suspended); RB Leipzig 3 (Angelino 2, Haidara 13, Kluivert 69) bt Manchester United 2 (Fernandes 80-pen, Pogba 82).

Steel.

**Company promoting sports, public sector:** Indian Air Force. **Company promoting sports, private sector:** Tenvic Sports. **National Sports Federation:** Paralympic Committee of India and Wrestling Federation of India.

**Sportspersons of the year:** Elavenil Valarivan and Bajrang Punia. **Breakthrough sports person:** Annu Rani.

**NGO promoting sports:** Magic Bus India Foundation and Pullela Gopi Chand Badminton Foundation.

**Lifetime achievement:** Manjusha Kanwar.

**Para athlete of the year:** Sundar Singh Gurjar, Simran Sharma.

**Sports journalist:** Mona Partha Sarathi. **Coach:** Radhakrishnan Nair.

**Professional services company:** Collage Design Pvt. Ltd.

**Sports set-up:** SportzGrid Pvt. Ltd; **Educational Institute, University:** Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies.

**Organisation promoting sports through CSR:** Tata

## Elavenil and Bajrang named the year's best

KAMESH SRINIVASAN  
NEW DELHI

Shooter Elavenil Valarivan and wrestler Bajrang Punia bagged the sportspersons of the year award at the FICCI India awards ceremony, held virtually on Tuesday evening.

"I thank my family first for always standing by me. My mentor Gagan Narang and my coach Neha Chauhan for always believing in me," said Elavenil, who had finished 2019 as No. 1 in women's rifle shooting.

"Such recognition motivates me to keep doing well. It gives me joy," said Bajrang, from his training base.

Former India cricket captain and coach, Anil Kumble received the 'best company promoting sports' award on behalf of his enterprise, Tenvic Sports.

**The award winners:** State promoting sports: Madhya Pradesh and Assam.

**Organisation promoting sports through CSR:** Tata

## Parthiv Patel calls time on storied career

From boy wonder to domestic stalwart, he always found a way to stay relevant

AMOL KARHADKAR  
MUMBAI

In an era during which athletes are extending their careers, retirement at 35, without any fitness concerns, could be considered early. But when one has been competing at the highest level for 18 years, 35 does not seem such a surprising age to retire.

So when Parthiv Patel, who earned a Test cap as a 17-year-old in 2002 even before making his Ranji Trophy debut, brought the curtain down on a career which spanned generations, you couldn't help but wonder whether the wicketkeeper-batsman was retiring too early or too late. The veteran, however, was crystal clear.

"I think the timing is right. I've been contemplating for almost a year now. I was taking it season-by-season. I felt that this was probably the right time, having played 18 years of First Class cricket and India career," Parthiv said from Ahmedabad on Wednesday in a virtual media interaction soon after announcing his retirement through a social media post.

"I'm satisfied and content

with the career I've had. There's hardly anything left to achieve as a player and as a captain of a First Class team. We've won almost everything. I've been part of three IPL title wins. I also feel that Gujarat cricket is in very good shape right now."

Had it not been for Parthiv's inconsistency behind the wickets, the world of cricket may have had to wait longer to witness the rise of M.S. Dhoni. And once Dhoni established himself across formats, Parthiv had to spend the remainder of his career as a back-up option for India.

"As a player, acceptance is very important. Accepting where you are is important. When MS was captain, I was still playing the game only because I loved the game. The format hardly mattered to me, whether it was club cricket, districts cricket, State, IPL or India," he said.

Once he managed to find a way to deal with the situation, Parthiv was in his element. He converted Gujarat from an also-ran to a domestic force to reckon with. The side achieved the rare accolade of winning all three inter-State tournaments under his captaincy – a testament to Parthiv's character. He also earned numerous call-ups to international cricket, the most recent of which came in 2018, for a Test in South Africa.

He may have held his cards close to his chest regarding his future plans, but don't be surprised if Parthiv continues his association with the sport, either as an administrator or a top executive in Indian cricket.

## The Parthiv file

**Major teams:** India, Gujarat, Chennai Super Kings, Kochi Tuskers Kerala, Deccan Chargers, Sunrisers Hyderabad, Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore

**Test debut** vs. England, Nottingham, 2002  
**Last Test** vs. South Africa, Johannesburg, 2018

**ODI debut** vs. New Zealand, Queenstown, 2003  
**Last ODI** vs. Sri Lanka, Brisbane, 2012

**Parthiv has been a brilliant ambassador for Indian cricket. He has always been a team man and it was a pleasure to captain him when he made his international debut at the age of seventeen.** SOURAV GANGULY, BCCI PRESIDENT

Your never-say-never attitude is something that has always stood out for me and I still remember the gutsy innings you played against Pakistan at Rawalpindi as an opener.

SACHIN TENDULKAR

Your determination to continue to work hard and dream big despite many challenges was fantastic.

VIRENDER SEHWAG

	M	Runs	HS	Avg.	50s/100s	Ct	St
Tests	25	934	71	31.13	6/0	62	10
ODIs	38	736	95	23.74	4/0	30	9
T20Is	2	36	26	18.00	0/0	1	0
FC	194	11240	206	43.39	62/27	486	77
IPL	139	2848	81	22.60	13/0	69	16

■ Parthiv remains the youngest wicket-keeper to play Test cricket, having made his debut at 17 years and 152 days

## SC relief for associations

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday spelt relief to many cricket associations and clubs across the country by lifting its nearly two-year-old blanket ban on other courts from either entertaining or proceeding with any case or dispute regarding the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) or State bodies.

The court had passed the restraining order on March 14 last year while appointing amicus curiae, senior advocate P.S. Narasimha, to mediate with the BCCI and cricket associations on issues as varied as release of funds to claims by members that the new BCCI Constitu-

tion had "gone beyond" the Justice R.M. Lodha Committee reforms in cricket administration.

"The restraint on all courts to entertain cases need not continue," a Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao said on Wednesday.

The order was prompted chiefly by a plea from three regional cricket clubs, represented by advocates Purushottama Krishna and M.F. Philip, who argued that their membership in the Thrissur District Cricket Association was terminated by the Kerala Cricket Association without an opportunity for hearing.

The court scheduled a hearing for the third week of January.

## QUICK SINGLES

Warner ruled out of first Test

**SYDNEY** Australia's opening batsman David Warner has been ruled out of the first Test (D-N) against India starting at Adelaide on December 17, Cricket Australia said on Wednesday. It is not clear who will take Warner's place, but Cameron Green's century for Australia-A against India-A has put him in the running. AFP

**South Africa to tour Pakistan next month**

**JOHANNESBURG** South Africa will make its first tour of Pakistan in 14 years when it plays two Tests and three T20Is in Jan-Feb. 2021. **The schedule:** Tests: Jan. 26-30, Karachi; Feb. 4-8, Rawalpindi; T20Is: Feb. 11, 13 & 14, Lahore. AFP

## NEW DELHI CRICKET ROUND-UP

## Unbeaten ton by Sanskar

Sanskars Bhatti (101 n.o., 65b) set up Three Star Academy's 40-run win over R.S. Academy in the Raghab memorial tournament.

**The scores:** Three Star Academy 220/3 in 35 overs (Sanskar Bhatti 101 n.o., Aniket Lohia 47 n.o., Piyush 42) bt R.S. Academy 180/4 in 35 overs (Rohit Sharma 65, Mayank Rawat 54).

## Tarun Kumar excels

Tarun Kumar (61 and 2/35) helped Sehwag Academy bt Venkateshwar Academy by 52 runs in the Bholu Singh memorial tournament.

**The scores:** Sehwag Academy 172 in 40 overs (Tarun Kumar 61, Manish Kumar 3/28, Ronak 3/29) bt Venkateshwar Academy 120 in 29 overs (Akhay Singh 32, Sumit Kumar 3/4).

**Yash Dhull shows the way**

Delhi under-19 captain Yash Dhull (66) showed the way in Niz Sports' 76-run win

over Ravindra Academy in the Choudhary Shyam Singh memorial event.

**The scores:** Niz Sports 203/4 in 20 overs (Yash Dhull 66, Chander Pal Saini 48, Pradeep Malik 46) bt Ravindra 127 in 17.3 overs.



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