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by  
**Mr. Vibhas Jha**

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One dead, 315 admitted to hospital in A.P. due to undiagnosed illness  
page 8



140 pleas challenging Citizenship Amendment Act pending before SC  
page 9



Defiant Donald Trump challenges vote result in first post-election rally  
page 11

Hardik, Dhawan and Natarajan star in India's series win  
page 13

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## NEARBY



### FIR lodged against Tejashwi for protest

PATNA  
A case was lodged on Sunday against Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav and 18 other leaders of the Grand Alliance for staging a protest without permission here amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The Opposition leaders had staged a protest at Gandhi Maidan on Saturday in support of the agitating farmers in Delhi. Later, Mr. Yadav dared the Nitish Kumar-led government to arrest him.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

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EDUCATIONPLUS ▶ PAGE 5

## 'Volunteers testing positive during trial not unexpected'

Bharat Biotech to conduct interim analysis of infections

JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI

Vaccine maker Bharat Biotech's Phase-3 clinical trial design for its candidate Covaxin expects 130 COVID-19 infections among trial participants, according to details shared by the company on the government's clinical trial website.

Thus instances such as Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij testing positive for COVID-19 two weeks after being vaccinated as a trial participant are expected.

The company will also perform an "interim analy-

## Support widens for Bharat Bandh call

Opposition leaders seek repeal of laws; farmers say transport unions, industry bodies back shutdown

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Top Opposition leaders, in a joint statement on Sunday, extended their support to the December 8 Bharat Bandh called by farmers' organisations demanding a rollback of the three farm sector laws, and claimed that the new laws would "destroy Indian agriculture by mortgaging it to corporates".

The joint statement was signed by Congress president Sonia Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, DMK president M.K. Stalin, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, CPI general secretary D. Raja, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and CPI(ML) general secretary Dipankar Battacharya, among others.

Leaders of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha claimed that support for the bandh had poured in from transport un-

Gaining strength: Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait and supporters taking part in a demonstration at the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border in Ghazipur on Sunday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

ions, women's and students' organisations and federations of industry, apart from political parties.

Separately, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi and the Shiv Sena too backed the call given by the farmers

Asking the Centre to meet the "legitimate" demands of the *kisan-annadatas*, the Opposition statement said, "We the undersigned leaders of political parties extend our solidarity with the ongoing massive struggle by the

Indian farmers organised by various kisan organisations from across the country and extend our support to their call for a Bharat Bandh on December 8 demanding the withdrawal of these retrograde Agri-laws and the Elec-

ratrity Amendment Bill."

"These new Agri-Laws passed in Parliament in a brazen anti-democratic manner, threaten India's food security, destroy Indian agriculture and our farmers, lay the basis for the abolition of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and mortgage Indian agriculture and our markets to the caprices of multi-national agri-business corporates and domestic corporates," added the joint statement that was released by the CPI (M).

The Bharat Bandh would be "complete" as all businesses, shops and commercial establishments would remain shut from morning till evening, said All-India Kisan Sabha (Ajay Bhavan) general secretary (Punjab) Baldev Singh Nihalgarh.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGES 2, 4 & 9  
SEVERAL ARRESTED IN LONDON  
FOLLOWING PROTESTS ▶ PAGE 11

must be included in the trial or participants should be followed for longer.

Following Mr. Vij's disclosure that he had tested positive after getting the first dose of the vaccine – based on an inactivated SARS-CoV-2 virus sourced from the National Institute of Virology – Bharat Biotech, in a statement on Saturday, said Covaxin followed a two-dose schedule administered 28 days apart and its efficacy would be determined two weeks after the second dose.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

The police in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, on Saturday arrested a Muslim man and his brother under the new anti-conversion law while he was in the process of registering his marriage to a Hindu woman from Bijnore.

The couple, who arrived at the registration office in Kanth, were handed over to the police by the members of a right-wing outfit who prevented them from completing the registration process.

The woman said she was

an adult and married the man on July 24 in Dehradun of her free will. "I got married willingly. I am an adult, aged 22," the woman told journalists, adding that they had been friends for two years.

They had been staying in Kanth, from where the man hails, for the past four to five months, she said. It was not clear if the woman or the man had changed their religion.

While members of the right-wing outfit took credit for the arrest, the police claimed that they acted on

information provided by the woman's parents.

### Fifth case

The two brothers were booked under the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020. It is the fifth such case to be lodged under the new law. After a 21-year-old man was arrested in Bareilly, seven persons were arrested and eight booked in Sitapur, while 14 persons were booked in Mau and two charged in Muzaffarnagar.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

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LUCKNOW

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Angry and agitated, farmers are waging a protest of their lifetime.

*The Hindu* spoke to residents from 22 districts of Punjab and captured their angst

HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

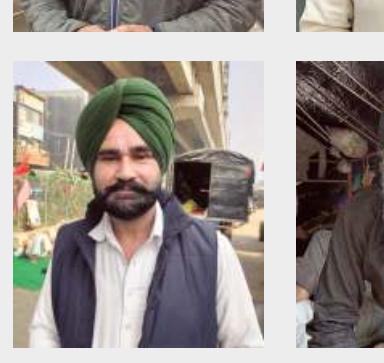
With unprecedented turnout and unanticipated vigour, the farmers' agitation across the three borders in the Capital has been already hailed as the largest protest in recent memory. At the forefront has been the largely agrarian State of Punjab, with residents from all 22 districts marking their attendance, braving the chill and bad air of the city. *The Hindu* spoke to one resident from every district and captured their angst.

Twenty-two-year-old Jagmeet Singh, who grows wheat and rice in Patiala, asserted that he and fellow farmers will not let the government sell off everything to the corporate. Kashmir Singh (72) from Amritsar called the new law 'kaale kanoon [black law]'. "They will kill the farmers," he said.

Harbans Singh, a 60-year-old farmer from Rupnagar, observed that "if we come across a problem, we won't be able to go to the judiciary", whereas Baba Jasvir Singh (34) from Fatehgarh Sahib said Sikhs are such a resilient community that they will fight for their rights till the end.

Ranveer Singh (56) from Jalandhar said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was a public servant and not everyone's boss. So he should act like one. Jagdev Singh (37) from Ludhiana said they don't trust the corporate and have experience dealing with them earlier. "An MNC contracted potato produce to us but they finally didn't like the produce. They gave us money after a lot of drama," he said.

Balkaran Singh (40) from Moga said currently they can take a loan of a few lakhs from commission agents (middlemen) even before selling the final produce, but after they are removed they will become inse-



## VOICES OF PROTEST



cure. Bikramjeet Singh (46) from Gurdaspur said the new laws will force them into contract farming and if the final produce is not to the contractor's liking, he might end up cancelling it.

Avtar Singh (55) from Kapurthala observed that these laws will impact everyone, including labourers, and not just farmers. Gurbinder Singh (35) from Tarn Taran said after the Minimum Support Price goes with this

law, every crop will meet the same fate as corn (makkhi) does as it's sold at a lesser price because the government doesn't buy it.

Manpreet Singh (38) from Mohali asked what if the corporate houses don't pay them after taking the land on lease. "We

won't be able to go to court also," he said.

Jagveer Singh (29) from Bhatinda said people in Punjab are already in debt and the laws will only increase the insecurity. "These laws only impact small and mid-level farmers and not the big

ones because they are already traders and are in touch with corporates," he said.

Arshpreet Singh (32) from Muktsar said the laws will make farmers dependent on private mandis and they'll have to bow down to them because they have to sell their produce.

Harmanjit Singh (34) from Hoshiarpur said he had sold sugarcane to a private mill two years ago and is still awaiting payment. "This is what this law will do," he said.

Rajinder Singh (65) from Mansa said if he wants to marry

off his children, he can take loan from the middlemen at present but if the middlemen are removed, they won't have anyone to fall back on because bank loans have high interest rates and depends on the land one owns. Gurjant Singh (50) from Barnala said "we don't want to sell to private mandis and that is that".

Reshma Kaur (60) from Sangrur said the laws will take away all the security from them. "We don't know the private market". Gurvinder Singh (45) from Fazilka said if the laws are not ac-

cepted by the farmers then why they were being forced on them.

Nacchhatar Singh (42) from Ferozepur said if people won't get the MSP, they'll be destroyed. Baltej Singh (45) from Faridkot was concerned about contract farming which he was always against.

Virender Maan (42) from Nawanagar said the uncertainty lies in the fact that they won't know the buyers. Kuldeep Singh (24) from Pathankot said the government will have to take the laws back and there'll be no negotiation.

Police return ₹7.55 cr. cash, 3.8 kg gold to 'rightful owners'

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police have returned more than ₹7.55 crore in cash and other valuables, including 3.8 kg gold, to their "rightful owners" in the last six months, officers said on Sunday.

These articles, lying in the custody of the Delhi police for several years, were handed over to its rightful owners upon the direction of Delhi Police Commissioner S.N. Srivastava, they said.

Special drives were launched, during which the Delhi police reviewed the process of returning of recovered and seized stolen properties to their rightful owners, the police said. Also, 5,299 two-wheelers, 280 TSRs and 869 four-wheelers were restored to their owners, he said. Electronic items, including 3,980 mobiles, 121 laptops, PCs, CCTVs and 1,931 other items were returned.

## AAP extends support to farmers' call for Bharat Bandh tomorrow

Cong. will gherao BJP HQ on Tuesday in support of farmers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

AAP on Sunday said that it has extended its full support to Bharat Bandh called by the farmers on December 8.

The Chief Minister of Delhi and AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal tweeted "The AAP fully supports the Bharat Bandh call made by farmers on December 8. AAP workers across the country will support it peacefully. There is an appeal to all countrymen that everyone should support the farmers and participate in it."

AAP convener Gopal Rai said that in all States and districts, AAP leaders and volunteers will stand in support of the farmers and the bandh. "This is not a battle of the farmers but this is a battle for all of us. If the farmers get affected due to these anti-farmer laws by the BJP, then the country will be affected," Mr. Rai said.

Mr. Rai added that in Delhi's cold winter nights, both



Farmers staging a demonstration against the farm laws at the Singhu border on Sunday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

young and old farmers are forced to sleep on the pavements, but the BJP government is entwined in conversations and are not landing on a concrete solution.

"When the farmers are requesting to repeal these bills, the government is bent upon convincing them by stating their benefits. But they are forgetting that farming is an occupation that they [farmers] know inside out and they would know what are the pros and cons," Mr. Rai said.

He appealed to all the citi-

zens of the country to stand in support of the farmers and the Bharat Bandh on December 8.

Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee president Ch. Anil Kumar said that the party fully supports the Bharat Bandh. Mr. Kumar said that the three anti-farmers bills passed by the Modi government at the Centre will ruin the farmers who are already in debt. He added that the Congress workers will "gherao" the BJP headquarters on December 8 in support of the farmers.

## HC upholds dismissal of jawan over smuggled gold

Absolute integrity is expected of all govt. employees and no slip can ever be brooked'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has upheld the dismissal from service and one-year imprisonment given to a Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) jawan, who did not report the seizure of three gold pieces, weighing half kilogram, from smugglers.

A Bench of Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw and Justice Asha Menon observed that, "absolute honesty and integrity is expected of all government employees and no slip can ever be brooked".

**No seizure record**

The High Court remarked that Sunil Kumar Yadav, who joined the services of SSB as



constable in 2011, "did not consider it inappropriate to keep smuggled gold in his possession, about the seizure of which no record was also prepared".

"Such employees wanting integrity cannot but be dismissed as their retention in service would send wrong signals and would be counterproductive," it said.

On November 25, 2014, Ya-

dav, who was posted in Narkatiaganj in Bihar claimed to have received input from his source about gold smuggling from Muzaffarpur in Bihar to Delhi in Saptakranti Express train.

It is Yadav's case that he was able to apprehend a smuggler and the apprehension was duly notified to the superior officers. By this time, however, the Sapt Kanti Express had already reached Baghaj railway station, which was almost 50 km away from Narkatiaganj where he and another constable, along with the smuggler deboarded the train.

After the Sub-Area Organisers (SAOs) came to the Baghaj railway station, all of them proceeded towards Narkatiaganj. However, on the way, the smuggler escaped from the custody of the SAOs. Yadav said he was asked to deposit the recovered gold with the nearest SSB unit at Tuthi bari while the SAOs "hurriedly" left the area.

Yadav claimed that he was arrested by local police while on his way to Narkatiaganj.

On the other hand, the Central government submitted that Yadav was apprehended while he was proceeding with his brother to his home instead of depositing the recovered gold with the SSB unit or the police or the Customs, whose offices were all located in the vicinity.

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- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
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Timings  
**DELHI**

MONDAY, DEC. 07	
RISE 07:01	SET 17:25
RISE 23:53	SET 12:26
TUESDAY, DEC. 08	
RISE 07:02	SET 17:25
RISE 00:00	SET 13:03
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 09	
RISE 07:03	SET 17:25
RISE 00:56	SET 13:39

**Delhi Weather** max min  
Delhi City 28 11  
Safdarjung 28 11  
Palam 25 15

**Delhi Palam Today**  
27°C Mist and haze during morning. A comfortable day with mainly clear sky. Pollution level may improve.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
27°C Mist and smoke haze likely during the cool morning. Pollution level would improve further with dry winds.

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**THE HINDU**

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Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	389	Gurugram	325
Ghaziabad	428	Faridabad	392
Noida	402	Greater Noida	396
Good	■	Satisfactory	■ Moderate
0-50	51-100	101-200	201-300
Poor	■	Very poor	■ Severe
201-300	301-400	401-500	>401
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS)   SOURCE: CPCB			

**Delhi's AQI**  
settles at 'very poor' category

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI  
The air quality in the Capital settled in the upper end of the 'very poor' category on Sunday, falling from the 'severe' category on Saturday. The average 24-hour AQI based on the readings from 38 monitoring stations was 389.

According to the government's air quality monitor SAFAR, surface winds are forecast to increase and air quality is likely to improve marginally by December 7 but within the 'very poor' category owing to slightly better ventilation condition. The AQI is likely to further improve on December 8 and 9.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

**SHINJINI GHOSH**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi University is prepared to conduct Open Book Examinations (OBE) for the second time this year, officials said on Sunday. The OBE for second and third-year undergraduate students and final-year post-graduate students is scheduled to begin on December 12.

Earlier this year, the university had shifted to the online OBE system due to the pandemic. However, final-year students - who appeared for the examinations in August - had raised several complaints with respect to issues like receiving wrong question papers, answer scripts not getting uploaded and so on and so forth.

Unlike earlier, the students will only have the option of uploading answer scripts on the OBE portal now, and emailing them will no longer be possible. Even after the declaration of results, scores of students had complained of being marked absent in papers despite appearing for them.

Head of DU's Computer Centre Sanjeev Singh, said: "Earlier, there were multiple options through which students could either upload the answer scripts on the portal, email them or send them to the nodal officers. However, the process is delayed as tracing the scripts becomes an is-



## DU prepared for second round of open book exams

University tweaks exam method. Students now have only the option of uploading answer scripts

sue. So, this time, the students will have to upload the answer scripts on the online portal itself."

### Concerns resolved

"The issues faced by the students such as wrong question papers were more of a mapping issue and human error. There are multiple players involved like Internet service providers. Some students were marked as 'Results Await-

ed' as their scripts were not on the portal. However, now all such concerns have been resolved," added Mr. Singh.

Stating that the university was prepared for the commencement of the examination, Mr. Singh said: "Even last time, there were only operational issues and not technical glitches. We also have a clear understanding of students in remote areas facing connec-

tivity issues and hence, an hour is given for downloading question papers."

To facilitate students, who have connectivity issues, DU has also made the provision of them to opt for a physical mode of examinations. D.S. Rawat, Dean of Examination, said: "Those who have opted for the physical mode of examination will have to go to their respective colleges and appear for online OBE

## HC directs regularisation of drivers serving in erstwhile Corporation Bank

There exists an employer-employee tie between them'

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has ordered regularisation of drivers, who were serving as various executives in the erstwhile Corporation Bank, which has now merged with the Union Bank of India as employees of the bank.

Justice Prathiba M. Singh agreed with a decision passed by the Central Government Industrial Tribunal (CGIT) holding that all the drivers are 'workmen' and that there is an employer-employee relationship between the bank and them.

**No direct payment**  
The Union Bank of India had moved the High Court against the decision of the tribunal and various other orders to regularise the service of the drivers, who had been working with the bank for over 10 years.

The bank argued that the

cars, which were being driven by the drivers, belonged to the bank. It said that the salaries were never paid to the drivers directly by the bank as they were paid by the senior executives of the bank, under whom the drivers were working.

The bank said it merely reimbursed the money to the senior executives. It further argued that the driver did not receive any provident fund, nor gratuity or any pension. It added that the driver was not given any appointment or termination letter either.

The court, however, rejected the submission saying that the documents on record show that the drivers have not been exclusively used for the executives of the bank but have also been serving the bank in various roles, including picking up parcels, computers, running errands, claiming reimbursements, taking delivery of

## Banned outfit member held

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

A member of banned Students' Islamic Movement of India has been arrested after absconding for 19 years, the police said on Sunday. DCP (Special Cell) said a team assisted by Inspector Shiv Kumar has arrested Abdullah Danish. "He was absconding for 19 years in a case of Sedition and Unlawful Activity registered in 2001 at New Friends Colony police station," the DCP said.

Deciding a civil suit against the denial of promotion to a woman Haryana police sub-inspector in her favour, a local court here has ordered that the plaintiff was not "warned to be careful in future" for lack of integrity but for not showing exemplary conduct as a senior police officer and hence, the court was "of the considered view that she is entitled to promotion". The court directed that the 53-year-old plaintiff be promoted within two months.

Sub-Inspector Raj Bala, the plaintiff, was awarded punishment of "warned to be careful in future", for requesting a loan from an accused of an FIR. The warning was issued by then Deputy Commissioner of Police, Headquarters, Shashank Kumar Sawan, on October 25, 2019, leading to denial of promotion to her. She filed a civil suit and the court, in its September 7 or

der, directed the competent authority to pass the speaking orders considering her plaint as representation.

But the Gurugram police commissioner rejected her representation on the grounds that an appeal could be made only against the order of dismissal or reduction or stoppage of increment or forfeiture of approved service for the increment and therefore, no appeal was made against the punishment of warning.

### Police conduct

Pronouncing the verdict, Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division), Anil Kaushik, observed that "the principles of natural justice and fair play have been blatantly violated by the act and conduct of Gurugram police commissioner and the IGP, Rewari Range, were not the competent authority to reject the representation of the plaintiff and rendered them liable for action but this court refrains from going ahead with the same lest it should appear a bit chas-

tions and thereafter, considering her punishment, "warned to be careful in future", so grave as to come as a stumbling block in the way of her promotion to the post of inspector".

Saying that the defendants in the case had put themselves in a position to eat the cake and have it too, Mr. Kaushik, said that the plaintiff's right had been stifled and she was denied her right to promotion without any cause. "It is a well-settled principle of jurisprudence that there is no wrong without a remedy," said the order.

Mr. Kaushik, in his 64-page order, also observed that the Gurugram police commissioner and the IGP, Rewari Range, were not the competent authority to reject the representation of the plaintiff and rendered them liable for action but this court refrains from going ahead with the same lest it should appear a bit chas-

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**THE HINDU**  
India's National Newspaper

Out of the total students, 5,700 opted for physical mode of examinations in DU.  
■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

from the institute."

### 1.30 lakh students

According to university data, over 1.30 lakh students will be appearing for the OBE this month. Out of the total number of students, around 5,700 students have opted for the physical mode of examinations, Mr. Rawat said.

Ramjas College principal Manoj Khanna, said: "The college is required to provide safety and precautionary measures to the students apart from facilities to appear for the online exams. All of these are in place and the college is prepared for students to take the physical mode of exam. However, the university is yet to provide us with the list and number of students who have registered for the physical mode."

Aishwarya Joshi, a law student from Uttarakhand, said: "Since it will be my first open-book exam, I am looking forward to it. It is a major relief from having to memorise numerous cases that had to be reproduced in verbatim earlier. However, the OBE is partly a problem for me as I come from a small town in the hills where Internet connectivity is poor and there is no cable Internet. So, it is mostly 4G that I will have to rely on."



A woman getting tested for the virus in north Delhi.

■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

## Cases continue to dip

Positivity rate now down to 3.68%: govt.

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded 2,706 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday

with 69 deaths and 4,622 recoveries in the past 24 hours, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government.

It added that 73,536 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 3.68% during the same period out of which 32,023 were RT PCR tests and 41,513 rapid antigen tests. The cumulative count of cases now stands at 5,92,250 with 9,643 fatalities and 5,57,914 recoveries.

Out of 18,814 beds reserved for COVID-19 patients in hospitals, 12,669 are vacant while in dedicated COVID-19 care centres, 6,939 beds out of the available 7,942 are vacant. A total of 15,276 people are now in home isolation and there are 24,246 active cases. Delhi is emerging victorious in this war against the virus. I would request you all to continue following the three commandments - mask, social distancing and sanitisation." CM Arvind Kejriwal tweeted that he was glad that the third wave also seems to be getting weak.

### Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
<b>5,92,250</b>	<b>9,643</b>
New cases in the past 24 hours <b>2,706</b>	New deaths <b>69</b>

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

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December 2020  
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Computer Based Test (CBT)	28 Dec 2020	23 Dec 2020

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## Woman arrested for duping over 100 people of more than ₹20 cr.

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

A woman was arrested for allegedly duping over 100 people of more than ₹20 crore on the pretext of delivering them flats, the police said on Sunday. She was wanted in more than a dozen cases across the Delhi and NCR and was nabbed from Mumbai, they said.

The case came to the fore after the police received complaints from several people, who had booked flats at Raj Nagar Extension in Ghaziabad.

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# Include SYL issue too, Haryana Minister tells agitating farmers

Water for irrigation a major issue with farmers of the State: Jai Prakash Dalal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

Haryana Agriculture Minister Jai Prakash Dalal on Sunday said the State farmers agitating against the three farm laws in Delhi should also seek resolution of the Sutlej-Yamuna Link Canal issue with Punjab in their ongoing talks with the Centre.



Haryana Agriculture Minister J.P. Dalal at a press meet in Gurugram on Sunday. ■ PTI

Addressing a press conference here, Mr. Dalal urged all people and organisations in the State supporting the farmers' agitation, directly or indirectly, to raise their demand for SYL construction as water for irrigation was a major issue of the farmers in Haryana besides other issues.

Mr. Dalal said the situation on the underground water front in half-a-dozen districts of South Haryana was grim

be no water, how will the crops come up. If there is no crop, then the issue of rate will have no meaning," said Mr. Dalal.

"We have won the case in the Supreme Court and now the SYL canal, the construction of which is pending for the last 40 years and which is considered the lifeline of Haryana, should be completed.

Therefore I request people across party lines, who are participating in the farmers' agitation and all those who are supporting it, directly or indirectly, to include construction of SYL canal in their demand letter for the welfare of farmers of Haryana, so that when farmer leaders and officials of the Government of India sit face-to-face for negotiations, this issue is also discussed."

the Minister said.

On the ongoing farmers agitation, Mr. Dalal said the issue was being politicised in the name of farmers but "we all are sons of farmers and will continue to take decisions in the interest of farmers as and when required".

#### Minister avoids question

In reply to a question on why the State government was not taking up the SYL issue with the Centre, Mr. Dalal said he did not want to get into what had happened on the issue so far and make an appeal as an individual. He also parried a question on his recent statement alleging that many foreign powers, including China and Pakistan, wanted to create instability in the country in the name of farmers' movement.

# RLP extends support for Bharat Bandh call

Raise voice for rights of farmers: Pilot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JAIPUR

The Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP), a constituent of the ruling NDA at the Centre, has extended its support to the call for Bharat Bandh on December 8 by farmer groups protesting against three recent farm sector laws.

RLP convenor and MP Hanuman Beniwal made the announcement on Sunday.

Congress leader Sachin Pilot also supported the Bharat Bandh call, saying that all should raise their voice for their rights.

"The unsuccessful dialogue between the Central government and the farmers is a sign that the BJP wants to hollow out India's agricultural foundation," he said in a tweet.

Talks between the government and protesting farmers

remained inconclusive on Saturday even after five rounds of discussions as the union leaders stuck to their demand for the repeal of the new farm laws, forcing the Centre to call for another meeting on December 9 to resolve the deadlock.

#### 'Major reforms'

Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove the middlemen and allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country.

However, the protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of Minimum Support Price and do away with the mandis, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

## 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 Monday:** Heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Lakshadweep; dense fog likely to set in at isolated places in Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, south Assam and Meghalaya

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	27.1	16.4	Kozhikode	—	34.0	25.4
Ahmedabad	—	33.1	16.4	Kurnool	—	33.1	19.2
Aizawl	—	19.3	—	Lucknow	—	28.0	12.7
Allahabad	—	31.2	12.6	Madurai	3.3	30.0	23.3
Bengaluru	1.3	24.4	18.5	Mangaluru	1.3	24.4	18.5
Bhopal	—	32.6	12.8	Mumbai	—	33.8	22.4
Bhubaneswar	—	31.2	17.6	Mysuru	—	28.0	20.1
Chandigarh	—	26.8	14.5	New Delhi	—	28.2	11.4
Chennai	20.5	29.9	22.6	Patna	—	26.8	13.3
Coimbatore	—	29.8	22.6	Port Blair	16	30.0	25.7
Dehradun	—	27.5	9.8	Puducherry	16	28.0	22.7
Gangtok	2	11.0	8.2	Pune	—	29.6	13.7
Goa	—	35.6	19.9	Raipur	—	31.2	11.4
Guwahati	—	26.5	16.9	Ranchi	—	27.0	11.1
Hubballi	—	29.0	17.0	Shillong	0.6	15.6	8.0
Hyderabad	—	26.5	16.9	Shimla	—	17.2	8.1
Imphal	—	23.2	7.6	Srinagar	—	24.5	3.0
Jaipur	—	30.3	16.0	Thiruvananthapuram	1.2	32.6	24.8
Kochi	—	30.8	25.4	Tiruchi	4.2	30.2	23.2
Kohima	—	18.0	6.4	Vijayawada	—	30.4	21.2
Kolkata	—	29.3	17.9	Visakhapatnam	—	29.9	22.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

Yesterday

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	CODE
Ahmedabad	33	164	59	—	210	■
Bengaluru	.5	55	74	—	—	■
Chennai	10	8	44	—	43	■
Delhi	19	62	67	429	391	■
Hyderabad	.6	98	13	—	138	■
Kolkata	27	33	57	360	262	■
Lucknow	.7	116	48	403	356	■
Mumbai	30	54	42	—	75	■
Pune	—	—	—	251	203	■
Visakhapatnam	13	38	35	—	106	■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 428 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Elera, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 35

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>2</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.

**PM<sub>2.5</sub> & PM<sub>10</sub>:** 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

# Vijender threatens to return Khel Ratna

Boxer extends support to farmers' stir

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India's first Olympic medallist in boxing and Congress leader Vijender Singh on Sunday announced that he would return the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award if the Central government did not withdraw the three controversial farm laws.

He said farmers had been protesting against the three farm laws for the last three months.

Asking the Centre to make an "immediate course correction", Mr. Badal said it was not right on its part to "forcibly" impose the laws on farmers.

"Enough is enough, if the



**Big boost:** Sportspersons Kartar Singh, Vijender Singh, Rajbir Kaur Rai and others say that they will return their medals if the Centre does not meet farmers' demands. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

government does not listen to the demands of the farmers, then I have decided that as a show of solidarity, I will return my Khel Ratna," Mr. Singh told PTI. "I come from a family of farmers and Army men, I can understand their

pain and anxiety. It is high time that the government pays heed to their demands," added the 35-year-old boxer from Haryana's Bhawanipatna.

"The award definitely means a lot to me but we also have to take a stand for things

we believe in. If the crisis is resolved with talks, then we would all be happy," he added.

Mr. Singh had won India's first Olympic medal in boxing, a bronze, in the 2008 Beijing Games.

# NGT seeks action plan on elephant corridors

It directs Odisha govt. to ensure stress-free migration of jumbos in the State

SATYASUNDAR BARIK  
BHUBANESWAR



Encroachments had led to human-elephant conflict. ■

NGT seeking concrete action on strengthening of corridors.

The WSO had sought the NGT's intervention for necessary legal action against encroachers and those violating the Provisions of the Forest Conservation Act 1980 and the Indian Forest Act 1927 in the proposed corridors.

Biswajit Mohanty, secretary of the Wildlife Society of Orissa (WSO), a voluntary organisation, had moved the

High Court on November 26 for a writ petition challenging the constitutionality of the Forest

dors was handed over to the Asia Nature Conservation Foundation (ANC). The ANC had completed its task with respect to the corridors. The government had even submitted that elephants were sighted in places where the jumbos had never been seen in the recent past.

**Last opportunity**  
The government had sought time to inform the NGT about action plan to strengthen corridors. It, however, failed to give a concrete action on physical progress on corridors. The principal Bench of the NGT in its latest order said the government must treat it as the last opportunity to come up with an action plan.

# Delhi BJYM leader, wife killed in mishap

5 others, including their sons, injured

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

A spokesperson of the Delhi BJP Yuva Morcha and his wife were killed when the car they were travelling in was hit by a truck on the Expressway in Uttar Pradesh's Kannauj district on Sunday.

Kannauj Police said five others, including the couple's three sons, were injured and were receiving treatment in the State medical college in Tirua.

The accident took place near Thathia village when Sandeep Shukla (45), his

wife Anita (42), their three sons and two neighbours were going to Pratapgarh to attend a marriage function, they said.

While Shukla and his wife died on the spot, their sons Siddharth, Abhinav and Aarav, and neighbours Amit Kumar and Aryan Sharma suffered injuries, Tirua SHO Rajkumar Singh said. Their family members in Delhi have been informed, he said.

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta condoled the deaths. (With PTI inputs)

# 3 killed on Yamuna Expressway

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NOIDA (U.P.)

Three persons died in two separate accidents on the Yamuna Expressway in Greater Noida, police said on Sunday.

In the other incident, two men died after their car rammed into a truck.

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■ ALBERT P'RAYAN

A year ago, a video of Dalit students eating mid-day meals separately from other students at a government school, in Ballia, UP, went viral.

On September 14, this year, the body of a 19-year-old Dalit woman, who died after she was allegedly gang-raped by four upper-caste men, was cremated without her family's consent in Hathras district, UP. The court asked the District Magistrate: "What if it was a girl from a rich family? Would you have cremated her the same way?"

On June 19, this year, a 60-year-old man and his 31-year-old son – arrested and brutally tortured at a police station at Sathankulam in Tamil Nadu – died due to injuries sustained while in custody. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) quoting the forensic report stated that police brutality killed the duo.

The three examples – caste discrimination, brutal rape, and police brutality – are clear cases of human rights violations. Discrimination based on religion, caste, gender, sexual orientation, and so on at the workplace, segregation of students based on caste and disabilities in educational institutions, failure to provide maternity leave, forcing people to become bonded labourers, denial of minimum wage to workers... are a few examples of human rights abuses in many countries. We read news about rights viola-

# Stand up for ALL RIGHTS

With Human Rights Day falling on December 10, a look at why students should be taught to value and appreciate diversity and stand up for human dignity everywhere

tions such as extrajudicial killings, illegal detention, harsh prison conditions, prolonged pretrial detention, police torture, in India, almost every day. How do educators and students respond to them? Do they feel that it is their moral responsibility to condemn such atrocities and be advocates for peace and justice? They can stand up for their rights and those of others only if they have adequate knowledge of various rights listed in the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights.

## Why Human Rights Education

Educators should be concerned about human dignity and rights and not only instil such values in students, but also educate them to value and appreciate diversity and uphold all rights. How can it be done? Human rights education (HRE) can play a significant role in achieving this goal.

HRE should be incorporated into the curriculum in order to promote peace, democ-

racy and social order. Its main objective will be to help students cherish the values of equality, liberty, human dignity, become aware of their rights, develop empathy, tolerance and respect for the rights of others, respond positively to various violations and to defend human rights. It can be a part of the value education curriculum and should be learned through experience. Students should be able to ap-

ply human rights standards in their practices.

## What can students do

Become members of human rights clubs in schools and educate themselves.

Become familiar with all the 30 rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Learn about and be inspired by the work of famous humanitarians.

Read news reports and stories and discuss them.

Write creative pieces to create awareness among people.

Discuss what can be done to highlight human rights issues and stop violations.

Speak up for the rights of victims by expressing solidarity. Write 'letters to the editor'.

Become advocates for peace, tolerance, and human rights.

## Beyond the exams

India is the largest democratic nation in the world with a multi-linguistic, multi-cultural and multi-religious pluralistic society. Unfortunately, certain forces pose a threat to democracy and indulge in unconsti-

tutional activities. As a result, certain sections of people are deprived of their rights and unable to raise their voice against the injustice done to them.

HRE can not only make students aware of their rights, but also help protect the rights of others. It is not a subject to be studied for exams or to acquire theoretical knowledge about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Human rights issues should challenge educators and students and lead them to respond positively to situations of rights violations. Eleanor Roosevelt, who was instrumental in drafting the UDHR, said that human rights should begin "in small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works." It is not necessary for everyone to become an activist, but it is important for everyone to be a defender of human rights.

The author is an academic, teacher educator, and columnist.  
rayanal@yahoo.co.uk

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**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹50,000

**APPLICATION:** Online

**DEADLINE:** December 15

b4s.in/EDGE/AKPS1

### ■ APJ Abdul Kalaam Scholarship (APJAK), Kerala

The Department of Minority Welfare, Government of Kerala, invites applications for APJ Abdul Kalaam Scholarship (APJAK), Kerala, to pursue diploma courses from government/aided polytechnics.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to students from the minority communities who are residents of Kerala and studying in a government/aided polytechnic in a merit seat. Annual family income must be less than ₹8 lakh.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹6,000 per year

**APPLICATION:** Online

**DEADLINE:** December 9

b4s.in/EDGE/JAK2

### ■ IIT Kharagpur Centre of Ocean Engg and Naval Architecture Junior Research Fellowship

Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, invites applications for the project "Propeller Shaft Instabilities and Mode Localization in Propeller Blades(ILP)".

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to candidates below 28 years, who hold a BE/BTech/ME/MTech/MS degree. They must have qualified GATE earlier or have a valid score now. They must be willing to enrol for PhD/MS depending on the previous qualification.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Up to ₹31,000 per month

**APPLICATION:** Online

**DEADLINE:** December 9

b4s.in/EDGE/CCF4

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTOS

KNOWLEDGE

# A quiz connect

Quizzes can be a useful tool for knowledge-building and making assessments fun, especially in an era of digital learning

■ RAJ DAM

Quizzing as a game or hobby has been part of our society's collective fabric for a long time. From the time Bourvita Quiz Contest started to air on All India Radio in the early 1970s, to Kaun Banega Crorepati now, generations of Indians have pursued quizzing as a hobby, and thousands of quiz clubs or dot our schools, colleges, neighbourhoods and communities across the country.

In the last decade, digital quizzing has taken off primarily because our classrooms became more technology enabled, and organisations, in the public and private sector, have adapted to social media and technology platforms to engage with their target audiences.

## Knowledge-building

Participation in quizzes, whether in person or online, is a great way to build one's knowledge around any subject. In early 2000s, I was a management student in Bengaluru. At the time, most college fests in the city had a 'Business Quiz' run internally or through a professional quizzing organisation or a quizmaster. As a student with a science background, I was not accustomed to various aspects of business, economics and finance, and participating in these quizzes taught me a lot about history, famous persons, companies, finance and markets that was handy during the campus placement season. This is not a unique story. I know many people, especially students, who built their knowledge base around technology, automobiles, art and culture, and many other areas by participating in quizzes.

The ability to compete with peers, receive positive reinforcements, and overcome challenges that such gamified technology offers makes the assessment less boring and enhances the experience of the person being assessed apart from having a positive impact in driving learning outcomes. In the COVID-19 impacted times that we are in, the use of quizzing as a fun way of knowledge-building and assessments has got a huge impetus worldwide and will remain so in the foreseeable future.

The writer is a professional quizmaster and the founder of QuizWorks, a quizzing company.

**Quizzing and assessments** But, for many, "quizzing" is a dreaded word. It conjures up the vision of a teacher walking into the classroom and offering a "spot quiz" or a "surprise test" on a subject that wasn't our favourite, and the stress it brought. However, today, teachers all across the world are using innovative technology that use game design and game mechanics to make a quiz interesting. Not just in classrooms but in workplaces too, the learning and development teams are increasingly using such tools to make mandatory assessments around HR policies, environment, health and safety, product knowledge, and programming, besides others.

The event is free and open to all. **On December 7 at 3.00 p.m.** To register visit: <https://bit.ly/36AjyjY>

THE HINDU  
QUIZ TIME!

## SAVE THE DATE

As part of the Sweden-India Nobel Memorial Week 2020, the Embassy of Sweden in India, in partnership with the Atal Innovation Mission, presents 'SHE STEM: Women Leading the Way'. This virtual celebration of women scientists and entrepreneurs in Sweden and India aims to honour women who are bringing cutting-edge science and technology to global sustainability efforts, and spearheading knowledge building and technology development within their fields.

Speakers include Darja Isaksson, Director General at Vinnova, Sweden's Innovation Agency (TBC); Dr. Beatrice Crona, Deputy Science Director at Stockholm Resilience Centre; Helena Samsioe, CEO and founder of Globhe; Linnéa Kornehed, CMO and co-founder of Einride; Dr Sunita Narain, Director General of Centre for Science and Environment; Sanskriti Dawle, Founder and CEO of Bell Labs and Dr. Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology. There will also be a dialogue with students.

The event is free and open to all. **On December 7 at 3.00 p.m.** To register visit: <https://bit.ly/36AjyjY>

## EXAM PREP

# Practice, a priority



The coveted IIFT test can be cracked with practise, hard work, and extra focus on general knowledge

■ SHASHIDHAR UNNI

Admission to the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) is coveted by MBA aspirants. Since this test is going online for the first time, aspirants should get used to this mode at the earliest. The test features 110 questions spread over four sections – English, Math, Data Interpretation/Logical Reasoning, and General Knowledge. The fly in the ointment is the General Knowledge section. Fortunately, the cutoff for this section is lower than the rest.

Like the other MBA entrance tests, speed is essential, and one must watch out for the negative markings.

## How to study

1. Practise speed math and mental calculations. Given the inexorable pressure of the ticking clock, calculating on your scrap sheet will be suicidal. Figure out a way to

remember squares, cubes, fractions and square roots till 75 at least. In Data Interpretation, ratios and proportions must be thoroughly revised. Likewise, practise pie charts, bars and combination graphs constantly.

2. For Logical Reasoning, make sure you are thorough with linear arrangements, circular arrangements, blood relations, coding/decoding and distance/directions and also master areas of inference and assumptions.

3. In Quantitative Aptitude, focus on modern math, algebra, arithmetic, probability, and permutations and combinations because these are favourites.

4. In the Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension section, you will be tested on functional grammar and passage comprehension. Learn synonyms and antonyms thoroughly. Practise exercises in books that help increase vocabulary. Get concepts such as subject-verb agreement,

parallelisms, idiomatic errors and comparatives/superlatives clear. The actual stress in this section will be Reading Comprehension (RC). But there is no substitute for non-stop practise. You will need to practise RCs on

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MA (Media and Cultural Studies)  
 MA (Disaster Management)  
 Self-Financed Programmes  
 M.A/M.Sc (Analitics)  
 MA (Organization Development, Change and Leadership)  
**TULAJPUR OFF-CAMPUS:**  
 BA (Hons) in SW with specialisation in Rural Development  
 BA (Social Sciences)  
 MA/M.Sc (Development Policy, Planning and Practice)  
 MA/M.Sc (Sustainable Livelihoods and Natural Resources Governance)  
 MA (Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship)  
 MA (Social Work in Rural Development)  
 MA (Women's Studies)  
**HYDERABAD OFF-CAMPUS:**  
 MA (Education)  
 MA (Public Policy and Governance)  
 MA (Development Studies)  
 MA (Women's Studies)  
 MA (Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability Studies)  
 MA (Regulatory Policy and Governance)  
 MA (Urban Policy and Governance)  
 MA (Water Policy and Governance)  
 MA (Master of Hospital Administration (MHA))  
 Master of Library and Information Science (MLS)  
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 MA (Urban Policy and Governance)  
 MA (Water Policy and Governance)  
 Master of Hospital Administration (MHA)  
 Master of Library and Information Science (MLS)  
**GUWAHATI OFF-CAMPUS:**  
 BA (Social Sciences)  
 MA SW (Community Organisation & Development Practice)  
 MA SW (Livelihoods and Social Entrepreneurship)  
 MA SW (Public Health)  
 MA (Rural Development and Governance)  
 MA (Women's Studies)  
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 MA (Public Policy and Governance)  
 MA (Development Studies)  
 MA (Women's Studies)  
 MA (Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability Studies)  
 MA (Regulatory Policy and Governance)  
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 MA SW (Public Health)  
 MA (Rural Development and Governance)  
 MA (Women's Studies)  
**MA (Labour Studies & Practices)**  
**MA (Sociology and Social Anthropology)**

varied topics. Try to paraphrase the passage into words you are comfortable with. See if you can summarise every para into a single line to capture its main point. Concentrate on primary purpose, central idea, inference, and tone of the passage. These always feature in IIFT tests.

5. The General Knowledge section should be attempted last. A good source for information is the year books published by various media houses. Choose the current year's and the previous year's editions.

Finally, just like one does for other entrance exams, solve as many of the previous years' papers as you can, as that will be the broad template followed.

The writer is Academic Head, T.I.M.E. Chennai.



CM  
YK

M ND-NDE



## Culture and peace

India's stand against UN's selectivity on religions gains force from its secularism

In a strong statement at the UN General Assembly discussing resolutions of the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) on the 'Culture of Peace', India criticised the world body for what it called "selectivity" in seeking to protect Abrahamic religions – Islam, Christianity and Judaism – over others. The Indian delegate pointed out that previous resolutions of the UNAOC dating back to 2006 had repeatedly decried the hatred against those religions – "Islamophobia, Christianophobia and anti-Semitism" – but didn't condemn attacks on other religious groups including Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists, who have suffered terror strikes and seen their shrines destroyed in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In particular, India said, the UNGA statement welcomed the Kartarpur Gurudwara corridor agreement between India and Pakistan, but failed to note that Pakistan's government has taken over the management of the Sikh shrine, which it called a contravention of the agreement and a violation of Sikh beliefs. India's delegate also accused Pakistan of a "culture of hatred" against "religions in India" and fostering cross-border terrorism and said a culture of peace cannot exist until that is changed. Above all, the Indian statement said, the UN's selectivity under the aegis of the UNAOC, an organisation that was set up in 2005 to prevent polarisation between societies and cultures and to bridge differences between them, only serves to further the theory of an inevitable "clash of civilisations" instead.

India's concerns over the UN resolutions that portray only three religions as victims of religious hatred are completely valid, and it is important that they are broadened to include every community that faces religion-based violence. It is also important that the government thwarts Pakistan's particularly insidious attempts to create a controversy against India at this time, by pushing these resolutions as India steps to take its two-year seat at the UN Security Council. New Delhi has been concerned by an increase in intrusive language from the UN bodies concerned as well, given that UNAOC issued a statement of "grave concern" over the Delhi riots in February this year that it said resulted in casualties of "mostly Muslims". India is keen to push back on the UNAOC and other UN arms, like the UN Human Rights Council, that have criticised the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. As it seeks to do all of this, however, the government must be careful about ensuring that in exposing the UN's "selectivity" it doesn't open a flank for a counter-charge against India. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, for example, has been criticised for offering fast-track citizenship to only a select group of religions, leaving out Muslims. India cannot call for a culture of peace that stitches together an alliance of faiths, while Indian States bring laws that seek to make difficult inter-faith marriages. In the larger analysis, the force of India's argument against the UN's selective resolutions and non-inclusive language as well as the international efforts of adversaries such as Pakistan remains its own secular credentials enshrined in the Constitution and its pluralistic ethos.

## Tenuous tack

The MPC's policy of prioritising growth over price stability is clearly fraught with risks

Friday's decision by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India to maintain status quo on benchmark interest rates and continue with an accommodative policy stance for "as long as necessary" has been widely welcomed as being 'pro-growth'. With the MPC noting that the signs of economic recovery were still far from broad-based, the panel asserted that it was incumbent on policymakers to support a durable rebound. The MPC also flagged its expectation that inflation would continue to "remain elevated" through the coming months to average 6.3% – well above the 6% upper bound of its target range – through the second half of the current fiscal. The RBI, which in October estimated retail inflation to range between 4.5% and 5.4% in the six-month period, has in just two months raised its projection for price gains by at least close to one percentage point. Seen in this light, the MPC's decision shows that the RBI is clearly prioritising growth over price stability for now. While the compulsion to ensure that monetary policy remains broadly supportive of an economy that is in recession as a fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying lockdowns is understandable, the rate setting panel's readiness to shrug off both persistently high inflation and its own outlook on prices is cause for concern.

Recent increases in the prices of iron ore, steel and transportation fuels also add to the worries that cost pressures are continuing to accumulate at a time when the economy is still well under water. The RBI has also, surprisingly, raised its GDP forecast for the full year. The central bank now expects the economy to shrink by only 7.5% in the 12 months ending in March, a full 2 percentage points shallower than the 9.5% contraction it had projected in October. The forecast is predicated on a return to growth of 0.1% in Q3 and 0.7% in Q4. It is this ostensibly sanguine outlook on the economy that is hard to square with the RBI's stand according primacy to growth over price stability. With the central bank prognosticating that, save some possible continued softening in the prices of cereals and transient easing of vegetable costs through the winter, other food prices would persistently remain at elevated levels, the MPC's policy approach is clearly fraught with risks. By laying the onus on supply disruptions, profiteering and taxes for the inflation spiral, the RBI is abdicating its primary mandate.

# There is nothing new about Trumpism

The strength of it can easily be located in the sum total of American civilisational weaknesses



HARISH KHARE

"How many times do we need to be told that Donald Trump is a jerk?" This throwaway line appears in *Beyond the Boom*, a 1990 collection of brilliant essays on American life and culture by a gaggle of young and robust ideological voices of the New Right in the post-Ronald Reagan years.

The point of this citation is to remember that as early as 1990, Mr. Trump had already been recognised as an American cultural joke. Yet, close to three decades later, he marketed himself as a major political phenomenon and eventually came to occupy the White House (without ever having held any public office).

### Traits of the social fabric

Now that he stands ejected from the Oval Office we need to remind ourselves that there was nothing innovative about Mr. Trump's success, and there was nothing new about whatever he was supposed to represent. The strength of so-called Trumpism can easily be located in the sum total of American civilisational weaknesses.

Eminent American historians and sociologists have, indeed, long delineated these weaknesses. In his masterly essay, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, Professor Richard Hofstadter had meditated, as early as 1963, on the United States' unresolved "cultural struggles" – first, over, immigrations and later on the race question. Populism has always got traction, as it got manifested in different forms – racism, xenopho-

bias, anti-Semitism, and paranoia about the outsider and his or her contamination. Isolationism (of the kind implicit in the 'America First' slogan) had had its appeal (President Woodrow Wilson was not allowed to take the U.S. into the League of Nations); jingoism has always been music to many American ears. These historical traits are woven into the American social fabric.

Yet, sensible, sensitive and caring politics, anchored around President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, beat back the preachers of narrowness and bigotry. But the ugliness, racism and violence remain unvanquished and dormant, waiting for a new prophet and his call to arms. After the Second World War, the call came in 1964 when Senator Barry Goldwater won the Republican Party's presidential nomination. Though he went on to lose the race for presidency by the biggest margin till date, Goldwater did revive the conservative platform, cobbled from old racist prejudices and xenophobic passions. Senator Goldwater's massive defeat would eventually pave the way for a conservative resurgence that finally culminated in Ronald Reagan's eight presidential years.

Ironically, it was during the Reagan-Bush years that the most intense and most bitter ideological battles took place – not between the liberal, progressive Democrats and conservative Republicans, but within the Republican Party, between the 'Mods' and the 'Cons'. The story of this struggle, repeated in state after state, is brilliantly told in *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* by Thomas Frank. Kansas, a state with progressive traditions, was to get sucked into right-wing anger and angst of the 1990s over the Clin-



tons, their liberal agenda and their presumed moral lapses.

### The most burning anxiety

Even as Reagan helped Americans overcome the post-Vietnam defeatism and they came to savour a new wave of prosperity, the untamed fears about immigrants and the Blacks resurfaced. Tom Wolfe's novel, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, brings out the visceral fears that gnawed 'white America' in the 1980s. In an introduction to a later edition of the book, Wolfe put his finger on the most burning anxiety: "New York and practically every other large city in the United States are undergoing a profound change. The fourth great wave of immigrants – this one from Asia, North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean – is now pouring in. Within ten years political power in most major American cities will have passed to the non-white majorities."

For the right wing that prophecy came to pass soon. In 2008 the unthinkable happened: a Black man became the president of the U.S. Within days of the Obama presidency the old-fashioned racist forces regrouped themselves under the banner of the so-called Tea Party Revolt. As Professors Theda

Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson tell us in their scholarly study, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, that 'movement' was used to infuse grassroots energy into the Republican Party and to transform it into a fighting instrument of "extreme conservative ideology."

The party needed a new mascot, someone vacuous, amoral, and totally banal, to spearhead the campaign to "take America back." Mr. Trump was smart enough to make himself agreeable to the individuals and interests behind the Tea Party. Except for a gift for personal disagreeableness, there was nothing new to the so-called 'Trumpism'. Mr. Trump suited all because he had no core.

All that Mr. Trump imbibed was just what lies beneath the surface of American society – distrust of science, biblical morality, racial enmities, an itch for global evangelicism. Simply put, Trumpism existed before Trump and there is a name for it – racism, unvarnished and unapologetic.

**A lesson from Trump's defeat**  
That Mr. Trump could do so well in the 2020 presidential contest seems to have mesmerised many in India, and there is a rush to dis-

cern something enduring, something even morally salvageable in this 'Trumpism'. Part of this infatuation is, of course, to find global justification for our own lurch towards ugliness of muscular majoritarianism. Just as Rush Limbaugh, that right-wing megaphone, would harangue and thrash the moderate Republicans for their taste for "European-style coffee and whole-grain breads and high-end chocolates," our very own desi imitators mock and ridicule "the Khan Market gang" for its preference for public decencies and personal civility.

We in India also need to take particular note that the 'strongman' notion stands rejected. Joe Biden never positioned himself as the sole bulwark against the 'enemy'. In contrast to Mr. Trump's rough and tough preening, Mr. Biden reassured the Americans – and the world – that for him power and authority are to be exercised as a collective trust, and not as a quest for personal glory.

There is, though, for us in India a lesson in Mr. Trump's defeat: ugliness of the right-wing can be rolled back. Just as the majority of the Americans are not given to bigotry, the majority of our citizens do not subscribe to communal and divisive hatred. The task of politics, in America as well as in India, is to tame the society's ugly proclivities. Good politics taps the moderate impulses of the centrist majority. The bigot may have the energy and the vehemence, but smart, sensitive and sincere politics will triumph in the end. And, above all, Mr. Trump's defeat has restored faith in democracy's cleansing capacity, to make us better than we are. Today in America, tomorrow in India.

Harish Khare is a senior journalist based in Delhi

## A mirage sold as a panacea for the unorganised sector

The labour codes will only better India's 'ease of doing business' ranking instead of improving conditions of employment

MOHAN MANI & BABU MATHEW

In an interview with *The Hindu* in October this year, the Union Labour Minister claimed that the four labour codes would generate employment and secure the basic rights of the workers. He also claimed that the labour codes seek to universalise the right to minimum wage of workers and social security entitlements. These appear to be extremely positive steps from the perspective of all workers. Why, then, have the labour codes not been universally welcomed by workers and their organisations, with even the Bharatiya Janata Party-affiliated Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh opposing the codes? What are the reasons for this cold reception to what the BJP claims is a game changer for all workers in the country?

### Universal social security

Let us first look at the claim of universal social security. The codes mandate benefits of Employees' State Insurance (ESI) and Provident Fund (PF) only for workers belonging to establishments employing 10 workers or more. This leaves out nearly 80% of all Indian workers – the informal sector – from the ambit of these benefits. These workers have to be satisfied with a promise of some special schemes for them in as yet

undefined future. They may also be allowed access to underutilised Employees' State Insurance Corporation hospitals – and even that only on payment of a usage charge! The most ubiquitous workers we encounter in our daily life – our domestic help, or the street vendor, or even the paper boy who delivers the morning newspaper home – are all left out of reckoning of this universal coverage.

What does ESI coverage mean for the remaining 20% of the workers? In 2016, the ESI covered 2.1 crore workers; this increased to 3.6 crore by March 2019. The ESI employed around six doctors per one lakh beneficiaries in 2016, as against the World Health Organization norm of 100 doctors; the proportion of doctors to beneficiaries would have further fallen with the expanded membership. The ESI would have needed to urgently increase doctor and paramedical strength, for which it would need more resources. However, in the interest of 'ease of doing business', the employer plus employee contribution to the ESI was reduced from 6.5% to 4% from July 2019. The decision to reduce the contribution rate at a time when the need for the ESI was to increase expenditure on medical care surely appears counter-intuitive. With the new codes seeking to cover 20% of all work-

ers, the membership would further increase to around 10 crore workers: a three-time increase over the membership in 2019. The available capacity of the hospitals and dispensaries would evidently be inadequate. The hope of 'underutilised hospitals' being made available to the informal sector is mere populist kite-flying.

There is another side to this picture. The ESI coverage follows the map of industrial growth in the country. Thus, in industrialised States like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, the ESI covered around 20% of the population as beneficiaries in 2016; the corresponding figure was just 0.7% for Bihar. Surely the possibility of scaling up coverage is a remote possibility in Bihar, given the very low base at present. It is not surprising that the granting of universal social security does

not seem to have figured big in the election rhetoric before the Bihar Assembly election. The political promises there are more basic – to provide jobs rather than job regulation.

While introducing the new codes, the government also did away with a number of existing cess-based welfare schemes. These included the Beedi Workers Welfare Board, covering an estimated five lakh home-based women workers. Even to this day, older beedi workers in the erstwhile South Kanara district of the Madras Presidency credit the education schemes available to them to the Board, which they say, enabled their children to escape the pernicious bind of poverty. The workers also had access to free dispensation in the hospitals run by the Board. With the new codes, the beedi workers will forego these facilities in exchange for an undefined promise of universal social security.

**Promise of minimum wage**  
The second claim for universal coverage was of the minimum wage. According to the Union Labour Minister, at present only around 30% of all workers get covered under the various minimum wage schedules. The government's remedy in the codes is to include a floor wage covering all workers. At various instances, the

Labour Minister announced a floor wage of ₹178 per day in 2019; and more recently the Finance Minister announced ₹202. This is only a little more than half the ₹375 per day recommended by the Labour Ministry's Expert Committee on Wage in 2019; and also lower than the poverty line family expenditure estimated by the government-appointed Rangarajan Committee in 2011, corrected for inflation. This 'floor wage' should more aptly be called the below poverty line, or BPL wage. It can only serve to pull down wages, far from shoring up the wage level.

The true colours of the government are clearly revealed. These codes, which also include various measures restricting the unions' right to strike and relax norms for factory closure, serve to improve the 'ease of doing business' ranking instead of improving the conditions of employment. The popular children's fairy tale, 'The Emperor's New Clothes', shows up the Emperor as wearing nothing. For the unorganised sector workers, the labour codes provide a similar story; a set of fairy tale promises that are nothing but a mirage.

Mohan Mani is a researcher with the Centre for Labour Studies at the National Law School India University; Babu Mathew is Professor and Director, Centre for Labour Studies at the National Law School India University

farmers and pass laws which could promote private players. Democracy requires the government to negotiate with the farmers. Repealing the laws would be real grassroots democracy. We have a Central Parliament and Central farm laws but the farmer, who is central to all this, is marginalised.

N.G.R. PRASAD,  
Chennai

Secretary-General has also said people have a right to protest peacefully and the authorities must allow them to do so. The government may try to silence foreign leaders and international organisations by saying this is India's internal matter, but it seems to forget that our own Prime Minister said in Houston, "Ab ki baar, Trump sarkar". The U.S. election too is that country's internal matter.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE,  
Paridahad

# The BJP's big ticket to Telangana

The party's solid gains in the Hyderabad civic polls lay bare the many failings of its key opponents



K. VENKATESHWARLU

Just about six years after the formation of Telangana, the BJP has arrived with a bang, capturing 48 of the 150 municipal divisions in the recent Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) election – from a mere four wins in the 2016 election – and garnering a sizeable vote share of 34.56%, which is 0.3% less than that of the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). The victory cannot be brushed aside as inconsequential, being one, after all, in a city civic election. It is significant in many ways. For the first time, the BJP has managed to challenge the near invincibility of the TRS, making it tough for the party to get its mayoral candidate elected. It has exposed the ephemeral nature of a strong regional sentiment. Riding on this Telangana sentiment, the TRS had won all the elections since the formation of the separate State in 2014.

Hyderabad is a mini-India seeped in cosmopolitan culture – a city treated as the heart of Telangana – encompassing as many as 25 Assembly segments (out of the total 119) and five Lok Sabha constituencies (of the total 17 in the State). If the BJP could effectively peddle its now-finely-tuned strategy of communal polarisation, sugarcoated as 'development agenda', in such a city, the fear is that it could extend it to the rest of the State by the next Assembly election scheduled for 2023, thus moving a step closer to its ambitious plan of expanding its footprint in south India, which has been eluding it, barring Karnataka.

**The AIMIM's policy**  
The BJP's performance in Hyderabad was matched by the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimneen (AIMIM), which retained its seat share in the council. The BJP's victories would not have come as a surprise to the AIMIM president and MP Asaduddin Owaisi, who had strongly opposed the formation of a separate Telangana on the ground that a smaller State



**Strong headway:** BJP supporters celebrating the GHMC election results at the party's office in Hyderabad on Friday. ■ G. RAMAKRISHNA

with a large Muslim population would be a fertile ground, sooner or later, for a party unabashedly espousing majoritarian rule.

The memorandum submitted by the AIMIM to the Srikrishna Committee, that was tasked with looking into the demand for a separate State, was quite revealing. "Our party is of the considered opinion that, in the ideal situation, the continuation of status quo, that is United Andhra Pradesh state, is in the overall interest of the minorities. The Muslims have issues and concerns with regard to the demand for separate statehood for Telangana because of apprehension regarding their safety, security and socio-economic well-being and welfare in a smaller state, more so because of the open hostility of the BJP and other constituents of the Sangh Parivar on the one hand and the deep-rooted animosity of the Left parties, on the other hand, towards them," Mr. Owaisi had said.

The AIMIM's opposition to a separate Telangana appears to be a paradox, given the fact that Telangana was part of a larger erstwhile Hyderabad State ruled by the Nizams, the last of whom, Mir Osman Ali Khan, was fully backed by the party in his attempt to keep the dominion intact and resist its integration into the Indian Union. The AIMIM knew that every episode in the turbulent history of the Hyderabad State would come in handy for the BJP to exploit, as is seen by the latter's demand for official celebration of September 17 as the Hyderabad Liberation Day (it was

on this day in 1948 that the Indian Army's action forced the Nizam's army to surrender, paving the way for the merger of Hyderabad into the Indian Union). This event was given a decent burial by the TRS after assuming power, though it kept demanding its official celebration all through the Telangana movement.

But what did the AIMIM do to counter the BJP? There is nothing much to show. The AIMIM continues to adopt a policy of being a perfect foil for the BJP, which earned it the "voter-cutter" sobriquet; it is happy protecting its exclusive Muslim constituency and targeting the Congress. Mr. Owaisi seems too busy projecting himself as the sole Muslim leader in India and expanding his party's base, rather than working on a well-coordinated strategy with secular parties to check the onward march of the BJP.

As in other elections across the country, the BJP's blatantly polarising campaign strategy for the GHMC polls was apparent with its Telangana State president and MP, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, making provocative rants like "surgical strike" on the Muslim-dominated Old City of Hyderabad, claiming that it has become a shelter for the Rohingya and Bangladeshis. He challenged Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao for a debate at Bhagyalaxmi temple, which controversially abuts Charminar, and asked him to come clean on the "hidden understanding" between the TRS and the AIMIM.

Ignoring the burning civic issues of a growing metropolis, all sorts of

divisive elements were marshalled with great emotive appeal to pepper its high-voltage campaign – quite in sync with the current dominant thinking among sections of the Indian middle classes. The arrival of a horde of BJP bigwigs, like Union Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, only added to the sting of its polarising campaign, with Mr. Adityanath claiming that only the BJP could change Hyderabad to 'Bhagyanagar'.

## TRS's sorry record

But one should understand that such a starkly communal campaign works in a situation where the failures of the government are galore. The recent floods in Hyderabad left a large section of people distraught and disappointed. The TRS government could neither prevent encroachment of lakes and *nalas*, nor did it reach out in time to people caught in the deluge. It also goofed up in extending flood relief of ₹10,000 to each family, as thousands did not get it. The government's mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic and its poor record in fulfilling the promises of building double-bedroom houses, providing jobs to youth and garnering revenue from the Layout Regularisation Scheme dented the TRS's vote share. Never to lose a chance, the BJP also included in its campaign armoury Mr. Rao's reluctance to go to the Secretariat, his frequent visits to his farmhouse, and his subtle projection of his son and Minister, K. T. Rama Rao, as "prince in waiting".

Politically, too, Mr. Rao made certain mistakes that he must be regretting now. All through his six years in office, he was virtually on a mission to decimate the principal Opposition parties, the Congress and the TDP, by poaching their MLAs. The BJP was not even on his radar as he perceived it to be too weak, while he kept cultivating the AIMIM. The weakening of the Congress and the TDP, that acted as a buffer, created a political vacuum, and being friendly to the AIMIM, it now seems, helped the BJP immensely. Unless Mr. Rao reworks his political strategy and focuses on checking the BJP, he may face a challenging time ahead.

K. Venkateshwarlu is a senior journalist based in Hyderabad

## FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

# Exhale the darkness

The Press Council's 'advisory' on foreign content is ill-considered and tantamount to a gag order



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

examining them and with zero consultations with news organisations, they would not have even abolished the Council. They felt that the Council will never surrender its shield-role. They felt that the Council, in a sense, exemplified the separation of powers. In order to implement the will of the Executive, the Council was abolished.

The advisory from the Council not only undermines the freedom of expression and the independent media, it also reveals how little thinking has gone into the process before issuing an advisory that is impossible to comply with. The term 'foreign' has a wide connotation, and it includes even international news agencies such as Reuters, the Associated Press and the Agence France-Presse. It also covers a range of news organisations with which many Indian newspapers and magazines have syndicated arrangements. The fact is, newsgathering is an expensive exercise. By having an international arrangement, a newspaper not only manages to defray the cost, but also fulfils its fundamental goal of informing its readers without being hampered by the resource crunch. The act of verification is central to any credible news organisation. The editorial assumption of an Indian newspaper, when it subscribes to or gets into a syndication arrangement with a foreign news organisation, is that the source agency has verified and authenticated an item before it is put out in the public domain. If a newspaper has the resources to verify and fact-check every statement put out by the agencies, it would very well, in the first place, have appointed more correspondents rather than depending on an external source. It is fair to say that the PCI's advisory has very little understanding of the political economy of the news gathering and news dissemination business.

In its wisdom, the Press Council of India issued an advisory that read, "The Press Council of India has considered references received from various quarters by the Government about the responsibility of Indian Newspapers in publishing foreign contents. The Council is of the view that unregulated circulation of the foreign content is not desirable. Hence, it advises the media to publish foreign extracts in Indian newspapers with due verification as the Reporter, Publisher and Editor of such newspaper shall be responsible for the contents irrespective of the source from which it is received."

**The Emergency years**  
Before addressing the stark nature of the advisory, it is important to understand the two roles assigned to the PCI: while it will remain a watchdog of journalistic ethics, it will also function as a shield to the freedom of the press. During the Emergency, the PCI was abolished and the Act that led to the constitution of the Council was repealed because the then government felt that the Council had taken the role of a shield to the freedom of press seriously. When the gory stories of Emergency's excesses and its onslaught on independent press came out, the Janata Government decided to re-convene the PCI, to protect the right to freedom of press. In fact, the then Information and Broadcasting Minister, Lal Krishna Advani, spoke at length about the need for an independent and unfettered press when he introduced the Bill to re-establish the Council.

If Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her Information Minister during the Emergency, V.C. Shukla, had known that the PCI would issue advisories on the basis of complaints received from the government, without fully

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

# True fiscal responsibility

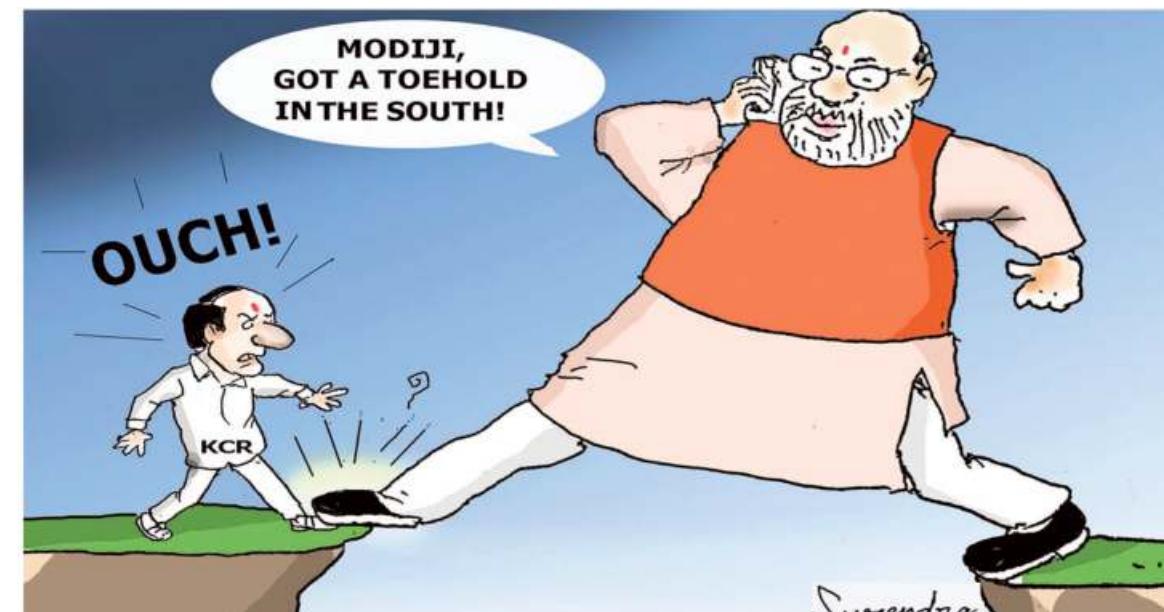
Slashing public expenditure amid a recession is a recipe for serious economic disaster

PULAPARE BALAKRISHNAN

The National Statistical Office (NSO) recently announced estimates of economic activity in the second quarter of the current financial year. As most of the first quarter coincided with the lockdown announced by the Central government, it would only have been expected that output would be depressed as production could not have taken place. And this is what happened. The GDP contracted by 23.9% in that quarter (compared to the same quarter of the previous year). However, there was no particular reason for assuming that we would see a contraction in the second quarter as well, but that is what we now find. Though the contraction has been less than both what it was in the previous quarter and what several sources had forecast, at 7.5%, it is still significant. Thus far, we have not had the V-shaped recovery predicted by the government's economists.

To have assumed a V-shaped recovery following the lifting of the Centre's lockdown would not have been wrong if output were determined entirely from the supply side under normal circumstances. Following this reasoning, output would remain depressed so long as the lockdown prevented production from taking place, but would spring back once these restrictions are removed. However, after they are lifted, we would return to a world in which output is determined by demand. This now introduces the possibility that output may not spring back, as investment may have actually declined post the lockdown. It would happen if depressed output causes private investors to hold their plans for the future and contract expenditure. A quarter is, after all, a very short period of time, and impulses in one may take effect only in the next.

**Telling figures**  
The NSO's press release makes speculation about investment behaviour unnecessary. We see in it that gross fixed capital formation at constant prices actually increased in Q2, indeed by a whopping 60%. It may be said that this was completely unanticipated, thus suggesting the prospect of growth in the future. Three other sources of expendi-



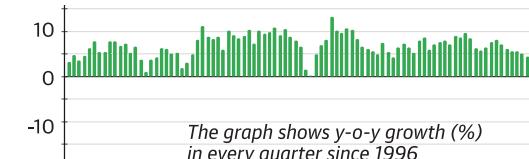
## DATA POINT

### Boom time for billionaires

Amid a raging pandemic and record levels of contraction in the economy, the riches of India's super-rich multiplied – in some instances by over three times. Between January and June this year, 85 new Indians were added to the High Net Worth Individuals list (net worth > \$50 million). Only the United States and China added more individuals than India, while the list shrunk in many other countries. By Sumanth Sen and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

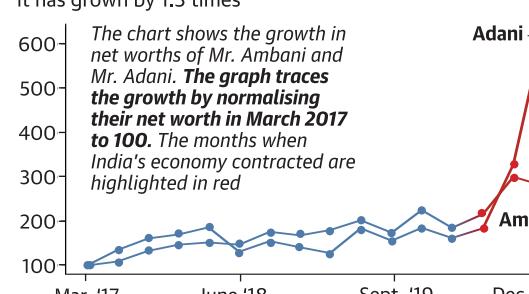
#### 1. ECONOMY IN RECESSION |

India's GDP contracted consecutively in the past two quarters – April to September 2020 – for the first time since at least 1996



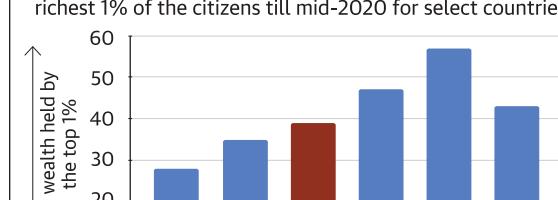
#### 2. RICHEST ON THE RISE |

While the economy was in recession, businessman Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani's net worths skyrocketed. Between Mar. 2017 and Dec. 2020, Mr. Adani's net worth grew over six times in size from \$5.37 billion to \$34 billion. Since June 2020, it has grown nearly 3.5 times. In comparison, Mr. Ambani's net worth grew over 2.8 times between Mar. 2017 and Dec. 2020, from \$26.6 billion to \$74.4 billion. Since June 2020, it has grown by 1.3 times



#### 3. STARK INEQUALITY |

About 39% of India's wealth belongs to the richest 1% of Indians, which is more than the share held by Chinese or American equivalents. The chart shows the share of a country's wealth held by the richest 1% of the citizens till mid-2020 for select countries



#### 4. HIGH NET WORTH INDIVID

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Support widens for Bharat Bandh call

Addressing a press briefing at Singhu (Delhi-Haryana border), he said the supply of vegetables, fruits and milk would be stopped during the bandh, but emergency services and wedding processions would be allowed.

The *chakka jam*, or road blockade, would end at 3 p.m., he added.

Mr. Singh said the farmers' unions were forced to intensify their stir since the Centre did not appear to take their demands seriously.

In a growing trend, Olympic boxer and Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna awardee Vijender Singh visited the Singhu border to extend support to the farmers and announced that he would return the

award if the farmers' demands were not met.

Swaraj India national president Yogendra Yadav also announced that all *mandis* in Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan would remain shut on December 8 and claimed that industry groups from Uttarakhand and Haryana had also pledged their support.

Welcoming a statement from the Editors' Guild of India, Mr. Yadav appealed to the media for "fair" reporting of the movement without attempts to defame it.

"We make an appeal to all to shun their flags and take part in the protests as farmers," said Mr. Yadav at the Singhu border and added that it has now become a "national movement".

A house-to-house survey was being taken up and the situation was under control,

the Minister said, adding about 170 were discharged.

Seven patients were rushed to Vijayawada for better treatment and their condition was stable, he added.

Medical teams from various hospitals in West Godavari and Krishna districts, staff of the ward secretariats,

Balakrishnaiah and other officials visited the government hospital.

## Helpline set up

Mr. Shukla said call centres had been set up at the Eluru municipal office. Residents may call 9154565529 or 9154592617 in case of an emergency. "GGH Superintendent A.V.R. Mohan and District Coordinator of Hospital Services Dr. Mohan Rao are monitoring the situation round the clock," said Mr. Shukla.

"Patients are complaining of giddiness and headache. The recovery rate is good and there is no need for panic," said District Medical and Health Officer Dr. Sunanda.

Unguturu MLA Vasu Babu, RDO Panabaka Rachana and Indian Red Cross Society chairman M. Jaya Prakash were among those monitoring the situation in the affected areas.

## IN BRIEF



Need for unity ahead of GP polls: Cong. leaders

BENGALURU

In their preparation ahead of the gram panchayat (GP) polls in Karnataka, Congress leaders have emphasised the need for unity, leaving aside personal ambition for power. The Congress will return to power if party leaders work with unity and cohesion, with the party's interests in mind, All-India Congress Committee general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, said on Sunday at a meeting ahead of the GP polls.

## BJP opposes distribution of house sites on Dec. 25

SRIKAKULAM The BJP has taken objection to the distribution of house sites to the poor on Christmas day in Andhra Pradesh. "Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is promoting a particular religion and the date chosen for the programme is a clear pointer to it," BJP in-charge of Etcherla Assembly constituency N. Eswara Rao told presspersons on Sunday. "The party has no objection to the distribution of house sites to about 26 lakh people. But the date chosen is objectionable," Mr. Eswara Rao said.

## Expressway work set to be inaugurated by PM

MYSURU Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to inaugurate work on the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway, a greenfield project that seeks to reduce travel time between the cities. Though the date for launch has not been finalised, Mysuru MP Pratap Simha said officials from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had already visited Bengaluru for an inspection of the project.

## 1 dead due to undiagnosed illness in A.P.

Over 315 admitted to hospital in Eluru; patients complain of headaches, epilepsy-like symptoms

**RAJAPUDI SRINIVAS**  
ELURU (WEST GODAVARI)

One person died and over 315 persons, including several women and children, were admitted to the Government General Hospital (GGH) at Eluru in Andhra Pradesh with an undiagnosed illness in the last couple of days.

The number of inpatients, which was 55 on Saturday midnight and 170 by Sunday morning, rose to 270 by evening and 315 by night. Unconfirmed reports said 50 more were undergoing treatment in various private hospitals. Patients developed dizziness, headaches and epilepsy-like symptoms.

Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas said Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had enquired about the situation in Eluru.

Medical teams from various hospitals in West Godavari and Krishna districts, staff of the ward secretariats,



Cause unknown: A woman being taken to a hospital at Eluru in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. ■ PTI

the Minister said, adding about 170 were discharged.

Seven patients were rushed to Vijayawada for better treatment and their condition was stable, he added.

Medical teams from various hospitals in West Godavari and Krishna districts, staff of the ward secretariats,

the patients are normal. COVID-19 tests were conducted for all the patients and the results were negative," doctors treating the patients said.

Collector Revu Mutyal Raju, SP K. Narayan Naik, Joint Collector Himanshu Shukla, senior civil judge D.

## Stage set for voting in Kerala local body polls

Parties take out rallies and roadshows in many places, but the usual sound and fury was missing

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



Side by side: Election committee offices of the LDF, the UDF and the BJP in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday. ■ S. MAHINSHA

Open campaigning in the five districts in Kerala, which go to polls in the first phase of the local body polls on Tuesday, ended on Sunday evening.

The customary 'Kottikasham', which marks the end of the open campaigning, was given a miss this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Political parties and candidates organised vehicle rallies and road shows in many places to mark the end of the campaigning at 6 p.m. on Sunday.

ing has shifted to the silent mode.

Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki districts, which go to the polls

on Tuesday, have 88,26,620 electors in all. Women voters number 46,68,209; men 41,58,341 and transgender voters 70. As many as 24,584 candidates are contesting in

the five districts, according to the State Election Commission.

The first phase has 11,225 polling stations. State Election Commissioner V. Bhaskaran appealed to political parties and candidates to cooperate with the Commission to organise free and fair elections. He urged voters to strictly observe the COVID-19 protocols in polling booths.

Thiruvananthapuram has

28,38,077 voters including 15,07,550 women, 13,30,503 men and 24 transgender persons. The district has 6,465 candidates in the fray and 3,281 polling stations.

Kollam has 22,22,770 voters including 11,81,236 women, 10,41,513 men and 21 transgender voters. The district has 5,723 candidates and 2,761 polling stations.

Pathanamthitta has 10,78,550 voters of whom 5,75,832 are women and 5,02,712 are men. There are also six transgender voters. The district has 3,699 candidates. Polling stations number 1,459.

Elections in the remaining districts will be held in the second and third phases on December 10 and December 14 respectively. Counting will be held on December 16.

## Memorial to Kadri Gopalanath dedicated at his birthplace

11-year-old disciple of saxophone maestro leads musical tribute

**RAVIPRASAD KAMILA**

SAJU MUNNUR

Eleven-year-old S. Tridhaat from Bengaluru, one of the youngest disciples of the late Kadri Gopalanath, saxophone maestro, was the first to pay a musical tribute to his 'guru' with the song *Pavaana guru* in the raga 'Hamsanandi', as a memorial to the musician who was thrown open at his birth place in Bantwal on Sunday.

The memorial, with a statue of the artiste holding a saxophone, was dedicated on Gopalanath's 71st birth anniversary about 35 km from

Mangaluru. The memorial is spread over 2,000 sq. ft, and has a garden.

A plaque in Kannada at

the memorial reads: "Music is a language which knows no boundaries of nation and dharma. It is a language of the heart."

Family members of the late Padma Shri awardee have constructed the memorial in their own land in Bantwal, where he had been buried more than a year ago.

The artiste, born on December 6, 1949, had passed away in Mangaluru on Oc-



Paying tribute: Manikanth Kadri (left), son of late Kadri Gopalanath, at the memorial in Bantwal. ■ H.S. MANJUNATH

tobr 11, 2019.

His son and music director Manikanth Kadri said the statue was made of 'Krishna

Shile' (black granite). Tridhaat, playing on a saxophone given to him by his guru, rendered the two in-

rathkal, played the guitar to pay his respects. "Mr. Gopalanath had fine-tuned my musical skills," he told *The Hindu*.

Tridhaat's father Sridhar Sagar, also a saxophone artiste and *Asthana Vidwan* (artist in residence) of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, said Gopalanath had brought the saxophone for his young disciple from the U.S. Tridhaat had learnt the basics of playing the saxophone from Gopalanath in 2014, when he was about seven-years-old, he told *The Hindu*.

K.S. Babu Narayan, a professor of civil engineering at the National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Su-

ratkal, played the guitar to pay his respects. "Mr. Gopalanath had fine-tuned my musical skills," he told *The Hindu*.

Porkodi Gopalakrishna Jogi, Gopalanath's first saxophone teacher, was felicitated on the occasion. Sarojini Gopalanath, the wife of the late artiste, was also present.

Mr. Manikant Kadri said there was a proposal to develop a cultural centre in Mangaluru in memory of the saxophone player.

It will be similar to Kalambandalam in Kerala. The cultural centre should be a place for teaching and learning various fine arts, folk dances and music.

## Hampi chariot can't be touched

ASI puts up barricade to protect the iconic structure

**STAFF REPORTER**

KALABURAGI



Protecting heritage: Authorities put the barricade around the stone chariot to protect it from visitors. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tourists can no longer get too close to the iconic stone chariot in front of the Vijaya Vitthal Temple at Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The architectural marvel, one of the most photographed monuments, has been cordoned off by a chain barricade by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The ASI on Saturday put up the barricade to prevent people from touching or climbing the monument and causing damage to it in any way.

P. Kalimuthu, Deputy Superintendent of ASI, Hampi, said the stone chariot was one of the most visited monuments in Hampi and needed extra protection.

"Every tourist visiting the site photographs the sensory monument and touches it. Some even climb it to take their photos with the monument. The protected monument is facing the risk of being damaged. Therefore, we had to put the barricade

around it," Mr. Kalimuthu said. Tourists can, henceforth, see and photograph the monument from a distance, he added. He clarified that there were no proposals presently before the ASI to barricade more monuments at the heritage site.

The proposal to install the barricade was in the pipeline for a long time now. There was some opposition from civil society when the ASI came forward to implement it in February this year.

The chariot inside the temple complex is a shrine dedicated to Garuda, but the sculpture of Garuda is now missing. The Hampi chariot is one among the three famous stone chariots in India, the other two being in Konark, Odisha, and Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu. The delicately carved chariot at Hampi, art historians say, reflects skill of temple architecture under the patronage of Vijayanagara rulers who reigned from 14th to 17th century CE.

## Expansion of Cabinet may be delayed

**STAFF REPORTER**

BENGALURU

The much-delayed exercise of reshuffling or expanding the Karnataka Cabinet is likely to be pushed to the new year, according to multiple sources in the ruling BJP.

The upcoming legislature session from Monday and the gram panchayat elections are now being cited as reasons for further delay of the exercise. Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa has been trying to reshuffle/expand his Cabinet since August.

However, Arun Singh, the new in-charge of BJP affairs in the State, carried no message from the party high command about the Cabinet reshuffle/expansion during his three-day visit to the State, sources said. "There is a growing feeling that a decision on the Cabinet issue has become intrinsically linked to the question of leadership change. Unless the high command takes a decision on that, Cabinet expansion is also not likely to be cleared," a senior party leader said.

## Animal adoption at a high in Bannerghatta

Over 200 animals have been adopted

**K.C. DEEPIKA**

BENGALURU

Despite job losses and pay cuts across multiple sectors due to the pandemic, the Bannerghatta Biological Park's (BBP) animal adoption programme received the highest ever response this year.

BBP Executive Director Vanashri Vipin Singh told *The Hindu* that as many as 179 people have adopted 211 animals this financial year, which is the highest ever. "The response that poured in during the pandemic has been overwhelming. Last year [FY 2019-20], 80 ani-

mals were adopted by 64 people, who donated ₹70,000. This year, 211 animals have been adopted by 179 people, who have donated ₹30,00,750. It is the highest so far, and the response has come from people all over the country and abroad, too," she said.

With the lockdown, the park's revenue had been hit severely. "Our expenditure is five times more than the adoption donations. But the programme was never meant to be a revenue generation model. Rather, it is aimed at connecting with people," she said.



I. Mahanpriya, aged 14 years, need your support to bring a new hope to my life. I suffer from B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and require Rs. 8,00,000 towards Chemotherapy. Address: Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Maduravoyal, Chennai - 600006. TFC No: 044-21374017. Email ID: womenwelfaresyndicate@gmail.com. Website: www.womenwelfaresyndicate.org.

## APPEAL

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. G/F, Conduits Apartments, O.N.O. 13, N. No. 29, Pycroft Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph. 044-21374017. 28235324/ 733897027. GOCID PAY favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT. (Please do not mention patient name on the cheque.)

CM YK

# 140 pleas against CAA hang fire

Supreme Court declined to stay implementation of the law in December 2019

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

Over 140 petitions challenging the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have been pending for nearly a year in the Supreme Court, leaving petitioners from various walks of life and across the political spectrum "deeply disappointed" over the delay.

"I am deeply disappointed, and the case should be taken up for hearing at the earliest," Jairam Ramesh, MP, one of the petitioners, told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

The last time the CAA case came up in court was on March 3 when Mr. Ramesh's lawyer, Kapil Sibal, made an urgent oral mention before the Chief Justice of India for a stay on the implementation of the law. He had said the case ran the risk of becoming infructuous.

The CJI had indicated referring the case to a Constitution Bench, but said the court might first hear the review petitions pending in the Sabarimala case. The court had asked Mr. Sibal to press for interim orders after the Holi vacation.

However, by March-end, the pandemic disrupted the physical functioning of the court. It was the third time the petitioners had sought a stay of the law.

In December 2019, the court declined a stay while asking the Centre to make an all-out effort to disseminate the actual legislative intent of the citizenship law. In January 2020, the court, to



Bone of contention: Women protesting against the CAA in Shaheen Bagh on March 16, 2020. — SANDEEP SAXENA

## Hoping for Act to be in force by Jan.: BJP general secretary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

Bharatiya Janata Party national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya on Sunday said he is hopeful of the implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act by January so that "refugees" who have come to West Bengal will get

some rights. "The BJP is a party which implements what it promises... The government will most probably give citizenship from January to all the refugees who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan because of religious persecution," he said.

another plea to stay the law, had said the CAA was "upmost in everybody's minds".

Communal riots and violence had rocked the national capital over the anti-CAA protests.

"Since the CAA has been unprecedented in many ways – be it the nature of amendment which strikes at the root of the Basic Structure of the Constitution or the protests it has evoked across the nation or the panic among the people that they will be driven out of the

country – it would be in the best interest of all that the Supreme Court hears the case at the earliest and put at rest these issues," advocate Haris Beeran, who represents the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), said.

Last December, the IUML filed the first petition in the Supreme Court against the CAA.

### Regional benches

P. Wilson, senior advocate and MP, who represents the DMK, said the pendency of the CAA case made a strong

argument for the establishment of regional Benches of the Supreme Court.

"The Supreme Court can take up and hear constitutional matters like the challenge to the CAA on a priority basis, while its regional Benches could deal with the other cases... The Supreme Court's own statistics shows 63,693 matters pending before it. There are a total 432 matters pending before its various Constitution Benches," Mr. Wilson said.

The CAA fast-tracks citizenship-by-naturalisation process for persons from six religious communities, other than Muslims, who have fled persecution from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The petitions against CAA have argued that a law that welcomes "illegal migrants" into India selectively on the basis of their religion, is against principles of secularism, right to equality and dignity of life enshrined in the Basic Structure of the Constitution.

The Union Home Ministry, however, described the CAA as a "benign" law which does not lead to expulsion, deportation or refoulement of illegal migrants.

It maintained that the CAA merely offers "amnesty" without hurting India's secularism. It relaxes the settled principles of Indian citizenship for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians persecuted in the "theocratic States" of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

# Groundswell of support for Punjab farmers

Government employees, lawyers, social workers and students extend support to the agitation



Telugu actor Vijayashanti to join BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Telugu actor Vijayashanti on Sunday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi and is likely to join the BJP on Monday.

Ms. Vijayashanti, who started her political career with the BJP in the 1990s, later joined the Telangana Rashtra Samithi and then the Congress. She resigned from the Congress after the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation results over the weekend.

BJP Telangana chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar and Minister of State for Home Affairs Kishen Reddy accompanied Ms. Vijayashanti to Mr. Shah's residence.

Politicians took money: Saradha MD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

Sudipta Sen, chairman and managing director of scam-tainted Saradha group of companies who is lodged in the Presidency Correctional Home, has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee alleging that several political leaders had taken large sums of money from him.

"It is painful to me to see that who are taking high money and actually cheat poor people are now joining BJP. I request the CBI and the State police for investigating the matter properly and necessary action may be kindly taken," the letter dated December 1 said.

The Superintendent of the Correctional Home had forwarded the letter to the authorities concerned.

Hundreds of insurance



People in Punjab's Sangrur town protesting against the Centre's farm laws and in support of the farmers' agitation. — VIKAS VASUDEV

employees under the banner of the Northern Zone Insurance Employees' Association, on Friday held a protest in Chandigarh to condemn the manner in which the Centre and the Haryana government allegedly tried to suppress the struggle of the farmers. "The Central government should accede to the demands of the protesting farmers for safeguarding Indian agriculture, our food security, to prevent artificial

food shortages and rise in prices of essential commodities," Rajeev Sehgal, divisional president of the association, said.

The Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana has also come forward to support farmers. Karanjit Singh, chairman of the council, on Sunday said under the new Acts, disputes would be heard by the sub-divisional magistrates or the additional district magistrates who were not trained

to hear litigation involving civil consequences.

"The disputes arising out of new enactments will involve commercial matters, Contract Act agreement and partnership matters which is under the purview of civil courts and therefore, barring the civil court jurisdiction is detrimental to the interest of lawyers," he said in a statement.

Mr. Singh said the council also supported the call of

# Environmental Crisis: A Grim Reality

The ongoing pandemic and unpredictable weather systems are signs of a planet in peril. Here's taking a look at climate change and its possible fallouts

unacademy

LET'S CRACK CSE

In association with THE HINDU GROUP

### Plastic pollution

As world consumerism continues to grow rapidly, so does plastic pollution.

In 65 years, from 1950 to 2015, plastic consumption increased from 2 to 419 million tonnes, out of which 11 million tonnes went directly into the oceans. This has been lethal to marine life and the ecosystem. If we don't rethink our practices it will cause untold damage to our environment.

### Food waste

About one-third, nearly 1.3 billion tonnes of food, is lost or wasted. Food waste and losses account for annual greenhouse gas emissions of 4.4 gigatons.

In a developing country like India, which already ranks poorly (94) in the Global Hunger Index, 40% of food waste occurs at the post-harvest and processing levels.

### Poor governance

Policy makers have for long been urged to strictly tax greenhouse

gas emitting activities and push for innovation of low-carbon procedures. One such practice is the implementation of the National Carbon Tax by countries like Europe, Japan, and Canada. The Paris Agreement states that countries need to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Since it is a voluntary agreement, there is a need for something more concrete.

Governments need to significantly expand support for green innovation. A study found that it would take until 2033 to stop global warming if all greenhouse gas emissions were halted in 2020. The time to act is now.



Sudarshan Gurjar  
Top Unacademy Educator  
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Scan to enroll for the free live class on Environmental Crisis in 2020 by Sudarshan Gurjar

# J&K administration seeks review of order on Roshni Act

In a U-turn, it files plea saying common people will suffer

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

This includes landless cultivators and individuals who are themselves residing in dwellings on small areas

PETITION BY J&K ADMINISTRATION

who are themselves residing in dwellings on small areas. They are unfortunately clubbed along with rich and wealthy land grabbers, who have obtained a title over state land through the provisions of the now struck Act," it said.

The government underlined the need to "distinguish between these two classes of people; the fact of being either a landless cultivator or the house holder with one dwelling in personal use."

It, however, called for a CBI investigation to focus on the design of legal and policy framework, changes with malafide intention to encroach public land and get possessory rights.

"This is submitted to allow the CBI to focus on influential and powerful people who defrauded the state," it pleaded.

The government's U-turn comes months after it chose not to contest the judgement.

In a number of lists made public, on the directions of the court, the government named senior politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen as "illegal occupants" of land, including lease land, and served them notices for eviction.

# Srinagar checkpoint attacked

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

A militant attack on a checkpoint in Srinagar left one policeman and one civilian injured on Sunday noon.

The attack took place at 12:06 p.m. when militants opened fire at Sagzaripora in Hawal area of Srinagar.

"One police personnel, identified as Farooq Ahmad Chopan, and a civilian, identified as Muneeb Ahmad Misger, a resident of Safakadal, sustained bullet injuries. The injured have been shifted to a nearby hospital, a police spokesman said. A hospital official described the health condition of the two as "stable". Police are working to establish the circumstances that led to the terror crime," said the spokesman.

At the other end of the State, Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader and former MLA Sushanta Ghosh, who had been for

# Two political homecomings in West Bengal ahead of election

Bimal Gurung, Sushanta Ghosh are back in the spotlight

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

West Bengal witnessed two homecomings on Sunday – one in south Bengal and one in north Bengal – of two prominent figures who had dominated the political landscape of the respective regions for several years.

Bimal Gurung of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) who has been in hiding after the Mamata Banerjee government slapped a number of cases against him during the 2017 agitation, including sections under the UAPA, returned to Darjeeling after over three years.

At the other end of the State, Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader and former MLA Sushanta Ghosh, who had been for



Bimal Gurung  
bidden by the law to enter Paschim Medinipur district returned to the district after eight years.

### Fight against BJP

Addressing a gathering at Siliguri, Mr. Gurung, who has shunned ties with the BJP, said that in the past 10 years, the party has done nothing for the people of the hills,

and urged them to teach it a lesson in the 2021 Assembly election.

Mr. Ghosh, who was arrested in 2011 after skeletons were recovered near his residence, was granted bail in February 2012, but was not allowed to visit the district. Speaking at a gathering in the presence of CPI(M) leader Sujan Chakraborty, he accused the Trinamool Congress government of slapping false cases against him.

"We have a vindictive government at the State which does not abide by any rule of law, and at the Centre, there is a terrible divisive force. We have to fight the 2021 Assembly polls and defeat both these forces," Mr. Ghosh said.

# Navy wants to join IAF in jet shopping

It wants to combine its multi-role carrier-based fighter procurement tender with that of the Air Force

DINAKAR PERI  
NEW DELHI

The Navy is looking to combine its tender to buy multi-role carrier-based fighter jets along with the Indian Air Force tender for 114 fighters that is under way. The idea follows a decision to cut down the number of jets to be procured as the Defence Research and Development Organisation has proposed indigenous development of aircraft.

"We have the MiG-29K operating from INS *Vikramaditya* and will operate from the Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC) I. To replace them, we have taken up a case for the multi-role carrier-borne fighters which we are trying to do along with the IAF," Navy chief Admiral Karambir Singh said last week.

**'Awaiting response'**  
"The Navy has approached the IAF, and we are awaiting their response," a Navy official said on condition of



Riding the waves: Naval aircraft on the deck of INS *Vikramaditya*. ■ REUTERS

anonymity.

On the Indian Navy's fighter procurement plans, Admiral Singh said the new development had been the twin-engine carrier-based deck fighter (TBDRF) which

the DRDO and the Aeronautical Development Agency had offered. He said they were working together to make sure that happens. It then "will have an indigenous deck-based fighter for

the Navy". Admiral Singh said many lessons had been learnt from the naval light combat aircraft-MKI programme such as the arrester hook and undercarriage, and more lessons were being learnt through the shore-based test facility in Goa.

"My hope is that the TBDRF would be able to enter service sometime in the early 2030s," he said

#### Cutting down numbers

In 2017, the Navy floated a Request for Information (RFI) to global fighter manufacturers, and the response is being evaluated. However, with the new jet under development and also factoring in budgetary constraints, the Navy is in the process of cutting down the number of fighters from 57 to 36. The final decision is awaited.

To further optimise the process, it is now looking to combine it with the IAF. However, it has to be seen how

this is taken forward as the IAF RFI was open to both single- and twin-engine fighters, while the Navy has a stated requirement for a twin-engine jet to operate on its carriers.

The Navy has 45 Russian MiG-29Ks and it had said earlier there would not be enough aircraft to operate from both carriers. The response to the RFI from Boeing with its F-18 Super Hornet and from Dassault Aviation with its Rafale jets are being evaluated. Both companies have said their jets can operate off the skip-jump of *Vikramaditya* and in future the IAC-I *Vikrant*.

#### U.S. visit

In fact, a Navy team was to visit the US Naval Air Station in Maryland early this year to witness a demonstration from Boeing on the compatibility of its F-18 Super Hornet take off and land from the decks of Indian carriers. However, the visit was deferred due to the pandemic.

# SII seeks emergency use nod for Covishield in India

It will pursue early availability with the help of ICMR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Serum Institute of India (SII) on Sunday became the first indigenous company to apply to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) seeking emergency use authorisation for the Oxford COVID-19 vaccine in the country, citing unmet medical needs due to the pandemic and in the interest of the public at large, official sources said.

The phase-3 clinical trial of the Oxford COVID-19 vaccine, Covishield, is being conducted by the Pune-based SII, co-sponsored by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), in various parts of the country in addition to clinical studies being carried out by Oxford-AstraZeneca in the UK and Brazil.

Based on phase 2 and 3 clinical trial results, the SII with the help of the ICMR,

# Pfizer first firm to seek DCGI nod for vaccine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Pfizer India became the first pharmaceutical firm to seek from the DCGI an emergency use authorisation for its COVID-19 vaccine in the country, after its parent company secured clearance in the U.K. and Bahrain.

The firm has sought permission to import the

vaccine for sale and distribution in the country, besides waiver of clinical trials on Indian population in accordance with the special provisions under the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019, sources said. Pfizer India has submitted an application on December 4 to the DCGI seeking emergency use authorisation, they said.

tained from the DCGI. Official sources, citing the SII application, said the firm had stated that data from four clinical studies, two in the U.K. and one each in Brazil and India, showed that Covishield is highly efficacious against symptomatic and severe infections.

## IN BRIEF



Veteran actor Ravi Patwardhan dead

Veteran actor Ravi Patwardhan, best known for starring in the Marathi show *Aggabai Sasubai* and 1980s Hindi films such as *Tezaab* and *Ankush*, died on Saturday following a massive heart attack, his elder son Niranjan Patwardhan said. He was 84. Ravi Patwardhan, was rushed to Jupiter Hospital in Thane after he complained of breathlessness. PTI

### Ex-Unitech chief, sons booked for bank fraud

NEW DELHI  
The CBI has registered a case against Unitech Limited, its managing director Ramesh Chandra, and his sons, Sanjay and Ajay, for allegedly cheating the Canara Bank of ₹198 crore. Mr. Chandra's sons were directors in the company, which had been dealing with the bank since 1971 and had availed itself of various credit limits under multiple-banking arrangement.

### I-T Dept allows revision of declarations

NEW DELHI  
Entities filing declarations under the direct tax dispute resolution scheme 'Vivad Se Vishwas' can revise them till tax authorities issue certificate mentioning details of tax arrears and the amount payable, the I-T Department has said. Issuing a set of FAQs on 'Vivad Se Vishwas' scheme, the Central Board of Direct Taxes also said the scheme cannot be availed when proceedings are pending before the Income Tax Settlement Commission. PTI

### FIR against 4 journalists for 'sting operation'

AHMEDABAD  
Police have registered an FIR against four journalists of a Gujarati newspaper for allegedly entering a police station in Rajkot to carry out a 'sting operation' and obstructing police personnel from conducting their duties, an official said. The journalists, three reporters and a photographer, entered the Rajkot taluka police station on the night of December 1. PTI

### Petrol, diesel prices hiked again

NEW DELHI  
Petrol price on Sunday was hiked by 28 paise per litre and diesel by 29 paise, the fifth straight day of increase in rates due to firming international oil prices. Petrol price in Delhi rose to ₹83.41 per litre from ₹83.13. Diesel rates went up from ₹73.32 to ₹73.61 per litre, according to a price notification of oil marketing companies. Rates crossed ₹90-mark for petrol and ₹80 in case of diesel in Mumbai. This is the fifth straight day of price hike and the 14th increase in rates since November 20. PTI

## Ahead of Assam polls, AGP puts on a show of strength

Party is facing a challenge from new regional entities

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

A "new-look" Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) on Sunday put up a show of strength in the race to be the most bankable regional party in Assam.

The AGP had been feeling the heat after the birth of at least four regional parties this year, primarily because of the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act movement.

The most potent of these is said to be the Assam Jatiya Parishad, formed by the same students' organisations that had sired the AGP, a minor partner in the BJP-led government in Assam.

But AGP president and Assam Agriculture Minister Atul Bora shrugged off the challenge, alluding to the "huge turnout" at its "national unity convention" at Bokhata in eastern Assam,



More mileage: Assam Gana Parishad supporters taking out a bike rally on Sunday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the headquarters of the Kaziranga National Park. Bokhata is also a key Assembly constituency represented by Mr. Bora.

"The upcoming election will show that the people's sentiments are with AGP. Challenge from others for the space of regionalism will make us stronger," he told *The Hindu*.

"The AGP, keeping in

mind the people's desire for change, has opened up to all communities who have made Assam their home and are Indians as defined by the Constitution," Mr. Bora said.

The AGP event, the largest in a series to position the party as regional with a national face, drew almost top leaders including ministers Keshab Mahanta and Phani Bhushan Choudhury.

The agency, in coordination with the Coast Guard, seized 217.8 kg of heroin off the Gujarat coast. The seizure involved a daring mid-sea operation and chase involving two high-speed boats and an aircraft of the Coast Guard. Six Pakistani nationals were arrested.

Last financial year, an increase in the seizure of precursor chemicals was noticed. From the previous year's catch, the seizure

## Major drug seizures from 4 States

DRI report names Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu

DEVESHE K. PANDEY  
NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu accounted for most of the drug seizures during 2019-20. The annual report of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence said 72 seizures of substances covered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act were made across India.

In 2018-19, most seizures were reported from Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Assam.

The agency, in coordination with the Coast Guard, seized 217.8 kg of heroin off the Gujarat coast. The seizure involved a daring mid-sea operation and chase involving two high-speed boats and an aircraft of the Coast Guard. Six Pakistani nationals were arrested.

Last financial year, an increase in the seizure of precursor chemicals was noticed. From the previous year's catch, the seizure

amount of alprazolam/zolpimadol increased from 40 kg to 130 kg. About 143 kg of methamphetamine was seized against close to 126 kg in 2018-19.

There was a substantial increase, from a little above 12 kg to about 58 kg, in mephedrone seizures, while nearly 550 kg of ephedrine was intercepted.

Following a crackdown on syndicates smuggling tramadol, there was a steep decline in its seizures from

such psychotropic substances are mostly prevalent in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu," the report said.

These States have a large base of small and medium chemical and pharma industries "which can be easily used by drug cartels to manufacture such illicit drugs". The northeastern States face the problem of synthetic drugs due to their borders with Myanmar, which is one of the major producers, especially methamphetamine.

Based on a specific intelligence, the DRI officials in Chennai had intercepted a consignment of over 1.37 lakh tablets, including alprazolam, being exported to the U.S. in the guise of herbal/ayurvedic medicines.

The agency also located an international call centre in Jaipur, being run by an accused, which had been set up to book orders of tablets like alprazolam and tramadol from buyers in the U.S.

## Plea to declare emergency unlawful

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled on Monday to hear a 94-year-old widow who wants the Emergency proclaimed in 1975 to be "wholly unconstitutional".

Veera Sarin said she and her family were victims of the excesses of that "grave and dark period of our nation's history". A three-judge Bench led by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul will hear the petition represented by advocates Ananya Ghosh and Neela Gokhale.

Their gold jewellery and diamond business based in Karol Bagh and Connaught Place in the National Capital were plundered by the government authorities during the Emergency, when civil rights and liberties were suspended.

Her husband never recovered from the shock of the family business going under. He was slapped with cases, they were threatened by the police and their family properties were raided repeatedly. One of the cases foisted against her husband, H.K. Sarin, under the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act of 1976 continued from 1975 to 2014 until the Delhi High Court declared it a "nullity".

Even then, it took another three years, on July 28 this year, to get a partial compensation for the government's "illegal possession" of their properties.

### Winter crop



Harvest in the mist: Villagers carrying the paddy harvest to their homes near the Deomali hill ranges in Koraput district of Odisha on Sunday. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

## Madhya Pradesh readies to treat 1 lakh malnourished children

State will deploy community management to overcome gaps

JAGRITI CHANDRA  
NEW DELHI

The Madhya Pradesh government is preparing to deal with a likely surge in children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), by chalking out a strategy to cater to 1 lakh such children by

emphasising community-led efforts to overcome shortcomings in health infrastructure, a government official said.

"Going by the prediction models, in the most optimistic scenario, the State should be gearing to create supportive mechanisms for over 1 lakh SAM cases just before the lockdown the number of SAM cases was hovering around 81,000. We have already identified 77,681 SAM children and 467 MAM (moderate acute malnutri-

tion) children after our monitoring activities resumed once the lock down lifted," Swati Meena Nayak, Director, Women and Child Development for M.P., said in an e-mail interview. She said the government expected to identify the remaining approximately 22,000 children by December-end.

"The State has a capacity of treating nearly 3,500 children through facility-based management. With COVID-19 protocols in place, we were at 50% of operational capacity and were staring at a daunting task," the official said.

The government then de-

cided to launch a strategy focused on nutritional care and rehabilitation of vulnerable children on the basis of a pilot project run by UNICEF in a block in Hoshangabad district. This would involve identifying children suffering from anaemia, low birth weight, deprivation of essential nutrients and micronutrients.

The scheme is being implemented under the programme Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM).

The community manage-

ment treatment includes identification of vulnerable children, community supervised feeding and monitoring of the health status, and forming mothers' groups as well as those of adolescent girls to assist frontline workers in spreading awareness within the community.

Incentives are also planned for various stakeholders such as village and health sanitation committees, SHGs, frontline workers, and families of SAM children.

The community manage-

# Trump challenges vote results at rally

He urges supporters to vote for a pair of Republicans in a runoff poll that will determine Senate majority

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
VALDOSTA

President Donald Trump is pressing his grievances over losing the presidential election, using a weekend rally to spread baseless allegations of misconduct in last month's voting in Georgia and beyond even as he pushed supporters to turn out for a pair of Republican Senate candidates in a runoff election in January.

"Let them steal Georgia again, you'll never be able to look yourself in the mirror," Mr. Trump told rallygoers.

Mr. Trump's 100-minute rally before thousands of largely maskless supporters came not long after he was rebuffed by Georgia's Republican Governor in his astounding call for a special legislative session to give him the State's electoral votes, even though President-elect Joe Biden won the majority of the vote.

The January 5 Senate runoffs in Georgia will determine the balance of power in Washington after Mr. Biden takes office. Republicans in the State are worried that Mr. Trump is stoking so much suspicion about Georgia elections that voters will think the system is rigged and decide to sit out the two races.

The latest attempt to subvert the presidential election



In denial: President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania at a rally in Valdosta, Georgia, on Saturday. ■ AFP

results continued Mr. Trump's unprecedented campaign to undermine confidence in the democratic process, but overshadowed his stated purpose in traveling to Georgia – boosting Senators David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler.

Republicans need one victory to maintain their Senate majority. Democrats need a Georgia sweep to force a 50-50 Senate and position Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris as the tiebreaking vote. Party officials had hoped the President would dedicate his energy to imploring supporters to vote in the runoff, when Mr. Perdue and Ms. Loeffler try to hold off Democrats Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, respectively.

Mr. Trump did echo Republicans' rhetoric that the races amounted to "the most important congressional runoff, probably in American history." That is only true because he lost.

But after Air Force One landed, it quickly became apparent that Mr. Trump was intent on airing his own complaints and stoking baseless doubts about the conduct of last month's vote, rather than boosting his party.

## Fight for Trump'

"I want to stay on presidential," Mr. Trump said minutes into his speech. "But I got to get to these two." He praised the GOP lawmakers, Mr. Perdue for his support for military spending and Ms. Loeffler for pushing for early

coronavirus relief spending. But he quickly pivoted back to his own defeat.

Mr. Trump pulled out a piece of paper and read a list of his electoral achievements, including falsely asserting he won Georgia and the White House. Mr. Biden carried the state by 12,670 votes and won a record 81 million votes nationally. Mr. Trump continued to reiterate his unsubstantiated claims of fraud, despite his own administration assessing the election to have been conducted without any major issues.

Chants of "Fight for Trump" drowned out the two senators as they briefly spoke to the crowd.

Brian Kemp, Governor of Georgia, in a tweet, said Mr. Trump also asked him to order an audit of signatures on absentee ballot envelopes in his State, a step Mr. Kemp is not empowered to take because he has no authority to interfere in the electoral process on Mr. Trump's behalf.

Mr. Trump, though, vented his frustrations with Mr. Kemp on Twitter and at the rally.

"Your people are refusing to do what you ask," he complained in a tweet, as if speaking with Mr. Kemp. "What are they hiding? At least immediately ask for a Special Session of the Legis-

lature. That you can easily, and immediately, do."

At the rally, he took aim once again at Mr. Kemp, saying he could assure him victory "if he knew what the hell he was doing."

Mr. Trump's personal contact with the Governor demonstrated he is intent on amplifying his conspiratorial and debunked theories of electoral fraud even as Georgia Republicans want him to turn his focus to the runoff and encourage their supporters to get out and vote.

## Certified race

In his tweet, Mr. Kemp said: "As I told the President this morning, I've publicly called for a signature audit three times (11/20, 11/24, 12/3) to restore confidence in our election process and to ensure that only legal votes are counted in Georgia."

While the Governor does not have the authority to order a signature audit, an audit was initiated by Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and it triggered a full hand recount that confirmed Mr. Biden's victory in Georgia.

The race has been certified for Mr. Biden and affirmed by the State's Republican election officials as a fairly conducted and counted vote, with none of the systemic errors Mr. Trump alleges.

# Last-ditch effort to save Brexit trade talks from failure

U.K. negotiator in Brussels for dialogue with EU counterpart

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BRUSSELS

British and EU negotiators embarked on probably their final two-day scramble to secure a post-Brexit trade deal on Sunday, after failing for eight months to reach agreement.

David Frost arrived in Brussels for more talks with EU counterpart Michel Barnier, ending a two-day pause after a fruitless week of late-night wrangling in London.

"We're working very hard to try to get a deal. We'll see what happens in the negotiations today," Frost told reporters as he arrived at the Gare de Midi train station in Brussels.

A European official said the negotiators would meet later in the day at the EU's Berlaymont headquarters in Brussels and that talks could go on late.

Meanwhile, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson will reportedly lobby European leaders, after a call with EU chief Ursula von der Leyen on Saturday ended with the sides still facing "significant differences" on the key issues.

The pair's next call will be on Monday evening and then the 27 EU leaders will



David Frost

won an election touting what he claimed was an "oven ready" Brexit deal.

The U.K. is bound to the EU's tariff-free single market until a post-Brexit transition period expires the end of the year – an immovable deadline by which time the two sides must try to agree on new terms of their future relationship.

"We're going to continue to work on these negotiations, until there's no point in doing so any further," British Environment minister George Eustice told Sky News.

Without a deal, the bulk of cross-Channel trade will revert to World Trade Organization terms, a return to tariffs and quotas after almost five decades of close economic and political integration.

Mr. Johnson has insisted Britain will "prosper mightily" whatever the outcome of the talks, but he will face severe political and economic fallout if he cannot seal a deal.

"If there is no deal now, I see huge international implications... because we would be in an economic war with Europe that would cost us very dearly," former Labour PM Gordon Brown said.

# China makes preparations for rollout of vaccines

One million receive experimental dose

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
TAIPEI

might be too complex for them to be used there. However, China said it will ensure the products are affordable for developing countries.

China National Pharmaceutical Group, known as Sinopharm, said in November it applied for final market approval for use of its vaccine in China.

Others have been approved for emergency use on people deemed at high risk of infection.

"We must be prepared for large-scale production," said Vice Premier Sun Chunlan, who has overseen much of the country's response, during a visit on Wednesday to developers, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Ms. Sun visited one of Sinopharm's Beijing subsidiary companies; another producer, Sinovac, and a research lab under the National Medical Products Administration, a regulatory agency that approves medical products for public use.

The government has yet to say how many people it plans to vaccinate.

Ms. Sun said plans call for vaccinating border personnel and other high-risk populations this month.

## They gathered outside the Indian High Commission



Beyond borders: Protesters gathering outside the Indian High Commission in central London on Sunday. ■ AFP

It soon became clear that the gathering was led by anti-India separatists who had taken the opportunity of the protests in India to ostensibly back the farmers in India but use the opportunity to pursue their own anti-India agenda," the spokesperson said.

The High Commission reiterated the government's stance that the protest against agriculture reform bills in India is part of an internal democratic process.

The protest comes after a group of 36 British MPs led by British Sikh Labour MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi had written to U.K. Foreign Se-

cretary Dominic Raab, asking him to make representations to his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar on the impact on British Punjabis of the demonstrations by farmers in India.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has said that while it is yet to receive the letter, the matter is an internal issue for India. The police handling of protests are a matter for the government of India, an FCDO spokesperson said.

Thousands of farmers are protesting on borders of Delhi since November 26, seeking repeal of new farm laws.

## Voting opens for Venezuela Assembly poll

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
CARACAS

Polling in Venezuela opened on Sunday to elect members of the National Assembly in a vote championed by President Nicolás Maduro but rejected as a fraud by the nation's Opposition politicians.

Mr. Maduro seeks to pack the Assembly with members of his United Socialist Party of Venezuela, capturing the last government institution out of his reach. Critics say doing so will smother the last remnants of democracy in Venezuela.

An Opposition coalition led by U.S.-backed politician Juan Guaidó is boycotting the vote.

International bodies like the EU have refused to send observers to Sunday's election, saying the conditions for a democratic process don't exist.

Government of Rajasthan  
Commissionerate of Horticulture, Pant Krishni Bhawan, Jaipur  
Tel. No. 0141-2227606; E-mail:jdh.ext.hort@rajasthan.gov.in

Dated:01-12-2020

Bid Ref. No.: F(I) CH/PMKSY-MI/BID/Auto/2020-2021/3028

UBN: HOR2021GLRC0095

NIB Code : HOR2021A0109

Notice Inviting E-Bid

Sealed Tenders are invited for the following work:

1. Fabrication of Structural Steel Dome for Kodaikanal Tunnel Telescopic Roof at Kodaikanal Observatory, IIA, Kodaikanal- Tender Notice No.: 41/IIA/CIVIL/KSO/KODAIKANAL/2020-21 dated 07.12.2020.

Detailed Tender Document can be downloaded from Institute's Website www.iap.res.in/tenders.htm. Last date for receipt of bid is 07.01.2021 at 1500 hours.

Administrative Officer

Name of the Work	Rate contract for supply of water soluble fertilizers and automation items along with implementation of fertigation, foliar fertigation and micro irrigation automation program on behalf of farmers on their field in Rajasthan
Cost of Bid Document	Rs. 1000/- (Rupees One Thousand Only)
Processing Fee	Rs. 1000/- (Rupees One Thousand Only)
Bid Cost (Approximate Cost) and Bid Security	Item / Work Bid Cost (Rs.) Bid Security (Rs. in Lac)
Supply of WSF and technical support to farmers for Fertigation	1135.00 22.70
Supply of WSF and technical support to farmers for Foliar Fertilization	77.00 1.54
Supply of Automation Items and technical support to Farmers for micro Irrigation Automation	80.00 1.60
Date & Time of Pre-bid meeting	11.12.2020 AT 11.00 AM
Bid Submission end Date / Time	23.12.2020 up to 2.00 PM
Detailed bid document, Corrigendum's, Addendums etc may be seen and downloaded from Websites	<a href="http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in">http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in</a> <a href="http://horticulture.rajasthan.gov.in">http://horticulture.rajasthan.gov.in</a> <a href="http://www.sppr.rajasthan.gov.in">http://www.sppr.rajasthan.gov.in</a>

(Yog Mitra Singhdeo)  
Commissioner Horticulture  
Rajasthan, Jaipur

# 'Microwave energy likely made U.S. officials ill'

Report comes after U.S. personnel in Cuba, China suffered from unknown illness

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON

A new report by a National Academy of Sciences committee has found that "directed" microwave radiation is the likely cause of illnesses among American diplomats in Cuba and China.

The study commissioned by the State Department and released on Saturday is the latest attempt to find a cause for the mysterious illnesses that started to emerge in late 2016 among U.S. personnel in Havana.

The study found that "directed, pulsed radio frequency energy appears to be the most plausible" explanation for symptoms that included intense head pressure, dizziness and cognitive difficulties. It found this explanation was more likely than other previously considered causes such as tropical disease or psychological issues. The study did not name a source for the energy



Mystery unlocked: Cuban officials make a presentation on the illnesses suffered by U.S. diplomats in Havana. ■ AP/FILE

and did not say it came as the result of an attack, though it did note that previous studies on the illnesses, some of which are classified.

"The committee found these cases quite concerning, in part because of the plausible role of directed, pulsed radiofrequency energy as a mechanism, but also because of the significant suffering and debility that has occurred in some of these individuals," said committee chairman David Rel-

man, a professor of medicine at Stanford University. "We as a nation need to address these specific cases as well as the possibility of future cases with a concerted, coordinated, and comprehensive approach."

The health effects were experienced by about two dozen Americans affiliated with the U.S. Embassy in Cuba as well as Canadian diplomats and personnel at the U.S. consulate in Guangzhou, China, in early 2017.

Some of the Americans have been critical of the U.S. government's response to their health complaints and at least one has filed suit against the State Department.

Between late 2016 and May 2018, several U.S. and Canadian diplomats in Havana complained of health problems from an unknown cause. One U.S. government count put the number of U.S. personnel affected at 26.

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In this month of giving, we bring you heartwarming stories of unconditional love

# Love doesn't count chromosomes

SOMA BASU

## The bright side of life

"Norah is considered a disabled person because of her genetic condition. In her disability I see so many abilities that outnumber mine, an able person. She has taught me to see a new world where you see abilities with a whole new frame of reference."

On December 3, the International Day of People with Disability, this was Instagram-influencer mom Pooja Khanna-Mittal's post about her three-year-old daughter Norah, who has Down Syndrome (DS).

When her daughter was born six weeks premature in Mumbai's Hinduja Hospital on July 2, 2017, she felt something was amiss. The staff did not offer the usual cake and candle light dinner given to all new



## WELLNESS ON THE SHELF

### Skin soft

Bare Anatomy has brought out personalised skincare kits to suit Indian skin, consisting of multi-tasking products for complete care. The new range is for a three-step skincare regimen, consisting of a deep pore cleansing facewash, intense hydrating moisturiser, and an overnight restorative cream. With ingredients such as salicylic acid, hyaluronic acid, resorcinol, peptides, fruit enzymes and lactic acid, the kits are customised to each skin type. You can choose your kit after you input your skin type, problems, goals as well as lifestyle conditions such as diet, age, and location into a skin analysis quiz.

Available at [bareanatomy.in](http://bareanatomy.in); ₹2,250



### Hair now

The Earth Collective's blend boxes for hair health are available in three variants, to suit different hair types. Each contains a hair cleanser and a conditioner, both 100 ml. The nourishment blend has goji berry, brahmi and alfalfa to bring back the bounce in your hair. The moisture blend is for those with dry and damaged hair, and contains a combination of honey, centella and mandarin. The detox blend is for those looking for a non-greasy formula to revitalise oily hair. It uses kaffir lime, jojoba and grapefruit. The volumising blend has been created to strengthen the hair using a combination of hops, capsicum, and ginseng.

Available at [theearthcollective.in](http://theearthcollective.in); ₹1,150



### Yes to yoga

Shakti Warrior has launched its new collection of yoga mats made using natural tree rubber and hemp. They are free from phthalates, latex, toxic glue, silicone, PVC and chlorine, and come with extra rubber cushioning for a better floor grip. The mats have microfibre suede, made from recycled plastic bottles, bonded to natural tree rubber. The microfibre suede top is to avoid plastic ending up in landfills.

Available at [shaktiwarriorshop.com](http://shaktiwarriorshop.com); ₹2,490

**CMYK**



Norah and Pooja's Instagram account now has over 20k followers ■ FALGUNI KHARWA



## Opening a different door

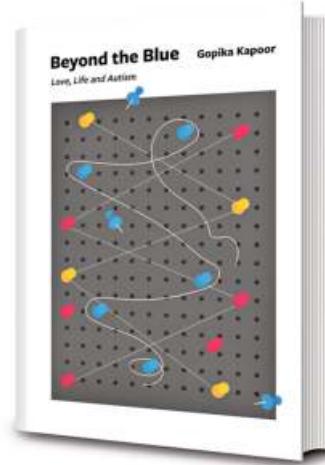
Gopika Kapoor has just written *Beyond the Blue: Love, Life and Autism*, about her experiences over the years after her child was diagnosed with the condition at age 3. She began writing at the beginning of lockdown this year as her son Vir, now 15, started showing signs of independence. "He makes his bed, irons his clothes, goes out shopping for small things, fights and makes-up with his twin sister," says Gopika, adding that these "mark significant steps towards an upward climb".

It has been quite a journey though. "We were shattered for years. How Elisabeth Kubler-Ross defines the five stages of grief, I went through denial, anger, bargaining, depression before accepting that every child is born with the ability to learn; only what and how much depends on the child," says Gopika.

She is thankful for therapy and acknowledges that she is one of the privileged few to get it, speaking of it as being important for both the child living with autism and for the parents and siblings. Parents are the first therapists in an informal and less structured way, she says. The book is raw and honest and Gopika says while she started writing for parents of children with autism, it evolved into a larger canvass. "I hope everybody reads it to make the world more inclusive because when bringing up children with developmental disability, our equations constantly change with people: those who help us and those who feel uncomfortable in the presence of our children," she adds.

Gopika first volunteered with the autism intervention team at Ummeed Child Development Center, a Mumbai-based NGO and rose to lead therapist and master trainer. She quit the job this January to write the book to tell the world how her training helped her to raise Vir.

"I have realised life is different and difficult, but not bad, and writing about anecdotes and incidents that made me happy, angry or unsupported was very cathartic," she says.



## Understanding Neuro-diversity

Dr Nandita De Souza, Director, Developmental and Behavioural Paediatrician at Sethu Centre For Child Development and Family Guidance, Goa, tells why the focus is now on neurodiversity rather than disability. Excerpts from a conversation:

### What is a simple definition of developmental disability?

• It is a manifestation of brain dysfunction that can affect lifelong cognitive functioning, communication skills and behavioural pattern. Like food, Nature, culture, human beings too have diversity. The fragile X chromosome is responsible for this neurodiversity and can lead to autism, Down Syndrome, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

### How do we relate to those who are neurodiverse?

• In your hands all your fingers are not the same but you know how to use them together. Likewise those with the condition should be integrated because they are no less, only their pace of grasping and doing things is slower than neuro-typical individuals.

Be patient with them and behave the same as you would with others. If somebody is unable to say hello to you, it doesn't mean you will not say hi. Or just say hello and move on naturally, instead of staying on to sympathise.

Human connect is the best cure for every condition, so give a hug as human touch heals better. Kneel down to their height to keep eye contact with them while speaking.

Schools are the best places for early intervention. Children can share food or observe what neurodiverse children enjoy the most.

### What can we do to help a developmentally disabled family member at home?

• Empower yourself with information and knowledge. Parents are the key to successful therapy. Do not be over-protective about them; rather allow them to experience different emotions.

Break into their comfort zone to make them flexible and independent. It is natural for every parent to worry about their child's future. Sibling bonding and networking within the community should be strengthened.

### How do development paediatricians (DPs) help in better treatment?

• There are about 100 of us in the country trained by the Indian Academy of Paediatrics. Medical paediatricians are bogged down by the lack of time and treating common ailments.

DPs are trained to recognise neurodevelopmental conditions. With a wider focus, they help to build the right support team around the child and child-specific skills; and collaborate with different stakeholders for better parenting of these children.

Early recognition of symptoms of speech delay, behavioural problems, sensory processing, intellectual disability by them leads to better awareness, early diagnosis and treatment.

## EXERCISE AT HOME

# Do the heavy lifting

Incorporate sandbags in your workout routine to help gain strength and build muscle

NISHA VARMA

A sandbag, like its name suggests, is filled with sand. It looks like an overstuffed gym bag, with multiple handles for executing different exercises.

You can add one to your home gym for variety and challenge. Inexpensive and maintenance free, they cost upwards of ₹1,500, depending on the weight and the brand. Try 5 kilograms for dynamic strength exercises, and 10 kilograms for static exercises.

Incorporating a sandbag into your routine will help you gain strength, hypertrophy (depending on the weight used and routine planned), a stronger core, and functional fitness.

A warm up is a must. Do cardio for 15 minutes, followed by a mobility routine, to warm up the shoulders, hips, lower back and arms.

All the regular gym exercises can be done with the sandbag but the functional exercises are a bit more challenging. Post workout stretches are a must.



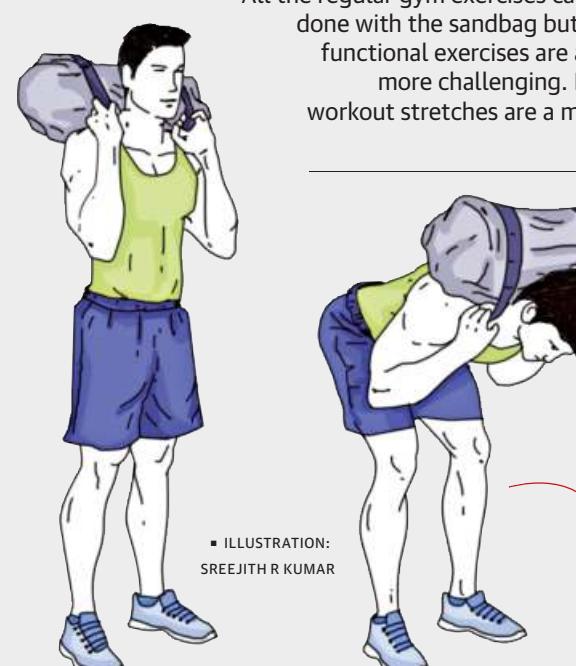
### BEFORE YOU BEGIN, REMEMBER...

Never neglect the warm up and cool down

Get used to the equipment before going into advanced moves

Stop the exercise if it makes you dizzy or places stress on any joint

Keep the lower back in neutral position and avoid hiking your shoulders towards the ears or pitching your chin forward, in any exercise



## Squat with good morning

The 10 kilogram sandbag is carried over the shoulders and held in place using the handles. Squat with feet shoulder width apart following it up by a good morning for the back (finishing with your torso nearly parallel to the ground.) Repeat slowly, at least 16 to 20 times, for the full benefit of both the exercises. This will strengthen the lower body and the lower back.



## Sandbag run

Hug the 10 kilogram sandbag close to your chest and jog a 100 meters. Stop for 15 seconds and repeat 10 times. This exercise provides good cardio and strengthens the core. It also builds functional fitness and dynamic stability of the lower back, upper back, chest and shoulders.

## Sandbag throws

Hold a 5 kilogram sandbag firmly with both hands and fling it as far as you can. Run across and throw it back. Repeat 10 to 20 times. Good for exercising the arms and chest.

Nisha Varma is an ACSM-certified exercise physiologist. This is a monthly column with exercises for a home workout.

# 'Tenet' is wonderful escapism'

Elizabeth Debicki on how shooting *Tenet* demanded both emotional and physical investments for her central role, and why Christopher Nolan is a masterful storyteller

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

*Tenet* is truly a 'Nolan baby' inside-out, more so than his other reality-bending films such as *Memento*, *The Prestige*, and *Inception*. But time wound up for the film's release, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Having been released in the US and the UK in September, the IMAX-shot film is now running in theatres across India.

The film stars Aussie actor Elizabeth Debicki (*The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*) as Kat, an expert in art curation and restoration who becomes integral to the Protagonist (John David Washington) and Neil's (Robert Pattinson) mission to save the world from an apocalyptic temporal war, enforced by Russian oligarch Sator (Kenneth Branagh).

**Theatrical value**

Elizabeth's scenes were shot in various parts of the world including Estonia, Vietnam and London, but she missed out on shooting in Mumbai. She still says, over a call from her home

in Australia, that "*Tenet* having a release in India warmed my heart because I'm so proud of this film. When Chris [Nolan] and Warner Brothers said they would release it this year, I remember thinking this is exactly what people need right now because *Tenet* is wonderful cinema and escapism, in a meta way. It has made me more aware of what cinema can do for people, in a time of 'drought'."

The announcement of *Tenet* having a theatrical release surprised the entertainment world, but those close to Nolan know of his tenacity. The 30-year-old, aware of the pandemic-induced restrictions experienced by the theatre and entertainment industries, sees it both ways.

"[The theatrical release decision] reinforced something I know about Chris," she elaborates, "In that he is a remarkable, auteur filmmaker who exists, in my opinion, in his own space. But I also know how much Chris' and Emma Thomas' (*Tenet*'s producer and Nolan's wife) dedication to and love for the art form are so pure and



real. They will be the ones who constantly go to the cinema and understand that *Tenet* is to be watched on a big screen and communally, with the sound and the colour. He understood that, even though we are in difficult times en global masse, if there was a way for people to go safely and still have cinema feed their souls, he would encourage that. I respected that approach."

When *Tenet* entered pre-production in 2018, the world got to know, headline by headline,

how collaborative the film was going to be; alongside a diverse cast, were cinematographer Hoyte van Hoytema (*Interstellar*, *Dunkirk*), composer Ludwig Göransson (*Black Panther*, *Creed I and II*), production designer Nathan Crowley (*Dunkirk*, *The Prestige*), and sound designer Richard King (*Inception*, *The Dark Knight*), to name a few.

Elizabeth agrees, laughing, "Words are my thing! The way Chris runs his set and directs, is

whatever the scale of a given scene, each frame has the same blueprint. It's all 'fundamentally Chris' as a masterful storyteller, and even with Hoyte, it is all about singular focus, whether it is someone's hand reaching for something or a plane flying into a building. Each iota that is being captured on film, is as important as the next. I have never experienced that before, and even speaking to you now, I grapple with how he does that. It is important to Chris that you understand. As an actor, this is very freeing, because you feel held by the atmosphere."

**Very harrowing**

For Elizabeth, *Tenet* did not just entail physically demanding work, but also that of the emotional variety too; Kat's relation-

**Time-bender** (Clockwise from left) Elizabeth Debicki; on the set of *Tenet* with director Christopher Nolan; in a scene with Kenneth Branagh ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**BEHIND THE SCRIPT**

*Tenet* had long been on director Christopher Nolan's mind — 20 years to be precise — and the script began to take physical shape back in 2014. To perfect the interpretations of time and science within the film, Nolan brought on theoretical physicist Kip Thorne, who worked with Nolan on *Interstellar*, to consult.

In past interviews, Elizabeth Debicki recalls her casting experience, which saw her being flown to Los Angeles to read the script in a locked room with no phones allowed — complete with a signed NDA.

ship with Sator comprises a great deal of fear but she insists her character is far from a damsel in distress.

"The grounds that [Kenneth Branagh] and I covered emotionally with those two roles were very dark. It was, at times, very harrowing," she comments, "With that kind of material, once you understand what you need to say with the scene and what the scene creates for your character to become this psychological portrait on screen, you surrender to it."

She laughs as she adds, "It sounds like such a basic thing, but it was important that Ken and

I really liked each other as people, and we both have a quirky sense of humour, so we were able to give each other a lot of life and support, and add levity to the shooting experience. Finding time to laugh helped a lot."

Regarding future projects, the 30-year-old is looking at a diverse range of moods, not just laughs. Her two biggest upcoming roles include the late Lady Diana, Princess of Wales in Netflix's *The Crown*'s seasons five and six, and leader of The Sovereign gold-dipped alien race Ayesha in Marvel Cinematic Universe's *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*.



## Over the hills, down the valley



Designer Rajesh Pratap Singh rolls out a contemporary collection from Satya Paul, hoping to woo millennial buyers

SANGEETHA DEVI DUNDOO

Valley of Flowers, the new collection from Satya Paul has the label's signature floral motifs on sharp, structured silhouettes that are a hallmark of the design vocabulary of Rajesh Pratap Singh.

In an email interview, Singh who was appointed the creative director of Satya Paul in June 2020 explains, "The idea is not to waver from the brand's DNA. It is more about adding a fresh perspective on the heritage of the brand, about reviving the archives and weaving stories in a modern atmosphere, removing some layers and moulding the language to make it more pertinent to today."

He hopes that the collections from Satya Paul will cater to the millennials and Valley of Flowers is the first step in that direction.

This collection is Singh's ode to the music of the 1960s and 1970s.

He talks about growing up listening to Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix and Robert Plant. Their album covers were an inspiration: "The music from that era was like nursery rhymes for my generation. So much happened at that time. Rules were broken for the sake of experimenting.

[It gave us] an idea of freedom. I was fascinated with the album covers and Henry Darger collages... Their graphic prints were references for the collection. The bold floral motifs, vivid colours, patchwork have all been incorporated with a modern twist."

Valley of Flowers has saris, reversible kimonos, pantsuits, capes, bow tops, pleated tunics and scarves in silk, wool and cashmere.

"The idea was to make Satya Paul more relevant and contemporary, to evolve the visual beyond the first degree of interpretation," adds Singh.

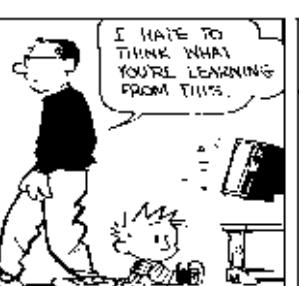
Free-spirited, bold and intelligent women of today would be the muse for the Valley of Flowers, says Singh, adding, "It is important for women to be strong and not be put into structures or box or a cliché."

The floral prints of the late 1960s and early 1970s have been reinter-

preted as patchwork and collages. "For instance, we have a satin duster jacket in an asymmetrical floral print layered with hand-stitched laser-cut flowers, a double-breasted pantsuit with asymmetric floral patchwork with 3D embroidery," says Singh.

The bags are unusual. Think a playful armhole-inspired shape, for instance. "We began working with ergonomic shapes. We studied the armhole shape of T-shirts and kept the designs more architectural. As far as the colours are concerned, we kept them bright with contrasting edging, so while it is classic, it also adds an element of playfulness. The 'Jungla' handbag's shape is an ode to the Kanchenjunga mountain in Sikkim."

*Valley of Flowers* is available at Satya Paul outlets across the country.

**POOCHE CAFE****PEANUTS****HAGAR THE HORRIBLE****CALVIN AND HOBBES****TIGER****PEARLS BEFORE SWINE**

## ASK US



N. SREEKANTH

**Q.** My wife is a clerk in a nationalised bank. She availed of a home loan from her bank. She hasn't got any property in her name and neither do I. The authorities tell us our area is not eligible for PMAY subsidy. Actually, PMAY depends on annual income. Can you help me get the subsidy?

TAMIL ARASAN

**A.** Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) also known as 'Housing for all by 2022' is a credit-linked subsidy scheme (CLSS).

PMAY divides applicants based on family income levels and likewise urban or rural locations, among other criteria such as carpet area, tenure etc. PMAY considers the level of family income as one of the eligibility criterion while other eligibility criteria such as the location of house purchased/constructed for which loan is/ is being applied for, is to be covered by Census 2011 for urban applicants and 17,788 towns as notified for rural applicants is equally applicable to you.

Kindly check if the location of your house is covered by Census 2011 or the 17,788 notified towns and approach the bank accordingly. Also to be noted is that the revised CLSS is applicable for EWSS and LIG groups for loans sanctioned from January 1, 2017 to March 31, 2022, while for MIG and MIG II it is applicable for loans sanctioned from January 1, 2017 to March 31, 2021.



**Q.** I have taken a loan of ₹14 lakh from UCO Bank in 2016. I want to know if I am eligible for rebate under PMAY?

HARSH BHATI

**Q.** I took a loan from a nationalised bank in 2016 to purchase an apartment. The loan was worth ₹30 lakh. Am I eligible for any refund under the PMAY? Where can I get the details about the scheme?

R.V. RAMANI

**A.** Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), also known as 'Housing for all by 2022', is a credit-linked subsidy scheme (CLSS). PMAY broadly classifies applicants based on family income, location of purchase/construction, non-ownership of other pucca houses, carpet area, tenure of the loan, period of loan sanctioned, among others.

Loans in both queries have been taken in 2016; depending on the income levels of either querists, if they fall under EWS/LIG as per revised CLSS loans sanctioned from January 1, 2017 to March 31, 2022 they are eligible for subsidy while MIG and MIG II categories, loans sanctioned from January 1, 2017 to March 31, 2021 are eligible for subsidy. With the furnished information, the PMAY will not be applicable for both querists if they opt to apply for subsidy now. The details of the scheme can be accessed from the official website of the PMAY scheme – [www.pmay-urban.gov.in](http://www.pmay-urban.gov.in) and [www.pmayg.nic.in](http://www.pmayg.nic.in).

(The author is a partner, GSS Associates, Chartered Accountants, Chennai)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to [moneywise@thehindu.co.in](mailto:moneywise@thehindu.co.in). Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

## LOOSE CHANGE

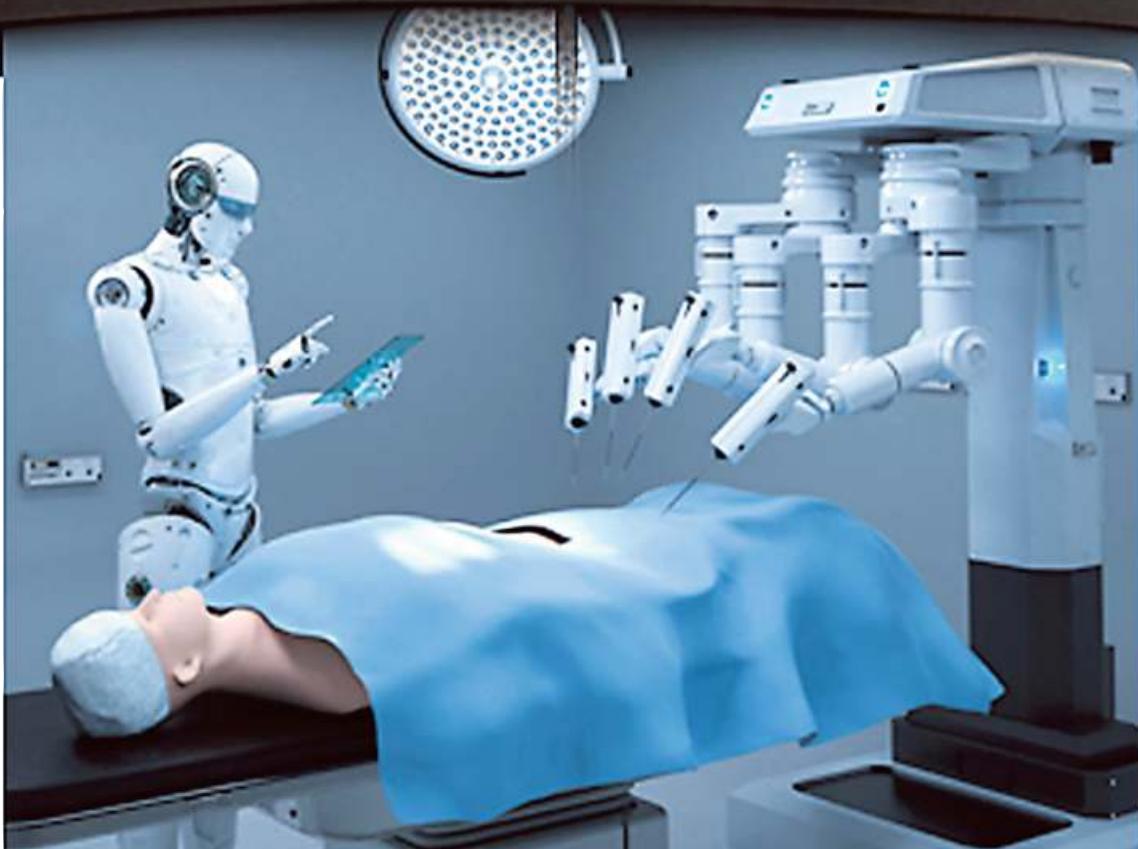
RAVIKANTH



"Things are slowly getting back to normal out here, ma'am!"

IRDA norms now permit insurers to cover hi-tech procedures

## Now, a policy for robotic surgery



sophisticated and world-class infrastructure facilities using state-of-the-art technologies for the treatment of various critical illnesses. And, when it comes to the cost of robotic surgery, it is very affordable unlike in the U.S., U.K., and Canada. Overall, the cost of such procedures in India is pocket-friendly, that too, without compromising on the quality of services and infrastructure. In other words, lower cost of the surgery would mean lower premium to be paid for such cover, too. All the advanced robotic surgeries along with bariatric surgeries can now be availed of by anyone having a comprehensive health insurance cover.

## Cost of surgery

Owing to their effectiveness and efficiency, the cost of performing robotic surgeries is a bit higher than regular procedures. A complex robotic surgery is likely to be almost ₹2 lakh more than a laparoscopic procedure.

On average, an abdominal robotic surgery costs ₹5.25 lakh while a cardiothoracic procedure costs ₹6.75 lakh in India. Similarly, a gynaecologic surgery costs ₹5 lakh and a head-and-neck procedure costs ₹6 lakh.

However, if you are covered under comprehensive health insurance with an adequate sum insured, you need not worry about the cost of the treatment as your health insurer will now cover you for such surgeries.

(The author is Health Business Head, Policybazaar.com)

AMIT CHHABRA

At a time when the world is facing its biggest medical challenge due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, health insurance policies in India are poised for a revamp that will make health insurance cover more customer friendly.

Inclusions in the policy, specifically for robotic and bariatric surgeries in India, were very limited and that was the reason why many policyholders were not able to avail of the best and most-advanced treatment on offer in the country.

Thankfully, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has now taken cognisance and all health policies are being standardised across health insurers. Besides an array of other inclusions like coverage for diseases such as mental illness, obesity, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, your health insurance policy will now cover you even for robotic and bariatric surgeries.

Insurance companies have already started the process of revamping and advanced products are now available for customers.

than possible with conventional techniques.

The benefits of such procedures in India come at a lower cost than in developed nations, making it easily accessible to a larger section of the population.

Robotic surgeries reduce the trauma caused to the patient by allowing surgery to be performed through small

ports or 'keyholes' rather than via large incisions.

The instruments can access hard-to-reach areas of a patient's body more easily through smaller incisions compared with traditional open and laparoscopic surgeries.

This helps in shorter recovery times, with fewer complications and a shorter hospital stay. They are mini-

mally invasive, painless and have a bigger cosmetic advantage.

## Procedures in India

India is the most preferred destination for getting high-quality treatment across the globe, and is dotted with various multi-speciality hospitals and patient-care centres. These hospitals are well equipped with advanced, highly

## COVER NOTE: E-INSURANCE

## Intangible, like insurance itself

Concept of dematerialisation is catching up in this sector also

K. NITYA KALYANI

About a hundred years ago, the British Government in India had set up the new currency press in the city then called Bombay and was persuading the wary common man to use paper money in the place of coins. We know how popular it became, but wait! Wariness about paper currency is back!

Today, every milk delivery boy and *keerai* seller is fine with BHIM or Google Pay, with the pandemic making the act of contact with people or objects much dreaded.

Moving to a more sophisticated financial transaction, the concept of dematerialised securities was pushed through successfully in India and had been well-accepted.

## Vehicle insurance

A useful recent development has been that you need not carry your original vehicle insurance policy but an electronic copy will do if it is in the eParivahan app.

Another insurance-specific recent move is that now you can digitally sign your life insurance policy proposal form. This was introduced in a limited way for pure risk life insurance policies, term policies, sold by agents and intermediaries until the end of December and has now been extended to the end of this financial year and to all types of life insurance policies. It comes with



Digital repository: An individual can have only one EIA where he or she can store all types of policies. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

checks and balances and the regulator is yet testing the ground on this move.

## Seven-year journey

Dematerialisation of insurance itself dates back to 2013, when the concept of demat accounts for insurance policies, called e-insurance accounts (EIA), was introduced. This would be a good time to push for large-scale adoption of the system.

There are four service providers with whom you can open an EIA, namely NSDL Database Management Limited, Central Insurance Repository

Limited, Karvy Insurance Repository Limited and CAMS Repository Services Limited; and, your insurance company can facilitate in submitting the application that you can download from repositories' websites and fill in.

An individual can have only one EIA and in it, you can keep your insurance policies of all types such as life, general, health and annuities issued by any Indian insurer. You will have a login and password for it and you can use the account as a one-stop shop for various policy-servicing requirements

such as receiving renewal alerts, effecting changes of address, KYC compliance, nomination, registering bank account details for paying premium and receiving payouts. You will receive an annual statement of your insurance portfolio as well.

What is more, you can appoint an authorised person who can operate your EIA when you pass away or are incapacitated to make claims. He would be only a facilitator and would not be entitled to receive any policy benefits unless also designated as a nominee or assignee.

You can also change your authorised representative through the repository.

Your existing paper policies can be dematerialised and added to your EIA and policies you buy, going forward, can be requested in electronic form directly, and hence, your insurance records are absolutely safe even in the face of relocation, floods, fires and common human carelessness! If you wish, you can also close your EIA and rematerialise your policies.

You can also port your EIA from one service provider to another free of cost. And, that's not even surprising because even the basic EIA is a free-of-cost service!

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

checks and balances and the regulator is yet testing the ground on this move.

Such a move is positive and appears likely. A move above \$24.4 would confirm the positive outlook. The outlook would be invalidated if the price falls below \$22.3.

Mirroring the global trend, MCX gold, too, ruled weak and achieved the target of \$21.52 an ounce.

The short-term outlook is positive and a rise to \$25.6-25.9 appears likely. A move above \$24.4 would confirm the positive outlook. The outlook would be invalidated if the price falls below \$22.3.

To summarise, precious metals appear poised to seek higher levels in the short-term. However, it remains to be seen if this upside potential can morph into a more sustainable uprend.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. The views and opinion featured in this column are based on the analysis of short-term price movement in gold and silver futures at Comex and MCX. This is not meant to be trading or investment advice)

## TECH TRAIL: PRECIOUS METALS

## November blues for gold

B. KRISHNAKUMAR

Precious metals took a knock in November with Comex gold witnessing its worst month in four years. The improvement in economic fundamentals across the globe, along with progress in COVID-19 vaccine development played a key role in pulling down the price of precious metals in November.

Comex gold closed 5.3% lower to settle at \$1,780.9 an ounce. Comex silver lost 4.7% to settle at \$22.53 an ounce.

In the domestic market, MCX gold futures lost 5.7% to close at ₹47,918 per 10 gm. MCX silver futures closed 3.6% lower to end at ₹60,222 a kg.

As anticipated, Comex gold ruled weak and dropped way below the target zone of \$1,825-\$1,840. As the target has been achieved, there is a possibility of a short-term bounce in price. A rise past \$1,865-\$1,870 appears likely in the short-term.

A move past \$1,890 would indicate the potential for a much higher price. On the other hand, a fall below \$1,770 would indicate the resumption of the recent downturn.

Comex silver, too, ruled weak and almost achieved the target of \$21.52 an ounce. The short-term outlook is positive and a rise to \$25.6-25.9 appears likely. A move above \$24.4 would confirm the positive outlook. The outlook would be invalidated if the price falls below \$22.3.

Mirroring the global trend, MCX gold, too, ruled weak and achieved the downside target



of ₹47,000-47,500. The short-term trend is positive and the price could rise to ₹49,900-50,900. A drop below ₹48,222 a kg.

As anticipated, MCX Silver was confined to the trading range of ₹56,000-64,200. The short-term outlook is positive and a rise to ₹66,300-67,000 appears likely. A move past ₹64,000 would strengthen this outlook. A fall below ₹58,500 would be a sign of weakness and could push MCX Silver to lower levels.

To summarise, precious metals appear poised to seek higher levels in the short-term. However, it remains to be seen if this upside potential can morph into a more sustainable uprend.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. The views and opinion featured in this column are based on the analysis of short-term price movement in gold and silver futures at Comex and MCX. This is not meant to be trading or investment advice)

## Bank fixed deposit rates

Bank Name	Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure
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## SMALL FINANCE BANKS

Jana Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.90	7.50	7.00
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.75	7.15	7.50
Equitas Small Finance Bank	7.00	6.75	7.00	6.75
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	7.00	6.75	6.75	6.75
AU Small Finance Bank	6.75	5.50	6.75	6.50
ESF Small Finance Bank	6.50	6.50	6.00	5.50
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	6.50	6.50	6.05	5.80
Fincare Small Finance Bank	6.50	6.00	6.30	6.00
Capital Small Finance Bank	6.40	6.00	6.00	6.00

## PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS

IndusInd Bank	7.00	7.00	6.75	6.75
RBL Bank	6.95	6.75	6.95	6.50
DCB Bank	6.95	6.50	6.95	6.95
Nainital Bank	6.35	5.25	5.35	5.35</

# India soars to series victory on Hardik's wings

Dhawan and Kohli, too, contribute to the big chase; Wade's whirlwind knock in vain; Natarajan impresses yet again



**Delivering the blows:** Hardik Pandya's audacity with the bat sealed the issue in India's favour. ■ GETTY IMAGES

## INDIA IN AUS

REUTERS  
SYDNEY

Hardik Pandya smashed two huge sixes in the final over to give India a dramatic six-wicket win over Australia in the second T20I on Sunday, sealing up the three-match series for the visitors with a game to spare.

Chasing 195 for victory, India needed 14 runs from the last over when Hardik delivered. He hit two off the first ball and sixes off the second and fourth deliveries, the final one flying deep into the stands at the SCG.

### Depleted attack

Australia's bowling attack, without Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins, had kept the contest tight. But debutant Daniel Sams was unable to contain Hardik, who remained unbeaten on 42 off 22 balls. Shreyas Iyer was not out on 12.

"It's fantastic," said Hardik. "I just wanted to finish it early, I don't like it when it goes down to the wire."

After Friday's 11-run victory in Canberra, India sealed the series ahead of Tuesday's third and final match.

Openers Shikhar Dhawan (52) and K.L. Rahul (30) had given the visitors a superb start, and when skipper Virat Kohli took over, it looked like India might reach the target with ease.

Kohli looked in good touch during his 24-ball 40, but his innings ended when he fell to Sams, edging behind chasing a wide delivery.

Earlier, with Aaron Finch ruled out due to a hip injury, Matthew Wade was named Australia's 11th T20I captain, and he led from the front with a typically aggressive 32-ball 58. Wade was run out when Kohli dropped him at cover off Washington Sundar but rifled the ball to wicket-keeper Rahual to catch the batsman short.

Steve Smith made a solid 46 before he was caught by Hardik at long-off, the fielder juggling with the ball before holding on to it.

Glenn Maxwell delivered a 13-ball 22, but the innings stalled in the middle overs before Marcus Stoinis and

## SCOREBOARD

### AUSTRALIA

Matthew Wade run out 58 (32b, 10x4, 1x6), D'Arcy Short c Shreyas b Natarajan 9 (9b, 1x4), Steve Smith c Hardik b Chahal 46 (38b, 3x4, 2x6), Glenn Maxwell c Washington b Shardul 22 (13b, 2x6), Moises Henriques c Rahul b Natarajan 26 (18b, 1x6), Marcus Stoinis (not out) 16 (7b, 1x6), Daniel Sams (not out) 8 (3b, 1x4); Extras (lb-1, w-2, nb-1): 4; Total (for four wkts. in 19.4 overs): 195.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-56 (Rahul, 5.2), 2-95 (Dhawan, 11.2), 3-120 (Samson, 13.4), 4-149 (Kohli 16.1).

### AUSTRALIA BOWLING

Sams 3.4-0-41-1, Abbott 2-0-17-0, Tyre 4-0-47-1, Maxwell 1-0-19-0, Swanson 4-0-25-1, Henriques 1-0-9-0, Zampa 4-0-36-1.

### Toss: India; MoM: Hardik.

India won by six wickets with two balls to spare and took a 2-0 lead in three-match series.

**Third and final T20I:** December 8, Sydney, 1.40 p.m. IST.

### Innings Scan

Australia	India
33	33
15	13
7	9
59/1	60/1
9.70	9.91

Sams smashed 17 off the final over bowled by Deepak Chahal. Left-arm seamer T. Natarajan, who impressed on

debut, finished with figures of two for 20, an extraordinary effort on a day when nearly 400 runs were scored.



Natarajan. ■ AFP

kind of start Australia had, I felt that they were short by 10-15 runs and knew we could win if we batted well," said Hardik.

"I am so impressed with him [Natarajan] because he keeps it very simple and doesn't complicate things. If you tell him 'go bowl a yorker or a wide slower one', he goes and does that. It is a learning for a lot of people that if you keep it simple, it can benefit you," he said.

# 'Have been focusing on finishing games'

Thought Natarajan would have been the Man-of-the-Match, says Hardik

### S. DIPAK RAGAV

Hardik Pandya, who continued his good run with the bat to help India seal the T20I series against Australia in Sydney on Sunday, said he had been focusing on finishing games during the off-season earlier this year.

Hardik, whose unbeaten 22-ball 42 helped India chase down a target of 195, said, "The biggest goal during the lockdown was to focus on finishing games when it matters the most. That was my plan and, that was the learning throughout. I had a chat with my brother Krunal about this always."

On a day when close to 400 runs were scored, T. Natarajan finished with two for 20. Hardik said he thought that the left-arm pacer would have been the 'player-of-the-match'.

"He got us the break and the runs he saved proved to be the difference. For the

## Hardik can become a bankable player: Kohli

Doing well without Rohit and Bumrah makes me happy, says the India skipper

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SYDNEY

India captain Virat Kohli on Sunday said winning the T20 series against Australia without established players like Rohit Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah meant a great deal to him. He was also full of praise for Hardik Pandya who, he said, had "raw talent."

"We've played as a team in T20 cricket. The fact that we don't have Rohit and Bumrah, our established white-ball players, and we are still doing well makes me happy. I am very proud of this team," said Kohli.

While Rohit has missed



**Smash hit:** Virat Kohli at his innovative best. ■ AFP

the series because of a hamstring injury he suffered during the IPL, Bumrah has been rested for the T20s, keeping in mind the upcoming

four-Test series.

The India skipper believes that with his raw talent, Hardik can become a "bankable player" for the team in the

years to come.

"The reason for him (Hardik) coming into the team in 2016 was pure ability. He has raw talent.

"And now he realises that this is his time, the next 4-5 years, to be that bankable player who can win you games from anywhere. His plans are right and I'm glad to see that," Kohli said.

"He now realises that this is the time to establish himself in that (finishing) role and play match-winning knocks for us."

"He plays with all his heart and certainly has that competitive nature about him."

## Rahane scores unbeaten century

### WARM-UP GAME

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
SYDNEY

Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane scored an unbeaten 108 and Cheteshwar Pujara a half-century as India got its red-ball tour underway on Sunday against a strong Australia-A side.

Rahane made the most of his opportunity, spending 228 balls at the crease, stroking 16 fours and a six to lead his team to 237 for eight.

Pujara also spent quality time in the middle, making 54 off 140 balls.

### The scores:

**India-A:** 1st innings: Prithvi Shaw c Paine b Pattinson 0, Shubman Gill c Harris b Nesan



**Well done!** Pujara, right, congratulates Rahane. ■ CRICKET.COM.AU

**Fall of wickets:** 0-1, 6-2, 40-3, 116-4, 121-5, 128-6, 197-7, 235-8.

**Australia-A bowling:** James Pattinson 19-5-58-3, Michael Neser 19-6-51-2, Jackson Bird 19-6-34-1, Cameron Green 4-9-0, Mark Steketee 14-3-50-0, Travis Head 11-3-24-2.

**Toss:** India-A.

## Son worldie spurs Tottenham to the top

### EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Son Heung-min and Harry Kane fired Tottenham back to the top of the Premier League on Sunday with a derby win over Arsenal after Jamie Vardy struck in the final minute against Sheffield United to lift Leicester to third in the table.

Kane played in Son in the 13th minute and the South Korean curled home a majestic opener much to the delight of the 2,000 fans in attendance.

Barcelona suffered a fourth defeat in LaLiga with a 2-1 loss at Cadiz.

**The results:** Premier League: West Brom 1 (Gallagher 30) lost

to Crystal Palace 5 (Furlong 8-0, Zaha 55, 68, Benteke 59, 82); Sheffield Utd 1 (McBurnie 26) lost to Leicester 2 (Perez 24, Vardy 90).

Tottenham 2 (Son 13, Kane 45+1) bt Arsenal 0.

**LaLiga:** Granada 3 (Suarez 43, Molina 88, Sanchez 38) lost to Manchester United 3

(Pogba 65, Greenwood 68, Rashford 78); Chelsea 3 (Giroud 27, Zouma 61, Pulisic 90+3) bt Leeds 1 (Bamford 4).

**Serie A:** Hellas Verona 1 (Zaccagni 21) drew with Cagliari 1 (Marin 48); Parma 0 drew with Benevento 0; Roma 0 drew with Sassuolo 0.

**Saturday:** West Ham 1 (Soucek 38) lost to Manchester United 3

(Pogba 65, Greenwood 68, Rashford 78); Chelsea 3 (Giroud 27, Zouma 61, Pulisic 90+3) bt Leeds 1 (Bamford 4).

**Serie A:** Juventus 2 (McKennie 78, Bonucci 89) bt Torino 1 (Nkoloulo 9); Inter Milan 3 (Lukaku 16, Hakimi 45, 70) bt Bologna 1 (Domínguez 67).

**Bundesliga:** Cologne 2 (Thiermann 18, Duda 43) drew with VfL Wolfsburg 2 (Arnold 29, Wehorst 47); Arminia Bielefeld 2 (Priest 21, Doan 31) bt Mainz 05 1 (Stoeber 82); Bayern Munich 3 (Musiala 30, Muller 35, 75) drew with RB Leipzig 3 (Nkunku 19, Kluivert 36, Forsberg 48).

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

### Solution to puzzle 13111

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

## TV PICKS

**Australia-A v India-A:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 8 p.m.  
**ISL:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Star Sports 3, 7.30 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



Grosjean to miss Abu Dhabi GP

SAKHIR (BAHRAIN)  
Romain Grosjean is returning home to Switzerland for treatment on the burns he suffered from his fireball crash in Bahrain and will miss the season-closing Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, his Haas team announced on Sunday. Next week's race at Yas Marina was to have been the Frenchman's last for the team. Grosjean said the decision not to race in Abu Dhabi was one of the hardest "of my life". AFP



Kandie licks half-marathon world record  
VALENCIA  
Kenya's Kibiwott Kandie smashed the men's half-marathon world record in Valencia on Sunday in a time of 57 minutes 32 seconds. He was almost half a minute quicker than the previous record of 58min 01sec set by his compatriot Geoffrey Kamworor in September, 2019. Five seconds behind was Ugandan Jacob Kiplimo. Genzebe Dibaba on her debut at the distance won the women's race in 1hr 05:18. AFP

**Kunal Lamba pots a win**  
NEW DELHI  
Kunal Lamba beat Namit Sharma 46-20, 71-64, 8-40, 11-45, 43-36 in the second round of the Delhi State snooker championship here. **Other results:** Gurjit Singh bt Mohit Sehgal 62-36, 63-17, 79-72; Nitesh Tyagi bt Jai Wadhwa 53-45, 68-38, 58-43; Tinkle Vijt Mayank Rana 80-41, 34-60, 42-51, 65-18, 59-45; Love Kukreja bt Sumit Goel 47-39, 54-37, 64-23.

## Sarfraz and Talat recalled for T20Is

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHRISTCHURCH

Veteran wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed and allrounder Hussain Talat were on Sunday recalled to Pakistan's 18-member squad for the three T20Is against New Zealand, beginning on December 18 in Auckland.

## Pakistan squad

**T20Is:** Babar Azam (capt.), Shadab Khan, Abdullah Shafiq, Faheem Ashraf, Haider Ali, Haris Rauf, Hussain Talat, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Hafeez, Mohd. Hasnain, Mohd. Musa Khan, Mohd. Rizwan, Sarfraz Ahmed, Shafeen Shah Afridi, Usman Qadir and Wahab Riaz.

**Pakistan Shehens:** Rohail Nazir (capt.), Abid Ali, Amad Butt, Azhar Ali, Danish Aziz, Fawad Alam, Haris Sohail, Imam-ul-Haq, Imran Butt, Mohd. Abbas, Naseem Shah, Shan Masood, Sohail Khan, Yasir Shah, Zafar Gohar and Zeeshan Malik.

## Premier Action claims Time And Place Plate

**HYDERABAD:** Trainer L. D'Silva's ward Premier Action, ridden by Suraj Narredu, claimed the Time And Place Plate, the chief event of Sunday's (Dec. 6) races. The winner is owned by Mr. Harisharan Devgan & Mr. Tinder Singh Alhwala. Suraj Narredu rode three more winners on the day, while trainers D. Netto and S. Sreekumar won three races each.

**1. GRACE HANOVER PLATE** (1.00m), Maiden, 2-y-o only, (Cat. II): ASHWA JAUHAR (Suraj Narredu) 1, By The Bay (Ashad Asbar) 2, Jarvis (R. Lakshmi) 3 and The Prospect (A.A. Vikrant) 4, 2-1/4, 4, 2, 1m, 07.53s, 310 (w), 8, 5 and 12 (p). SHP: 38, TPH: 45, FP: 50, Q: 31, Tanala: 295. Favourite: Ashwa Jauhar. Owners: Mr. Shailesh Singh & Mr. Ravinder Pal Singh Chauhan. Trainer: Mr. Srinivas Reddy.

**2. TIC TOC PLATE** (DIV. I) (1.00m), rated 40 to 65, (Cat. II): INCREDULOUS (B.R. Kumar) 1, Apollo (Ashad Asbar) 2, Makram (Afroz Khan) 3 and Sporting Smile

(Afroz Khan) 4. Not run: La Mer, 2, 1-1/2, 2-1/4, 1m, 12.71s, 328 (w), 5, 13 and 18 (p). SHP: 15, TPH: 49, FP: 201, Q: 149, Tanala: 4, 555. Favourite: Sitara. Owners: Mr. Polkumpally Salkumar, Mr. C. Nanda Kumar & Mr. Raof Ali Khan. Trainer: D. Netto.

**3. CABARET PLATE** (1.00m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): LAGOS (Jodha R S) 1, Crazy Horse (Md Ismail) 2, Explosive (Irvan Singh) 3 and Blue Valentine (R. Lakshmi) 4. Not run: Tapatio, 2-1/4, 5-1/4, Sh, 1m, 27.01s, 3205 (w), 84, 7 and 19 (p). SHP: 40, TPH: 63, FP: 4,228, Q: 752, Tanala: 7,922. Favourite: Aerial Combat. Owners: Mr. Donald Anthony Nett & Mr. S.P. Pathy. Trainer: D. Netto.

**4. TIC TOC PLATE** (DIV. II) (1.00m), rated 40 to 65, (Cat. II): STRATEGIST (Suraj Narredu) 1, Wah MS Zara (Irvan Singh) 2, Hidden Hope (Kuldeep Singh) 3 and Ayur Shakti (Afroz Khan) 4, 1-1/2, 2-1/4, 1/4, 1m, 12.31s, 313 (w), 6, 6 and 8 (p). SHP: 85, TPH: 19, FP: 253, Q: 158, Tanala: 521. Favourite:

(Nakhat Singh) 4. Not run: La Mer, 2, 1-1/2, 2-1/4, 1m, 12.71s, 328 (w), 5, 13 and 18 (p). SHP: 15, TPH: 49, FP: 201, Q: 149, Tanala: 4, 555. Favourite: Sitara. Owners: Mr. Polkumpally Salkumar, Mr. C. Nanda Kumar & Mr. Raof Ali Khan. Trainer: D. Netto.

**5. HIMAYAT SAGR PLATE** (DIV. I) (1.00m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): MAGIC STREET (Suraj Narredu) 1, Balus (Rohit Kumar) 2, Story Teller (Nakhat Singh) 3 and Dancing Doll (Md Ismail) 4. Not run: New State, 3-3/4, Nose, Hd, Im, 13.69s, 39 (w), 5, 15 and 10 (p). SHP: 32, TPH: 31, FP: 155, Q: 154, Tanala: 727. Favourite: Magic Street. Owners: Mr. Ravinder Reddy Male & Mr. Teja Gollapudi. Trainer: S. Sreekumar.

**6. TIME AND PLACE PLATE** (DIV. II) (1.00m), rated 40 to 65, (Cat. II): PREMIER ACTION (Suraj Narredu) 1, Call Of The Blue (Gaurav Singh) 2, British Empress (Akshay Kumar) 3 and N R I Heights (Abhay Singh) 4. Not run: Lockhart, 1/2, 1-1/4, 3/4, 18 (w), 9, 17 and 8 (p). SHP: 56, TPH: 19, FP: 950, Q: 227, Tanala: 1,247. Favourite: British Empress. Owners: Mr. Harisharan Devgan & Mr. Tinder Singh Alhwala. Trainer: L.D. Silva.

**7. HIMAYAT SAGR PLATE** (DIV. II)

(1.00m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): SHILOH (Deepak Singh) 1, Marvel Princess (Santhosh Raj N R) 2, Solo Winner (Jitendra Singh) 3 and Brush The Sky (Afroz Khan) 4, 3/4, Nk, Nk, Im, 14.39s, 378 (w), 41, 17 and 121 (p). SHP: 23, TPH: 63, FP: 712, Q: 175, Tanala: 6,011. Favourite: Marvel Princess. Owners: Mr. G. Krishnamohan Rao, Mr. Kona Venkata Rao & Mr. Alluri Ajay Kumar. Trainer: D. Netto.

**8. MEDAK PLATE** (1.00m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25, (Cat. II): MAXWELL (Jitendra Singh) 1, Be-dazzled (Nakhat Singh) 2, Hopscotch (B.R. Kumar) 3 and Dillon (Gaurav Singh) 4, 7-3/4, 1-1/2, 5-1/4, Im, 27.95s, 310 (w), 8, 22 and 6 (p). SHP: 63, TPH: 18, FP: 482, Q: 238, Tanala: 8,360 C/O. Favourite: Maxwell. Owner: Col. K.S. Garcha. Trainer: S. Sreekumar.

**Jackpot:** 70%, ₹10, 734 (11 tkt.) and 30%, ₹665 (76 tkt.); **Treble:** (i) 14,201 (1 tkt.), (ii) 8,142 (C/O); (iii) 9,493 (1 tkt.); **Mini Jackpot:** (i) 9,682 (C/O), (ii) 6,062 (C/O).

## Daruvala finishes maiden season on a high

Holds off Ticktum to register his first victory; Mick Schumacher crowned champion

## FORMULA 2

## SPORTS BUREAU

## SAKHIR

India's Jehan Daruvala capped off his rookie campaign in Formula 2 with a brilliant maiden win in the Sakhir Sprint Race on Sunday.

Daruvala emerged on top after a long battle with Dan Ticktum, eventually winning by a 2.9 second margin. Feature race winner Yuki Tsunoda made it a Carlin 1-2 by overtaking Ticktum late in the race.

At the start, Mick Schumacher, who sealed the F2 title on Sunday, was brave off the line. The German attempted an audacious drive

resumed after a Virtual Safety Car period.

## Pulling ahead

After a hard-fought battle for a few laps, Daruvala nosed ahead on Lap 26 with a daring move on the outside. Once in front, Daruvala managed to stave off Ticktum's challenge and opened up a 3.5s gap before cruising to his first F2 victory.

"It feels good to win the last race of the season and finish on a high

down the middle in an attempt to get past Ticktum and Daruvala. The Indian fell back to third but Ticktum held on and opened up a 1.2s gap.

However, the British driver warned over the team radio that he was losing his rear tyres.

Schumacher, too, suddenly started to feel the wear on his tyres from an earlier lock-up and dropped back behind Daruvala. The 22-year-old from Mumbai then shuttled up the road and caught up with Ticktum when racing

resumed after a Virtual Safety Car period.



Moment to cherish: Daruvala, centre, outpaced Tsunoda, left, and Ticktum to win the Sprint Race. ■ GETTY IMAGES

## Mumbai City FC answers Lobera's call

Tops standings with convincing win over Odisha FC

## ISL 2020-21

## SPORTS BUREAU

Mumbai City FC manager M Sergio Lobera had said before the game that he wanted his outfit to attack with intent, score goals and shut out oppositions in the 2020-21 Indian Super League. The MCFC players not only fulfilled their coach's wishes but also made it to the top of the standings with a 2-0 win over Odisha FC at the GMC Stadium in Bambolim on Sunday.

Bartholomew Ogbeche, the leading ISL goal scorer for both NorthEast United and Kerala Blasters, finally opened his account for Mumbai with a 30th-minute penalty.

OFC right-back Shubham Sarangi had handled the ball inside the box as he attempted



Gung ho: Rowlin Borges celebrates after scoring MCFC's second goal on Sunday. ■ PTI

ed to block Vignesh Dakshnamurthy's cross from the left flank. The referee pointed to the spot and Ogbeche beat goalkeeper Kamaljit Singh from 12 yards out.

Four minutes later, MCFC had a goal disallowed following an Ahmed Jahouh free-kick. Centre-back Mountada Fall rose the highest and found the back of the net from close range with a header.

But Fall, who reached the ball first, barged into an onrushing Kamaljit on the follow-through and was unlucky as the referee awarded Odisha a free-kick.

**Huge let-off**  
The injured Kamaljit was replaced by Ravi Kumar, and his team had a huge let-off. However, the Islanders kept threatening in attack, especially Bipin Singh on the left-wing.

The 25-year-old assisted

Rowlin Borges for Mumbai's second goal in the 45th minute just moments after he almost set up Hugo Boumous in a similar manner.

Borges made a late run from midfield and reacted to Bipin's cross with a header to double his side's lead.

The Kalinga Warriors had numerous chances throughout the match, however, they were unable to finish those. Diego Mauricio registered OFC's first shot on target when he hit one straight at custodian Amrinder Singh in the 67th minute.

Odisha's wastefulness upfront helped Mumbai make its best start ever in an ISL season, with nine points from four games.

**The result:** Mumbai City FC 2 (Ogbeche 30+, Borges 45) bt Odisha FC 0.

## S. Africa-England ODI abandoned

Two members of the tourists' party return unconfirmed positive tests

## COVID IMPACT

REUTERS  
CAPE TOWN

Sunday's One Day International between South Africa and England in Paarl was abandoned after two members of the tourists' party returned unconfirmed positive tests for the novel coronavirus, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has said.

The Kalinga Warriors had numerous chances throughout the match, however, they were unable to finish those. Diego Mauricio registered OFC's first shot on target when he hit one straight at custodian Amrinder Singh in the 67th minute.

The abandonment follows a fresh round of testing after two hotel workers in the bio-secure environment in which both teams are staying returned positive results.

England had previously expressed concern over the strength of the bio-secure environment.

"We remain in constant dialogue with Cricket South Africa and will continue to work closely with them to determine how best to move forward," said Ashley Giles, managing director, England men's cricket, said in a statement.

South Africa's director of cricket Graeme Smith said they hope the final two matches could be played.

## Seven cases

The unconfirmed positive results take to seven the number of COVID-19 related incidents on the six-match white-ball tour, two of which occurred in the South Africa camp before the series started. There have now been five in the bio-secure environment.

## United stuns Gokulam

## IFA SHIELD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

United Sports Club, a Calcutta Football League premier division team, sprung a surprise on I-League side Gokulam Kerala FC in the IFA Shield here on Sunday. Bright Middleton netted the match-winner for United.

Mohammedan Sporting and Real Kashmir made smooth starts, the former defeating Kidderpore SC 4-0 and latter getting past Peerless SC 2-1.

In the other match of the day, Southern Samity held Indian Arrows 1-1.

**The results:**

**Group A:** Mohammedan Sporting Club 4 (Sujit Sadhu 2, Hiru Mondal 28, Philip Adajah 46, Ganesh Nigam 86) bt Kidderpore SC 0.

**Group B:** Real Kashmir FC 2 (Chesterpoul Lyngdoh 25, Danish Farooq 32) bt Peerless SC 1 (Uttam Rai 20).

**Group C:** Southern Samity 1 (Sujit Saren 27) drew with Indian Arrows 1 (Gurkiran Singh 79).

**Group D:** United SC 1 (Bright Middleton 85) bt Gokulam Kerala FC 0.

## Three in a row for Dahiya



Paras Dahiya

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SONEPAT

Top seed Paras Dahiya defeated Fardeen Qamar 6-3, 6-1 in the final of the ₹10,000 AITA ranking tennis tournament at the Shantima Tennis Academy on Sunday.

It was the third successive title in the domestic circuit over the past three weeks for Dahiya, who has been guided by coach Jignesh Raval from the Altevo Waske Academy in Ahmedabad.

"I am pretty confident that these titles would help me reach a national rank of 15, from 26. I plan to go to Germany for more training.