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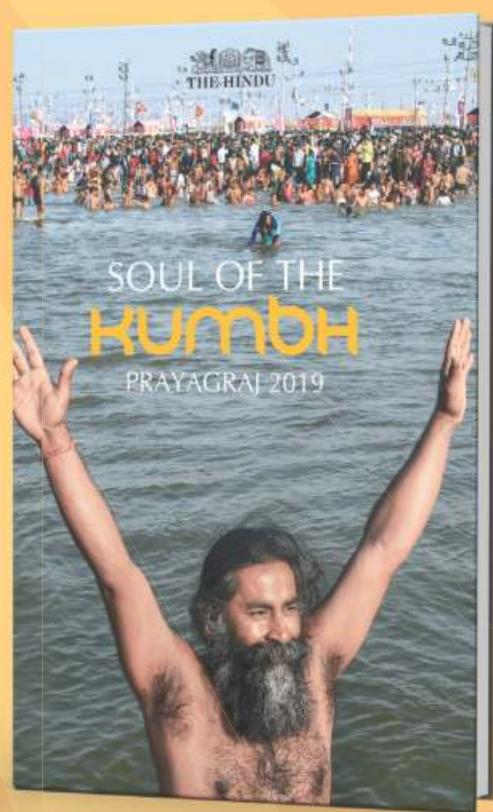
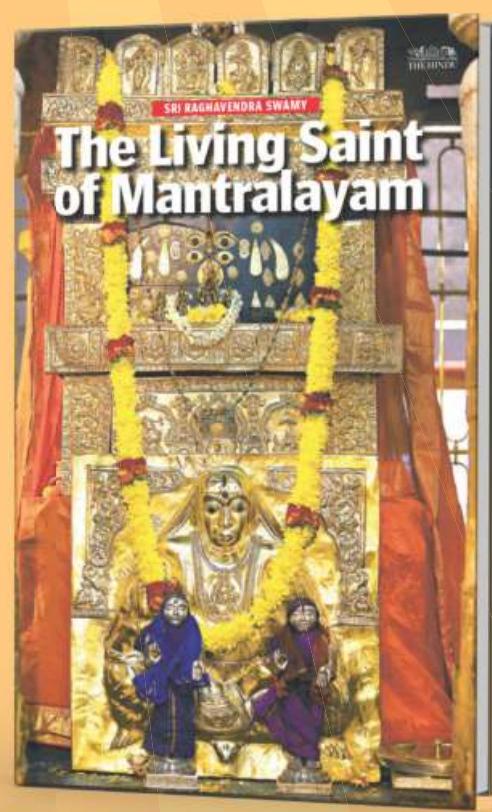
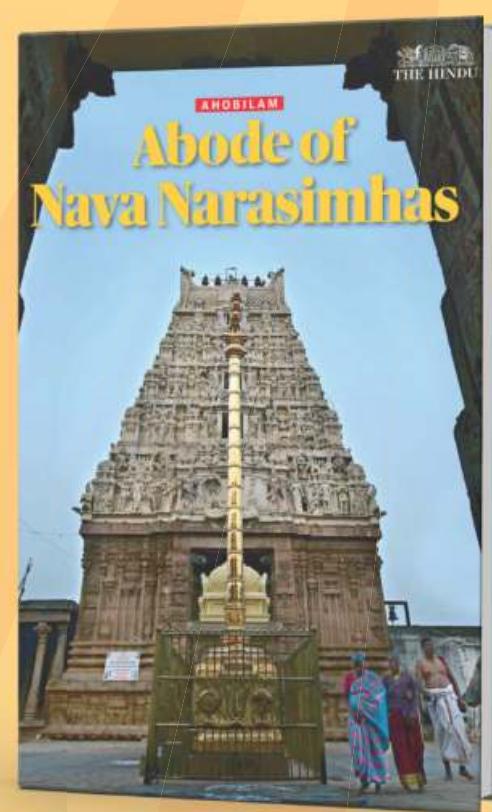
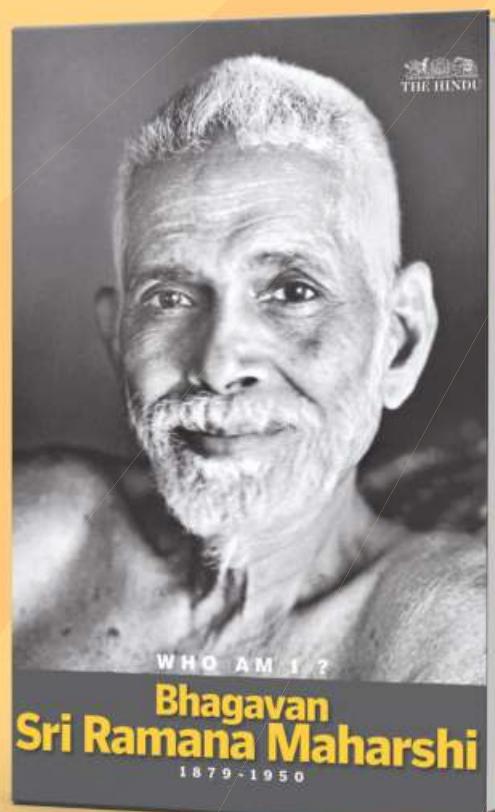
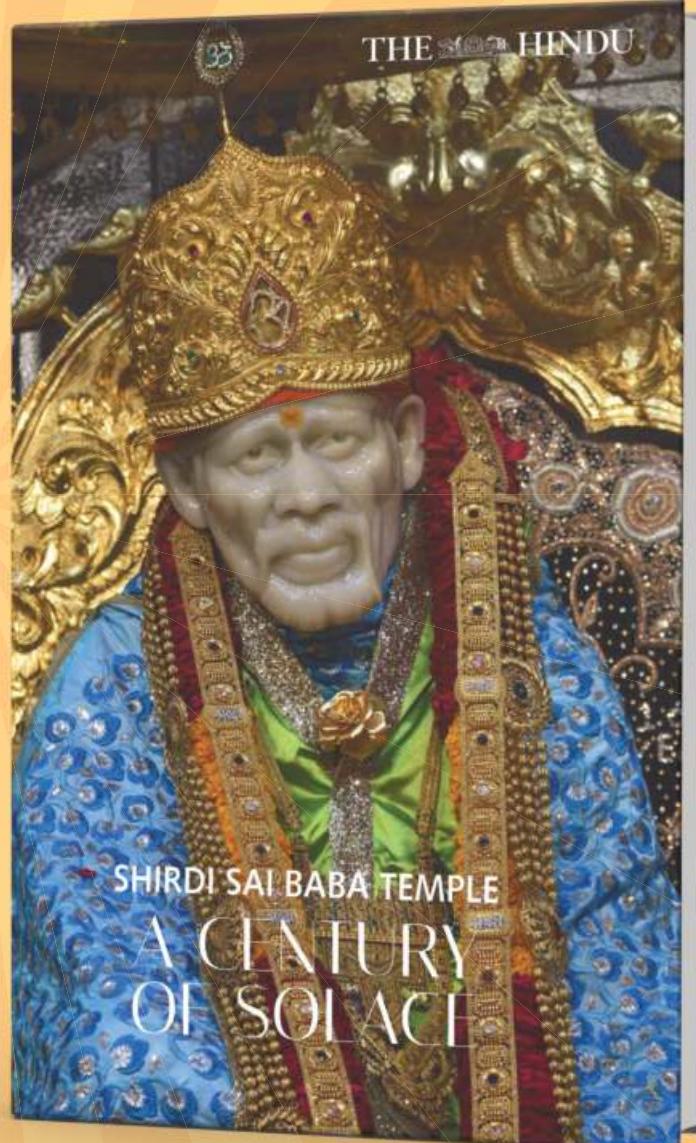
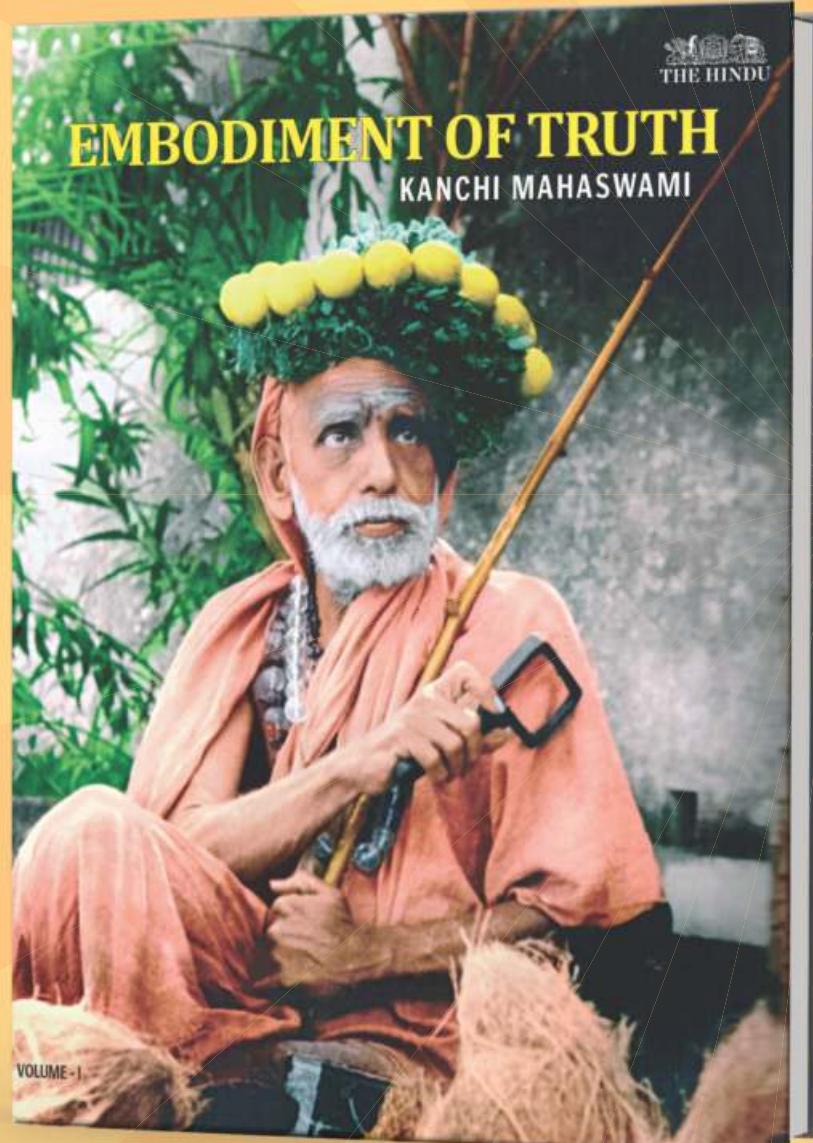
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“

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**Dinesh Kumar Khara**  
- Chairman, SBI

**To our valued customers,**

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*thank you*

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Amid leadership tussle in Punjab, Sidhu calls on Priyanka Gandhi  
page 9



Centre seeks report on fake vaccination camps in Kolkata  
page 10



International tourism losses could cost world \$4 trillion, says report  
page 12



Kyrgios outlasts Humbert, Djokovic cruises past Anderson  
page 13

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## NEARBY



Farmers, BJP workers clash at Ghazipur border

GAZIABAD Farmers and BJP workers clashed at the Ghazipur border on Wednesday. Each side held the other responsible for the fracas in which at least six BJP workers sustained minor injuries and around two dozen cars were damaged. Farmer groups described it as yet another planned attempt by the ruling party to disrupt their peaceful movement.

NEWS ► PAGE 8

Cylinder blast kills four of family in Shahdara

NEW DELHI Four members of a family died when a cylinder exploded in Shahdara's Farsh Bazar on Tuesday night. The blast happened in the adjacent room where a cylinder business was being run by the houseowner's relative. Delhi Fire Services chief Atul Garg said a call was received at 12.12 a.m. and nine fire tenders were pressed into service. A case has been registered against the houseowner and his niece.

CITY ► PAGE 2

## Elections no guarantee against tyranny, says CJI

+ Pandemic might yet be a curtain raiser to larger crises'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Wednesday said the mere right of the public to change the "ruler" once every few years by itself need not be a guarantee against "tyranny".

"In the 17 general elections held so far, the people have changed the ruling party or combination of parties eight times, which accounts for nearly 50% of number of general elections. In spite of large-scale inequalities, illiteracy, backwardness, poverty and alleged ignorance, the people of Independent India have proved themselves to be intelligent and up to the task. The masses have performed their duties reasonably well. Now, it is the turn of those who are manning the key organs of the State to ponder if they are living up to the Constitutional mandate," Chief Justice Ramana said.

The Chief Justice referred



Chief Justice N.V. Ramana

to the colonial period when law was used as a "tool of political repression". "I think any law backed by a sovereign must be tempered by certain ideals or tenets of justice," the CJI said. He was speaking at the 17th Justice P.D. Desai Memorial Lecture.

Chief Justice Ramana said it was time to pause and ask to what extent the rule of law was used to protect ordinary lives during the pandemic.

"I do not intend to provide an evaluation of the same. Both my office and my tem-

## Nurses' union objects to 2-week training plan

Giving an injection requires 'sophisticated and advanced knowledge', states letter

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Federation of Delhi Government Nurses has written to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal protesting against allegedly "allowing" people, after a training of two weeks, to administer injections and also calling them "community nursing assistants".

On June 16, Mr. Kejriwal had announced that 5,000 persons will be trained to work as assistants to doctors and nurses and will perform the tasks assigned to them.

"The trainees will be taught how to measure oxygen, blood pressure and how to inject medicines," the Delhi government said in a statement on Monday.

The two-week training of 500 such assistants has already begun with an aim to tackle a possible third wave.

"An injection is not just a



No easy job: A health worker administering a vaccine to a beneficiary in north Delhi on Wednesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

mechanical process but it requires a sophisticated advanced knowledge of human anatomy to avoid fatal consequences. It is also suggested that only trained nursing personnel be appointed for injection and vaccination for patient safety," the letter dated June 29 read.

Jagdish Kulhari, the president of the organisation, said

the development will be "disastrous" for people.

**3-to 4-year course**  
"The government is saying that in two weeks these community nursing assistants will be trained for giving injections. They will be given a certificate after their training. But how can you train them to give injections in two

weeks? We nurses have to undergo three or four-year courses and the government is now going to teach these people anatomy and how to give injections in two weeks?" he said.

The letter said there are "thousands" of nursing personnel available in Delhi and waiting for a job. "Recently, many Delhi government hospitals like Indira Gandhi Hospital, Dwarka; LBS Hospital, Khichripur; Guru Govind Singh Hospital, Raghavpur Nagar; advertised for contractual jobs through walk-in interviews. Thousands of trained nursing personnel reached there and the hospital administrations were not able to manage the situation," the letter said.

Mr. Kulhari said the association has around 1,500 nurses from eight Delhi government-run hospitals.

book Twitter on the basis of its recent inquiry in which it had found that child sexual abuse material was easily available on its platform.

For its part, Twitter said it has a zero tolerance policy for child sexual exploitation, adding that it will continue to invest in technology and tools that are essential to stay ahead of this issue.

The police have sought to know the steps taken by the Twitter officials concerned against child sexual abuse content on its platform and details of the accounts circulating such material.

**Case registered**  
The Delhi Police had registered an FIR against Twitter following a complaint by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR). The case was registered under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal

Code (IPC), the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POSCO) Act and the IT Act, the police said.

This comes days after NCPCR asked Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Cell) Anayesh Roy to explain why no action had been taken against Twitter as per its letter to the Delhi Police dated May 29.

In its letter, the NCPCR had asked Delhi Police to prevent the exploitation

of children on Internet and will continue to aggressively fight online child sexual abuse. "We will continue to invest in proactive detection and removal of content that violates Twitter rules and work with law enforcement and NGO partners in India to tackle the issue," the spokesperson said.

It added that all viewing, sharing, or linking to child sexual exploitation material, regardless of the intent, contributes to the re-victimisation of the depicted children and is prohibited on the platform.

It further pointed out that in 2019, the company had launched a feature, in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs and NGOs in India to blacklist specific child sexual exploitation search keywords in Hindi, English, Bengali and Kannada.

■ SANDEEP SAXENA

## On the beat



Street hawks: Delhi police personnel patrolling the Laxmi Nagar market, which was shut down by the East Delhi administration till July 5 for not adhering to COVID-19 protocol, on Wednesday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

## Delhi sizzles at 43.5°C, relief expected today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The heat wave continued in the Capital with the maximum temperature settling at 43.5 degrees Celsius, which is seven degrees above normal for the season. It is the highest recorded temperature this year so far, warmer than 43 degrees Celsius recorded the day before.

The Met Department has forecast some relief in the form of thundershowers on July 1. "Partly cloudy sky with possibility of thundery development...Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 41 and 29 degrees Celsius," read the forecast.

For July 2, the forecast shows partly cloudy sky with light rain at a few places. IMD said conditions are not favourable for the advancement of the southwest monsoon over Delhi for the next six-seven days. The normal date for the arrival of the monsoon in the city is June 27.

## Notice to Twitter over pornographic content

The microblogging site said it will continue to fight online child sexual abuse

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has sent a notice to microblogging site Twitter seeking details about the steps taken by it against circulation of child pornographic content on its platform, a senior officer said on Wednesday. He said the notice was sent on Tuesday.

The police have sought to know the steps taken by the Twitter officials concerned against child sexual abuse content on its platform and details of the accounts circulating such material.

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"Twitter has a zero tolerance policy for child sexual exploitation and we have a proactive approach to combating sexual exploitation of minors on our service

TWITTER  
SPOKESPERSON

book Twitter on the basis of its recent inquiry in which it had found that child sexual abuse material was easily available on its platform.

For its part, Twitter said it has a zero tolerance policy for child sexual exploitation, adding that it will continue to invest in technology and tools that are essential to stay ahead of this issue.

Replies to a query on the FIR against it for allegedly allowing access to child pornography on its platform, a Twitter spokesperson said: "Twitter has a zero tolerance policy for child sexual exploitation and we have a proactive approach to combating sexual exploitation of minors on our service."

This comes days after NCPCR asked Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Cell) Anayesh Roy to explain why no action had been taken against Twitter as per its letter to the Delhi Police dated May 29.

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■ SANDEEP SAXENA

## Seven get bail in riots case

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday granted bail to seven accused persons in a murder case related to the north-east Delhi riots, noting that they "cannot be incarcerated till the conclusion of trial, which will take a lot of time and particularly considering the [COVID-19] pandemic".

Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat while granting bail to the seven accused persons directed them not to leave the NCR without prior permission of the court. The

court directed them not to tamper with any evidence or contact any witnesses.

"They shall attend the court on every date of hearing or as directed by court," it said, adding, "Immediately after their release, they shall intimate the local SHO concerned of their mobile number which they shall be using after their release".

The case related primarily to the murder of one Vinod Kumar near ICICI Bank in Brahmpuri on February 24 last year. In all, 12 persons are accused in the case.

## One more held in R-Day violence case

Police face resistance from accused's family and neighbours

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 26-year-old man who was wanted in connection with the Red Fort violence case was arrested by Delhi Police Crime Branch on Wednesday after being on the run for five months.

The accused, Buta Singh, had a bounty of ₹50,000 on his head. He will be taken into police remand after he is produced before the magistrate at Tis Hazari Courts, the police said.

DCP (Crime) Monika Bhardwaj said, "Our team received specific information about Buta Singh. A team was sent to Punjab which managed to trace him. Subsequently, a raid was conducted at his village in Talwandi Sobha Singh."

"Our raiding team faced strong resistance from his family and neighbours who tried to get Singh out of police custody. They tried to block roads with tractors, but with the help of local

police, our team finally managed to come out from the village along with the accused," she said.

Singh along with his associates was seen in a video in which they claimed to have hoisted religious flags at Red Fort, the officer said.

On January 26, thousands of farmers protesting against the Centre's new farm laws had clashed with the police and entered Red Fort during a tractor parade, some hoisted flags at the ramparts.

## Cylinder blast kills four of family in Shahdara

Case against homeowner, kin for running 'illegal' business

HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

Four members of a family died while one survived following a cylinder blast in Shahdara's Farsh Bazar on Tuesday night. The blast happened in the adjacent room where a cylinder business was being run by the homeowner's relative.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) R. Sathyasundaram said that a case has been registered under Section 285 (negligent conduct with respect to fire or combustible matter), 304A (causing death by negligence), and 34 (common intension) of the Indian Penal Code against the homeowner and his niece "who run a gas, kerosene stove and small cylinder stoves repairing shop in the front portion of the house".

### Nine fire tenders

Delhi Fire Services chief Atul Garg said the call was received at 12.12 a.m. and nine fire tenders were pressed into service.

Recalling the incident, surviving member Lal Chand (27) said that his mother Munni Devi (45), younger brothers Om Prakash (22) and Naresh (20) and sister Suman (18) were in their one-room rented accommodation and while the three had slept around 11.45 a.m., Lal Chand and his brother Om were using their phones. "Our mother asked us to sleep and I said okay. We kept the phone aside and a few minutes later, we heard the blast in the next room and within seconds,



Police outside the house where the cylinder blast took place, on Wednesday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

there was fire all over. The wall of the front portion also collapsed," he said.

Lal Chand said he cried out for help a few times but the rest of his family members had lost consciousness. "I was near the window and was breathing into the glass which was finally broken by a friend who saved my life," he said.

The 27-year-old alleged that locals told him that the homeowner, who lives right opposite, had asked the family not to come out to avoid another possible cylinder blast," he said.

An injured Lal Chand cried as he was the only surviving member in his family now. He had lost his father 11 months ago in a car accident in Kampur when the latter was going to attend the last rites of his mother. "Now, I am all alone," he wept.

Lal Chand sells food on a cart opposite a mall in East Delhi. His brother Om Prakash worked at a shop nearby and Naresh worked as an insurance agent.

## Labourers' death: kin blame contractor for not giving safety gear

Police yet to make arrests after filing case

HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

A day after three labourers fell to death at a Delhi Development Authority under-construction site in Dwarka, family members of one said that he left behind a month-old son.

On Tuesday afternoon, four labourers who were on a lift at the site fell after it allegedly broke from the top. The police said that Panna Lal (50), Basant (29), and Mangla Prasad Singh (26) died and Surender Rai (48) is undergoing treatment.

At Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital's mortuary, Mangla's family waited for his body and said that they were told by fellow workers that no safety gear was provided.

### Refuse to learn lessons

"It's the contractor's fault. There was no head gear or any other safety gear. So many labourers have died like this but no lessons are ever learnt. We'll keep lying like this," said Mangla's cousin Manoj Singh.

Mangla's elder brother, Pushpendra Singh said that the deceased got married a

year ago and the couple was blessed with a baby boy a month ago. "Mangla had gone home to celebrate his child's birth. He came back to Delhi about 15 days ago and started working at this site, where he was also living," the brother said, adding that his wife and parents are not coping well after hearing the news.

### Lift broke

"We have been told by other workers that the lift broke from the top. The entire negligence of this incident lies with the company who has the contract. They should take care of all the families who have lost their loved ones," said Manoj.

Pushpendra said that that he along with Mangla and their father worked as Prantiya Rakshak Dal officials in Uttar Pradesh but Mangla quit the job in 2018 to come to Delhi and earn more money. While Pushpendra also quit in 2020 because of low pay, their father Sita Ram Singh continues to be an official.

The police have registered a case but no arrests have been made so far.

## Two arrested in Dwarka honour killing incident

Couple was shot at multiple times

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Six days after a couple were shot at multiple times in an alleged case of honour killing, the woman's cousin along with his friend has been arrested, the police said on Wednesday.

The police said that the accused have been identified as Vicky and Ritik.

On the night of June 24, Vinay Dahiya and Kiran Dahiya were shot at multiple times at their rented accom-

modation in Ambarai village. While Vinay died, Kiran is undergoing treatment.

The accused had conducted a recce of the couple's house, a day before.

The couple had eloped last year against the wishes of their families and got married in a court in Chanderigarh.

Both the families were against their relationship because the two are from the same clan.

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## CHANGE OF NAME

I SARASWATHY alias Kalyani W/O of No.13937556X Ex Nk, R Raju, corrected in name to R S Kalyani D.O.B.31/07/1954 vide affidavit dated 28/06/2021 sworn before notary S Ramesh, Chennai:600019.

## MISSING

## TRACE THE FAMILY OF CHILD FOUND.



The child name unknown, aged about 6 to 8 year, wheatish brown complexion, height 3.8 feet, has been found at Punjab Basti on 13/8/2020 Any information regarding her family is solicited.

Please contact Ms Glory, +91 70425 07487, for the same. From THE PERSON INCHARGE, FLAG Children Home, Karol Bagh, Delhi

## PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE  
It is to bring to the notice of general public that the following Three Original documents belonging to (1) M/s. Rampurha Realtors Pvt. Ltd Vasika No-1722, Regd. Dated 24/07/2005, Plot No. 135 B-10 Biswas (72 Acres) Village Gatal Kalan Gurugram, (Sale Deed) (2) M/s. S.A InfraTech Pvt. Ltd. (now known as Rampurha Properties Developers Private Limited) Dated 24/07/2007 pertaining to 135 Bigha 5 Biswa 5 Biswas (84,539 Acres) Village Gatal Kalan Gurugram, (Agricultural Land) (3) M/s. Rampurha Promoters and Developers Pvt. Ltd, dated 05/07/2011 (Special Power of Attorney in favour of BPL) for agency private purpose have been lost/stolen. Notice is hereby given to the public at large that no person / entity should deal with, use or make any claim on behalf of any of these original documents, and any person / entity in custody of the above said original documents or having any knowledge thereof should return the same to the undersigned within 7 days of publication of this notice, Sd/- Janak Singh (Auth.) R/o Plot No.119 Sector-44, Gurugram, HR, M. 9811191622

Amit Kumar Advocate

M-2, M-Block, Civil Wing,

Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Mr. Neeraj Paliv & Ms. Manika are availing housing loan from LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Kaushambi Ghaziabad to Purchase the Entire First Floor without roof rights of Southern Side built up Property No. 7 area 100 sq.yd. in Block - C Khasi Makaonwala, Sector 10, Ghaziabad Colony known as Adash Nagar on Ghazi Road Delhi from Ms. Sarita Garg who is the owner of said property by virtue of Sale Deed regd. on 11.06.2007 as per document no. 6410 in her favour. Ms. Sarita Garg has lost and misplaced the original Sale Deed registered on 24.11.2005. 12.2005 as per Document No. 921 and relevant police complaint has also been lodged on 06.01.2012. If anybody finds the misplaced Original document, the same may be returned to the LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Kaushambi Ghaziabad. If anybody misuses the same shall be at his own risk. If anybody has any claim, right, interest in the said property shall also inform within 15 days to the undersigned on Telephone No. 0120-4164364, 9891191622 & 989119162 as applicant are mentioned above.

S.C. Varahney (LICFL Panel Advocate)

R-14/17B, Raja Nagar, Ghaziabad-201002

## OBITUARY &amp; REMEMBRANCE

## DEATH



**Mr. R. Venkateswaran (54)**  
Supervisor, Printing Dept,  
The Hindu, Maraimalai Nagar  
Passed away on 30.06.2021.  
Address: 18A, Vijayalakshmi Nagar,  
Venkatacupuram, Singaperumal Kol-603204  
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THURSDAY, JUL. 01	
RISE 05:28	SET 19:24
RISE 00:00	SET 11:53
FRIDAY, JUL. 02	
RISE 05:28	SET 19:24
RISE 00:24	SET 12:46
SATURDAY, JUL. 03	
RISE 05:28	SET 19:24
RISE 00:53	SET 13:40

**Delhi Weather** max min  
Delhi City 44 28  
Safdarjang 44 28  
Palam 43 30

**Delhi Palam Today**  
42°C Heat wave condition  
likely with warm moderate  
winds and few clouds.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
40°C A hot day with partly  
cloudy sky. Duststorm and  
thunderstorm with light rain  
may occur at some places.

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# Migrant workers trickle into the city with renewed hope

Dearth of jobs in the wake of pandemic has not dissuaded them from returning

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

After a second exodus in April when the Delhi government announced a lockdown due to the second wave of the pandemic, migrant workers have been trickling into the Capital as it unlocks with a renewed hope of finding employment. As the city roars back to life, transport hubs are teeming with people arriving by trains and buses every day. But for some, boarding buses back home is a bittersweet journey as their dreams of making it big in the city have been dashed due to lack of employment opportunities.

At the ISBT-Kashmere Gate Metro station, a long line of passengers meanders through the few spots of shade that provide relief from the summer sun. One of them is Roshan Singh



Migrant workers outside the Kashmere Gate ISBT.  
■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

from Zirakpur, who used to work at a shop in Sadar Bazaar. His employer terminated his services when the lockdown was announced. Back in the Capital hoping to find a job, Roshan says employment is hard to find but needs it to sustain his family.

## First timers

While some are making a renewed attempt at seeking employment, there are first timers to the city as well.

Waiting to board a bus to So-nepat, Karthik Chaudhary from Uttar Pradesh says he is on his way to report for his first job as a security guard. "A friend of mine got me the job. I have completed my graduation but there are no jobs that I could find due to COVID-19. I am taking up this offer till I can find something better, he says." He says he has not been vaccinated, but hopes his employer will ensure that.

As passengers deboard with hope, there are others boarding buses with their belongings packed in jute bags disillusioned with what the big city had to offer them. "I was here right through the lockdown trying to find a new job. I did not leave as I had moved here from Bihar with my family. I am heading back now as I have not been able to find any employment. The con-

tractor who had promised me a job says he cannot promise me anything. I will go home to my village and find something there until this uncertainty is over," says Ajit Kumar who works at construction sites.

## Lucky ones

Ashutosh Mishra, a migrant worker from Bihar is at the ISBT terminal in Kashmere Gate to receive his family. He says he was lucky as he worked as a security guard at a factory that prints labels for medicines, and hence operational.

"But there are several others from my village who had to head home after losing jobs. Times are difficult. If there is another lockdown, we will head home but even if we can find a job and work for a month or two, we will be able to sustain our families," he says.

## AAP to launch campaign against tax, licence fee hike

## STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) attacked the BJP over allegedly raising different taxes and licence fee to "harass" traders and said that the party will launch a campaign to collect signatures of traders against it on Thursday.

"The commercial tax has been increased, trade licence fee has been increased along with everything else. Attempts are being made to make the situation difficult for

traders and merchants. The Aam Aadmi Party stands in support of the traders. In the COVID-19 situation, it is incorrect to treat the traders in this manner," AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj said.

"A campaign will also commence wherein lakhs of traders will give their signatures to raise their voice against BJP's municipal corporation and the increasing torture. After this, in all the 272 wards, AAP workers and councillors will take this campaign forward," he added.

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

The general public is hereby informed that an unidentified person about 35 years of age whose name, residence, and family is unknown had been found dead at Ring Road Opposite Hanuman Mandir Jamna Bazar Kashmere Gate, Delhi. In this regard, a vide has been registered with FIR No: 353/21, dated: 25.06.2021 at PS Kashmere Gate, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to identify the deceased person, but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the UIID is as under:

**Sex:** Male, **Age:** 35 Years, **Height:** 5'3", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** White colour striped shirt and black colour pant.

If anyone has any information about his relatives, kindly inform the SHO/Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)

Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641

Fax: 011-24368639

SHO  
P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.  
Ph. No. 011-23968730; 23968789  
DP/1300/N/2021

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown** was found on 24.06.2021 at 07:59 PM on K.M. Pole No. 15/29-31 UP Line near Sultanpuri Flyover, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 23A dated 24.06.2021 has been lodged at Police Station, Sarai Rohilla Railway Station. Identification of unidentified dead body is as under:

**Name: Unknown, Age: 30-35 Years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Shallow, Injury: Head Injury.**

If anyone has any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be informed undersigned.

SHO  
Police Station, Sarai Rohilla Railway Station  
Ph.: 011-28711697, 8750871308

No..SDT.27/2018/103/3625

## RE-E- TENDER NOTICE

The Directorate of Sericulture, Assam, Khanapara, Guwahati-22 re-invites e-tendering in 2-bid systems from the intending manufacturers / authorised dealers / Govt. registered firms for supply and installation of machineries of Multi-End Reeling unit and Twisting unit under North Eastern Region Textiles Promotion Schemes (NERTPS), funded by Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India. The machineries are to be supplied and installed in Darrang District of Assam. The tenders shall have to be submitted online in two bid system through the Govt. e-tendering portal [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in)

1. The Bids (both Technical and Financial) are to be submitted online in the website <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in>. Manual Bids will not be accepted.
2. Scanned copies of original hard copies of financial instruments towards cost of Bid Document and Earnest Money Deposit must be submitted online.
3. The original copies of the Cost of Bid Document, EMD along with one hard copy of Technical Bids with all supporting documents for the purpose of physical verification must be submitted manually as specified in the bid documents as per bid schedule.

Detailed tender documents are available at [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in)

## Important dates:

1	Date of availability of Bidding documents on e-procurement portal	2 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2021 from 11.00 AM
2	Last Date & time for online bid submission	30 <sup>th</sup> July, 2021 upto 2.00 PM
3	Last Date & time for Hard copy submission	30 <sup>th</sup> July, 2021 upto 2.00 PM
4	Time & date of opening of bids	30 <sup>th</sup> July, 2021 upto 2.30 PM

Executive Engineer  
TLMD-II Pampore

Janasanyog /C/1546/21

Director,  
Sericulture, Assam, Guwahati-22

## SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

## INTERLOCKING OF LC GATES

E-TENDER NOTICE ■ Dt. 29.06.2021

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom

Engineer, South East Central

Railway, Nagpur, acting for and on

behalf of the President of India, invites

E-Tender for execution of work

mentioned below. Sr. No. 1. Name of the Work: (1) Interlocking of LC Gates having TVU more than 20,000 at LC No. BK-2 (BTC-WR section), GJ-2, GJ-3 (G-BRA section) in "E" route of Nagpur Division of SECR. (2) Interlocking of LC Gates having TVU more than 20,000 at LC No. GCF-2 (G-HDM section) in "E" route of Nagpur Division of SECR. Tender Notice No.: ST-6LC-INT-21. Approval: ST-6LC-INT-21. Approval: Tender Value: ₹ 1,27,34,765.85. Earnest Money: NIL (Obtain Bid Security Declaration in lieu of Bid Security). Completion Period: 8 (Eight) Months. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto 15.00 Hours on 19.07.2021 only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offers received shall be rejected. Note: All tenderers have to get themselves registered in IREPS & procure DSC (Digital Signing Certificate) for participating in e-tendering. Details are available on our website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

IP/22/45

DSTE/JNP

Clean India Drive

एक कदम बढ़ावा की ओर

## IN BRIEF



Editor of world's only Sanskrit daily no more

K.V. Sampath Kumar, 64, Editor of *Sudharma*, reckoned to be the country's and the world's only Sanskrit daily, passed away in Mysuru on Wednesday following cardiac arrest. He, along with wife K.S. Jayalakshmi, were awarded the Padma Shri in 2020 in recognition of their efforts to keep the publication alive.

Odia poet chosen for 2020 *Kuvempu* award

BENGALURU  
Odia poet Rajendra Kishore Panda has been selected for the *Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar*, the national award instituted in memory of the late poet laureate, for 2020. The award carries a cash award of ₹5 lakh, a silver medal and a citation.

## Cong. veteran receives death threat in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
Former Home Minister and Congress veteran Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan has complained to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan about a death threat that he received. Mr.

Radhakrishnan said he had received an anonymous letter posted from Kozhikode. The writer threatened to kill Mr. Radhakrishnan and his family if he did not leave the State.

## Home for child sexual assault survivors by Aug.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
A Model Government Women and Childcare Home that is being set up in Thrissur, Kerala, to house child survivors of sexual assault will start functioning by early August. Though it is intended to accommodate 200 survivors, only 75 to 100 children, above the age of 12, living in Government Women and Childcare Homes will be shifted there initially.

# Kerala's cases stay flat at over 13,600

State's test positivity shows small drop; Karnataka's total deaths cross 35,000

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

COVID-19 transmission in Kerala remained steady, with at least 10,000-12,000 people getting infected every day.

## COVID-19

On Wednesday, the State reported 13,658 new cases as 1,40,727 samples were tested.

The test positivity rate (TPR) at 11% on Tuesday witnessed a small drop to 9.71% on Wednesday. Active cases were stagnant at around one lakh. On Wednesday, they stood at 1,00,881 patients.

Cumulative COVID-19 deaths stood at 13,235 with

the State adding 142 recent deaths to the official list.

Malappuram district reported the highest number of new cases at 1,610, Thrissur 1,500, Thiruvananthapuram 1,470, Ernakulam 1,448, Palakkad 1,273, Kozhikode 1,254, Kollam 1,245, Alappuzha 833, Kasaragod 709, Kannur 634, Kottayam 583, Pathanamthitta 457, Wayanad 372 and Idukki 270 cases.

Andhra Pradesh reported 35 deaths and 3,797 infections on Wednesday.

In June, a total of 1,96,428 infections and 1,776 deaths were reported. The TPR of 27.3 lakh samples in June was 7.17%. The number of infections came down by 67% from May to June.



Food point: A restaurateur waiting for customers in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. ■ MAHINSHA S.

The number of active cases stood at 38,338. A third of active cases were in East Godavari and Chittoor districts as of Wednesday, while Kurunool, Vizianagaram and Anantapur had less than a

thousand. The daily TPR of 9,696 samples was 3.89%.

Karnataka on Wednesday reported 3,382 new cases, 813 from Bengaluru Urban. With 111 deaths, the toll rose to 35,040.

The State had 76,505 active patients, and the day's TPR was 1.97%.

Telangana recorded 917 cases on Wednesday, taking total infections to 6,23,510. A total of 1,09,802 samples were tested.

Fresh COVID-19 mortality stood at 10, pushing the toll up to 3,661. Of the 917 new cases, 108 were from Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation region.

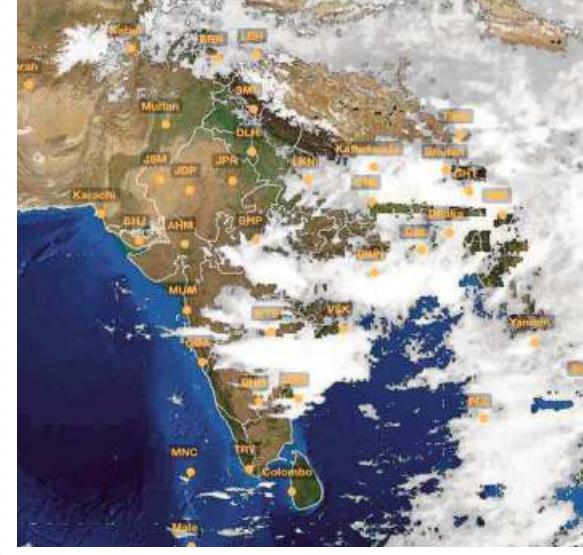
Of the total cases 13,388 were active ones as on Wednesday.

Another 4,506 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday, taking the tally to 24,79,696. As on date, 38,191 people are undergoing treatment for the infection.

(With inputs from Vijaya-wada, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai bureaus)

## WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAX, INSTANT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 hrs)

**Forecast for Thursday:** Heavy/heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Manipur, Mizoram, Bihar, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Karakal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	15...	33...	24...	Kozhikode	...	32...	26...
Ahmedabad	...	37...	25...	Kurnool	...	36...	26...
Aizawl	95...	...	18...	Lucknow	...	39...	29...
Alahabad	...	36...	30...	Madurai	...	39...	26...
Bengaluru	...	32...	22...	Mangalore	...	31...	24...
Bhopal	...	37...	26...	Mumbai	0...	31...	26...
Bhubaneswar	0...	36...	20...	Mysuru	...	33...	21...
Chandigarh	...	41...	30...	New Delhi	...	43...	28...
Chennai	...	36...	2...	Port Blair	...	31...	25...
Coimbatore	...	34...	2...	Puducherry	...	35...	26...
Dehradun	...	37...	2...	Pune	...	31...	22...
Gangtok	16...	21...	18...	Raipur	...	36...	27...
Goa	0...	32...	26...	Ranchi	...	34...	25...
Guwahati	1...	30...	26...	Shillong	42...	28...	18...
Hubballi	...	30...	20...	Shimla	...	31...	23...
Hyderabad	24...	34...	24...	Srinagar	...	33...	16...
Imphal	0...	27...	21...	Thiruvananthapuram	...	32...	25...
Jaipur	...	41...	3...	Tiruchi	...	39...	26...
Kochi	...	32...	2...	Vijayawada	...	39...	27...
Kohima	...	26...	20...	Visakhapatnam	...	35...	26...
Kolkata	...	34...	28...				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	CODE
Ahmedabad	50	36	16	51	85	■■■■■
Bengaluru	4	54	21	...	62	■■■■■
Chennai	4	16	92	18	41	■■■■■
Delhi	10	28	11	308	319	■■■■■
Hyderabad	3	80	13	29	56	■■■■■
Kolkata	9	24	25	61	98	■■■■■
Lucknow	17	16	58	162	161	■■■■■
Mumbai	9	121	12	28	33	■■■■■
Pune	...	29	97	41	75	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	13	42	36	54	86	■■■■■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Charkhi Dadri, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 343 indicating unhealthy levels of pollution. In contrast, Bagalkot, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

**Yesterday**

**Air Quality Code:** ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.  
**NO<sub>x</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.  
**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

**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

## CBI team from Delhi meets Narayanan

Probe begins into 'police frame-up'

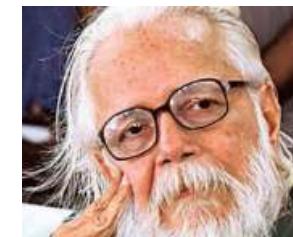
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) team from New Delhi has commenced its inquiry into the "police frame-up" that set in motion the infamous Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) spy case in 1994.

The CBI team called on former ISRO scientist Nambi Narayanan at his residence.

Last month, the CBI had filed an FIR marked as "classified" in the Chief Judicial Magistrate court here, accusing five former law enforcers of "wrongful arrest, custodial torture and unjustified incarceration" of Mr. Narayanan and others.

The CBI had named former Director-General of Police Siby Mathews, who headed the Special Investi-



Nambi Narayanan

gation Team that probed the ISRO case; his Deputies K.K. Joshua, S. Vijayan and Thampi S. Durgadutt; and then Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, R.B. Sreeku-

mar, as accused in the FIR.

The dark chapter in the annals of the police investigation in Kerala has its provenance in a case registered at the Vanchiyoor police station on November 13, 1994.

## REGION

## IN BRIEF

# Khori Basti: BKU(C) leader issues ultimatum to govt.

He gives Haryana govt. 7 days to draw up rehabilitation plan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
FARIDABAD

Police lathi-charge villagers at Khori Basti in Faridabad on Wednesday.

sidents of the colony at the "dharna" site.

The farmer leader said the residents of the Khori Basti had settled around three or four decades ago and should be rehabilitated. He also demanded strict action against the officials who allegedly took bribe to allow them to settle on the forest land. Mr. Charuni asked the Haryana government to chalk out a rehabilitation plan for the residents of the colony, restore the water and power connec-

tions and release those arrested by July 7 or face a mass movement.

Labour rights activist and Mazdoor Adhikar Sangathan activist Nodeep Kaur, in a video posted on her Twitter handle, said Bhagat Singh Chhatri Ekta Manch president Ravinder and her sister Rajveer Kaur had also gone for the panchayat and were arrested. She also accused the police of "brutal lathi-charge".

Assistant Commissioner of Police, Badkhal, Sukhbir Singh said a large number of people assembled at the Khori Basti manhandled police personnel and pelted stones forcing the police to use "mild" force.

Earlier, CM Manohar Lal, in Chandigarh, said 1,400 families at Khori Basti were voters of Haryana and the government was working on a plan for their rehabilitation.

He added that these PTMs will be a space for parents to understand how to provide regular learning support to their children.

## Govt. schools to hold PTMs from July 19-31

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Wednesday said that the Delhi government will be organising parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) in government schools between 19 July and July 31 to guide parents on how to provide learning support to children in times of COVID-19 pandemic.

"Although COVID-19 has impacted schooling adversely and we are unsure of when schools will open, but learning has not stopped, it has just been taken online. Online learning has increased the role of parents. Parents have always been a part of children's education but their role has increased," Mr. Sisodia said.

He added that these PTMs will be a space for parents to understand how to provide regular learning support to their children.

## Class 10 assessment: High Court pulls up NGO over plea

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday pulled up an NGO for approaching it at the 11th hour seeking a direction to all CBSE-affiliated

schools to publish on their websites the rationale document of the assessment criteria for Class 10 students before finalising the results, for greater transparency.

</div



## Small doses

The first relief package for the second COVID-19 wave falls short of expectations

**A**fter asserting that people should wait for the Union Budget's announcements to trickle down before seeking a fresh stimulus to cope with the second wave of the pandemic, the government finally unveiled a relief package of sorts this Monday. The financial implications of the measures, such as the promise of easy small-ticket loans for 25 lakh micro-entrepreneurs and 11,000 tourist agents and free tourist visas, have been projected at about ₹6.29 lakh crore by the Finance Ministry. Nearly ₹2.68 lakh crore of this is in the form of credit guarantees. A further ₹1.5 lakh crore of guarantees has been promised to add to the ₹3 lakh crore emergency credit scheme, but the scheme's tenure hasn't been extended beyond September 30. Similar backing has been announced for loans worth ₹60,000 crore to COVID-affected sectors, but only tourism has been publicly identified. Enhancing loan guarantees will perhaps give risk-averse lenders more confidence in extending loans when the credit:deposit ratio has hit a multi-year low. But there is little to make such loans viable by stirring demand for goods and services. Free visas are a good idea but are unlikely to gain traction till India has a firmer grip on the pandemic by providing vaccines for all, including for those under 18. Loans of ₹1 lakh to ₹10 lakh for travel agents may help meet some liabilities or expenses but won't make people take holidays. Just like last year's ₹20 lakh crore package, the actual outgo from the exchequer this time is minimal and the direct stimulus to demand abysmal.

Additional spending of ₹15,000 crore to ramp up paediatric healthcare, with guarantees for ₹50,000 crore low-interest loans for health projects in the hinterland, are critical to cope with future pandemic waves. It makes sense to direct resources towards health and faster vaccination. But the inclusion of measures already announced (such as fertilizer subsidies and food grains for the poor), along with spends planned over the next two or five years, and even a ₹77.5 crore bailout plan for an ailing farm marketing firm, gives the package just extra padding. Investing time and resources to figure out some form of income support for the vulnerable sections in rural and urban areas would have been more helpful. Weak demand is a bigger concern for industry this year as high inflation, a propensity to save for future medical bills, and an uncertain job market have led to belt-tightening from consumers. If the government is hesitant about creating new doles for the fear of them becoming permanent features, it could have at least offered some immediate relief for all by addressing the elephant in the room - high fuel prices. This would dampen inflation, empower RBI to lend greater support to growth and leave a little more money in people's hands to spend. While the effort to maintain fiscal restraint may impress global rating agencies, they would be among the first to acknowledge that there's a tipping point where policy inaction risks hurting the economy's long-term prospects.

## Desert home

India seems to have warmed up to the UAE as a cricketing venue after earlier misgivings

**T**he ICC Twenty20 World Cup's shift from India to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was inevitable following recurrent waves of COVID-19 infections and the logistical difficulties of hosting an event featuring multiple squads. Over the last few weeks, the news first started as a source-based whisper before the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)'s top brass - President Sourav Ganguly and Secretary Jay Shah - spoke individually, clearly stating that India would host the championship in the UAE. Finally, the International Cricket Council issued a statement declaring that the tournament will be held from October 17 to November 14 with Oman stepping in as a co-host for the qualifiers. Once the BCCI scheduled the remainder of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in West Asia ahead of the T20 World Cup, it was no surprise that the premier championship too would follow suit. With its three grounds at Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah being in close proximity, the UAE cuts out the need for air travel, and teams can adhere to bio-bubbles in their respective hotels, an essential requirement in these fraught times of a constantly mutating virus. India hosted England earlier this year and the IPL too commenced this summer, but the pandemic's surge meant that the league had to be suspended while a second wind was sought in the desert sands prior to the T20 World Cup.

That for a year India paused its domestic cricket makes it all the more difficult for it to suddenly lend its weight to international fixtures at home. Now that the ambivalence has been shed, it is interesting to note the emergence of the UAE as a popular neutral venue. Fans of a certain vintage would recall past jousts at Sharjah lit up by the legendary exploits of stars ranging from Javed Miandad to Sachin Tendulkar. And then India stayed away for a while as talk about bookies and off-field corrupt influences surfaced. Meanwhile, terrorism-scarred Pakistan kept the UAE as its home venue as nervous rivals refused to land either at Karachi or Lahore. Since then, India has warmed up to the UAE as a cricketing outpost while Pakistan has found a few visitors willing to play on its turf. As a second host for the IPL, the UAE has always stepped forward and India had an instant solution for its T20 World Cup hosting crisis. After winning the inaugural ICC World T20 in South Africa back in 2007, India has suffered a title drought and there is a case for course correction. But before that, its dual units have to tackle six limited-overs contests in Sri Lanka and five Tests in England.

# How the Chinese Communist Party endures

In large measure it is due to the party's ability to sum up the lessons of history and change course quite drastically, if required



ALKA ACHARYA

**C**itizens in China encapsulate the transformation of the country under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) thus: under Mao Zedong, China 'zhan qilai' (stood up); under Deng Xiaoping, China 'fu qilai' (became rich) and under Xi Jinping, China is well on course to 'qiang qilai' (becoming powerful). Inevitably, the organisation that has steered this 'rise' and its ability to ride out a succession of domestic and external crises and yet emerge stronger and more resilient has been the cynosure of intense debates.

The CPC's longevity is due in large measure to its ability to sum up the lessons of history and change course quite drastically, if required. While the Mao, Deng and Xi periods are conventional markers to distinguish the shifts and departures over the past 70 years, it would be an error to assess China as if it was born in 1949. The *longue duree* is something the Chinese communists take very seriously. This analysis seeks to identify five major lessons that have guided the CPC over the course of the past century.

### The birth of a new China

The first major lesson was drawn from the colonial era, when China was "carved up like a melon", and the humiliation heaped by the western colonial powers. The collapse of the Qing Empire in 1911 brought about the desired political revolution and China entered the comity of nations. The location of the CPC in the sensibilities and imagination of the Chinese people today cannot be understood without reference to what was actually

accomplished by the victory of the CPC first over the Japanese and then the Kuomintang in 1949. The Communist Party was on the right side of history. It fused the people with a collective purpose - the rejuvenation of China - and gave them a 'national' identity. With its ideology and superb organisational skills and the assistance of a lean but highly disciplined People's Liberation Army to power its sines, the CPC combined the thousands of sparks that were simmering throughout the country into one big explosive social revolution, demolishing an entire social class. This was 'liberation' - not mere independence - and the birth of a new China, encapsulated in the popular post-1949 slogan, "mei you gongchangdang; mei you xin zhongguo (If there had been no Communist Party, there would not have been a new China)". Such a comprehensive political, economic and social destruction, as it were, is unparalleled in the history of modern revolutions.

This historical experience underpinned Mao's nationalist message on October 1, 1949: China had "stood up" and it would never let itself be humiliated again. It was not until well into the Deng period that the theme of humiliation was encountered less frequently, but the importance of standing up to external forces that seek to impose their ways has endured. Strong responses to any perceived attack on sovereignty (Tibet and Taiwan, for instance), the categorical rejection of anything that could be interpreted as a dilution of national interest or the determined push-back of attempts to impose or lecture about 'western' values are cases in point. The 'Wolf Warrior' diplomacy in recent times can be seen against that backdrop - the authority and power of the ruling elite in China can under no circumstances be undermined in the eyes of its people.

The second signal lesson came out of the success of the Bolshevik



revolution in 1917. But Marxism had to be 'Sinicised' before it could be applied to the Chinese conditions. Mao took the revolution from the cities to the countryside and in the process, imparted to the Chinese revolution a populist character that the Bolshevik revolution did not have. The concept of 'Sinicisation' is essentially a tool for grounding any 'foreign' concept or idea in the Chinese conditions. It was seen in the post-1949 strategies of economic development and industrialisation when China rejected both the Soviet and the capitalist model. Over the years, the process of 'Sinicisation' has morphed into 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. It is in this vein that Mr. Xi speaks about the need to adapt Marxism to China's modern requirements.

### Lessons from Tiananmen

Political centralisation had inevitably come on the heels of the revolution, though the CPC under both Mao and Deng attempted to balance it with decentralisation. And then came the third historical lesson - out of the Tiananmen crisis of 1989. The simmering dissatisfaction stemming from the uneven impact of Deng's reforms and the problem of corruption in the CPC since the mid-1980s burst out in massive demonstrations and more critically, from the CPC's point of view, fostered a sense of solidarity among the students and workers. The demonstrations were crushed by a massive use of force. For Deng

the lesson was that if China was to achieve its economic objectives, it "could not afford chaos". Stability was accorded top priority and the nation's energies channelled into "getting rich", which has continued to be the chief plank of the CPC's governance after Deng down to Mr. Xi. Inevitably, that translated into clamping down on political freedoms, and centralising tendencies gained the upper hand. As ideology declines, the dependence on the organisation in holding the country together increases and makes imperative the need for a strong leader who can ensure that stability. This has reached unprecedented levels with Mr. Xi ensuring that every unit of political, economic, social and cultural organisation in China is not only juxtaposed with the CPC but also functions within the parameters set by the party.

The fourth lesson stemmed from the defining structural transformation of the post-World War II international order - the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Socialist bloc in 1991. The rejection of the Stalinist period by the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev was highly problematic; as Deng told his comrades, you cannot and must not deny your history. Recall the official assessment: "Mao was 70% right and 30% wrong". But more importantly, it underscored the necessity of a strong party-state and its firm control over the market forces. Over the years, this has only been affirmed with greater conviction.

Finally, we have a slew of lessons spilling out since China decided to dispense with its 'low profile' in foreign affairs. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has donned the mantle of a great power with aplomb - it thinks like a great power and to that extent, it will follow the logic of power in its dealings with the world. The aftermath of the pandemic provided Mr. Xi with the opportunity to demon-

strate that the PRC is a responsible major power. The world's response and acceptance are mixed. The CPC would do well to reflect on the lessons that need to be drawn about the reactions to its assertiveness.

### Costs of success

Bringing nearly 800 million people out of poverty is an amazing achievement, whichever way you see it, but it has come with huge domestic costs. China is one of the most unequal societies in the world today. Its unprecedented growth has created unparalleled environmental challenges spilling beyond its borders. Rapidly shrinking state welfare packages have made the increasing population of the elderly more vulnerable. And it is struggling with a disturbing gender imbalance. There are certainly many lessons here as Manoranjan Mohanty's book, *China's Transformation: The Success Story and the Success Trap*, points out, about how not to grow.

It is more important than ever to understand the nature and power of this organisation; its strengths and weaknesses; its ability to capture the imagination of the people - and interestingly, the youth. It has refuted prognostications of its demise with its capacity for reinventing, regenerating and renewing its compact with the people, strengthened, among other things, by its ability to continue learning from history. The world is dealing not merely with a nation state but with an authoritarian party-state that foregrounds its civilisational culture - and at its helm is an organisation that is steering the country towards its own tryst with destiny. It remains to be seen whether the CPC is still on the right side of history, but the party is by no means over.

Alka Acharya is Professor of Chinese Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University and Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi. Views are personal

## An attempt to silence the film fraternity

The proposed amendments to the cinematograph law will prevent film-makers from making certain kinds of films



KAMAL HAASAN

**C**an we remain silent when there is a proposal to muzzle our society's voice of creativity and reflection? I have always believed in the power of cinema to transform society and I still do. The belief stems from my personal experiences as a film-maker and I have also seen first-hand what it is to defend one's constitutional rights. The recent action of the Central government is one such. I am referring to the draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2021 for which the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has asked for opinions before presenting it to Parliament.

### The draft Bill

My icon, M.K. Gandhi, failed to realise the full potential of cinema and so did E.V. Ramasamy. Imagine if righteous people like them had taken cognisance of this platform? The power of this medium

has made me what I am today. Cinema is an auteur's medium. But it is also the voice of the people and hence the voice of the institution of democracy. Now the Central government is keen to seize that voice of democracy by a single act of Parliament.

The draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill proposes to add a proviso to sub-section (1) of Section 6 of the Cinematograph Act to grant revisionary powers to the Central government to direct re-examination of films that have already been certified for public exhibition. This is done predominantly with a view to empower the government to interfere and influence the independence of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) in certifying films and, more dangerously, to reopen records of already certified films.

It is pertinent that we understand the present scenario to clearly perceive the excess of the proposed amendment. While the current censorship rules are archaic and redundant and we have been crying ourselves hoarse to abolish the same, inviting artistes to be their own censors, the amendment to provide for revisionary powers to any government



after certification is a step further back. This amendment comes close on the heels of the government's decision, in April 2021, to abolish the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal. Consequently, the only resort available now to any film-maker who is aggrieved by a decision of the CBFC is to approach the relevant High Court which would be too expensive and time-consuming for most film-makers.

Through this amendment, the Central government has sought to usurp powers that are held to be "unconstitutional" by the Supreme Court of India. Portions of Section 6(1) of the principal Act were held to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in *Union of India v. K. M. Shankarappa* (2000). The Court held that "Section 6(1) is

a travesty of the rule of law which is one of the basic structures of the Constitution".

### Revisionary powers

The impression that the Central government is trying to create now is that it is powerless to act against complaints received. I had the experience of a State government acting on a complaint and an imaginary scenario. I did showcase my film before its release to my brethren who expressed their apprehensions even after the Censor Board certified it. The imbroglio created over the film's supposedly inflammatory nature led to the closing of doors of theatres in my own State, all due to political machinations. It is that avenue which this amendment opens out to any government to use its revisionary powers, which it anyway has.

The government is well empowered to act against complaints received, by submitting itself to judicial review against decisions of the CBFC granting certification, instead of trying to impose executive excess, which was the core principle laid down by the Supreme Court through its order. The Central government seems to have ma-

nipulated and manoeuvred this situation since the Tribunal has recently been struck down.

The draft Bill will only restrict freedom of speech and put a gag on the film fraternity, preventing film-makers from making films on bad governance, social evils, and so on. Further, any executive authority may be emboldened to ban films based on frivolous petitions of groups with vested interests or fringe groups.

In this age of the Internet, every person is more than a mere soapbox orator. The government is aiming to silence its people. All those who trust and are invested in liberty, equality and fraternity should voice their protest. If temporary myopia is the problem of certain sections of the media and other political parties, then the Makkal Needhi Maiam and I will become the torchbearers.

The time to rally is now, since the government has invited comments from the public till July 2 before the Bill is taken to Parliament. Acts once passed will affect generations to come.

Kamal Haasan is a film-maker and artiste and President of the Makkal Needhi Maiam

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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- Feeding the migrants** The Supreme Court has rightly put the onus of feeding the migrants on the government ("Ensure that no migrant worker goes hungry, SC instructs govt.", June 30). The pathetic condition of the migrants following the lockdown last year is well known. Only a small band of selfless volunteers and organisations offered them help. This is never going to be enough. And it is, after all, the government's responsibility to ensure the welfare of the migrants. ANTHONY HENRIQUES, Mumbai
- That the Court slammed the Labour Ministry for its "unpardonable apathy" in not completing the work of the National Database for Unorganised Workers is quite a strong judicial indictment. It is hoped that the government which failed to monitor the implementation of the court's directives of 2018 will do so at least now. Those responsible for this "unpardonable" failure to set up the migrant database should also be pulled up for dereliction of duty. While migrant labourers contribute immensely to developmental activities in India, at sites far away from their homes, they are voiceless in the absence of any recognised collective association that can bargain with their employers for the betterment of their working conditions. The Labour Ministry must encourage the formation of such labour unions. S.K. CHOUDHURY, Bengaluru
- I wish to highlight the trend of extending the tenures of heads of various government bodies and bureaucratic arms ("Kant's tenure extended", June 30). While it is obviously convenient to let the officer continue, especially if he or she continues to be in the good books of the ruling party, it is not desirable from the perspective of encouraging merit and building the morale of officers. The silence of the establishment is deafening - no senior bureaucrat has condemned this dangerous trend. It is obviously unfair to those in waiting as they end up losing their chance of occupying higher posts. The convention of an age limit is also ignored. This implies that some people are irreplaceable, which is hardly a defensible point in such a large country. Extensions should only be given as exceptions and that too for not more than a single term. Else, this trend only encourages conformism and a culture of meritocracy and the morale of senior officers will continue to be in peril. SUNIL KUMAR K., Bengaluru
- Demanding transparency in the process of the university ranking system is different from discrediting the same ("The trouble with rankings", June 30). There cannot be any dispute that the world needs an objective, quantifiable and verifiable system or systems to compare the work of various universities to enable students and teachers to make an informed choice and for other important purposes. Though the present systems of ranking are not without their shortcomings, they are serving the purpose at least to some extent. There is always room for making improvements in the criteria based on which the rankings are arrived at. Criteria such as 'citations', 'peer review' and 'research publications' are important yardsticks, but they can be made more rigorous by introducing the factor of 'quality of research'. With regard to judging the universities from the social perspective, this may be suitably integrated into the ranking system. It can be made one of the criteria with appropriate weightage. KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI, Hyderabad
- Corrections & clarifications:** It is Sputnik V vaccine: A front-page graphic titled "One more joins the battle" (June 30, 2021) had erroneously called it Sputnik B while listing the other vaccines available.
- It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the editor (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; e-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. Personal visits are welcome. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com

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## INTERVIEW | MONTEK SINGH AHLUWALIA

# India's 1991 liberalisation leap and lessons for today

The reforms were hugely successful but a lot remains to be done, says one of the architects of the transition

VIKAS DHOT

*Three decades after India embarked upon the path of economic liberalisation, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, one of the key figures of the reform process, former Deputy Chairman of the erstwhile Planning Commission and currently Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP), discusses in an interview with The Hindu the transition of the Indian economy, what remains to be done, and the road ahead after recovery from the slowdown induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Edited excerpts:*

How would you describe the evolution of the economy since 1991?

■ The reforms were aimed at unleashing the energies of the private sector to accelerate economic growth and to do so in a manner that ensured an adequate flow of benefits to the poor. They certainly succeeded in this objective.

The full benefits took time to materialise because a gradualist approach was adopted – entirely understandable in a democracy – but the results are dramatic if we look at a longer time frame. The GDP growth averaged 7% in the 25 years from 1992 to 2017, compared with an average of 5% in the preceding ten years and 4% in the preceding 20! And as growth accelerated, poverty declined. Between 2004-05 and 2011-12, the last year for which official data on poverty are available, about 140 million people were pulled above the poverty line. This is not to say that there were no shortcomings. Some of the reforms begun in 1991, especially in the financial sector, have yet to be completed. We have not done as much as we should have in the health and education sectors; environmental concerns have not been adequately built into our development strategy.

In his book, *Confessions of a Swadeshi Reformer*, former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha has said that a lot of the blueprint for the liberalisation was already on the table when the Narasimha Rao government took charge. Could you give us a glimpse of that period and what were the key changes being worked out before the change of the regime?

■ I have written on this subject in my book *Backstage*, but let me attempt a brief encapsulation. To get a glimpse of the period, one should consider the main features of the control system before the reforms and see how it restricted entrepreneurship.

The private sector was not allowed to invest in a number of sectors thought to

be critical for development. The so-called “commanding heights” were reserved for the public sector despite its lacklustre performance. Where the private sector was allowed, it could invest only after getting an industrial licence, and that was especially hard to get for “large” industrial houses. Over 860 items were reserved exclusively for small-scale producers, including many that had very high export potential. Imports were more strictly controlled than in almost any other developing country because it was felt necessary to conserve scarce foreign exchange. Consumer goods simply could not be imported so domestic producers faced no import competition. Producers could import capital goods and intermediates needed for production, but this generally required an import licence. This was given only if the government was satisfied that the import was essential and domestic substitutes were not available. Finally, the import of technology was controlled and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was discouraged.

It was clearly not a system geared to encourage enterprise or innovation. I am reminded of George Santayana’s much-quoted words: “Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it.” Since most of the population today has no recollection of the control system we had earlier, I hope it will serve to ensure that we never slip back to these absurdities.

Efforts were made in the 1980s to liberalise the system but these were incremental changes. The system itself remained in place. By 1990, it was clear that drastic change was needed. I had the opportunity to prepare a paper outlining a core set of industrial and trade policy reforms, combined with exchange rate reform and reforms in the public sector. This paper, dubbed by the media as the ‘M Document’, generated a great deal of controversy, but several people supported the need for these reforms. Around that time, the Ministry of Industry under Ajit Singh (newly returned from the United States) proposed bold liberalisation of industrial li-



■ The government’s decision to stay out of the RCEP went against the Prime Minister’s earlier positive signal of moving from “Look East” to “Act East”

censing, but he was opposed by the Finance Ministry under Madhu Dandavate, and only a watered-down version was announced.

As Commerce Secretary in the Chandra Shekhar government, I started working on trade policy reforms along the lines suggested in the ‘M Document’, including bringing in Eximscripts, as a first step in moving to a flexible exchange rate. In April 1991, Dr. Manmohan Singh, who was then Adviser to Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, delivered the convocation address at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, where he outlined what he thought were the key reforms needed. It included many of the suggestions in the ‘M Document’ and went beyond them.

In other words, the ideas that finally went into the reforms were on the table before 1991. But they had not been approved politically. It was the P.V. Narasimha Rao-Manmohan Singh duo that implemented them in 1991. The fact that the economy was in a crisis helped, but their success is also due to the fact that there was a well-thought-out policy package to implement.

Even so, it was not easy. Both the Right and the Left opposed the reforms. The Congress party itself had many who were not convinced. Indian businesses were also conflicted. They liked domestic liberalisation, but were unhappy at the entry of foreign competition, both through imports and FDI.

Some pending factor market reforms, in areas such as labour and land, remain hanging. Are they not holding up investment?

■ Yes, these are key pending items. The need for labour market reforms was recognised, but it was thought that we should first get the industrial, trade and

investment

financial sector reforms to show positive results and take up labour market reforms later ... In a meeting with businessmen in 2006, PM Manmohan Singh was asked about labour market reforms. He said ... if we could get the economy to grow at 10%, it would be easier to persuade labour. We did grow at over 9% for a few years but persuading labour proved to be difficult.

On the land market, I must admit that it was not on our agenda. One reason is that land is a State subject and the Centre had enough on its plate. In the UPA [United Progressive Alliance] years, it did get involved in land acquisition because this was an area with a lot of agitation and allegations of heavy-handedness. Unfortunately, the resulting legislation introduced too many conditions, which could greatly delay the process.

India progressively lowered import tariffs from an estimated 57.5% in 1992 to 8.9% in 2008, but this trend has been reversed over the past few years. While this appears to be in line with rising protectionism globally, can India afford to do this if it wants to play a greater role in world trade?

■ I feel the reversal of a trend that was followed by several governments, including the NDA [National Democratic Alliance] government under former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, is unfortunate. It will hamper our stated ambition to become part of global supply chains.

Indian industry has legitimate complaints about poor infrastructure, poor logistics and time-consuming trade procedures, which reduce its competitiveness. But the solution lies in addressing these problems directly, not in raising import duties, which will only raise costs in the economy.

I also fear that once the government signals a willingness to raise duties to help individual products, it will encourage a flood of demands that will be difficult to resist. The government should engage with Indian industry and other experts to come to an agreement on what the average level of duties should be and how it should be reduced over time. The NITI Aayog under its first Vice-Chairman, Arvind Panagariya, had recommended that we should move to an average duty rate of about 7%, gradually narrowing the range of variation across products and eliminating duty reversals. This is the right approach.

Should we revisit our stance on the RCEP [Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership] even as we try

to re-engage with markets such as the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union and Australia for free-trade pacts?

■ I was surprised by the Centre’s decision to stay out of the RCEP. It went against the Prime Minister’s earlier positive signal of moving from “Look East” to “Act East”. I assume that there was lobbying from those who fear that the Indian industry would not be able to compete against China, a member of the RCEP.

On the land market, I must admit that it was not on our agenda. One reason is that land is a State subject and the Centre had enough on its plate. In the UPA [United Progressive Alliance] years, it did get involved in land acquisition because this was an area with a lot of agitation and allegations of heavy-handedness. Unfortunately, the resulting legislation introduced too many conditions, which could greatly delay the process.

As I have already mentioned, the Indian industry has legitimate complaints about things that make India uncompetitive, and these must be addressed directly. The reduction in tariffs required under RCEP was to be accomplished over several years, giving ample time to take the steps needed to improve our competitiveness. As far as unfair competition from China is concerned, the solution lies in a faster method of imposing anti-dumping duties on China, not raising import duties across the board. We should note that geopolitics is forcing major countries to reduce dependence on China. India cannot expect to replace China, but it can reasonably expect to become a major player in non-China-dominated supply chains. RCEP membership would help as it will reassure partners that trade policy will not be arbitrarily changed.

As for Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with the U.S., Europe and the U.K., we have traditionally preferred trade liberalisation in a multilateral forum, but major developed countries seem to be moving away from multilateral negotiations. Working on agreements with important groups bilaterally seems to be the only hope for assuring market access. However, such FTAs will involve more give and take, including on contentious issues such as intellectual property rights and bilateral investment protection, and we must be willing to accept that.

The spectre of jobless growth was a matter of great debate in the UPA years. Did the situation worsen post-UPA even before the pandemic, which of course has led to severe income and job losses?

■ Employment was a matter of concern during the UPA period, but it had some positive features. The period was the first time we saw a fall in employment in agriculture ... but it was accompanied by sufficient growth in total employment in non-agriculture sectors, so that the labour displaced from agriculture

was absorbed in non-agriculture. Total employment actually increased...

The post-UPA period before the pandemic has been analysed in a recent study by Santosh Mehrotra and Jajati K. Parida. They find that the substantial slowdown in GDP growth after 2016-17 led to employment actually falling from 474 million in 2011-12 to 469 million in 2018-19. Employment in agriculture continued to decline, reflecting a normal structural change, but unlike the UPA years, non-agricultural employment grew much more slowly. So, open unemployment increased. The problem was most severe among the youth, who experienced unemployment of 18%.

The COVID-19 pandemic has of course triggered a collapse in employment. According to provisional National Income estimates, GDP contracted by 7.3% in 2020-21. Many analysts say this underestimates the contraction as the adverse impact on the informal sector is not captured. In any case, a sharp fall in the GDP is bound to lead to a contraction in total employment, and we are seeing that in the data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy.

What do you think should be the priorities looking ahead?

■ The economy is clearly recovering from the contraction induced by the pandemic, but how quickly it will recover is uncertain. Much depends upon whether we are hit by a third wave, and more importantly on how severe it is. The priority now must be to get the vaccination coverage expanded as soon as possible. This will create conditions conducive to a return to normalcy.

However, recovery will only take us back to the 2019-20 level ... If we only go back to the pre-pandemic growth rate of around 4% to 5%, we will get little respite on the employment front or on reducing poverty. Past experience shows that we need to get back to 7% to 8% growth if we want to make progress on poverty reduction and provide enough jobs for our growing labour force.

Once the pandemic is brought under control and we are back to the 2019-20 level of production, the government would be well-advised to take a hard look at what caused the slowdown before the pandemic, and then come out with a clear statement of a set of mutually supportive policies that will counter these forces and lead to higher growth and higher employment. It should also come out with a target for post-pandemic growth.

(Read the full interview at <https://bit.ly/MontekSingh>)

## Reimagining examinations

Disruptions caused by the pandemic call for innovative and holistic methods of assessment

N. ARUNACHALAM

For students, empowerment and acquisition of knowledge begin when they are properly evaluated in an appropriate examination system through a process that provides immediate results and success.

The online pattern of examination should not only judge intellectual development, as is prevalent in the present-day examination system, but it must also test the holistic development of students. It is the responsibility of every academician and authority to find the ways and means to conduct online examinations with reliable standards amid the COVID-19 pandemic. To successfully complete examinations during this period, constructive strategies, particularly in the online mode, should be employed, rather than calling for the cancellation of exams.

The Supreme Court had stated last year that students in higher education cannot be promoted without writing the final-year or terminal semester examinations, and a directive to the University Grants Commission (UGC) had said the States cannot promote students based on internal assessment or past performance. The court made it clear that the States could, under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, postpone final-year or final-semester exams, but they did not have the power to direct universities to promote students based on prior performance, as students’ assessment was the prerogative of the UGC. The UGC rules clearly stated that a degree cannot be granted without examinations.

**Inclusive ways**  
It is now mandatory that final-year semester examinations should be conducted either online, offline, or a combination of both methods. Therefore, a new examination pattern should be crafted. It must include the assessment of educational objectives of understanding, critical and independent thinking, problem-solving ability, reflective thinking, skill development, and application of knowledge. In other words, a revised system should assess analytical and

application skills, rather than mere knowledge in a given time slot. This would enhance the quality and competence of students.

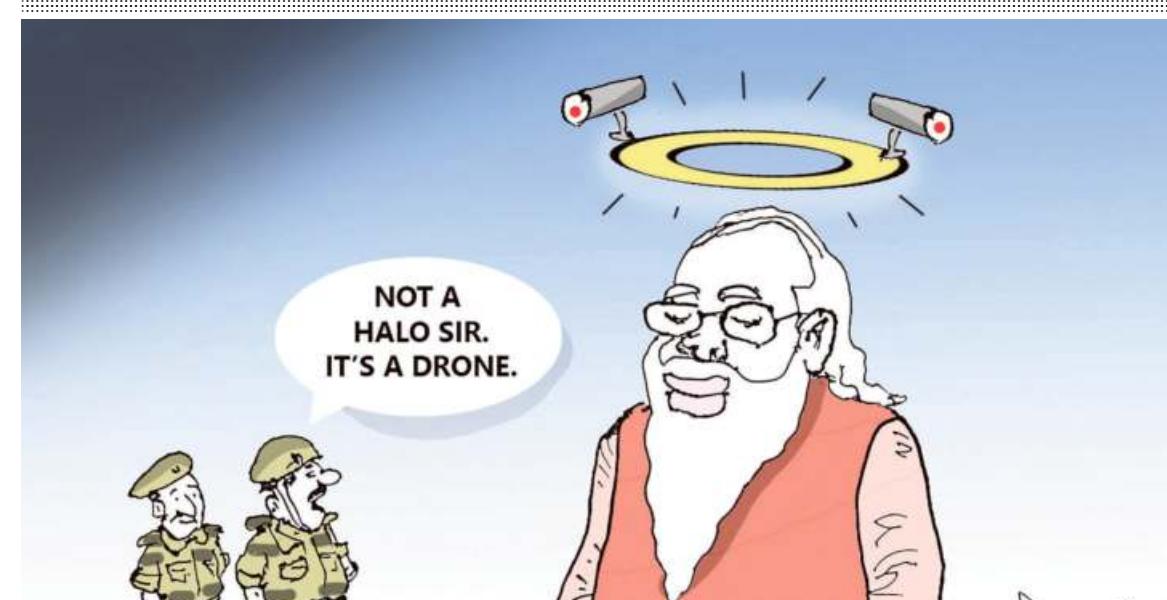
To restrict copying, answer scripts may be assessed using plagiarism software. With technological tools, monitoring and supervision of students during online examinations is not a difficult task. Many of the world’s leading universities, some premier Indian institutes, and a few State universities conduct examinations online efficiently and fairly through suitable tools.

**Looking for alternatives**  
An alternative approach may be open-book examinations – it allows students to refer to textbooks or other source material while answering questions. Students are provided with questions before sitting for the exam, and they can even complete the test at home. This will help counter rote learning, which pervades the current examination system, while also sensitising students to real learning and analytical and application skills. Open-book examination is a well-accepted concept in many countries around the world.

Last week, the Supreme Court directed States that have cancelled Class 12 examinations of their respective Boards to spell out their assessment plans. It has also cleared the evaluation criteria proposed by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) for their Class 12 examinations.

Testing the knowledge gained and the presentation of that is the essence of education. As Jiddu Krishnamurti said, “It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education.” Criticism should be accepted constructively in order to frame an innovative examination system. It is the foremost responsibility of policymakers and educationists to tackle the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

D. N. Arunachalam is Professor of Lifelong Learning, Journalism and Mass Communication at Alagappa University



### DATA POINT

**South stands apart** | People in the South of India tend to be more religiously integrated and less opposed to interreligious marriages, data from a nationwide survey conducted by the Pew Research Centre show. Though people from the southern States are equally, if not more, religious than citizens in other parts, relatively fewer of them consider theirs to be the “one true religion”. For instance, 62% of people from the South go to places of worship at least once a week, which is more than the share in Central, Eastern, Western and Northeastern parts. About 57% wore religious pendants, higher than all regions except Central India (58%). However, only 37% of them, the least among regions, thought it was important to stop women in their community from marrying into another religion. By The Hindu Data Team

**STARK CONTRAST** | The southerners were more liberal when it came to dietary restrictions. Relatively fewer of them considered a person to be not Hindu if they eat beef, or a person to be not Muslim if they consume pork. People from the South also had more “close friends” from outside their religion and caste circles compared to persons from other parts of India. About 75% of Hindus residing in southern India said they would accept a Muslim as a neighbour -- a stark contrast to all other parts of India. Importantly, education played a role in people’s religious beliefs. Religious opinions of the college-educated varied sharply from those who did not attend college.

% of Indian adults who said...	North	Central	East	West	South	North east	Less than college	College graduate
Religion is very important to them now personally	86	92	88	87	69	86	85	80
My religion is one true religion	40	55	41	44	26	47	42	33
Their close friends are the same religion as them	40	58	51	45	29	52	46	34
They would be willing to accept muslim as a neighbour (answer sought from Hindus)	56	46	51	62	75	34	56	63
It is very important to stop women in their community from marrying into another religion	74	86	72	70	37	56	69	54
All of their close friends are members of the same caste	22	24	31	24	17	45	25	17
It is very important to stop women from marrying into another caste	72	83	64	67	37	51	65	50
Hindus who said a person cannot be Hindu if they eat beef	83	83	79	68	50	74	72	72
Muslims who said a person cannot be Muslim if they eat pork	72	92	76	71	63	74	77	83
It is very important to be a Hindu in order to be truly Indian	57	78	57	55	39	33	58	48
It is very important to speak Hindi to be truly Indian	62	85	53	52	27	40	56	48
They go to places of worship (at least weekly)	70	45	37	59	62	54	52	55
Have an altar, shrine or religious symbol in their home	81	86	77	88	76	67	81	83
They generally wear a religious pendant	53	58	53	40	57	34	53	48

**Methodology** | Pew interviewed 29,999 individuals across 29 States and UTs. Persons from all major religions, speaking at least 17 different languages across all age groups (excluding children), were included in the sample. The survey was conducted between November 17, 2019, and March 23, 2020.

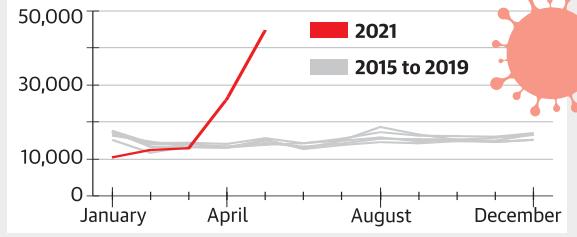
The Hindu

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## FROM PAGE ONE

## Chhattisgarh's excess deaths 4.8 times toll

**Excess deaths** | The graph shows the number of deaths registered by Chhattisgarh's CRS system. The data for 2021 is from the online registrations done in CRS portal and the data for 2015-2019 is from CRS annual reports



The month-wise figures between 2015 and 2019 were sourced from the CRS' annual reports.

If instead of averages, a year-by-year growth rate of deaths is considered, the State's 71,142 registered deaths in April-May 2021 were 2.2 times higher than the estimated 31,842 deaths. In this approach, the undercount factor slightly comes down from 4.85 to 4.4. However, estimating the undercount using the averages method would suit Chhattisgarh as the growth in deaths over years is not consistent.

**Conservative estimate**  
It is important to note that the excess deaths calculated are a conservative estimate given the low death registration levels of the State.

First, only 81.5% of deaths were registered in 2019, lower than 26 of the 36 States/Union Territories. This contrasts with death registration numbers in States such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala which were 100%, according to CRS 2019. Chhattisgarh's registration numbers are however higher than that of Bihar (51.6%) and Uttar Pradesh (63.3%).

Secondly, the registered deaths in April-May 2021 were based on only 24.32% of the registration units which reported fatalities online during the two months.

Whereas the figures from 2015-2019 were based on the CRS annual reports which had collated information from all the registration units. Thus, the actual deaths that occurred in April-May 2021 may be three times higher than reported and so the undercount factor may also increase substantially from 4.8 to about 10.

The registered deaths in the last two months could also be higher because in Chhattisgarh only 76.4% of deaths are registered within 21 days of death, a number that is lower than States like Punjab (98.9%), Himachal Pradesh (92.1%), West Bengal (91.7%), Andhra Pradesh (91.4%), Tamil Nadu (90.9%) among others. This could also increase the number of excess deaths and its multiple over the actual COVID-19.

(With inputs from Shubhomoy Sikdar)

## Drones, flying toys banned in J&amp;K district after attacks

The order directed all those in the district who possessed such gadgets to deposit them with the local police station. Government agencies using drones for surveys and surveillance should inform the local police station in charge and the executive magistrate. It warned of action against those who violate the order.

On Monday, the Army said two separate drone activities were spotted over the Ratnachak-Kaluchak Military area.

In Kashmir, police sources said at least two drones were seized since Monday.

## No leadership change in Karnataka: Vijayendra

He reiterates BJP high command's view

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MYSURU/BENGALURU

BJP State vice-president B.Y. Vijayendra on Wednesday sought to make it clear that the party's central leadership had ruled out any change of leadership in Karnataka till the end of the term of the current Assembly.

He told presspersons in Mysuru that BJP national general secretary Arun Singh, who is in charge of Karnataka, had praised Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's administration

while making it clear that he would continue at the helm for the remaining two years of the term of the Assembly. He replied in the affirmative when asked if the campaign for change of leadership was a "closed chapter."

Mr. Vijayendra, who is Mr. Yediyurappa's son, said there was no need to attach any political significance to visits by BJP MLAs or Ministers to New Delhi. "There is no bar on anybody visiting the national capital...there is no need to lend a political colour to the visits."

## Farmers and BJP workers clash at Ghazipur border, six injured

Each side holds the other responsible for the 'planned' fracas on the expressway

ANUJ KUMAR  
GHAZIABAD

Farmers and the Bharatiya Janata Party workers clashed at the Ghazipur border on Wednesday. Each side held the other responsible for the fracas in which at least six BJP workers sustained minor injuries and around two dozen cars that were part of the party cavalcade damaged.

BJP district president Sanjeev Sharma said he and 300 party workers were waiting on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway to welcome Amit Vimali, the newly appointed general secretary of the party's Uttar Pradesh unit, who was travelling from Delhi to Bulandshahr.

## 'Black flags'

"Suddenly, around 30-40 members of the Bharatiya Jana Union jumped the dividers and started showing black flags. We didn't mind black flags but when they started damaging our vehicles, we asked the police to intervene," said Mr. Sharma.



BJP workers show a sword on a damaged vehicle after a clash with farmers at Ghazipur border on Wednesday. ■ PTI

He added he saw BKU workers donning their green caps and some Sikhs among those who attacked their vehicles. "It was a planned protest as they had come prepared with black flags on sticks and swords," Mr. Sharma claimed.

"As there were many members of the SC-ST Morcha at the spot to welcome their leader [Amit Vimali], they lodged a complaint with the police," he added.

Farmer groups described it as yet another planned attempt of the ruling party to disrupt their peaceful movement against the agriculture reform laws.

## 'Slogans against farmers'

"The workers of the ruling party were beating drums and raising slogans against the ongoing farmers' movement since morning. They had been trying to provoke the farmers. When some BJP

workers tried to climb on our stage, farmers pushed them back," said BKU national spokesperson Rakesh Tikait, adding they would lodge a complaint with the police. "If they want to come on our platform, they should leave the BJP first," he added.

Farmer leader Jagtar Singh Bajwa also described it as an attempt to discredit their movement. "Those who were part of the welcoming party themselves damaged their vehicles and put the blame on farmers," he alleged.

Anshu Jain, Circle Officer, Ghaziabad, said the police had to intervene. "The injuries were not of serious nature and some vehicles were damaged when the cavalcade moved ahead from where police were present. The claim of the farmer groups that BJP workers were trying to climb on their stage seems far-fetched as two lanes of Expressway separated them."

## Google removed 59,350 posts in April

In first transparency report under new IT rules, firm says it got over 27,700 complaints from users

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Google removed 59,350 pieces of content from its social media platforms in April last, following over 27,700 complaints received from individual users in India, according to the company's maiden monthly transparency report.

The report follows the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 that came into force on May 26.

The rules require social media platforms with more than 50 lakh users in India to publish compliance report every month mentioning the details of complaints received and action taken.

The undercut factor during the first wave could not be analysed as the annual CRS report for 2020 has not yet been released and the number of units which reported deaths in the online portal were very low during the period. Also, the undercount factor for 2021 was a smaller multiple (3.6) for a similar reason. The excess death figure and the undercount factor will be revised when data from all registration units get recorded.

(With inputs from Shubhomoy Sikdar)

## Govt. must correct its mistake: Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said the Supreme Court had given the Union government an opportunity to rectify its mistake by directing it to pay compensation to the kin of all those who died of COVID-19.

"SC has given an opportunity to the Modi government to rectify its mistake. At least now the government should provide relief to the victims by fixing the right amount of compensation. This is an important step in the right direction," he tweeted.

Earlier, in the day, a Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan held that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) – headed by the Prime Minister as its ex officio chairperson – had failed to perform its duty and gave six weeks to fix the guidelines for fixing the ex gratia compensation amount.

"This is a vindication of the Congress party's stance and the demand raised by Rahul Gandhi for the creation of a COVID Compensation Fund and grant of Rs. 10 Lakh to every COVID-19 victim by the Central Government by transferring 10% of the annual 'Fuel Loot' of Rs. 4 Lakh Crore being collected by the Government of India," Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said in a statement.

Mr. Gandhi again targeted the government on high taxes imposed on petrol and diesel by tweeting with the hash tag #TaxExtraction.

Mr. Gandhi again targeted the government on high taxes imposed on petrol and diesel by tweeting with the hash tag #TaxExtraction.

## Safe search

Google published its first monthly transparency report in accordance with the new IT rules in India. Highlights from the report



- Google received a total of 27,762 complaints in April this year from individual users located in India
- 59,350 pieces of content were removed from its social media platforms in April
- The new rules require social media platforms with more than 50 lakh users in India to publish a compliance report every month, mentioning the details of complaints received and action taken

The platforms also need to mention the number of specific communication links or parts of information they have removed or disabled access to, following proactive monitoring conducted by using automated tools.

In an emailed statement, a Google spokesperson said the company has a long history of providing transparency into the different types of requests it receives from around the world, and how it responds. All of these requests are

tracked and included in the company's existing Transparency Report since 2010.

"This is the first time we will publish a monthly transparency report in accordance with the new IT Rules, and will continue to publish more details as we refine our reporting processes for India," the spokesperson stated.

As per the report, the company received a total of 27,762 complaints from individual users located in India via designated mechanisms and relates to third-party content that is believed to violate local laws or personal rights on Google's significant social media intermediary (SSMI) platforms, including YouTube. This data also in-

'Centre's digital agri proposals raise concern'  
91 groups send feedback to govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Centre's digital agriculture proposals raise concerns of exploitation of farmers, data protection and consent, mismanaged land records, exclusion of landless cultivators and the corporatisation of agriculture, according to 91 organisations which sent in their feedback to the government on Wednesday.

The organisations said it was important to bring the benefits of digital technology to farmers, but emphasised that such digital infrastructure should be owned by the government, not private corporates. They alleged that the current model is more focussed on using the government's existing databases and geared towards corporate revenue models, rather than ensuring that farmers' needs and interests are considered.

The Centre published a consultation paper on an India Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture (IDEA) on June 1, and sought public feedback by the end of the month. The 91 organisations, which include some of the farm unions groups protesting against three farm reform laws at Delhi's borders as well as digital rights advocates, urged the government to extend the deadline to translate the

document into other languages in order to hold meaningful consultations with farmers. They noted that there is no farmer representation in the task force which brought out the proposals or in the governance framework of IDEA.

The organisations said it was important to bring the benefits of digital technology to farmers, but emphasised that such digital infrastructure should be owned by the government, not private corporates. They alleged that the current model is more focussed on using the government's existing databases and geared towards corporate revenue models, rather than ensuring that farmers' needs and interests are considered.

"The proposition of a 'farmers' database' based on digitised land records will lead to problems and exclusions,

given the seriously flawed condition of the digitised land records and their failure to capture the information of actual cultivators and those operating the landholding," said their letter.

## IN BRIEF



## Narada case: HC allows affidavits from State

KOLKATA  
The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday allowed applications of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Law Minister Moloy Ghatak and the State of West Bengal seeking submission of affidavits in Narada case.

"...When we receive complaints from individual users regarding allegedly unlawful or harmful content, we review the complaint to determine if the content violates our community guidelines or content policies, or meets local legal requirements for removal. The figure...shows the total number of removal actions taken during the one month reporting period," it said.

## CBI conducts searches in arecanut smuggling case

NEW DELHI  
The Central Bureau of Investigation has conducted searches at 19 locations in a case against unknown Central Excise and Customs officials and others for allowing the smuggling of substandard betel/arecanuts of Indonesian origin, leading to Customs Duty evasion of about ₹15,000 crore annually. The searches were carried out in Nagpur, Mumbai and Ahmedabad, on the premises of private persons, including proprietors or partners of importing firms and customs house agents.

## Bombay HC upholds TRAI's new tariff order

MUMBAI  
The Bombay High Court on Wednesday upheld the constitutional validity of the New Tariff Order (NTO) by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), except for two pricing conditions. A Division Bench said the *a la carte* rates of each pay channel forming part of a bouquet shall not exceed three times the average rate of the pay channel bouquet of which the channel is a part. The second condition is that the sum of the *a la carte* rates of pay channels forming part of a bouquet shall in no case exceed 1.5 times the rate of the entire bouquet of which the channel is a part.

## Modi government helped Patanjali get loans: Cong.

NEW DELHI  
The Congress on Wednesday alleged that the Narendra Modi government helped the Patanjali group buy out an insolvent company by arranging loans from public sector banks. At a virtual press conference, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera alleged that Patanjali group, led by yoga guru Ramdev, bought Ruchi Soya for ₹4,350 crore. "The Prime Minister and the government cannot continue to support these capitalists and businessmen babas at the expense of the exchequer," he said.

## It's up to NDMA to fix ex gratia amount

SC unimpressed by govt. argument that COVID-19 is a 'continuous disaster'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday left it to the "wisdom" of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to fix the amount of ex gratia to the families of those who lost their loved ones to COVID-19, while considering the recommendations in the 15th Finance Commission Report and funds required for other reliefs and priorities, including COVID-19 preparedness, mitigation, prevention and recovery.

Earlier, a Bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, Vineet Saran and M.R. Shah pulled up the NDMA for failing in its duty to recommend ex gratia.

Justice M.R. Shah, who authored the verdict, said



A relative mourning the loss of a dear one recently in Visakhapatnam. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

Authority recommending guidelines for the minimum standards of relief in the form of ex gratia assistance on account of loss of life of a person who has died due to COVID-19... the beneficial intent of the legislation [Disaster Management Act] cannot be frustrated," the judgment noted.

The court was unimpressed by the government's argument that COVID-19 was a "continuous disaster" whose trajectory cannot be predicted.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had contended that a one-time monetary compensation to victims would not help now. Besides, funds need to be channelled into public health, vaccination, treatment, food, economy, etc.

"Nothing is on record that any guidelines/decision has been taken by the National

judges should be wary while delving into economic and fiscal regulatory issues, but in this case, the Supreme Court was "absolutely justified" to intervene as the NDMA had failed in its duty.

Justice M.R. Shah, who authored the verdict, said

"Nothing is on record that any guidelines/decision has been taken by the National

judges should be wary while delving into economic and fiscal regulatory issues, but in this case, the Supreme Court was "absolutely justified" to intervene as the NDMA had failed in its duty.

Whether to hold big tech companies accountable was being viewed as a "governance issue and a democratic issue" by some. International relation was created to include states but the role of "non-state players who are in some ways bigger than many states" needed to be "seriously debated".

The Minister's remarks

imagined. But in a democratic society we have to ask ourselves, big tech is there in my life, but where is the responsibility [of the big tech]? You have a huge power but where is the accountability," the External Affairs Minister stated.

Whether to hold big tech companies accountable was being viewed as a "governance issue and a democratic issue" by some. International relation was created to include states but the role of "non-state players who are in some ways bigger than many states" needed to be "seriously debated".

## IN BRIEF

**'Implement Inter Caste Marriage Act in J&K'**

SRINAGAR

President of the All Party Sikh Coordination Committee Jagmohan Singh Raina (in the photo) on Wednesday demanded implementation of the Inter Caste Marriage Act in Jammu and Kashmir to stop interfaith marriages. "If the anti-conversion law is implemented, it would stop the forcible conversion of people belonging to any religion whatsoever," Mr. Raina said at a press conference in Srinagar.

**2 militants killed in Kulgam encounter**

SRINAGAR

Two militants were killed and a soldier was injured in two separate incidents in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday. The police said the militants were killed in an operation at Chimmer area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district. Violence was reported on Wednesday in Narbal area of Budgam district after the killing of Lashkar-e-Taiba 'commander' Abra Nabi in the Maloora encounter on Tuesday.

**149-year-old capital shifting ends in J&K**

SRINAGAR

The 149-year-old biannual tradition of shifting capitals between Srinagar and Jammu, by moving hundreds of official files physically in trucks on the treacherous Jammu-Srinagar highway, came to an end on Wednesday. The administration served notice to employees to vacate the 'Darbar Mow' related accommodations in three weeks in Jammu and Srinagar.

# India flags 'green pass' issue

Reciprocal restrictions for EU countries barring Indian entry, say sources

SUHASINI HAIDER  
NEW DELHI

India took issue with the European Union's plans to institute a "green pass" from July 1, with government sources warning that India will introduce a "reciprocal policy" only allowing ease of travel for those European countries that recognise Indian vaccines Covishield and Covaxin.

The latest twist to the controversy of the European Union's Digital Covid Certificate came a day after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met with his EU counterpart High Representative Josep Borrell Fontelles.

In a tweet after the meeting, Mr. Jaishankar indicated that he raised the issue of possible restrictions on Indian travellers in the EU if they do not have one of four vaccines approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), which include the

India will allow travel for those European countries that recognise Indian vaccines.

European-made AstraZeneca vaccine but not the Indian-made Covishield by the Serum Institute of India (SII) or Covaxin by Bharat Biotech.

"We have requested EU Member States to individually consider extending similar exemption to those persons who have taken COVID-19 vaccines in India, that is,

Covishield and Covaxin, and accept the vaccination certificate issued through the Co-WIN portal," a source said on Wednesday.

"We have also conveyed to EU Member States that India will institute a reciprocal policy for recognition of the EU Digital Covid Certificate," the source added, making it clear that only citizens of those countries in the 27-member grouping who make exemptions for travellers inoculated with the Indian vaccines would be given an exemption from mandatory quarantine on arrival in India.

**Letter of protest**

The government's statement, made through officials who did not wish to be identified, came even though the European Union had issued a detailed clarification, denying its plan was discriminatory. The African Union

had also issued a letter of protest over the EU proposal saying that it promoted "inequality" for those from India and "lower-income" countries for whom the Covishield vaccine was the "backbone" of the international COVAX alliance programme.

The EU had also explained that SII had not applied for the requisite permissions with the EMA, and had promised to consider its case as soon as it applied.

However, New Delhi now appears to be taking the position that the EMA must consider the Indian-made vaccine by accepting the Co-WIN certificate, regardless of the applications. The government's stand is especially significant since while Covishield has received World Health Organization authorisation, Covaxin is yet to be cleared by the global health body.

The Prime Minister met the Ministers on Wednesday for a meeting that went on for more than four hours. NITI Aayog official V.K. Paul made a presentation on the COVID-19 situation in the country at the meeting.

"The Prime Minister said that it wasn't enough to just procure vaccines and have a stock, Ministers must campaign to end vaccine hesitancy and see that more and more people are vaccinated," said a Minister present at the meeting.

## Modi meets Council of Ministers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi cautioned his Council of Ministers that the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic still loomed large, urging them to ensure vaccinations in their areas on a war footing and "put in all efforts to prevent a third wave".

The Prime Minister met the Ministers on Wednesday for a meeting that went on for more than four hours. NITI Aayog official V.K. Paul made a presentation on the COVID-19 situation in the country at the meeting.

"The Prime Minister said that it wasn't enough to just procure vaccines and have a stock, Ministers must campaign to end vaccine hesitancy and see that more and more people are vaccinated," said a Minister present at the meeting.

## Delimitation panel to visit Kashmir

It will interact with politicians, officials

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR

The Delimitation Commission chaired by Justice Ranjan Prakash Desai (retd) on Wednesday decided to visit Jammu and Kashmir from July 6 to 9 "to gather first-hand information and input concerning the ongoing process of delimitation" of Assembly seats, the Commission said.

The Commission, which includes Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and J&K Election Commissioner K.K. Sharma, decided to visit the Union Territory and interact with political parties, public representatives and administration officials, it said.

**Valuable suggestions**

"The Commission expects that stakeholders will cooperate in this endeavour and

will provide valuable suggestions so that the task of delimitation is completed timely."

An EC source said the Commission would visit Srinagar and Jammu, and if need be also other parts of the Union Territory to interact with registered political parties.

The source said the data collection process was complete.

The source said there was a need to look into considerations other than population as factors on the ground had changed since the last delimitation in 1995.

For instance, there were many constituencies that had been split over multiple tehsils, the source said. The geographical, administrative and accessibility factors would be taken into account as well.

## Lalu likely to address RJD's foundation day

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad is likely to address the party's silver jubilee foundation day on July 5 in Patna.

Party leader and younger son of Mr. Prasad, Tejashwi Yadav told party leaders and workers, "the time to come is yours".

Rashtriya Janata Dal chief is currently recuperating from various illnesses at the residence of his elder daughter and party Rajya Sabha member Misa Bharti in New Delhi.

## AAP leaders attacked by mob in Gujarat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
AHMEDABAD

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders in Gujarat were allegedly attacked by a mob of about 60 people in a village in Junagadh district from where the AAP leaders were passing through during a campaign tour on Wednesday. Several workers received minor injuries while one was seriously injured in the violent attack when a mob launched an assault with iron pipes and sticks," said the AAP statement in Gujarat.

"If people like Isudan Gadvi and Mahesh Savani are being attacked openly in Gujarat then no one is safe in Gujarat," Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal said that in a tweet after the incident.

The AAP Gujarat media coordinator Tuli Banerjee claimed that the "BJP organised the violent attack" on the AAP leaders in Junagadh district.

"AAP leaders Isudan Gad-

avi, Mahesh Savani and others were attacked when their car was intercepted by a mob equipped with iron pipes and sticks," said the AAP statement in Gujarat.

Former Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu, who has been leading a public battle against Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, on Wednesday had a closed-door meeting with former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

The meeting with Mr. Gandhi, where Ms. Vadra was also present, lasted for almost an hour and a half but neither Mr. Sidhu spoke to the media nor did the Congress issue any state-

## Sidhu meets Priyanka, Rahul

'Ex-Minister's role in revamped PCC ahead of Assembly poll figured in the talks'



Punjab Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu with party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ment. But the leaders are said to have discussed Mr. Sidhu's role in the revamped Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) ahead of the next

year's Assembly polls.

Mr. Sidhu's meeting with the former Congress chief in the evening was facilitated by a marathon meeting bet-

## E.U. may offer vaccines to Bhutan

The doses will allow the country to complete its second round of inoculation

SUHASINI HAIDER  
NEW DELHI

Days ahead of a deadline to complete Bhutan's COVID-vaccination programme, the European Union has stepped in to help supply the much-needed half a million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine, officials confirmed to *The Hindu*. The vaccines will allow Bhutan to complete its second round of inoculation. India, which had provided enough vaccines for the first round, failed to export the next batch due to the pandemic surge in April, when its Vaccine Maitri programme was suspended.

"The E.U. and its Member States are actively pursuing concrete options through the EU Civil protection mechanism [for Bhutan]; decisions will be taken in the coming days," a E.U. official said on Wednesday. It is un-



Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck overseeing measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. ■ REUTERS

derstood that the E.U. has agreed to coordinate supplies from its member countries and is now helping negotiate the paperwork with AstraZeneca to allow those countries to re-export their surplus stocks of AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria to Bhutan.

The E.U. is also coordinating the logistics including air transportation and cold-chain requirements for the early transfer of doses.

Bhutan has been running against time in its quest for vaccines, as the prescribed gap between the first and second doses at 16 weeks, runs out in mid-July. In addition,

the distribution to the remotest corners is likely to take a further 10-11 days, just as the first round in March

did, when doses reached 93% of the eligible adult population of 5,30,000.

Bhutanese officials, who welcomed the E.U.'s decision to activate its civil protection mechanism to procure the vaccines from countries who could spare them, said India too played a role by putting in a "good word" with countries well-disposed to assist. In particular, the countries who have agreed to send the supplies are those whose vaccine stocks had not expired, nor were they required for their domestic use. Like a good friend, India has been very helpful in helping to mobilise vaccine donations from friendly countries," the official said, adding that they are "hopeful" that the E.U. donations will reach Thimphu by next week, so that they reach recipients in time.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA GROUND WATER DEPARTMENT NATIONAL HYDROLOGY PROJECT**

E-TENDER NOTICE FB NO: NHIP/TB/2021/21/Works/3777

Following is the notice for E-tender for Ground Water Department, Govt of Telangana from eligible bidders under National Competitive Bidding (NCB).

Details: Building Upgradation of State Data Centre & Exhibition Centre in Ground Water Department, Hyderabad under National Hydrology Project (NHP). Start Date of Download : 01/07/2021 (10.30 hrs); Date of Pre-bid Meeting : 13/07/2021 (11.30 hrs).

Last Date of Submission: 31/07/2021 (15.00 hrs). The details of IFB will be available on https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app, https://gwd.telangana.gov.in and http://hp.mowr.gov.in/websites.

Sd/- Director & Nodal Officer, NHP Ground Water Department

RO No: 312-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/2021-22

SD/- Director & Nodal Officer, NHP Ground Water Department

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## IN BRIEF



## Ban on international flights till July 31

The suspension of scheduled international passenger flights has been extended till July 31, the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) said on Wednesday. "International Scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case by case basis," the DGCA said in a circular. The restriction doesn't apply to international all-cargo operations. International scheduled flights have been suspended since March 23, 2020. However, flights are permitted under the "air bubble" agreement India has entered into with 27 countries.

## Covaxin neutralises Delta variant: NIH

**WASHINGTON** India's Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research, effectively neutralises both Alpha and Delta variants of coronavirus, the U.S.' National Institute of Health has said. The NIH said results of two studies of blood serum from people who had received Covaxin suggest that the vaccine generates antibodies that effectively neutralise the B.1.1.7 (Alpha) and B.1.617 (Delta) variants of SARS-CoV-2, first identified in the U.K. and India, respectively. PTI

## Maharashtra to go in for doorstep vaccination

**MUMBAI** The Maharashtra government informed the Bombay High Court on Wednesday that it would not wait for the Centre's approval and would proceed with implementing door-to-door vaccination for the aged on an experimental basis. Advocate General (AG) Ashutosh Kumbhakoni made the statement before a Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni. "We want to do it on an experimental basis, and we propose to start it from Pune district, as the size of the district is not too large or not too small," the AG said.

## Odisha begins unlocking 20 out of 30 districts

**Bhubaneswar** The Odisha government on Wednesday commenced the unlocking process in 20 out of 30 districts where the COVID-19 test positivity rate had fallen below 5%. It, however, extended a partial lockdown in the remaining 10 districts till July 16. "In 17 districts, mostly in the southern and western region, lockdown has been relaxed following improvement. It is a matter of great satisfaction that there has not been an increase in the rate of infection in these districts," said Suresh Chandra Mohapatra, Chief Secretary.

# Centre seeks report on fake jabs in Kolkata

It directs local administration to respond in two days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Alarmed at alleged instances of fake COVID-19 vaccination camps in some pockets in Kolkata, the Union Health Ministry has directed the local administration to submit a report within the next two days.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said in the communication that "in view of the instances of COVID vaccination camps being organised allegedly by unauthorised people, it is requested that the matter be urgently enquired into and the factual position about the serious allegations be clarified in the next two days."

The letter noted that in some of these camps, notably in the Kasba locality of the Kolkata Municipal area, none of the beneficiaries received any vaccination certificates generated from the CoWIN portal.

The Health Ministry had been advising States repeatedly that vaccination certificates must be issued to the beneficiaries. "Non-issuance of these certificates therefore does lead to apprehensions of fake vaccination camps and also raises doubts on the contents of injections delivered in such camps," Mr. Bhushan said.

More than 32.13 crore (32,13,75,820) vaccine doses have been provided by the



**No harm:** SFI and DYFI activists participating in a demonstration against fake vaccination camps in Kolkata. ■ PTI

## 'No evidence to link vaccines with infertility'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Wednesday said there is no scientific evidence suggesting COVID-19 vaccination can cause infertility in men and women and asserted the vaccines have been found to

be safe and effective. It further said that the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration had also recommended COVID-19 vaccination for all nursing women, terming it safe with no need to stop or pause breastfeeding before or after the inoculation.

Centre to the States and the Union Territories so far, according to a release issued by the Ministry on Wednesday.

This, it said, had been given through free of cost channels and through direct state procurement category. Of this, the total consumption, including wastage was

31,40,75,654 doses (as per data available at 8 a.m. on Wednesday). More than 73 lakh (73,00,166) balance and unutilised doses were still available with the States and the Union Territories. More than 24,65,980 doses would be received by them within the next three days, it added.

## Due process in Brazil deal: Bharat Biotech

Firm says it took routine approach

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

Covaxin manufacturer Bharat Biotech on Wednesday asserted that it had followed a routine 'step-by-step' approach towards getting contracts and regulatory approvals for supply of the vaccine in Brazil, and added that it had neither received any advance payments nor supplied any vaccines to the South American country's Health Ministry.

Reacting to media reports, including a news report in which *Reuters* cited Brazil's Health Minister Marcelo Queiroga announcing the suspension of a \$324-million Indian vaccine contract in the wake of allegations of irregularity, the Hyderabad-based company laid out the timeline of developments related to its efforts to supply the vaccine to Brazil.

Stating that discussions with the Brazilian Ministry had begun in November 2020, Bharat Biotech said

that over the course of eight months, a step-by-step approach, similar to what was observed in other countries where the company sought approvals, had been followed.

Subsequently, Covaxin received emergency use authorisation in Brazil on June 4.

## Price point

Bharat Biotech said it had been clearly established that the vaccine would be priced between \$15 and \$20 per dose for supplies to governments outside India. The pricing for Brazil had also been indicated at \$15 per dose.

Also, while advance payments had been received from several countries at the same price points, with supplies in process, pending approvals, "as of June 29, Bharat Biotech has not received any advance payments or supplied any vaccines to MOH Brazil," the company said.

## DGCA issues safety advisory to all aircraft operators

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

The Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued an advisory to all airlines to instruct their crew not to hesitate to seek "follow me" vehicle service during poor visibility at airports.

The safety guidelines follow after an investigation into an accident revealed that the aircraft, while taxiing to the bay, entered an open drain and suffered extensive damage.

The runway markings were not visible due to rain over the airfield. The Pilot in Command manoeuvred the aircraft, ignoring the advice of the Pilot Monitoring's request for a "follow me" vehicle service for taxi to the bay.

The DGCA in the advisory issued early this month said during the aircraft ground operations on an aerodrome, operational and/or environmental issues such

# Court gives relief to CA aspirants

It allows them to opt out if they or family members suffer from COVID-19

## LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

In relief to chartered accountancy aspirants, the Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed them to opt out if they or their family members had COVID-19.

The court directed the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) to allow candidates to opt out of the July exam if they were able to produce a certificate from a registered medical practitioner showing that either they or any of their family members were suffering from COVID-19 or its after-effects and unable to prepare for the exam.

"A candidate shall be entitled to exercise the option of opting out if he/she personally, or any of his/her family member, has suffered COVID-19 in the recent past and the fact is so certified by a registered medical practitioner, as a result of which he/she is unable to appear in



the ensuing examination or, for that matter, is disabled in preparing for the examination," the court order said. RT-PCR test result was not necessary if a candidate had a doctor's certificate.

## Change of centre

The court further directed that candidates should be given the option to opt out even if the exam centre has been changed to another location within the same city.

"If you are changing the exam centre at the last minute because of your own loca-

gistical problem, you should leave it to the candidate to decide whether he or she wants to opt out. You have to give the candidate the choice and respect their choice," Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, leading a three-judge Bench, addressed the ICAI, represented by senior advocate Ramji Srinivasan.

The court said candidates who opted out due to "COVID-related problems" and exam centre changes should be allowed to appear in the back-up exam whenever it would be conducted.

The court said the ICAI scheme already allowed candidates affected by the lockdown during the examination to opt out appear for the back-up exam to be conducted by the institute in due course.

The court, allowing the ICAI to go ahead with its exams in July, directed the institute to strictly adhere to safety norms.

On Tuesday, the court pointed out to the ICAI that opt-out option should be made available not only for the candidates who are COVID-19 positive at the time of exam but also for those who could not prepare for it due to extended post-pandemic complications certified by an expert.

The Bench was hearing pleas to postpone the exam due to the pandemic.

The ICAI had said that July was the apt time to conduct the exam with all safety protocols in place, considering the lull in cases. The third wave may hit in September or October.

It had noted that candidates were eager to take the exam.

"Out of 3,74,230 candidates, as on June 27, more than 2,82,000 candidates have downloaded their admit cards, thus showing their eagerness to appear in the examination," it had argued.

## Issue clear guidelines on death certificates: SC

Fatalities due to related complications must also be certified as COVID deaths'

## LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed that deaths due to COVID-related complications must be certified as COVID deaths.

"A simplified procedure/guidelines is/are required to be issued by the Central Government and/or appropriate authority for issuance of an official document/death certificate stating the exact cause of death, i.e.,

diagnosed and irrespective of whether the patients died at home or in hospital, the court said.

"It is the duty of every authority to issue accurate/correct death certificates stating the correct and accurate cause of death, so that the family members of the deceased who died due to

COVID-19 may not face any difficulty in getting the benefits of schemes that may be declared by the government," the judgment noted.

The court ordered that the guidelines should also lay down the grievance redressal process for the families of COVID-19 patients in case of errors in certificates.

## Cabinet clears viability gap funds for BharatNet

Project will follow the PPP model

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a viability gap funding support of up to ₹19,041 crore for the implementation of the BharatNet project through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model in 16 States.

The project will be extended to all inhabited villages beyond the gram panchayats in 16 States – Kerala, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.

"The Cabinet has in-principle approved implementation of BharatNet in 16 States in a public-private partnership model with a total expense of ₹29,430 crore. The Government of India will only spend the viability gap fund of ₹19,041 crore," the Minister said, add-

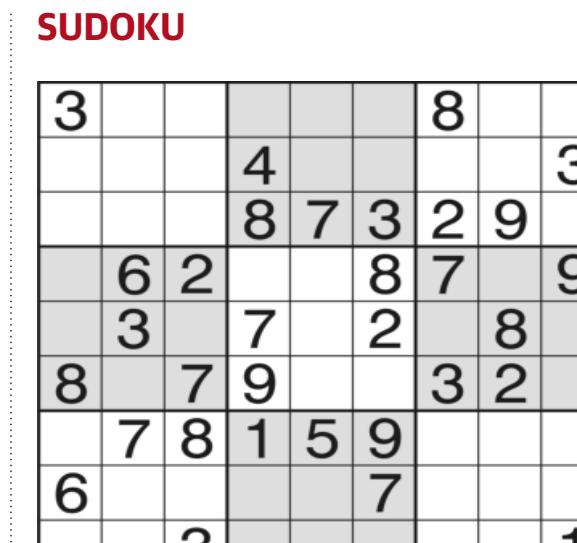
ing that an estimated 3.61 lakh villages, including gram panchayats, would be covered via BharatNet.

An official release added that the revised strategy will include creation, upgrading, operation, maintenance and utilisation of BharatNet by the concessionaire or the private sector partner, who will be selected by a competitive bidding process.

The private sector partner is expected to bring an equity investment and raise resources towards capital expenditure and for operation and maintenance of the network.

Extension of BharatNet to all inhabited villages will enable better access to e-services offered by various governments, enable online education, telemedicine, skill development, e-commerce and other applications of broadband, Mr. Prasad said, adding that it would help bridge the digital divide.

## SUDOKU



## Solution to puzzle 13287

## Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

No. SS/124 Date/Time: www.mightyfingers.com

## FAITH

## Eyewitness account

Valmiki's Ramayana is known as Adi kavya, because it was the first kavya to be written. Although many other Ramayanas came to be written later, Valmiki Ramayana is special, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan, in a discourse. Sage Narada visits Valmiki, and Valmiki then puts a question to him. He lists sixteen good qualities, and asks if anyone alive at that time has all these qualities. Brahma then enables Valmiki to see all the events of the Rama avatara – past, present and future. Because of Brahma's boon, Valmiki is witness to everything that takes place during the Rama avatara. His kavya, therefore, is an eyewitness account of what happened. It is nothing but the truth, with no additions or deletions.

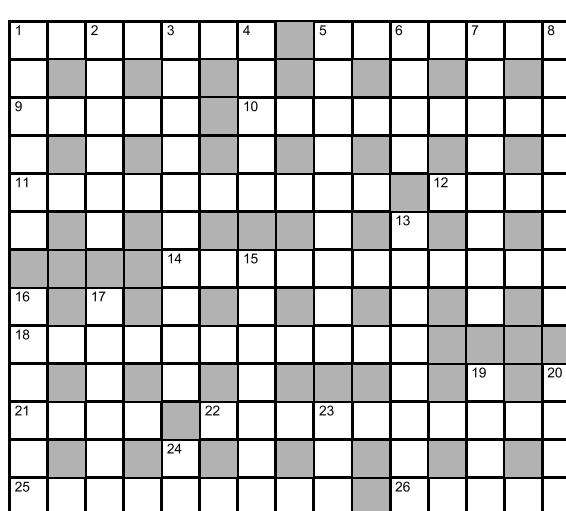
The Vedas are to be understood with the help of Itihasas and Puranas, and Itihasas are more important than the Puranas. However, some events described briefly in the Ramayana are elaborately described in some Puranas, and so, at such times, Vaishnava Acharyas have used the descriptions given in the Puranas. For example, Paadma Purana gives the Kakasura episode in more detail than one finds in Valmiki's Ramayana, and Acharyas have quoted from the Paadma Purana. The Ashtakshara mantra, dhvaya mantra and charma sloka are significant for Sri Vaishnavas. And the Ramayana shows us the importance of dhvaya mantra, for it shows the inseparability of the Lord and His Consort. The Ramayana makes us realise that we have to approach the Lord, only with the blessings of His Consort. The kavya shows us both the end to be attained and the means to attain it. The end is to serve Him in Sri Vaikunta. The way to achieve this is through surrender to Him. The concept of total surrender lies at the heart of the Ramayana.

TH CROSSWORD  
(set by Karaoke)

13288

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- ACROSS**
- Characteristic of extremely scary animals essentially is to chase soft cat (7)
  - Tactical maneuvers initiated by half-dead marshals (7)
  - Intrinsic adrenaline is relating to kidneys (5)
  - He settles taxes on first residence depending on constructed area and type (9)
  - Caring tendency to hide love rejected by nurse (10)
- DOWN**
- Hired thug ran away from the capital of Myanmar (4)
  - 5 M+OM+FNT? (5,6)
  - Comic actors sit on drawers (11)
  - Piece of news comes first in the evening mail (4)
  - Rialto ideally suited (10)
  - Improving middle of song's text with permission finally from director (2,3,4)
  - Meal provided by sailor (5)
  - One with strong liking missed cuddle occasionally from desperate dry-cleaner (7)
  - I say why no eyeglass designed for one that never



GOWRI S AND ANASUYA MENON

Dhola village near Jodhpur, in Rajasthan, is veiled in darkness as the electricity snaps, interrupting Sua Devi's Zoom call.

Undeterred, the 46-year-old *kalbeliya* dancer, asks her son to rev up his motorcycle right outside the room. Under the powerful headlights, which bounce off her glittering jewellery, she continues her class, dancing in front of the smartphone positioned in her living room, teaching students from across the world.

The artiste who has lived most of her life on stage – Sua has been dancing since the age of seven – now handles a video call with dexterity. She says the pandemic forced her to find ways to adapt: "I was able to learn something new in between this crisis. I have a family of 13. Thanks to online classes, I am able to feed them and also help others in the village."

Sua, like a clutch of other folk artistes, has pivoted online out of necessity; she has not been on stage for a year and a half. But there still remain many who are outside the digital economy, struggling to make ends meet. Of the artistes performing and teaching online; some are individual pursuits while in other cases, NGOs and private organisations help with the transition.

Sua is supported by the arts platform Kalbeliya World, which was born during the pandemic in May 2020. Run by three women – Aakansha Maheshwari (USA), Chritsina Gomez (USA) and Ayla Joncheere (Belgium) – Kalbeliya World connects traditional *kalbeliya* dancers from Rajasthan with students and fellow artistes from around the world.

When the lockdown began in March 2020, Ayla was in Rajasthan, where the seed of this idea took form. She explains, "There were these traditional dancers and musicians whose artforms were very interesting but for whom, going online was difficult. On the other hand, we also had a huge international network of dancers who were already practising *kalbeliya*. We thought we could bring them together." Registration and payment is done in collaboration with a US-based fitness platform Mind-



**Question of survival** (Anti-clockwise from left) Kathakali dancer Biju Bhaskaran; screengrabs from Natya Arts Learning App; and Kalbeliya World artistes Vishwa Bharath; and Sua Devi • THULASI KAKKAT AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Now, log on for Kathakali

Play the *chenda* via an app or learn *kalbeliya* dance on a group call, with help from traditional performing artistes who are innovating to survive a tough year and keep their craft alive

body and earnings from the class are directed to the respective teacher.

"We had over 600 students from over 20 countries in the first month. Each class was priced at \$10," says Christina, adding that they have 12 teachers – six dancers from Pushkar, three from Jodhpur (including Sua) and three from Jaipur. Each teacher has more than one family in their village that they directly or indirectly support.

A year on, though the number of students have visibly decreased with gyms and studios opening up internationally, the platform soldiers on.

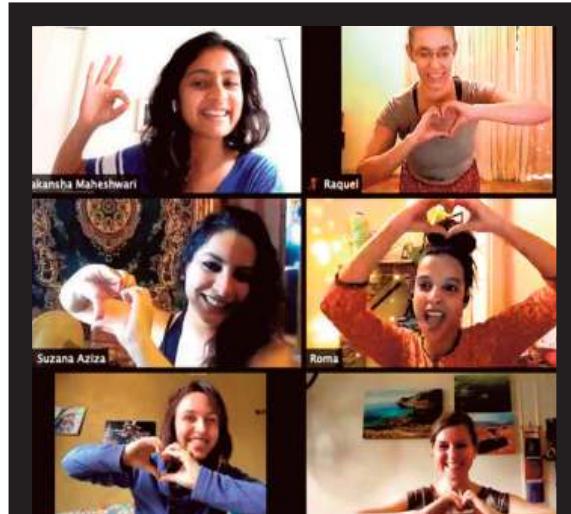
They plan to make the initiative hybrid once travel restrictions are eased, where dancers can fly to India for physical workshops.

Meanwhile, Kasargod-based *mizhavu* artiste Kalamandalam Sivaprasad has developed the Natya Arts Learning App, which offers courses in English and Malayalam on Indian traditional and classical arts, including a soon-to-be-introduced beginner's module on Kerala's percussive instrument *chenda*, seen in temple concerts and festivals. Live

and recorded classes on Kathakali, *ottamthullal* and *nangiarkoothu* are also in the pipeline.

"These are art forms that were not conceptualised for an online space. It took us a lot of time to prepare a module that could work in the virtual system of learning," says Sivaprasad of the app that took over two-and-a-half years to create.

Today, it has 7,500 downloads on Google play store. Recorded classes come with accompanying notes explaining rhythm patterns and scales on



the screen. "We have 25 students from France, the US and the Gulf countries as well," says Sivaprasad.

### Temporary breather

This increasing interest from students outside India transcends genres. Chennai-based theatre and folk artiste Vishwa Bharath, who has been teaching *parattam* (where the artiste moves according to the beats of the *parai*), *silambam* (a weapon-based martial art of Tamil Nadu) and *devarattam* (derived from movement celebrating victory in the battlefield) online since last year says the latter has dominated the 2021 lockdowns.

"*Devarattam* is a spinal and leg movement-oriented form where you need your body warmed up... You have to move while chanting the *swarkattu/sollu* (rhythm signatures) and be in the frame at the same time," explains Vishwa.

Recognising that it is not easy to transition to virtual events, Vishwa has also opened up his home studio in T Nagar

### MILES TO GO

Despite these stories of grit, a majority of traditional artistes lack the resources to experiment online. This year has been brutal: along with financial strains, many have lost family and crew members to COVID-19. Carnatic vocalist TM Krishna along with his team has been helming fundraisers, raising money via online concerts. He says, "If we are looking at the larger spectrum, it (the number of folk artistes who were able to create a presence online) is only negligible. We have to work very hard on the demand side and for that social mindsets have to change."



for senior artistes who wish to use it for online classes.

Vishwa currently has six online students. Karthik Gowrisankar has been his student since 2019, and has had a taste of both physical and online folk arts classes and would choose the former to the latter, any day. Currently he

is learning *devarattam* online.

"There is a lot of history behind the artform, about how it is being practised



and propagated, that is taught," he says. A designer by profession, Karthik finds these one-and-a-half hour classes, twice a week, a welcome diversion.

"For a student who has had a few years of training, moving to an online medium is not tough. But for a new student, it is not easy," says Kochi-based Kathakali artiste Biju Bhaskaran. His student base comprises a mix of both. They are first taught the *kaal sadhakam* (footwork) followed by *chuzhippu* (body movements). *Thalam* (rhythm) and *muradas* come much later. The one-hour classes are held on Google meet.

Biju, who started classes in March, restructured the process for the online medium by focussing more on theory.

"Theory is extremely important for a *kathakali* dancer. I felt this time could be effectively used to learn the theoretical part." Biju also concentrates on the *vaythaari*, the rhythmic sequences that decide timing in *kathakali*. He says, "If the students learn this, once the physical classes start, it would be easy for them to adapt. They would just have to perfect their *muradas* then."

## Booster juice on the go

A startup initiative that installs charging stations in *kirana* stores could change the way consumers view electric vehicles in India

RUTH DHANARAJ

A friend's predicament served as a blueprint for Kirana Charzer, a charging station for electric vehicles (EVs).

"A friend using an electric bike ran out of charge outside Bengaluru city limits. With no provision to charge his bike anywhere along the way, he ended up pushing his vehicle for close to four hours. Fearing this may happen again, he decided to stop using EVs," says Sameer Ranjan Jaiswal, one of the founders of Charzer.

He adds, "It struck us that there is a *kirana* or basic supply store every 500 metres in India. If these shops doubled up as charging areas, such incidents could be minimised."

Entrepreneurs Dheeraj Reddy, Sameer Ranjan Jaiswal and Yugraj Shukla, launched FAE Bikes, an EV scooter rental and fleet management startup in 2016.

"We had experienced the challenges of the EV market first-hand and were working with manufacturers, stakeholders and the Government. We understood why many a customer walked out of showrooms without buying a vehicle," says Sameer.

Kirana Charzer was launched at MOVE 2020 in London on February 12, 2020. Compatible with two-, three- and four-wheelers, it is a compact, zero-maintenance and IoT-enabled charging station.

With the help of the Kirana Charzer app, EV users can locate nearby chargers, book a slot and



**Stays sturdy** The Kirana Charzer is available in Mangaluru, Hyderabad and Kerala ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

make a payment. A completely drained out four-wheeler would require six to eight hours to get the battery charged, though customers usually use it for one or two hours, as that is sufficient for a 30-40 kilometre power boost.

The app also aids hosts with a daily report of power consumed, bookings and earnings.

Since the Kirana Charzer works with a basic single phase electricity connection, it can be installed without any changes to the existing grid connection. Keeping in mind weather conditions in India, the Charzer is sturdy enough to withstand rain, wind and grime from the outdoors.

With their headquarters in Bengaluru, the team has taken Charzer to Mangaluru, Hyderabad and Kerala; stations in Delhi and Pune will be operational once the lockdown lifts.

The Indian Young Farmers Forum collective is dedicated to training young farmers across the country, starting with Tamil Nadu

■ K JESHI

Six years ago, Pradeep Kumar Manickam began farming on his arid ancestral land in Karur, Tamil Nadu. The barren five-acre farm is now a flourishing 'food forest' with 200 varieties of edible native species.

Similarly, A Jai Ganesh, 45, conducted repeated trials with dragon fruit cultivation for over five years, before converting his one-acre plot at Illupanagaram village near Udumalpet into a thriving farm with 4,000 plants, of which 80% are already fruiting.

"It's time to talk about economic success in farming," says Saravanan Chandrasekaran, 32, who has formed Indian Young Farmers Forum, a collective where successful farmers mentor newcomers.

"Identifying success stories is the first step, followed by farm visits to replicate the model." The forum has 75 members, with an age cap of 45. However, experienced mentors of different ages form the advisory panel.

Saravanan points to a growing trend in the last 10 years, where many young people are making a mid-career drift to invest in agricultural land and start farming. Kailash Nandan, 27, worked in Bengaluru for a few years before returning to

his ancestral land in Narisipuram near Thondamuthur. "I wanted to try out non-conventional farming. We have coconut, arecanut, turmeric, groundnut, and sesame on a commercial scale. The forum is a neutral place to collaborate and learn from each other," he says.

Some of the members are part-time farmers, including Saravanan who works as an administrative officer at Kumara-guru Institute of Agriculture. He owns over 15 acres in Pollachi where he is developing a food forest with native guava, sapota, and tamarind trees. "The forest is taken care of by Nature. There is no intensive farming. We just harvest. People pay a premium to source good food from an authentic source.

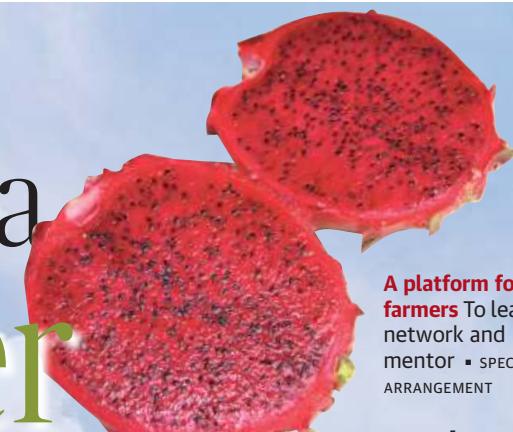
We have to understand and adapt."

The forum also encourages use of technology in farming. "In the West, farmers master it. Our country is a land of small farmers; the average land holding of an Indian farmer is 1.5 acres. We cannot push a futuristic thought or technology to experiment. That's why this forum is significant, as young farmers here are economically stable, have a good volume of land, and are willing to experiment. We expose small farmers to technologies that are already a success," says Saravanan.

The spotlight is on sustainable farming, adds 32-year-old K Gnana Saravanan, an award-winning agripreneur of Deesan Farm at Meenakshipuram, on the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border. He adds, "We have integrated farming of coconut and other inter-crops like banana, nutmeg, and arecanut. I conduct classes on natural farming for youngsters."

So, how does one become a farmer? Pradeep Kumar replies, "Well, you become one." In his internship programme, aspirants from across India stay at his farm for up to three months and get exposure in end-to-end farming. His farm has a community seed bank to conserve native species. "We

## How to become a farmer



**A platform for farmers** To learn, network and mentor ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### Future plans

- Register the forum as a Farmer Producer Organisation
- Conduct short-term workshops and training programmes with experts
- Encourage scientific farming and share core expertise, for example selecting quality seeds.
- Make regular farm visits across Tamil Nadu to learn from successful farmers
- Promote farm internships – an opportunity to intern at a model farm
- To know more, email [youngfarmerforum@gmail.com](mailto:youngfarmerforum@gmail.com) or call 9003099166



ods and how a farmer can create a sustainable business out of agriculture. "When you choose farming as a way of life, you better ensure that it's the most profitable business on Earth."

practise farming just like our ancestors: we thrive on value additions. If we cultivate groundnut, we ensure to extract oil." His social media pages document natural agriculture meth-

Responding to a rising interest in heritage varieties, farmers work on preserving and marketing indigenous mangoes

CHITRADEEPAN ANANTHARAM

At his 35-acre farm in Bodinayakanur, Jayanth Kaliappan fiercely protects eight local varieties of mango. "We have 1,200 mango trees, of which 22 are native varieties. Of them, eight are rare and unique to this region," says Jayanth.

His organic farm, set in Theni district, follows the legacy of his father A Kaliappan, who made it his mission to save native rare mangoes from extinction.

At his farm, Jayanth harvests *thenampaalai*, which tastes like coconut; and *muttakose*, shaped like a cabbage. The farm also protects its brightly-flavoured *singavaada*; big, fibrous *javadu*; and sweet, pulpy *thadaga kaai*. Finally, there is the rosemary, tinted pink near the stem, and *adamaga*, used for pickling, which weighs between 1.5 and 2 kilograms.

"We are creating saplings from the mother tree of these varieties so that future generations will also benefit from the nutritional value of these mangoes," says Jayanth.

Umaramanan Umaphathi of Auro Orchards, set in Avulur, near Puducherry explains how many of Tamil Nadu's native mangoes began to disappear over the last three decades as farmers preferred to grow just five or seven popular varieties for the domestic and export market. "Now, people are bored of eating the same varieties year after year and are showing interest in local mangoes or *nattu kaai*. This year, our customers pre-booked native mangoes even before we began harvesting," says Umaramanan.

At the 44-acre Auro Orchard, he grows *iruttu*, *rettikola*, *kadhar*, *malliga*, *pether*, *neer malgova*, K-white and amarapalli. He also has "Natty," as the local farm workers call it, which are unrecognised native varieties (*perilladha mambazhangal*), and *ratna*, which is a hybrid of the *neelam* and popular *alphonso*. There is the fleshy *rettikola*, three times bigger than the *rumani*; the *kadhar* is medium-sized and very sweet; pulpy *malliga* with huge flat fruit and firm *iruttu*, weighing about 250 grams each.

"So far I have seen *iruttu* only on our farm. We have a single tree, so we are now creating more saplings from this mother tree. The fruit has a thick, dark green skin like *kalapadi*, orange flesh and a unique sweetness," he says.

Umaramanan sells the harvest at Saragam, a retail outlet in Avulur, as well as at organic stores in Chennai, Organic Farmers Market and reStore. "I deliberately keep the price of native mangoes on a par or higher than the popular ones, as I don't want people to judge the fruit based on its price," he says, adding that *rettikola*, *peth-*



**Legacy lives on** (Left) The only Iruttu mango tree at Auro Orchard, Puducherry; (below) Rettikola mango ready for harvest ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

er and *malliga* sell the fastest.

Rajapalayam-based mango farmer and researcher KS Jagannatha Raja has been propagating and conserving rare and native trees for 25 years. He says we have already lost many precious mango varieties, unique to the region. "As a custodian of native mangoes, I have saved from extinction certain varieties such as *mohandas*, *pot-talma*, *panchavarnam* and *karupatti kai*, which tastes like jaggery. By combining *mohandas* and *swarnareka*, I developed a variety which I named Raju-1," he adds.

Jaganatha who runs the Rajapalayam Nursery Garden says he creates over 14,000 saplings a year from various mother trees, and distributes them to farmers in the region. Establishing a healthy, productive mother tree requires planning and preparation. Using the grafting method, he grows a sapling and waits for three years for the tree to yield fruit. Then he confirms the mango variety based on taste, texture and size.

#### Newer markets

Fazila Fathima's family grows 15 mango varieties on their 8.5-acre farm in Tada, near the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh border. "This includes *dilpaspur*, *putty*, *guamango*, *khudadad*, *khadar*, *pether*, *badami*, and *jehangir*," says Fazila, adding that this summer they sold it via home delivery around Chennai under the brand name, Mango Super Kings.

For over two decades, the harvest from the grove was exported, but with the pandemic affecting exports since last year, they have been retailing within Chennai.

As mangoes are seasonal and their shelf life limited, many of these farmers are finding ways to preserve their harvest so that nothing goes to waste.

While Mango Super Kings makes mango jams from different varieties, Umaramanan sells dehydrated mangoes online. He says that, as native mangoes have solid flesh with less water content, which helps the process and yields more output, "they suit this process the best".



#### TAKING ORDERS IN CHENNAI

Organic Farmers Market, Thiruvanmiyur: 9790900887

reStore, ECR: 044 24921093

Jayanth Agro Farms, Bodinayakanur: 9962008974

Mango Super Kings, Royapettah: 7338866441

Roo's Food Concepts, Kilpauk: 8870801234

## Bite into a juicy past

hangal), and *ratna*, which is a hybrid of the *neelam* and popular *alphonso*. There is the fleshy *rettikola*, three times bigger than the *rumani*; the *kadhar* is medium-sized and very sweet; pulpy *malliga* with huge flat fruit and firm *iruttu*, weighing about 250 grams each.

"So far I have seen *iruttu* only on our farm. We have a single tree, so we are now creating more saplings from this mother tree. The fruit has a thick, dark green skin like *kalapadi*, orange flesh and a unique sweetness," he says.

Umaramanan sells the harvest at Saragam, a retail outlet in Avulur, as well as at organic stores in Chennai, Organic Farmers Market and reStore. "I deliberately keep the price of native mangoes on a par or higher than the popular ones, as I don't want people to judge the fruit based on its price," he says, adding that *rettikola*, *peth-*

more focussed than that. There are essays from people who knew, loved and worked with Tony that adds new context and perspective.

There is my research and perspective of my travels with him."

In her introduction, Woolever writes about how difficult it is to co-author a travel book when your co-author, the traveller, is no longer travelling the world.

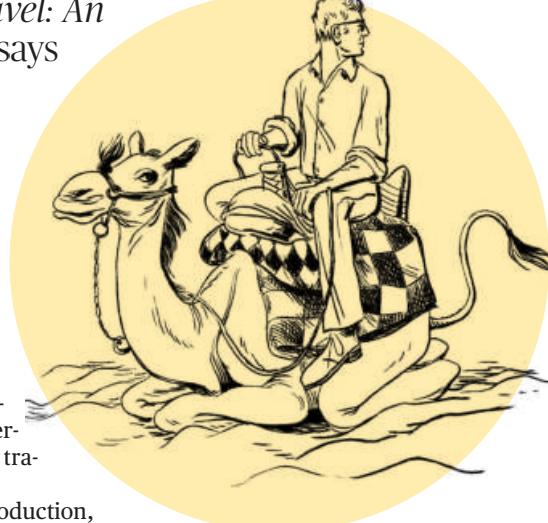
"What made it possible for me to carry on with the project was that he had left behind this extraordinary body of work in his books and television work. Between that and my long-standing relationship with him – I was his assistant for nearly 10 years – I had a good sense of how he spoke, his voice, tone and rhythm."

She adds, however "With parts of the world opening up again, and people feeling comfortable about travelling, this book seems to come at a perfect time. If you are in a place where it is not safe to travel, this book can be a surrogate, a way to fantasise and remember."

The Internet has changed how we consume travel information, Woolever, 47, says. "What I think adds value to this book, is that it is Tony's perspective. People miss Tony's voice. This book is an artefact of the world as it was when he visited it. Some things do not change, cuisines are much more stable than individual businesses or political situations, so there is something to be gleaned from a book that you can't get from a single Instagram photo or a travel recommendation website."

The book, like Bourdain's other books, including *Kitchen Confidential*, *A Cook's Tour*, *The Nasty Bits* and *Medium Raw*, is on the bestseller list.

Woolever does not want to call it a homage to Bourdain, or a greatest hits compilation. "It is much



Bourdain's original idea, Woolever says, was to try and find someone who did a Victorian naturalist style of illustration. "While we did deviate from that a little bit, the idea was to keep in the vein of a field guide, with illustrations that are more evocative than a flat photograph. Tony spent a lot of time as a teenager and a young adult working on illustrations and cartoons. He was modest about it but was actually quite a gifted illustrator."

In the fall, Woolever has a second book coming out, *Bourdain, the Definitive Oral Biography*.

"It is the story of his life, as told through the stories of people who knew him. I did close to 100 interviews with everyone from his mother, brother, first and second wife, daughter, childhood friends, cooking school friends, kitchen, television, and publishing colleagues."

Bourdain's legacy, Woolever says, is his way of seeing the world. "There is so much more to the world than fine dining and hotels. He was at the forefront of a movement to show people that the entire world is interesting. It is this openness to experience and discovery that is his legacy. Tony functioned as a wonderful example of someone who had strong opinions, but also had respect for people who disagreed with him. I hope that people can hold that memory of him; as someone who would be willing to sit down and break bread with someone whose views were not the same as his."

**Surrogate travel** Anthony Bourdain's sketch by Wesley Allsbrook in *World Travel*; Laurie Woolever

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## On the track

DEEPA ALEXANDER

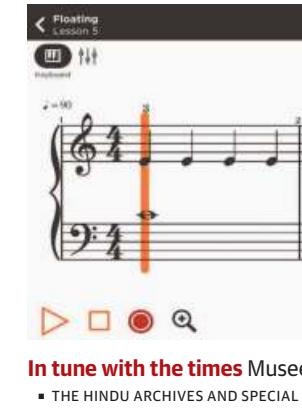
As lessons move online, 180-year-old Musée Musical turns to learning app Manoké to connect musicians, teachers and students



For nearly 180 years, Chennai's famed Musée Musical has celebrated a near-perfect score. The story of the music brand weaves into its plot an English pianist, a French businessman and an Indian accountant who took a Portuguese firm – Misquith & Co, founded in 1842 – and made it a place where many Indians had their first tryst with music; some of them went on to become legends.

The firm that resides on Anna Salai in a red-tiled building with green awnings and a sign that reads 'music saloons, pianos and organs', has since 1901 represented Trinity College, London, prepared nearly 20,000 students for the College's exams, and serviced and sold musical instruments. Helmed by the Das brothers – Kishore and Sachin – Musée Musical has now jumped onto the app bandwagon to accelerate learning and develop technical skills. Manoké, which means 'play along' in Japanese, has been developed by US edutech company Topgig Labs.

"Good teaching cannot happen without a teacher and face-to-face classes. The tech intervention is to ensure transparency and engage-



**In tune with the times** Musée Musical; screenshot from the app ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

songs, but there aren't many sources for popular Indian songs. Manoké Studio, is a notes creation, curriculum planning and publishing platform, while Manoké Stage is a play-along app for the entire orchestra."

Manoké helps teachers curate structured lesson plans based on international benchmarks created by Musée's dean of studies, Karl Lutz-mayer, a pioneer in identifying the gaps in teaching of Western Music in India. "Detailed analytics and metrics provided by the platform can help improve learning outcomes. It is currently the only platform available in India that works as an interactive sheet music set by the learner to suit his learning ability – practice tools such as tempo and metronome, share and get feedback from trainers," says Sachin. "The pandemic has shown us that if those in the creative arts do not embrace technology we cannot carry forward the good work of musicians and music teachers."

While general users can download the app for free, music schools need to subscribe. Teachers get access to the International Benchmarks for learning and also more content for teaching support. The family of Manoké apps is compatible with PC, Android and iOS.

## Through Tony's eyes

Laurie Woolever, who co-wrote *World Travel: An Irreverent Guide* with Anthony Bourdain, says the book is an artefact of the world as it was when the chef, author and television host, visited it

MINI ANTHIKAD CHHIBER

One would imagine a travel guide has no place at a time when travel is either a distant dream, or a nightmare. Yet here is *World Travel: An Irreverent Guide* (published by Bloomsbury) by celebrated chef, author and television host, Anthony Bourdain, who died in June 2018, and his long-time assistant, Laurie Woolever. "The idea of a travel book seemed insignificant from the perspective of a world that had stopped travelling," states Woolever over a video call from New York City.

She adds, however "With parts of the world opening up again, and people feeling comfortable about travelling, this book seems to come at a perfect time. If you are in a place where it is not safe to travel, this book can be a surrogate, a way to fantasise and remember."

The Internet has changed how we consume travel information, Woolever, 47, says. "What I think adds value to this book, is that it is Tony's perspective. People miss Tony's voice. This book is an artefact of the world as it was when he visited it. Some things do not change, cuisines are much more stable than individual businesses or political situations, so there is something to be gleaned from a book that you can't get from a single Instagram photo or a travel recommendation website."

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## What doesn't kill you...

Actor Kabir Bedi discusses heartbreaks and loss in his deeply personal memoir

SRIVATSAN S

When Kabir Bedi sat down to pen his memoir, *Stories I Must Tell*, which was launched in April by actor Priyanka Chopra, he offhandedly pasted a sticker onto his computer that read: "Be vulnerable." It resulted in reliving a quagmire of emotions and a deeply contemplative book beyond the regular glitz and glam of filmdom.

It is a story of love and loss, but also milestones and mistakes – Bedi's words, not mine. "It is a story of what it takes to be a human; to go through the rollercoaster of emotion I went through and the lessons that emerged. I wrote the book to inspire people and at the same time, caution them about the joys and dangers of success," says Kabir Bedi, who recently gave a talk as part of FICCI FLO Chennai's chapter titled Stories We Must Hear.

Edited excerpts:

**When you started writing this book, what were the images that came to you?**

● I thought I had a hell of a story to tell.



But when I sat down to write, I began to think: 'how am I going to tell this story?' Because, if I start from the beginning, it is boring and if I start from the middle, the flashback seemed distracting. I decided to tell mine as a human story, starting from college days at St Stephen's and the interview I did with The Beatles, which changed my life forever.

**You started out in the '70s and became a bona fide star in Europe. You have worked with some of the biggest names in Indian and European cinema...were you at all worried about being self-indulgent?**

● I was determined not to be self-indulgent. I haven't shied away from stating

the wrongs and I haven't spared myself either. I have been equally brutal in the mistakes I made or should have done differently. It was also the story of the depths in which I fell into and how I rose from it. I was relooking at my younger self more compassionately in the most interesting way possible. In that sense, it was cathartic.

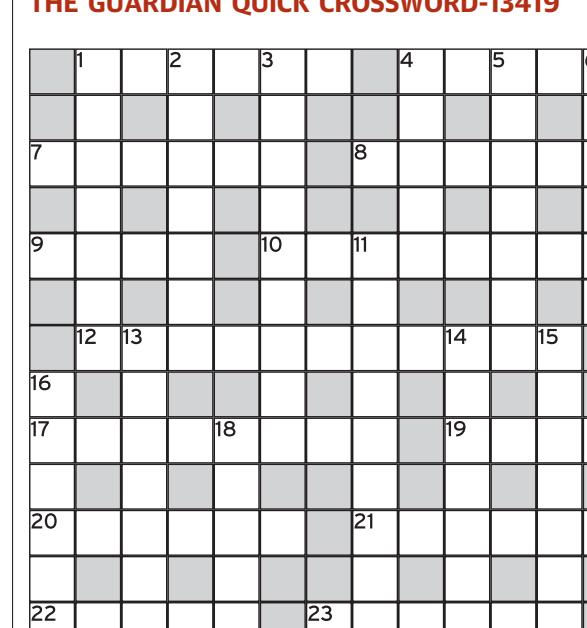
**How would you describe the writing process, was it therapeutic or did it make you go further down the rabbit hole, like the chapter about your son?**

● You have to dive in. There is no other way than to relive in its complete complexity, in its beauty and tragedy. Whatever resistances I had about my life came before the book.

**Is your book a heartfelt apology or a stubborn justification?**

● None of those. It is to give people a vicarious sense of what it is like to be a man who has been out of many relationships. To understand the idealistic era of the freedom struggle where my parents came from, and what it took them from being revolutionaries to becoming religious figures. To understand what it takes to be in Hollywood where they aren't writing roles for you; what it takes to be noticed by James Bond fans around the world.

### THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13419



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#### Across

- 1 West German chancellor, 1969-74 (6)
- 4 Small pop group (5)
- 7 Small mouthful (6)
- 8 Playfully makes fun of (6)
- 9 Male parent of a horse, for example (4)
- 10 Clothing business (informal) (3,5)
- 12 Profuse bleeding (11)
- 17 Special significance (8)
- 19 Giant who eats people (4)
- 20 In truth (6)
- 21 Beat by cunning (6)
- 22 Devotion to religious principles (5)
- 23 Cash in shares, bonds etc (6)

#### Down

- 1 Given to reading (7)
- 2 Grim – a US tree (anag) (7)
- 3 In a state of wild excitement (9)
- 4 Large box used for storage (5)

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

5 Hardy wild horse of the American western plains (7)

6 Forced out of office (6)

11 Rotating wheel used in navigation systems

## MARKET WATCH

	30-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,482	-0.13
US Dollar	74.32	-0.12
Gold	4578.5	-0.83
Brent oil	75.05	-0.22

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	703.70	-7.30
Asian Paints	292.70	-8.80
Axiscity	74.30	-3.65
Bajaj Auto	4133.85	9.20
Bajaj Finserv	12109.05	-190.85
Bharti Airtel	6015.85	-36.55
BPLC	525.65	0.70
Britannia Ind	468.10	1.85
Cipla	3649.65	-7.50
Coal India	146.65	2.15
Divis Lab	4408.25	52.10
Dr Reddys Lab	5423.05	-10.05
Eicher Motors	2671.15	-0.35
Grafix Ind	1498.75	-4.55
HCL Tech	983.50	-0.10
HDFC	2475.25	-25.95
HDFC Bank	1497.90	-4.15
HDFC Life	686.30	-0.20
Hero MotoCorp	2902.60	-24.90
Hindalco	372.05	-2.20
Hind Unilever	2471.30	-21.25
ICICI Bank	630.90	-1.80
IndusInd Bank	1016.35	-1.80
Infosys	1580.80	17.75
Indian Oil Corp	107.90	-0.25
ITC	202.70	-0.60
JSW Steel	683.90	-2.00
Kotak Bank	1705.85	0.00
L&T	1500.55	-10.35
M&M	777.70	-3.90
Maruti Suzuki	7515.90	28.40
Nestle India Ltd.	17633.00	33.75
NTPC	116.40	-1.20
ONGC	117.70	-1.70
PowerGrid Corp	232.00	-3.60
Reliance Ind	2110.65	22.85
SBI Life	1008.15	8.75
State Bank	419.20	-2.30
Shree Cement	27504.60	-629.85
Sun Pharma	675.45	-2.15
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	754.40	-3.65
Tata Motors	339.60	-1.95
Tata Steel	1166.60	-5.95
TCS	3345.75	4.90
Tech Mahindra	1095.45	7.30
Titan	1732.50	0.90
UltraTech Cement	6776.00	-48.70
UPL	792.85	-12.55
Wipro	545.65	3.05

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.13	74.45
Euro	88.10	88.48
British Pound	102.68	103.12
Japanese Yen (100)	67.08	67.37
Chinese Yuan	11.48	11.53
Swiss Franc	80.31	80.66
Singapore Dollar	55.13	55.38
Canadian Dollar	59.77	60.04
Malaysian Ringgit	17.86	17.94

Source: Indian Bank

## Co-location: CCI rejects complaint against NSE

CHENNAI  
The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has rejected allegations of anticompetitive practices against the NSE in the co-location case.

# May's lower spending pegs fiscal deficit at 8.2%

Increase in revenue receipts in first two months also helps

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India's fiscal deficit in the first two months of 2021-22 stood at 8.2% of the Budget target with revenue receipts rising even as spending contracted by the end of May, data released by the Controller General of Accounts on Wednesday show.

Economists said capital spending contracted by 41% in May after a sharp uptick in April, indicating that State-level restrictions during the second wave of the pandemic had hurt economic activity. They, however, cautioned against interpreting the outcomes over April and May.

"Benefiting from a jump in tax and non-tax receipts



amidst a contraction in revenue expenditure, the Government of India's fiscal deficit was limited to ₹1.2 lakh crore in April-May... less than 30% of last-year's level of ₹4.7 lakh crore during the nationwide lockdown," Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ICRA, wrote in a note.

## GST: CBIC to felicitate 54,439 taxpayers

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

To mark the completion of four years of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said it would felicitate as many as 54,439 taxpayers on Thursday who made most of their indirect tax payments in cash and filed their returns on time.

"GST has been a milestone in the economic landscape of India. It has decreased the number of taxes, compliance burden & overall tax burden on common man while significantly increasing transparency, compliance and overall collection," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a tweet.

## Government must aid Jet Airways' revival: NCLT

'Airline can't claim historicity over slots'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The government must help in Jet Airways' revival and resolve the issue of airport slots though the airline can't claim historicity over them, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has said.

"The claim of historicity advanced by the corporate debtor cannot be made available to it," the NCLT said in the judgment delivered on June 22.

"We trust the authorities concerned, including the Government of India, shall take a holistic approach and provide necessary assistance in allocation of slots as and when they are sought.

The consortium of Murari Lal Jalan and Kalrock Capital would infuse ₹1,375 crore

Sunil Kumar Sinha, India Ratings' principal economist, said the revenue and expenditure trends of the first two months were unlikely to provide any clarity on the year's fiscal deficit.

"April and May 2020 were unusual months due to the nationwide lockdown and again April and May 2021 witnessed regional/local lockdowns resulting in loss of economic activities and revenue generation," he said. The change in the RBI's accounting year to April-March had advanced the release of its dividend payment, pushing up non-tax revenue collections to 47.9% of the year's Budget estimates, Mr. Sinha added.

into the airline, including ₹475 crore for payments to financial and corporate creditors, employees and workmen. The balance ₹900 crore would be spent on capital expenditure and working capital.

The ₹475 crore will include a payment of ₹380 crore to financial creditors, ₹52 crore to employees and workmen and ₹10 crore to operational creditors who will each get ₹10,000 only.

Core sector output rose 16.8% in May

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Output from India's eight core industries grew 16.8% in May 2021, with six sectors reporting significant positive growth due to the base effects from May 2020 when the country was in a national lockdown.

Steel output rose 59.3% in May, compared to a 40.4% decline in the same month of 2020, while cement grew 7.9%, compared to a 21.4% dip last May. Coal production increased by 6.9% from a 9% contraction in May 2020.

Fertiliser production, which was the only sector to record growth (7.5%) in May 2020, declined by 9.6% this May, according to provisional data released on Tuesday.

The deficit stood at 1% of the gross domestic product in the latest quarter, RBI data showed. "A normalisation in import demand as well as a surge in gold imports contributed to the widening of the current account deficit," said Aditi Nayar, chief economist at the ratings agency ICRA. The deficit had widened at month-end.

Rupa Rege Nitsure, chief economist at L&T Financial Holdings, said, "India needs to focus on improving the competitiveness of its exports to make its external balance position more sustainable".

'Current account deficit widens as imports revive'

'Gold shipments surged in Jan.-March'

## REUTERS

MUMBAI

India's current account deficit (CAD) widened in the January-March quarter on the back of a higher trade deficit and lower net invisible receipts, the Reserve Bank of India said in a release on Wednesday. The CAD stood at \$8.1 billion in January-March compared with \$9.4 billion a year earlier, but portfolio investments, mainly in the form of equity purchases, rose by \$7.3 billion versus a decline of \$13.7 billion.

Traders said month-end demand for dollars from oil importers was one of the main factors driving the unit lower. The rupee ended at 74.3250/3350 per dollar, from 74.22 on Tuesday.

It dropped 2.4% in June, its biggest fall since last March when it fell 4.6%. Over the quarter, it lost 1.7%, its worst quarterly fall since January-March 2020 when it tumbled 5.8%.



Portfolio investments rose by \$7.3 bn versus a decline of \$13.7 bn

dened to \$6.28 billion in May from \$3.15 billion in May 2020. RBI said net external commercial borrowing had fallen to \$6.1 billion in January-March compared with \$9.4 billion a year earlier, but portfolio investments, mainly in the form of equity purchases, rose by \$7.3 billion versus a decline of \$13.7 billion.

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Rupee fell by most in 15 months in June

## REUTERS

MUMBAI

The rupee posted its biggest monthly drop since the onset of the pandemic in March last year, pressured by high global crude oil prices and concerns over the U.S. Federal Reserve hinting at unwinding its massive stimulus.

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## SpiceJet posted loss of ₹235 cr. in Q4

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



Low-cost carrier SpiceJet on Wednesday reported a loss of ₹235 crore for the quarter ended March 31. For the financial year 2020-21, the airline incurred a loss of ₹998 crore.

The board approved plans to raise fresh capital of up to ₹2,500 crore through the issue of eligible securities to qualified institutional buyers.

"These funds will be used to significantly strengthen our balance sheet," the airline's CMD Ajay Singh said. The airline has also decided to hive off the cargo business, SpiceXpress, as a separate entity.

Revenue from cargo jumped more than sixfold in FY21.

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INTERVIEW | RANA MITTER

# 'Domestic considerations always come first for China's Communist Party'

There's been a shift towards a more controlled way of looking at history under Xi Jinping, says Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China at Oxford University

ANANTH KRISHNAN

*As China's Communist Party turns 100 on July 1, its current leader, Xi Jinping, has staked out a greater global role for China even while championing a message of assertive nationalism at home. How China will manage these two increasingly conflicting trends remains to be seen. For China, says Rana Mitter, Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China, University of Oxford, at the heart of the party's aspirations is domestic stability and prosperity, and the fear of the system somehow being overturned. So, domestic considerations will always come first. Excerpts from an interview:*

On June 29, Xi Jinping honoured 29 people with a medal, including veterans of the Chinese Civil War and the Korean War, and called on Chinese Communists to remember past contributions and sacrifices. Do those messages still resonate in 2021?

■ What the ceremony showed was the continuing importance of history in the way that the Chinese Communist Party thinks about itself. Also the way in which

that history is used to furnish a narrative, which essentially is about the sort of inevitability in the eyes of the party of its eventual victory. It is a really important indication that when the party thinks about 100 years of its own history, it sees it as a continuity. That's a large part of what the message that was being put forward today [June 29] had to say.

There has been some limited space in China in the past to debate history but it seems

increasingly that's narrowing. Do you see a change under Xi on how the party approaches the history question?

■ There's definitely been a shift towards a much more controlled way of looking at history under Xi Jinping. It's always been the case, actually, for thousands of years in the sense that history is political in China. One of the first court historians, Sima Qian in the Han Dynasty [206 BCE to 220 CE], actually found himself being severely punished for writing history that was insulting of the Emperor. There is this long tradition of political history getting people into trouble. In the case of Xi in particular, he has moved the dial from where it was certainly 10 years ago, maybe even five years ago. At that point, it was certainly possible for scholars in particular to read alternative his-

tories of the party, ones in which some of the leaders who had previously been sort of purged might be somewhat reconsidered. The disasters of the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s were acknowledged, if not fully, at least as being mistakes that had to be overcome. But now, there is a much stronger sense that actually, even

those sort of cautious criticisms of mistakes in the party's history can't be permitted any more.

The idea of national rejuvenation has been around for a long time, but has become more prominent in the Xi era. Do you see a difference in the party's approach to creating a national identity?

■ I think it is different. He does, of course, draw on what his predecessors did. If you look at the idea from Deng Xiaoping back in the 1980s, that China should "hide its light and bide its time", that China should be concentrating on getting rich, securing its economy, engaging with the world and creating this huge economic miracle, when Deng Xiaoping said that he didn't intend that should be the case forever. He meant that China

should use that time to build up to a position where it could reveal itself to the world as a major new power. I think Xi Jinping would feel that he is the leader who essentially has fulfilled that promise or expectation from Deng.

If you look at the Party Congress speech that Xi gave back in 2017, that's one of the first explicit articulations of the idea that China is going to take this global role, that it's going to have influence around the world.

The party pushing this idea of rejuvenation, that China has grown strong and stood up, plays well at home, but doesn't play very well externally. It seems that contradiction has become more acute. Is it too simplistic to suggest the domestic will always win over external considerations?

■ I don't think it's too simplistic at all. You've actually given a very astute assessment of what is at the heart, in the end, of the aspirations of the Chinese Communist Party and the state they run, which is domestic stability and prosperity, but also fear, more than anything else, of the system somehow being overturned. So that domestic consideration will always be most important.

I'd like to say it's not inevitably true, but I think it's broadly true that when Politburo member Xi Jinping or one of his colleagues gets up in the morning, they're not so much worried about what the Prime Minister of Japan is about to do as they're worried about what the Party Secretary of Hunan or the Party Secretary of Sichuan, is about to do.

Nonetheless, let's understand that international policies in some senses is in ser-

vice of domestic politics, the two can't be entirely separated. So in that sense, I think there is a debate going on. One reason we can tell that there clearly is some sort of reset going on, at least in words, is a speech made by Xi Jinping just a couple of weeks ago, in which he talked about the need for China in the world to be more humble and more lovable. The idea that basically China's diplomats have gone around the world, essentially barking their heads off, and telling their host countries where they've got it wrong, has just not gone down at all, well, anywhere. Whether or not this marks more of a change of language than a change of policy remains to be seen.

(For full interview, scan the QR code)



## Tourism losses could cost \$4 trillion: report

It calls for quick roll-out of vaccines

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

WASHINGTON DC

The collapse of international tourism due to COVID-19 could cost the world at least \$4 trillion in terms of global GDP for 2020 and 2021, according to a report from two United Nations (UN) institutions.

India experienced a 54% drop in tourist arrivals in 2020, according to *COVID-19 and Tourism: An Update*, a joint report released by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN World Tourist Organisation (UNWTO) on Wednesday.

Tourism is not expected to return to pre-COVID levels until 2023 or later, costing the world somewhere between \$1.7 trillion and \$2.4 trillion in 2021, based on three scenarios (optimistic, pessimistic, and a third scenario in which the uneven roll-out of vaccines is considered).

On average, in the absence of any economic stimulus, a drop in tourist sales leads to a 2.5-fold loss in real GDP due to linkages with upstream sectors such as agriculture, according to the study.

The report also recommends socio-economic measures to protect livelihoods. "Workers should be protected rather than specific jobs in declining sectors, for example through training," it says. Finally, some tourism-related businesses will not survive even after restrictions are removed, the report says, advising governments to decide which ones to support and for what duration.

Workers should be protected rather than specific jobs in declining sectors, for example through training

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN  
WASHINGTON DC

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution, introduced in May, when India was in the throes of a massive second wave of COVID-19, expressing solidarity with India, backing the Biden administration's assistance to India and asking it to facilitate in kind medical supply donations from the private sector.

"The resolution stands with the people of India as they collectively work to stem the spread of CO-



Expressing gratitude: A man walking past a mural depicting frontline COVID-19 workers in New Delhi. ■ AFP

VID-19," said Brad Sherman, a California Democrat and co-chair of the House India Caucus. "The U.S. must work with our partners around the world to quell the virus everywhere it persists," said Mr. Sherman, who intro-

duced the legislation along with his Republican co-chair, Steve Chabot.

"As co-chair of the House Caucus on India and Indian Americans, I am pleased my colleagues came together today to pass this important re-

solution expressing the House's support for India during this trying time," Mr. Chabot said.

While criticised for being slow to mobilise support for India, over the course of May, the U.S. had provided – as per official estimates – over \$100 million in government assistance and a total of over \$500 million in assistance, including individual and private sector contributions.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also spoken with U.S. President Joe Biden as well as Vice-President Kamala Harris on the assistance India needed and the U.S.'s plans to share its excess vaccines.

## U.S. involved in U.K. warship incident: Putin

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday accused Washington of involvement in an incident involving a British destroyer off the coast of Moscow-annexed Crimea.

Last week, Russia said it fired warning shots to ward off the British Navy's *HMS Defender* as it passed near the Crimean peninsula in the Black Sea in what it said was a violation of its territorial waters. "This, of course, was a provocation – that is

completely obvious," Mr. Putin said. "It was complex and was carried out not only by the British, but also by the Americans." Britain has defended the ship's route, saying it was "in accordance with international law".

Mr. Putin said that "we on

our territory fight for ourselves, for our future".

"Even if we sank that ship, the world wouldn't have been on the verge of World War III, because those who are doing this know that they couldn't be the winners in this war," he said.

**KERALA WATER AUTHORITY - e-TENDER NOTICE**  
Tender No : SE/PHC/MPM/12/2021-22  
Providing FHTCs to AR Nagar Panchayaths and allied works  
EMD : Rs. 500000  
Tender fee : Rs. 17700  
Last Date for submitting Tender : 15-07-2021 03:00:pm  
Phone : 04932734871  
Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in  
KWA-JB-GL-6-234-2021-22  
Superintendent Engineer, PH Circle, Malappuram

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Lakes Division-2,  
Room No. 309, 3rd Floor, New Building, BBMP,  
N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560002  
No. EE-2(Lakes)/Corr/2021-22 Date: 25.06.2021

**CORRIGENDUM**  
Ref.: Tender Notification No.: EE-2(Lakes)/TN-06/2021-22  
date: 15.06.2021

Due to technical reason the revised dates pertaining to the notification No.: EE-2(Lakes)/TN-06/2021-22 date: 15.06.2021 shall be read as under:

**Revised calendar of events:** (1) Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders: 09.07.2021 upto 4:00 p.m. (2) Opening of Technical bid Tender Document: 12.07.2021 at 4:00 p.m.

The other terms and conditions of the tender remains unaltered.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, Lakes Division-2, BBMP**  
**COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE**

**Wear Mask** **Follow Physical Distancing** **Maintain Hand Hygiene**

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Rajarajeshwari Nagar Division  
BBMP Office, Near Chowdhury Bus Stop, Mathikere, Bengaluru - 54  
No.EE/RRND/Tend/03/2021-22 Date: 29.06.2021

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
(Through GOK e-Procurement Portal only) (Two Cover System)

The Executive Engineer, Rajarajeshwari Nagar Division, invites tenders from eligible Contractors for the works detailed in the table below:

S.I. No.	Name of the Work	Approx. Value of Works (Rs. in Lakhs)
1	Redesign and upgrading of existing Musical Fountain interfaced with multimedia based Laser and Video Projection on Aqua Screen at J.P. Park Ward No. 17 under PACKAGE-2019-20 RRN-DIV-(08).	1000.00

**EMD Declaration :** As per G.O. No. FD 675 Expenditure-12/2020 dated: 22.12.2020. 1) Tender documents may be downloaded from e-procurement portal from: 05.07.2021 onwards. 2) Pre-bid Meeting: 19.07.2021 at 11.00 a.m. 3) Last date for uploading of filled tender document: 22.07.2021 upto 4.00 p.m. 4) Date of opening of Technical Bid : 23.07.2021 at 4.00 p.m. 5) Date of opening of Financial Bid : 27.07.2021 at 4.00 p.m. Further details can be accessed from GOK e-procurement website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> or contact the office of the undersigned.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rajarajeshwari Nagar Division.**

**PAY DEVELOPMENT CHARGES, HELP TO DEVELOP BENGALURU**

**STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19. NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.**

**Wear Mask** **Follow Physical Distancing** **Maintain Hand Hygiene**

**CSIR-INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY**  
(Council of Scientific & Industrial Research)  
Uppal Road, Tarnaka, Hyderabad - 500 007, Telangana, India.  
Advertisement No.02/2021 Dated 01.07.2021

Date of commencement of online applications : 01.07.2021  
Last date for receipt of online applications : 30.07.2021  
Last date for receipt of hard copy of applications : 16.08.2021

**CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, Hyderabad (CSI-R-IICT)** invites **ONLINE APPLICATIONS** from Indian Nationals only for filling up of Security Assistant post, the details are given below:

Post Code	Designation	No. of posts & Reservations	Pay Matrix (7th CPC)	Emoluments (approx.)	"Upper age Limit not exceeding as on 30.07.2021
SAT01	<b>SECURITY ASSISTANT</b>	One (1) Post UR	Level - 6 Cell - 1 (Initial Basic pay)	Rs.54,000/- p.m.	28 years

For further details please visit our website <http://www.iict.res.in> and apply through online by filling the application form available there. The detailed advertisement, terms and conditions and instructions to the candidates are available on the website.

**Sd/- Sr. Controller of Administration**

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY**  
**MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**NOTICE NO: 08a / 2021**

e-Auction will be conducted for disposal of Ferrous scrap, Non-Ferrous scrap, other Misc Scrap, condemned Wagon, Coaches & Locos, Scrap Rails and other Permanent Way scrap material.

S. No.	e-auction conducted by	Date of auction for the Month of July' 21	Materials for auction
1.	CMM/GSD/PER	09.07.21	19.07.21
2.	Dy.CMM/CSSD/GOC	10.07.21	20.07.21
3.	Dy.CMM/SSD/PTJ	12.07.21	22.07.21
4.	Sr.DMM/MAS	13.07.21	23.07.21
5.	Sr.DMM/SA	14.07.21	26.07.21
6.	Sr.DMM/TVC	15.07.21	27.07.21
7.	Sr.DMM/PGT	15.07.21	28.07.21
8.	Sr.DMM/TPJ	16.07.21	29.07.21
9.	Sr.DMM/MDU	16.07.21	30.07.21

The details of item to be sold in e-auction will be available in [www.irops.gov.in](http://www.irops.gov.in) catalogue in website

For detailed terms and conditions and downloading of catalogue please visit out web-site <http://www.irops.gov.in> → E-Auction → Sale → Live Auctions.

**Principal Chief Materials Manager**

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# Djokovic slides into the third round

Kyrgios outlasts Humbert in five-setter; Cornet packs off Andreeescu; Kenin crashes out

## WIMBLEDON

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON

Novak Djokovic slid, slipped, skidded and stumbled into the third round on Wimbledon's slick grass by beating Kevin Anderson 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 on Wednesday.

**Book COVID-19 Vaccine Slot on Paytm**



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Djokovic didn't face a break point and committed just six unforced errors, including one with his forehand.

The retractable roof was open when the top-ranked Djokovic was first on Centre Court for his rematch against Anderson, who also lost when they played in the 2018 final.

While Djokovic endured an up-and-down performance on the slippery surface and rose from one spill

### Thursday's picks

- Men: 6-Federer vs Gasquet
- 2-Medvedev vs Alcaraz
- Women: 1-Barty vs Blinkova
- 2-Gauff vs Vesnina

muttering in frustration, he had little trouble with Anderson. The preternaturally limber Djokovic extended one rally by hitting a forehand while down on his knee – and won the point.

Nick Kyrgios finished off No. 21 seed Ugo Humbert 9-7 in the fifth set of their suspended first-round match.

The contest had been halted at 3-all in the fifth set on Tuesday evening because local rules prevent play past 11 p.m. When they resumed on the No. 1 Court, Kyrgios broke for an 8-7 lead and then saved two break points in the final game before clinching the match with a service winner.

It was Kyrgios' first match since the Australian Open in February, where he also beat Humbert in an entertaining five-setter.

The Australian is now 4-0 in five-set matches at Wimbledon. Kyrgios had won the first and fourth sets and Humbert the second and third. The latter was coming

### The highlights

**1** Before Tuesday, the only other time Serena had not progressed beyond the first round at a Major was at the 2012 French Open (lost to Virginie Razzano)

**6** Since winning the 2019 US Open, Andreeescu has missed three Majors and not progressed beyond the second round in the other three

**16** Djokovic has won 16 straight matches at Wimbledon since his retirement against Berdych in the 2017 quarterfinals

**58** Wimbledon 2021 is Cornet's 58th consecutive Grand Slam singles appearance, the longest among active players

**C** Not too bad for a part-time player. I was in so much pain in the morning, after not having played for so long. But to play in front of you fans, it was easy to get up and come

**KYRGIOS, AFTER BEATING HUMBERT, IN ONLY HIS SEVENTH TOUR-LEVEL MATCH SINCE FEBRUARY 2020**

off his first grass-court title after winning the Halle Open this month.

Bianca Andreescu made another early Grand Slam exit when she lost to Alice Cornet 6-2, 6-1.



### THE RESULTS

**Men: Second round:** 1-Djokovic (Srb) bt Anderson (RSA) 6-3, 6-3, 6-3; **First round:** Kyrgios (Aus) bt 21-Humbert (Fra) 6-4, 4-6, 3-6, 6-1, 9-7; Thompson bt 12-Ruud (Nor) 7-6(6), 7-6(3), 2-6, 2-6, 6-2; 7-Berrettini (Ita) bt Pella (Arg) 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-0; Nishioka (Jpn) bt 28-Isner (USA) 7-6(5), 2-6, 6-3, 6-7(3), 6-4; Chardy (Fra) bt 20-Karatsis (Rus) 7-6(4), 7-6(6), 6-3; Querrey (USA) bt 11-Carreno Busta (Esp) 7-6(6), 6-4, 7-5; Ymer (Swe) bt Tsonga (Fra) 7-5, 6-7(4), 5-7, 6-4, 6-3.

**Women: Second round:** 7-Swiatek (Pol) bt Zvonareva (Rus) 6-1, 6-3; 2-Sabalenka (Blr) bt Bouler (GBR) 4-6, 6-3, 6-3; Brengle (USA) bt 4-Kenin (USA) 6-2, 6-4; 11-Muguruza (Esp) bt Pattianna Kerkhove (Ned) 6-1, 6-4; Samsonova (Rus) bt 22-Pegula (USA) 6-4, 3-6, 6-3; Osovina Serrano (Col) bt 32-Alexandrova (Rus) 7-5, 6-2. **First round:** Cornet (Fra) bt 5-Andreeescu (Can) 6-2, 6-1; 3-Svitolina (Ukr) bt Van Uytvanck (Bel) 6-3, 2-6, 6-3; 16-Pavlyuchenko (Rus) bt Bogdan (Rou) 6-2, 6-2; Vondrousova (Cze) bt 24-Kontaveit (Est) 2-6, 6-4, 6-2.

### Fallen seeds

**Men:** 11-Carreno Busta, 12-Ruud, 20-Karatsis, 21-Humbert, 28-Isner  
**Women:** 4-Kenin, 5-Andreeescu, 6-Serena, 9-Bencic, 17-Bertens, 22-Pegula, 24-Kontaveit, 32-Alexandrova

# Injured Serena exits in tears

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

American legend Serena Williams's dreams of winning an eighth Wimbledon singles title and equaling Margaret Court's Grand Slam record of 24 ended in tears on Tuesday as further doubt was cast on her future in the sport.

The 39-year-old was leading 3-1 in the first set of her first round match against Aliaksandra Sasnovich of Belarus when she slipped and injured her right leg.

Williams returned after receiving medical



**Agony:** Serena Williams slipped on the Centre Court and could not take further part in her first round match. ■ AP

Bopanna-Divij set to miss Tokyo cut

### SPORTS BUREAU

Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan look set to miss the cut for men's doubles at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. India could be without a men's doubles team for the first time since Barcelona 1992, where Leander Paes and Ramesh Krishnan reached the quarterfinals.

With a low combined ranking of 113, Bopanna (38) and Divij's (75) entry rested on a series of withdrawals. Despite some, the cut for 22 teams out of 24 direct acceptances is said to be as high as mid-60s, according to sources. The final cut-off could not be confirmed.

This now greatly diminishes the country's possibility of fielding a mixed doubles team, for each of the mixed doubles players should mandatorily feature in their respective doubles draws. Sania will be playing in the women's doubles competition in Tokyo alongside Ankita Raina.

Regardless, as preparation, Sania and Bopanna have teamed up for mixed doubles at Wimbledon, where they will play Hungary's Timea Babos and Marton Fucsovics in the opening round. The Indian duo lost the mixed doubles bronze medal playoff at Rio 2016.

# Underwhelming Ukraine's fairy tale continues

Makes quarters as Dovbyk's strike at the very end of extra-time dumps Sweden

## EURO 2020

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
GLASGOW

Ukraine had reached the round of 16 at the European Championship with two losses and the worst record of the advancing teams. And now the quarterfinals, too.

Ukraine eliminated previously unbeaten Sweden 2-1 on Tuesday with a goal in stoppage time at the end of extra-time from a player who was left on the bench for the entire group stage.

Substitute Artem Dovbyk stooped to guide a header from Oleksandr Zinchenko's cross past goalkeeper Robin Olsen.

### Faces England

Ukraine will now head to Rome to face England on Saturday.

Zinchenko gave Ukraine the lead in the 27th minute when he rifled in a low shot set up by a crafty pass from



**The clincher:** Ukraine's Artem Dovbyk stoops to head home and break Swedish hearts. ■ AP

the crossbar.

Sweden coach Janne Andersson cited the momentum shift in extra time when Sweden defender Marcus Danielsson was sent off in the 98th minute for following through on a challenge with a raised boot on substitute Artem Besedin.

The game lost all rhythm and flow in scrappy extra

time periods littered with fouls, injuries and an argument between the two coaches.

**The result:** Sweden 1 (Forsberg 43) lost to Ukraine 2 (Zinchenko 27, Dovbyk 120+1).

time periods littered with fouls, injuries and an argument between the two coaches.

**The result:** Sweden 1 (Forsberg 43) lost to Ukraine 2 (Zinchenko 27, Dovbyk 120+1).

captain Andriy Yarmolenko.

Emil Forsberg's deflected shot from outside the area in the 43rd minute equalised for Sweden.

**Unlucky Forsberg**

It was his fourth goal at Euro 2020, but a tournament lead-tying fifth eluded him in the second half despite curling shots off the post and

# Abhimanyu is youngest ever GM

P.K. AJITH KUMAR  
KOZHIKODE

"My short-term goal," Abhimanyu Mishra had said over phone from Budapest last month, "is to become the world's youngest Grandmaster."

On Wednesday, he reached that goal. The US player of Indian origin has become the youngest GM in history, at 12 years, four months and 25 days. He beat the record of Sergey Karjakin, who had completed his GM title in 2002 at 12 years and seven months.

Abhimanyu scored his third and final norm by defeating India's Leon Mendonca in the penultimate round of the Vezerepko GM tournament at Budapest.

He had reached the Hungarian capital along with his father Hemant a few months ago on a one-way ticket, on a mission to complete the GM title.

After enjoying several promising positions in four drawn rapid games, Arjun easily gained the draw in the second to advance.

Carlsen survived a brilliant comeback by Wesley So who won third and fourth games to win the second set 2.5-1.5 to force the

# Arjun falls to Aronian in tiebreaker

Carlsen overcomes fighting So; Ding, Artemiev set up second semifinal

## CHESS

RAKESH RAO  
NEW DELHI

blitz tiebreaker. Carlsen recovered from the double-blown to win the first game in style.

**From winning position**  
In the second, too, Carlsen reached a winning position and then took a draw needed to go through.

From the lower-half of the draw, Ding Liren and Vladislav Artemiev made it past Jan-Krzysztof Duda and Anish Giri, respectively.

**The results:**  
**Quarterfinals: Set Two:** Arjun

Erigaisi drew with Levon Aronian (Arm) 2-2 (Aronian wins blitz playoff); Wesley So (USA) bt Magnus Carlsen (Nor) 2.5-1.5 (Carlsen wins blitz playoff 1.5-0.5); Ding Liren (Chn) bt Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Pol) 3-1; Vladislav Artemiev (Rus) bt Anish Giri (Ned) 2-1.

**Semifinal line-up:** Carlsen-Aronian; Ding-Artemiev.

## IN BRIEF



**Nihal Sarin triumphs**

KOZHIKODE  
Nihal Sarin won the Silver Lake Open chess tournament in Serbia on Tuesday. The third-seeded Indian emerged

on top of the field with eight points from nine rounds. In the final round, he defeated Branko Damjanovic of the host. The second and third places were also taken by Indians Raunak Sadhwani and Abhimanyu Puranik who scored seven points each.

**Pogacar wins fifth stage**

LAVAL  
Slovenian Tadej Pogacar emerged as the overwhelming Tour de France favourite when he destroyed the field by winning the fifth stage, a 27.2-km individual time trial, on Wednesday. The defending champion clocked a best time of 32 minutes between Change and Laval.

# India shot out for 221 in second ODI

Mithali comes good again; Cross scalps five, Ecclestone three

## INDIA IN ENG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
TAUNTON

India was dismissed for 221 in the second ODI against England on Wednesday.

Captain Mithali Raj topped with 59 (92b, 7x4) and stitched together a 68-run partnership for the fourth wicket with Harmanpreet Kaur (19).

Young opener Shafali Verma contributed 44 off 55 balls while the other opener, Smriti Mandhana, scored 22 before being the first of seamer Kate Cross' five victims. Shafali and Smriti had added 56.

Jemimah Rodrigues, who had replaced Punam Raut, struck two boundaries before falling to Cross for eight. Shafali departed a run later, stumped by Amy Jones off left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone.

It was at this stage that Mithali and Harmanpreet did the repair job before the latter was caught and bowled by Cross. Wickets fell regularly before the last-wicket pair of Jhulan Goswami (19 n.o., 19b, 3x4) and Poonam Yadav (10, 15b, 1x4) added 29 to take India to a respectable total. Cross finished with impressive figures of five for 34. Ecclestone's spell read 10-2-33-3.



**Skipper's knock:** Mithali came up with another half-century to help India go past the 200-mark. ■ GETTY IMAGES

### SCOREBOARD

**INDIA**  
Smriti Mandhana b Cross 22 (30b, 3x4), Shafali Verma st. Jones b Ecclestone 44 (55b, 7x4), Jemimah Rodrigues c Brunt b Cross 8 (75b, 2x4), Mithali Raj run out 59 (92b, 7x4), Harmanpreet Kaur c & b Cross 19 (39b, 1x4), Deepthi Sharma c Dunkley b Cross 5 (12b, 1x4), Sneh Rana c Knight b Cross 5 (7b, 1x4), Taniya Bhatia c Jones b Ecclestone 2 (10b), Shikha Pandey c Jones b Sciver 2 (7b), Jhulan Goswami (not out) 19 (19b, 3x4), Poonam Yadav b Ecclestone 10 (15b, 1x4); Extras (b-6, lb-6, w-13, nc-1); Total (in 50 overs): 221.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-56 (Smriti, 11.5 overs), 2-76 (Jemimah, 15.4), 3-77

(Shafali, 16.4), 4-145 (Harmanpreet, 33.5), 5-160 (Deepthi, 37.2), 6-168 (Sneh, 39.1),

## TV PICKS

**Wimbledon:** SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.  
**Tour de France:** Eurosport (SD & HD), 5.15 p.m.  
**England vs Sri Lanka:** 2nd ODI: Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m.  
**NBA:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 6 a.m. (Friday)

## IN BRIEF



## Hawks down Bucks to level series

ATLANTA Giannis Antetokounmpo suffered a knee injury as Milwaukee Bucks slumped to a series-leveelling defeat against Atlanta Hawks in their NBA Eastern Conference finals clash on Tuesday. An all-round offensive effort from the Hawks secured a 110-88 victory at the State Farm Arena to square the best-of-seven series at 2-2. The result: Eastern Conference finals: Milwaukee Bucks 88 lost to Atlanta Hawks 110. Series tied 2-2.



## World 400m champion Salwa Eid Naser banned

LAUSANNE World women's 400m champion Salwa Eid Naser of Bahrain was banned for two years for doping on Wednesday in a ruling by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. Sport's top court upheld an appeal by World Athletics against a ruling by the federation's own disciplinary tribunal which had cleared Nigerian-born Naser of missing doping tests. AFP

## National u-10 chess put off till July 4

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI Owing to unresolved issues with the official online platform Tornelo's server in Australia, the last four rounds of the National (under-10) open online rapid chess championship were cancelled on Wednesday and rescheduled for July 4,

According to an announcement by the All India Chess Federation, "The Tornelo Server is not taking the load and there are major network issues in Australia. We tried to fix the same on Tuesday night.

"However, the same issue occurred today. Considering the situation, we are forced to call off the rounds of the National (Under-10) Open for the day. The remaining rounds will be played on July 4, 2021."

After seven rounds, Ethan Vaz, Reyhan Mohammad, Samyam Srivastava and Jval Saurin Patel shared the lead with seven points.

## Mairaj to drive to Croatia for vaccination

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI The long wait for vaccination will culminate with a long drive for skeet shooter Mairaj Ahmad Khan.

After unsuccessful attempts to get inoculated at his training base in Italy, Mairaj will drive from Italy to Croatia to get the vaccine shot.

Driving on the European highways for more than 1,000km from Capua towards the north of Italy, Slovenia and into Croatia may serve as a pleasant change from the rigours of training for the Olympics. A flight across the Adriatic Sea could help cut down the distance by half, but the two skeet shooters were unwilling to exercise that option owing to the risk of catching the virus.

Mairaj will take the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine. All other vaccines require two shots.

## FINA ratifies Srihari's A-mark

Swimmer says he drew inspiration from Sajan's performances

## SWIMMING

## SPORTS REPORTER

BENGALURU Srihari Nataraj has become the second Indian after Sajan Prakash to secure A-mark Olympic Qualification Time, after his time of 53.77s in a 100m backstroke time trial in Rome last weekend was ratified by FINA, the Swimming Federation of India announced on Wednesday.

Sajan had breached the A-mark in 200m butterfly on Saturday with a timing of 1:56.38s (A-mark: 1:56.48s) to become the first Indian ever to achieve the feat.

Srihari's timing required FINA's approval because it was clocked at a requested time trial after the youngster had missed the A-mark (53.85s) by five hundredths of a second last Friday. The 20-year-old can now heave a



**Relief:** Srihari Nataraj, who was on tenterhooks over his Tokyo participation, can now fully concentrate on preparing for the Olympics. ■ FILE PHOTO

sigh of relief and look forward to joining Sajan on the trip to Tokyo as Monal Chokshi, SFI secretary, confirmed that Srihari's name was on the FINA list, and that the official letter would arrive Thursday or later.

"I was very anxious but I was well distracted because

we went around sightseeing in Rome," said Srihari. "That distracted me for a couple of days but I was anxious and [it was] a big relief when I found out."

Srihari said that he drew inspiration from Sajan. "I am very happy that he did it and it's a huge thing. He proved

that it was possible, even at age (27) and with all the injuries he went through. It was a motivation that I can do it too. I saw him drop from 1:57 in Uzbekistan to 1:56 and that showed it wasn't impossible for me to drop another 0.2 seconds a day later."

Srihari will now be training in Bengaluru, where the State Government, through an order on Wednesday, has permitted the opening of "one designated swimming pool only for training of swimmers for Tokyo Olympics."

"There are three weeks left [for Tokyo] and there will be a lot of competition. The main goal is to get a better time. Based on past history and if I can drop [the time] a bit, I see myself making the semifinals. That is the goal," Srihari added.

## Ashwin, Mithali and Neeraj recommended for Khel Ratna

## SPORTS AWARDS

## AGENCIES

## NEW DELHI

The BCCI has decided to recommend women's cricketer Mithali Raj and spinner R. Ashwin for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, the country's highest sporting honour. For Arjuna Award, the Board will send the names of senior batsman Shikhar Dhawan, K.L. Rahul and pacer Jasprit Bumrah.



Mithali Raj. ■ FILE PHOTO



Neeraj Chopra. ■ FILE PHOTO

has been recommended for the Khel Ratna by the Indian Golf Union. World champion in double trap Ankur Mittal and World Championship silver medallist in air rifle Anjum Moudgil have been recommended for the Khel Ratna by the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

A. Sharath Kamal has been recommended for the Khel Ratna by the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI).

Two-time European Tour winner Shubhangakar Sharma

## Sanjeev and Tejaswini finish fifth

India signs off with four medals

## SHOOTING WC

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI Sanjeev Rajput and Tejaswini Sawant placed fifth in the mixed rifle 3-position event in the shooting World Cup in Osijek, Croatia.

After pulling through into the second stage of qualification – at the expense of the other Indian team of Anjum Moudgil and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar – with a better score of inner-10s after being tied on 873, Sanjeev and Tejaswini missed the medal match for the same reason.

The Indian pair had a lower score of inner-10s on

## Dutee makes Tokyo in both 100m &amp; 200m



Dutee Chand. ■ FILE PHOTO

## ANI

## NEW DELHI

Dutee Chand has qualified for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics in both 100m and 200m through the World Rankings quota on Wednesday.

Dutee's overall position of world No. 44 in 100m and world No. 51 in 200m was enough to fly to Tokyo.

## Prajnesh enters pre-quarterfinals

## TENNIS

## SPORTS BUREAU

PORTO Second seed Prajnesh Gunneswaran beat Mathias Bourgue of France 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 to move into the pre-quarterfinals of the €44,820 Challenger tennis here.

**The results:** €44,820 Challenger, Porto: First round: Prajnesh Gunneswaran bt Mathias Bourgue (Fra) 6-2, 3-6, 6-1.

**Doubles:** Pre-quarterfinals: Luca Margaroli (Sui) & Sriram Balaji bt Geoffrey Blancaneaux & Maxime Janvier (Fra) 4-6, 4-6, [10-6].

\$25,000 ITF women, Palma

del Rio, Spain: First round: Anastasia Zakharova (Rus) bt Karman Kaur Thandi 6-4, 4-6, 7-5.

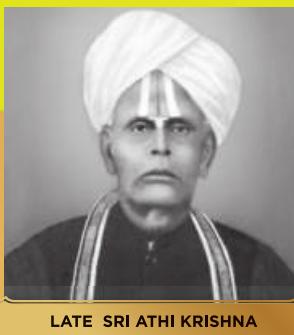
\$15,000 ITF women, Monastir: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Emilie Lindh Gallagher (GBR) & Valentina Ryser (Sui) bt Arina Solomatina (Rus) & Humera Baharmus 6-4, 6-3.



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## 'I didn't want a DNF against my name'

Heptathlete Shobha recounts her gritty display at the Athens Games

## ATHLETICS

## V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

## HYDERABAD

The Olympics is not all about winning medals!

In the birthplace of the Modern Games, Athens, J.J. Shobha came up with a display which still stands out as one of the most memorable performances by an Indian, not for winning a medal but for completing her heptathlon events despite a ligament tear before the final segment (800m).

For the 43-year-old Shobha, the 2004 Games is a personal high too because of the amazing spirit she displayed in the face of serious injury for which she received a standing ovation from the crowd for her grit



J.J. Shobha running with her injured leg. ■ VINO JOHN

and determination.

"The memories of that day are still fresh. No doubt, there is a lifelong regret of coming at the wrong time

missing a huge opportunity of having a go at the Olympic medal when you know you are at your best. But again, it was destiny that saw me suffer that ligament tear in the javelin event," Shobha recalled in a chat with *The Hindu*.

"Well, some thoughts will be repetitive but I have no issues for I am taken back to the Athens Games and there is no better joy than sharing that unforgettable experience," said the South Central Railway officer with a big smile.

"When I look back, I had entered the Athens Games after setting the National record in heptathlon (6211 points which still remains in her name) and the injury

hurts me most. "I vividly remember being carried away on a stretcher twice during the heptathlon in Athens – once after the injury and the after completing the 800m under serious distress," said the mother of two girls.

"Honestly, I was not sure whether I would complete the event. But somehow I mustered the courage and conviction to do that. I just didn't want DNF (Did Not Finish) against my name in the Olympics. I was glad that I finished 11th overall (6172 points)."

Shobha's tryst with the Olympics will be one of those moments which truly symbolise the motto and spirit of the Games.

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