



India, China agree to resolve issues in an expeditious manner

Page 6



Sonia Gandhi accuses PM of mismanaging COVID-19 situation

Page 8



Iran starts up advanced centrifuges in nuclear deal breach

Page 9



Dhawan, Shaw power Capitals to victory against Super Kings

Page 14

### NEARBY



#### Arthiyas withdraw strike over MSP in Punjab

LUDHIANA/CHANDIGARH  
A few hours after going on a strike against the Centre's direction to the State government to transfer the minimum support price of farmers' crops directly to their bank accounts, 'arthiyas' in Punjab on Saturday withdrew their protest after Chief Minister Amarinder Singh assured them that they would remain an integral part of the procurement system.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 5

#### Bihar police officer beaten to death in Bengal

PATNA  
A Bihar police officer was allegedly beaten to death by a mob in West Bengal's north Dinajpur district in the early hours of Saturday. Ashwini Kumar, the SHO of Kishanganj town police station in Bihar, had gone for a raid at Panta-pada village in connection with a motorcycle theft case.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 7

**WANT TO CLEAR crack PRELIMS 2021 IAS TRY OUR RED BOOKS ONLY AT 1000/- WE PROMISE & WE DELIVERED**  
70+ questions covered in 'Red Books' cover  
From PRELIMS RED - All Old & New CEPS and BOOKS in 2020  
• 70+ Major Books Covered.  
• 1.5 Lakh MCQs & Affairs  
• [Jan 2020-May 2021]  
• Synopsis of India Year Book  
• Model Solved Papers  
• Cut off  
Call - 921-7070707

MAGAZINE ▶ 8 PAGES

CLASSIFIEDS ▶ PAGE 4

## 5 killed as violence mars fourth phase of polling in West Bengal

Forces open fire after crowd attacks north Bengal booth

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Five people were killed in two separate incidents of firing in the Sitalkuchi Assembly constituency in north Bengal during voting for the fourth phase of election on Saturday. The incidents sent shockwaves across West Bengal, which still has four more phases of voting.

Four persons were killed when Central forces opened fire at polling booth number 126 at Amtali Madhyamik Siksha Kendra under the Jor Patki gram panchayat. Voting was then suspended at the booth. Superintendent of Police, Cooch Behar, Debashis Dhar said about 300 to 350 people, including women, attacked guards at the polling station with crude weapons following rumours that security personnel had beaten up a person who had allegedly fallen ill.

"The CISF personnel sought reinforcement from QRT (quick response teams) teams, and the scuffle continued. When they [the people] tried to forcibly enter the polling booth and started snatching weapons, the CISF personnel opened fire,



**High drama:** Locals attempting to stop BJP MP Locket Chatterjee's vehicle, during the fourth phase of West Bengal Assembly polls, in Hooghly district on Saturday. ■ PTI

#### Mamata blames Shah for deaths

The death of four persons in Cooch Behar during polling triggered a strong reaction from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who blamed Amit Shah and demanded his resignation. ▶ PAGE 7

#### 'CISF, police opened fire in self-defence'

Members of the police and the CISF fired over 15 rounds in "self-defence" in a span of two hours at two polling booths in Cooch Behar's Sitalkuchi Assembly constituency. ▶ PAGE 7

#### Re-poll ordered at one booth in Cooch Behar

The Election Commission of India on Saturday ordered re-polling at one polling station in Cooch Behar after violence broke out during the fourth phase of the West Bengal poll. ▶ PAGE 7

which killed four people," Mr. Dhar said.

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for West Bengal Aariz Aftab said the Commission had sought a detailed report on the incident from the Dis-

trict Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police.

The incident evoked strong reactions from the Trinamool Congress, with party chief Mamata Banerjee blaming Union Home Minis-

ter Amit Shah for the incident and stating that the manner in which polls were held were a "shame on democracy".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6

## Vaccinations cross 10 crore doses despite the recent dip

Daily inoculations drop from 45 lakh on April 5 to 29 lakh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Amidst complaints of vaccine shortages raised by several States, India crossed a milestone of administering 10 crore doses as on Saturday. The Health Ministry claimed that India had administered these doses within 85 days, faster than the United States' 89 days and China's 103 days.

However, the 29 lakh doses administered within the last 24 hours were a significant decline from the 45 lakh doses – an all-time record – administered on April 5 (Monday). Since that high, the country's daily vaccinations have seen a decline every day of the week, except for April 8, when it registered a moderate jump to 36 lakh doses and declined again on April 9.

Data from the CoWin database, which displays vaccination trends over a monthly timeline, shows that except for the weekends, the number of vaccinations on a given day is usually more than the previous day.

This particularly coincides with a steady increase in daily vaccinations that went down to 6.2 lakh on March 29 but then accelerated everyday to reach 41 lakh on April 3.



**Being prepared:** Bosch Sports Complex in Bengaluru being turned into a COVID Care Centre as cases rise. ■ MURALIKRISHNA

#### Protection from reinfection only lasts months'

A study has found that some people who had COVID-19 lacked meaningful immunity to prevent reinfection months later.

The study found that 20%-30% of infected people had declining virus neutralising activity despite stable seropositivity. ▶ PAGE 8

#### Shortage of remdesivir in Gujarat, M.P.

Remdesivir, a life saving drug used to treat critically ill COVID-19 patients, is in short supply in two States, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. In Gujarat, a controversy has erupted after BJP started distributing the drug. ▶ PAGE 8

for everyone above 45.

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Thursday that 13.5 crore doses of vaccines were available, of which 10 crore had been administered until Saturday.

#### Delhi govt. enforces strict restrictions

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Saturday banned all gatherings except for marriages and funerals till April 30 due to the rise in COVID-19 cases.

The AAP government also made it mandatory for people flying from Maharashtra to Delhi to have a negative RT-PCR test report, according to the official order.

All social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious, festival-related and other gatherings and congregations are now prohibited. The number of people who can attend weddings has been reduced to 50 and funerals to 20.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 3

## Eerie silence



**Road to recovery:** An empty road in front of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai on Saturday during the weekend lockdown imposed by the Maharashtra government. ■ VIVEK BENDRE (RELATED REPORT ON PAGE 8)

## Assamese Muslims plan 'mini NRC'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Assamese Muslims have decided to prepare their own "mini NRC" to distinguish the indigenous followers of Islam from Bengal-origin migrant Muslims residing in Assam.

This, the Janagathya Samannay Parishad (JSP) said, was necessary to "overcome an identity crisis" indigenous Assamese Muslims have been facing after being bracketed with migrant Muslims. It has created a portal where Assamese Muslims must submit relevant documents for this purpose.

The JSP represents three categories of indigenous Muslims – Goriya, Moriya and Deshi.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6

## Dolphin boom in Odisha's Chilika lake

Activists elated at jump in number of endangered Irrawaddy dolphins



**Growing numbers:** An Irrawaddy dolphin seen in the Chilika lake in Odisha. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The population estimation exercise for dolphins and other cetacean species covered almost the entire coast of Odisha.

Three species were recorded during the census, with 544 Irrawaddy, bottlenose and humpback dolphins sighted this year, compared with 233 last year.

Wildlife activists are elated over the sizeable growth in the population of

endangered Irrawaddy dolphins, which are mostly found in Chilika lake, jumping from 146 in 2020 to 162 this year. Apart from Chilika, 39 Irrawaddy dolphins were sighted in the Rajnagar mangrove division, though their number has come down from 60 in 2020. The highest growth has been noticed in the case of humpback dolphins. Only

two humpbacks were sighted in the Rajnagar mangrove in 2020. In 2021, however, this population grew astronomically to 281.

"In 2020, the weather conditions were really bad. This year, our teams came across some large groups of humpback dolphins near Ekakula and Habelikhati areas, close to the Gahirmatha Olive Ridley nesting ground," said Bikash Das, Divisional Forest Officer, Rajanagar (Mangrove) Division.

"These humpback dolphins were not part of any riverine systems, so they cannot be identified as residential mammals. They were spotted travelling along the Odisha coast and the number is likely to fluctuate in the next census," Mr. Das added.

## Farmers block KMP Expressway in Haryana

Traffic hit at many places as farmers stage sit-in at toll plazas; 10 leaders detained

ASHOK KUMAR  
GURUGRAM

Traffic on the 135-km-long Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway in Haryana, connecting the Delhi-Agra and Delhi-Ambala highways, was completely hit on Saturday after farmers staged protests against the three contentious agriculture reform laws at several points, in response to a call by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) for a 24-hour blockade.

"There is no traffic on the road at all since morning. Farmers have been holding agitations at several points, including Kundli, Badli, Nuh and Palwal," Vijay Tiwari, senior project manager, Path India, the toll collection agency for the KMP, told *The Hindu*. However, there were no reports of protests on the stretch of the road passing through Gurugram.

All-India Mewati Samaj



**Strong stance:** Farmers protesting on the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway at Dausa in Ghaziabad on Saturday. ■ ANI

president Ramzan Chaudhary said 10 farmer leaders in Nuh were detained by the police while they were holding a demonstration at Rehwasan. "Almost an hour after we began the protest, the police took us to the police station in a bus. We were let off after four hours," Mr. Chaudhary said.

Nuh SP Narendra Bijarniya denied that the farmers were detained, and said they were taken to the police station for "talks" after they blocked the Gurugram-Nuh road. Farmers thronged the toll plazas in large numbers around 8 a.m. and sat on

dharna. The police were also deployed in large numbers to prevent any law and order situation.

#### 'Full support of people'

"Farmers blocked the Dausa plaza and Ghaziabad border. They managed the langar and water on this highway itself. Farmers protesting at the Tikri border also blocked the KMP and set a stage. Led by agitating farmers of the Singhu border, farmers blocked the KMP at three sites. Due to the full support of common people, this programme was a complete success," a press statement issued by the Morcha said.

Cutting through five districts of Haryana – Sonipat, Jhajjar, Gurugram, Nuh and Palwal – the KMP Expressway has 11 toll plazas with an average traffic of around 25,000 vehicles per day.

## Police rescue seven-month-old in dramatic operation

Family's tenant abducted toddler for a ransom of ₹40 lakh as he wanted to settle down with girlfriend

**HEMANI BHANDARI**  
NEW DELHI

When the kidnapper along with the seven-month-old boy was 800 metres away from the police, the officers lost his location and were about to lose him. They, however, decided to take a risk and ended up successful.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Parvinder Singh said that around 1.30 p.m. on Friday, Outer Delhi's Ranholi police station received a call stating that their seven-month-old son had been kidnapped by their tenant and that the accused was asking for a ransom of ₹40 lakh.

### Came to play with child

A police team, including Station House Officer Inspector Vimal reached the caller's house where they met the child's mother Shivi Kaushik.

She told the police that Priyanshu Kumar, a computer engineer, has been staying on the second floor of their residential building on rent for the last two months.

On Friday, he came around 11.30 a.m. and said

he wanted to play with her son and when she told him that the child was sleeping, he decided to wait.

An hour later, when the child woke up, he immediately picked him up and when the mother went out of the room, Priyanshu escaped with the child.

Ms. Kaushik informed her husband, Sidhartha Kaushik, who is a pharmacist working in a company in Okhla.

Around the same time, Priyanshu called Mr. Kaushik and told him to transfer ₹40 lakh and cooperate. He also said that he would harm the child if they approached the police. The family, however, was firm that they wanted to get police help.

### Operation lasted 7 hours

The police registered the case and began the operation which lasted nearly seven hours. Additional DCP Sudhanshu Dhamma took the lead and stayed with the family throughout.

Recalling the stressful and dramatic operation, Mr. Dhamma said that the main aim for the team was to keep the ac-



Accused Priyanshu Kumar in police custody.

\* SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the child. I also told him not to come near Mohan Garden and to stay away from the police," the officer said.

Another tactic used by them was to transfer money to him. A total of ₹40,000 were transferred to his account. Mr. Singh said that a team was constantly tracking his location.

He first walked about 4 km towards Uttam Nagar from where he took a cab to Pandav Nagar, went to Anand Vihar and then took another cab to Vasundhara.

He then went to Vaishali and then came towards Delhi again. He also withdrew transferred money at one point. Around 4.30 p.m., he hired a cab in which he remained till the end.

### Lost track

The police said that he took the cab towards Aerocity and Mehram Nagar as well and that's when they felt he could try to leave the city too. The police started sweet talking him into coming to Lajwanti Chowk. "But 800 metres from his cab, we lost his location. At that point, he

was also getting anxious and said that he was going to harm the child. His father started crying. We took a risk and calculated at what point he would reach the junction and hoped that the signal turned red so he could be intercepted," Mr. Dhamma said.

But, to their misfortune, they could only trace him again when he was 140 metres away from them and had crossed the red light.

The police, all of them in civil dress, intercepted the car and rescued the child. Priyanshu managed to flee.

He was, however, arrested six hours later with the help of technical intelligence.

During interrogation, he allegedly told the police that he is a BTech degree holder and graduated in 2018. He was currently doing apprenticeship in Sahibabad.

He allegedly told the police that he has a girlfriend in Kanpur and he needs to meet her demands for which he constantly needs money.

He decided to kidnap the child and ask for ₹40 lakh ransom so he could settle with her in Kanpur.

## PM should meet Kejriwal every 15 days, says Sisodia

They can discuss governance, Delhi development model

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Saturday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should hold fortnightly meetings with Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and take suggestions from him on better governance.

"The Prime Minister and Home Minister are accepting it [Delhi's model] is the correct model of development].

I hope that the PM will take opinions [from Mr. Kejriwal]. Every 15 days, Mr. Kejriwal should be called for tea and discuss what model can be done for country's development, which schemes

can be done better for common man's benefits and economy," Mr. Sisodia said during a press conference.

### Election campaigns

He claimed that election campaigns by the BJP and Congress are now based on the "Arvind Kejriwal model



In Kerala, the BJP has promised free public transport for women, and in Tamil Nadu, the party has said that it will bring in a model of governance that is similar to what can be seen in Delhi

**MANISH SISODIA**  
Deputy Chief Minister

of governance".

"Recently, when Home Minister Amit Shah was campaigning in West Bengal, he promised free electricity up to 200 units should the BJP be elected to power. In Kerala, the BJP has promised free public trans-

a vision for the nation, he understands the pulse of the people, and knows what is required to push the people and the nation ahead. He is the only leader with the administrative will to walk the talk," said the senior Aam Aadmi Party leader.

Mr. Sisodia added that the PM had recognised the relevance of home isolation and creating micro-containment zones to combat the spread of COVID-19, and went on to claim that both ideas had come from Delhi.

## Man murders wife as passers-by look on

Video shows multiple stabbing

**STAFF REPORTER**

NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old man allegedly stabbed his wife to death in Rohini's Vijay Vihar in broad daylight on Saturday. The accused has been arrested, the police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Rohini) Pranav Tayal said that the accused has been identified as Harish Mehta, who works at a marriage bureau, and the victim has been identified as Neelu, who used to work at Safdarjung Hospital.

Video of the incident which was captured by a person on the street showed the accused stabbing the wife multiple times as she lay in a pool of blood. The video also shows people casually passing by as the man stabbed his wife.

The police said that a PCR call was received regarding stabbing of a woman on the street. When the police reached the spot, they saw a man holding the wife and running away. Locals had also gathered by then. The police chased and apprehended him. The woman was taken to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital where she was de-

## FCI wheat counters to be opened in Narela mandi

**STAFF REPORTER**

NEW DELHI

Agriculture Minister Gopal Rai on Saturday said that taking cognisance of the demands of farmers, the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is going to set up wheat procurement counters in Narela mandi from Monday.

"After a joint meeting with senior officials of the FCI today, it has been decided that their counters will be set up from Monday which will facilitate wheat procurement at MSP rates. Setting up of counters will help farmers in a way that their time will be saved, they will be saved from the long and tedious process of registration and won't be forced to run from pillar to post to sell their crops," Mr. Rai said.

On Friday, responding to allegation by Mr. Rai, the FCI had said that they have opened procurement counters in Food Storage Depot (FSD) in Narela, which is only a few metres from the Narela mandi and shared photos and videos of wheat procured.

"The FCI has opened centres at Najafgarh mandi, Food Storage Depot, Narela, and Food Storage Depot, Mayapuri which are fully functional from April 1. FSD Narela is adjacent to APMC Narela mandi, hardly a few metres away from the main gate of the mandi," the FCI said on Friday.

## Tyred and tested



Protesting farmers at the Ghazipur border near Delhi on Saturday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

## BJP protests against AAP's 'anti-farmer attitude'

Bidhuri says Delhi govt's failure has forced them to sell their produce below MSP

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Saturday held a demonstration outside the residence of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to protest against the "anti-farmers attitude" of the AAP government. It demanded that the government should fulfil the promise for 50% bonus over and above the MSP in Delhi.

Members of the Delhi Pradesh BJP Kisan Morcha and BJP MLAs participated in the protest and said that it was a "failure" of the Delhi government's Agriculture Department to verify the documents of the farmers that forced them to sell their produce below the MSP being offered by the Central go-

vernment.

Mr. Bidhuri said that Chief Minister had claimed that it had implemented the Swaminathan Committee report in Delhi and the farmers were being provided 50% bonus over and above the MSP of wheat. However, at present, the MSP declared by the Central government is ₹1,975 per quintal and the 50% bonus comes to ₹987.50 per

quintal and this should be paid to the farmers immediately.

The BJP demanded that the Chief Minister immediately issue instructions to the Agriculture Department and direct them to start verification of documents of the farmers so that they are able to sell their produce to the FCI at the MSP announced by the Central government.

## Man held for duping people over fake jobs

**STAFF REPORTER**

NEW DELHI

A 48-year-old man was arrested from Kolkata for allegedly duping people by posting fake job advertisements online for work abroad, the police said on Saturday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Thakur said that the accused has been identified as Samir Arvind Parekh, a labour contractor and a resident of Guwahati.

The police said that a woman approached them and said that she runs a food home delivery service from Chhattarpur.

In the first week of March, she saw an online job advertisement for the position of a chef. She contacted the person concerned who offered her \$2,000 salary to work as a chef at a restaurant in the U.S. She and her business partner deposited ₹36,000 each as registration fee for the same as demanded by the man. Later, when they tried contacting him, the phone number was found to be switched off.

During probe, bank statements of the beneficiary accounts were obtained and analysed which led them to the accused who was arrested on April 7 from West Bengal.

It was revealed that he has cheated 25 people and he and his accomplices contacted victims online and promised to provide them job abroad.

## Rising virus cases pose fresh trial for prisons

Inmate count touches 20,000 mark in city jails for the first time

**SAURABH TRIVEDI**

NEW DELHI

The rising number of COVID-19 cases in the Capital has again thrown a fresh challenge at the Delhi prisons where inmate count has touched the 20,000 mark for the first time.

Following social distancing norms in such packed spaces remains a perennial concern.

The Delhi prison has a sanctioned capacity of around 10,000 inmates. However, the jail administration said that they are making all possible efforts to keep the prisoners safe and are following all COVID-related protocols.

### Space crunch

A senior officer said that despite the pandemic, there is surge in number of inmates and for the first time the count had crossed

the 20,000 mark on March 30.

"It is tough to maintain hygiene and COVID-19 protocols in summers when there is a space crisis. However, they regularly sanitise inmate wards and senior citizens have been kept in separate wards for safety," said the officer.

In Delhi, there are three prisons – Tihar, Mandoli and Rohini – where a total 20,041 prisoners are lodged.

The officer added that as per the protocol, whenever any new inmate arrives, he or she is kept in a separate ward for 14 days and has to undergo mandatory COVID-19 test followed by health screening. The prisoners' meeting with their relatives is also suspended till further orders.

### Vaccination facility

"We have arranged COVID-19 vaccination facility inside Tihar prison in order to avoid taking them out to the nearest vaccination centre. We are doing all possible efforts to keep the inmates safe and we have managed to achieve it. We keep motivating them to get



An inmate getting vaccinated in Tihar jail hospital.

\* SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

prisons which has a capacity to accommodate 5,200 inmates but at present there are 13,587 inmates.

In Rohini prison which has a capacity of 1,050 inmates, there are 1,733 inmates at present.

In Mandoli prison, which has a capacity to accommodate 3,776 inmates, there are 4,721 inmates currently.

There are only two jails (14 and 16) in Mandoli where there are less numbers of inmates than the sanctioned capacity. The situation is the worst in Jail number 1 and 4 of Tihar where the number of inmates lodged are four times more than the actual capacity.

### Possible efforts

"We are doing all possible efforts but social distancing is not possible within the barracks. We ensure that whenever inmates move out of their barracks – to make a call to their families, or to appear before court through videoconferencing or some other work – we ensure they follow all safety protocols. We ensure social distanc-

ing at places of gathering. We have marked circles on floors and made face masks mandatory," said DG (Prisons) Sandeep Goel.

He added that there is no immediate relief that can be possible in jails but they are managing the situation with the available resources.

### A ticking bomb

"Inmates above 60 years of age and with comorbidities have to undergo daily health screening. A team of doctors inspect the ward and monitor their oxygen level and body temperature. For other inmates, we monitor their health and randomly check their body temperature," said Mr. Goel.

A doctor who wished not to be named said that overcrowded prisons in Delhi are a ticking bomb and could cause a disaster.

Social distancing is the only way to break the chain of infection and in such congested spaces it can never be followed. The government should come up with more options for the safety of inmates.

**WESTERN RAILWAY**  
**EMpanelment of private hospitals**  
EOI No.: MD/173/7/Empanelment/  
NDB Date: 08.04.2021 Executive:  
CMS-MMCT Work and Location:  
Office of Chief Medical Supdt.  
Mumbai Central, WR, No.MD/  
173/7/Empanelment/NDB, Invite  
Expression of Interest (EOI) for  
Empanelment of Private Hospital in  
Nandurbar District for treatment of  
Railway Beneficiaries in emergency  
in Nandurbar section of Mumbai  
division. The rate of payment for the  
treatment of patient will be as per  
CGHS NABH/NABL or Non-NABH/  
Non-NABL (Ahmedabad city) rate list  
or Hospital rates which ever lower.  
For procedure where CGHS rates  
are not mentioned discount on the  
hospital rates may be given &  
mentioned. The duration of  
empanelment will be for 02 years  
from the date of Agreement (MoA).  
Those private Hospital which are  
interested for empanelment with  
Western Railway may give their  
consent for inspection of their  
hospital on or before 30/04/2021. The  
last date for submission of EOI is  
on or before 30/04/2021. The interested  
Private Hospital may submit EOI  
Hospital Rate, other relevant  
documents (in sealed envelope) to  
office of Add. Chief Medical Supdt.  
Health Unit, Near Railway Station,  
Nandurbar-425412, on any  
working days (Monday to Friday)  
between 9.30 am to 05.00pm.  
Contact No.0264-225788 Detailed  
guidelines is uploaded in tender  
section of www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in  
along with advt (Eligibility for  
Empanelment and application,  
CSTE circular including model MoA,  
Addendum on MOA for Non-CSTE  
Railway beneficiaries) Completion  
period: 02 years Date of  
submission: 30/04/21

Timings  
DELHI

SUNDAY, APR. 11	
RISE 06:01	SET 18:45
RISE 05:47	SET 18:09
MONDAY, APR. 12	
RISE 05:59	SET 18:46
RISE 06:15	SET 19:02
TUESDAY, APR. 13	
RISE 05:58	SET 18:46
RISE 06:45	SET 19:55

Delhi Weather	max min
Delhi City	37 17
Safdarjung	37 17
Palam	38 20

**Delhi Palam Today**  
38°C A pleasant morning and hot day would prevail with light surface winds.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
38°C A comfortable morning and hot day with mainly clear sky. Surface winds would be light to moderate.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019  
All rights reserved.

## Labourer dies after falling from bridge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old labourer died after he fell from an under-construction bridge near Jasola in south-east Delhi's Sarita Vihar, the police said on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Panne Lal. He was a resident of Sanjay Camp in Okhla. On Friday night, the police received information that a man had fallen from a bridge near Jasola.

The man was taken to Apollo Hospital by the police and he died on Saturday morning during treatment.

"During inquiry, negligent conduct by the contractor of the bridge was found. He did not cover the stairs of the bridge with fencing or barricade and he did not deploy any guard there for the safety of the people," the police said.

A case has been lodged against the contractor.

# Strict curbs put in place to stop virus spread

Ban on all gatherings except weddings and funerals; metro, buses, eateries and cinema halls to operate at 50% capacity

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Saturday banned all gatherings except for marriages and funerals till April 30 due to the rise in COVID-19 cases.

The government also made it mandatory for people flying from Maharashtra to Delhi to have a negative RT-PCR test report, as per an official order.

All social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious, festival-related and other gatherings and congregations are now prohibited, as per the order.

The number of people who can attend weddings has been reduced to 50 and funerals to 20.

Restaurants, bars, cinemas, theaters, multiplexes can operate at 50% capacity.

The occupancy in buses and metro trains have also been capped at 50%.

"Transportation by Delhi



People waiting in the observation room after getting the COVID-19 vaccine at Guru Gobind Singh Hospital in Delhi on Saturday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Metro: 50% of capacity of metro coach. Transportation by buses: Intra-State (within NCT of Delhi) movement of buses (DTC as well as Cluster) shall be permitted with

the condition that not more than 50% of bus capacity shall be allowed at one time inside the bus," it read.

Till Saturday, 100 people could attend gatherings, in-

cluding marriages, in closed spaces, and 200 people in open spaces. Also, there were no capacity restrictions in cinema halls and buses.

Stadiums for organising

sports events shall be allowed without spectators.

All swimming pools, except those being used for training of sport persons for participation in National and International events, will be closed, the order said.

Flyers from Maharashtra

"A negative RT-PCR report (not older than 72 hours prior to undertaking the journey) shall be compulsory for all persons arriving from Maharashtra to NCT of Delhi by air. Passengers without a negative report will have to remain in quarantine for 14 days. All Constitutional and government functionaries and their employees are exempted from these instructions, if they are asymptomatic," the order said.

"There shall be no restriction on inter-State and intra-State movement of persons and goods, including those for cross-land border trade

under treaties with neighbouring countries. No separate permission is required for this," the order said.

Private offices and organisations have been advised to stagger timings and reduce the number of employees in attendance. "They are advised to follow the practice of work from home as far as possible," the order read.

All schools, colleges and educational, training, coaching institutions etc. will remain closed, the order said.

"Students of Classes 9-12 may be called to school for academic guidance and support for mid-term exams/pre-Board exams/annual exams/Board examinations, practical exams/project work, and internal assessment, after following the prescribed SOP for COVID-19 safety issued by the Directorate of Education, and with the consent of the parents," the order said.

## Kejriwal rules out lockdown option

Health system must regain momentum to battle surge'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday ruled out the possibility of another lockdown in the Capital to deal with rising COVID-19 cases but said that there was a need to spearhead an aggressive vaccination campaign while simultaneously taking measures to contain the spread of the virus.

Reviewing preparations at Lok Nayak Hospital, Mr. Kejriwal said, "This is the fourth wave in Delhi. The last wave was in November last year after which cases had become so few in Delhi that the health system and other agencies began to get lax. It is imperative that they gain

their momentum again and begin to function in the same efficient manner that they did, which helped contain the virus."

The CM said that he had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking for permission to increase the number of vaccination centres, remove the age limits on beneficiaries, and provide sufficient number of doses so that all Delhiites can be vaccinated within the next two-three months.

"I cannot talk about the rest of the country, but as per Delhi government's preparation, if these three pre-conditions are met, we can assure you that all Delhiites will be made available for infected patients.

two-three months. Once everyone is vaccinated, it will greatly aid us in containing and ending the severity of the virus," he said.

**Vaccine supply**  
Mr. Kejriwal added that Delhi at present has enough vaccination to carry out the drive for the next 7-10 days and that hospitals in the Capital were in a comfortable position with reference to beds and ventilators.

Mr. Kejriwal said that out of the 2,000 beds available at Lok Nayak Hospital, 1,500 have been declared as COVID-19 beds, and if the situation demands, all 2,000 beds will be made available for infected patients.

## Daily cases fall in Delhi as testing dips by 29%, positivity crosses 10% mark

Tenure of resident doctors extended by 6 months, says Jain

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

With a 29% drop in testing compared to the previous day, Delhi reported 7,897 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours on Saturday.

The tally now stands at 7,14,423. The city had recorded 8,521 cases on Friday, the second highest single-day spike since the start of the pandemic.

The highest single-day spike in Delhi till date – 8,593 cases – was reported on November 11, 2020,

As per the bulletin on Saturday, a total of 77,374 tests were done in 24 hours, a drop from the 1,09,398 tests

on Friday.

The test positivity, however, has jumped to 10.21%, the first time this year. Thirty-nine fatalities were also reported in the past 24 hours, taking the death toll to 11,235.

Of the total cases, 6,74,415 people have recovered and there are 28,773 active cases.

Earlier in the day, Health Minister Satyendar Jain tweeted that to combat rising COVID-19 cases and meet the demand of medical personnel, the tenure of presently working senior resident doctors and junior resident doctors will be ex-

tended for six months. Also, candidates will be hired for the vacant posts.

He added that all Delhi government hospitals have been directed to engage 4th and 5th year MBBS students, interns and BDS doctors for COVID-19 treatment of patients.

"During a surge, swiftness of process is a must. In addition to CDMOs, all Medical Superintendents and Directors of Delhi Govt hospitals dedicated for covid, are now authorised to issue oxygen concentrators to discharged covid patients [sic]," the Minister said in another tweet.

## Professors raise red flag over rising COVID cases in St. Stephen's College

They have requested principal to let students return home

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Professors at St. Stephen's College have written to the administration yet again on the number of COVID-19 cases on campus.

College governing body member Nandita Narain wrote to Principal John Varghese demanding transparency on how the situation was being handled and requested that all non-infected students be allowed to return home.

"Did the college inform all 225 students and employees – tested on April 3 by a private lab – that they

had tested negative? Did they get a copy of their results? On the basis of this, did the college open all areas on April 6 for routine work barring Mukherjee East and Sports Complex?" Ms. Narain asked.

**Testing discrepancies**  
Ms. Narain also asked whether testing organised by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate showed a number of positive results among students and employees.

"Do these discrepancies in the two tests not cast a doubt on the credibility of the first test, especially

since the private lab did not disclose individual results? Will an independent and transparent probe be held to inquire into this negligence?" read the letter.

Referring to a college trip in March, Ms. Narain further asked: "Is it true that the condition of one of the officials who accompanied the students to Dalhousie has deteriorated and that he has been admitted to a hospital? Should the college not be closed, and infected students admitted to hospital, and other students sent home in the light of the outbreak in the campus?"

**Western Railway**  
VARIOUS CIVIL WORK  
Executive: DEN (Est/S) BCT, Tender Notice No.: BCT/21/22/07, Dated: 09-04-2021. Work and Location: Dadar - Rehabilitation of Dadar - Rly colony - Type II (54-units), Type IV (2-units), Type III (1 units) along with Road, Drainage line, Toilets, Garden, Boundary wall in connection with rehabilitation of Western Railway south colony in connection with relocation of infringing structure and proposed new STR in connection with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> line at Dadar station. Approx. Cost of Work: Rs. 14,25,09,697.28. EMD: Rs. 0/- Date & Time of Submission: On 18-05-2021 till 15.00 hrs. Date & Time of Opening: On 18-05-2021 till 15.30 Hrs. 1. Regarding detailed nature of work, containing cost of tender document (non refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, similar nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in). Manual offers will not be considered.

0017

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://facebook.com/WesternRly)

THE HINDU  
India's National Newspaper

THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the accuracy of any statement before responding to any publication in this newspaper. THE PUBLISHING LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,  
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमण्डल तेनुघाट

निविदा रद्द संबंधित सूचना

इस प्रमण्डल द्वारा आमंत्रित ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या – (तेनुघाट) DMFT 01/2021-22 दिनांक 05.04.2021 जिसका PR NO. 245099 है को अपरिहार्य कारणवश रद्द किया जाता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता,  
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमण्डल तेनुघाट।

PR 245475 Drinking Water and Sanitation(21-22)D

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय  
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमण्डल तेनुघाट

निविदा रद्द संबंधित सूचना

इस प्रमण्डल द्वारा आमंत्रित ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या – (तेनुघाट) DMFT 02/2021-22 दिनांक 05.04.2021 जिसका PR NO. 245124 है को अपरिहार्य कारणवश रद्द किया जाता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता  
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता  
प्रमण्डल तेनुघाट

PR 245477 Drinking Water and Sanitation (21-22)\_D

**BHARATHIDASAN UNIVERSITY**  
A State University Accredited with A' Grade by NAAC in the Third Cycle  
53<sup>rd</sup> Rank among the Indian Universities in NIRF-2020  
Palkalaiyur, Tiruchirappalli - 620 024, Tamil Nadu, India

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION (CDOE)  
UGC-DEB Approval F.No.20-26/2020(DEB-IV)

ONLINE DEGREE PROGRAMMES  
ADMISSION NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates to the  
ONLINE DEGREE PROGRAMMES for January 2021 Session

UG PROGRAMMES (NON-SEMESTER)

Last Date for January 2021 Session: 30-04-2021

1. B.A. Tamil  
2. B.A. English  
3. B.B.A.

Session starts from 01-05-2021

PG PROGRAMMES (NON-SEMESTER)

1. M.A. Tamil  
2. M.A. English  
3. M.A. Economics  
4. M.A. History

PG PROGRAMME (SEMESTER)

M.B.A Business Administration

Eligible students from anywhere in the world can apply

# MATRIMONIAL

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

## BRIDEROOMS WANTED

### INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL

#### BRIDEROOMS WANTED

#### BRIDES WANTED

#### BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED

Classification common for Brides, Bridegrooms, Brides & Grooms

Assamese

Awadhi

Bengali

Bhojpuri

Bihari

Chhattisgarhi

English

Gujarati

Haryanvi

Hindi

Kannada

Kashmiri

Konkani

Malayalam

Manipuri

Marathi

Marwari

Nepali

Oriya

Parsi

Punjabi

Saurashtra

Sindhi

Tamil

Telugu

Tulu

Urdu

Advocate

Business

Defence

Doctor

Engineer

Finance/ Banking

Government/ Quasi-Govt.

IAS / Allied Services

Information Technology

MBA / CA / ICWA

NRI

Cosmopolitan

Divorcee

Physically Challenged

MARRIAGE BUREAUS

WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

#### COMPUTER / INFO.TECH.

Tamil/ Telugu Speaking girl, 54", MS (CS) US, Jun 1989, Birthplace: Sultanpur (UP), Casto - Kori, 52", Working in MNC in Hyderabad as SW Engg. Contact No: 7887976659

#### COSMOPOLITAN

Groom Needed. Casto no bar. Girl's details : DOB 20th Mar 1980, Birthplace: Sultanpur (UP), Casto - Kori, 52", Working in MNC in Hyderabad as SW Engg. Contact No: 7887976659

#### DIVORCEE

HINDU NADAR (Tamil settled in Kerala), issueless divorce, 39/160, BE/MBA working in USA, seeks suitable Hindu (CNB) groom working in USA. 9890223767 / 9207732376.

FAIR/ MUDALIYAR Girl 30/162, 10th, No issue, seeks suitable groom, caste no bar, Chennai only. 9840353368

#### DOCTOR

AD CHRISTIAN CSI well settled family 30/ 150/ MBBS Pvt Hospital seeks Doctor groom. Casto no bar. Ct: 9790655279 / kavukum9@ gmail.com

MARTHOMITE 28/165 MD-Radiology F- Civil service M-Dr, seeks Dr groom from Kerlite Christian. 7339157563

PILLAI 26/165 MBBS(going to join MD-US). Seeks Dr groom-Resident/Fellow-in USA. Saivam community. CT:7339157563

#### Wanted DOCTOR BOY For MALAYALEE CHRISTIAN MBBS,MS,MCh GIRL 29/5'5"/Fair.

Contact 1992MBBS@gmail.com 9425004560 9589204193

IAS / ALLIED SERVICES KERALA HINDU SC Girl, 06.04.1988, IIS, Assistant Director (Doordarshan), Delhi, Ct: 8589881011

#### MALAYALAM

LOOKING- ALLIANCE for my daughter aged 26yrs MBA ,Coming from a affluent family looking for a roman catholic well settled Professional groom preferably settled in Bangalore from a Religious well settled family : 97409 99607

PROGRESSIVE MINDED Nair Girl from Cochin, Atham, 27/168 cms.Corporate Lawyer,Bangalore. 9847584504

#### MALAYALAM

NAIR GIRL 27/154, Revathy, employed Chennai settled, Alliance invited Chennai Nair family. 950012855

ALLIANCE FOR fair girl/ 23/ msc genetic engineering/ atham/ 165 cm height only daughter of a class one gazetted officer (police) from research background boys contact us gayatri1997@gmail.com

VISHAKARMA, 25 M.tech, 6LPA, Chennai. Seeks Edu. Groom settled Good Family. Contact - 703545194.

HINDU, AD, 32, Moolam, Dhanus, BE, MS (USA) working in USA, Green card in process seeks suitable well settled PG Groom with Green card / H1B / settled in USA. C: 994875320

NRI Brahmin Girl 35/54", MS Robotics Working in California. U.S. Casto No Bar Seeking MS/MBA/Ph.D, 34-37 yrs 5'6" Staying In Us, +91442426372 matr.divya27@gmail.com

#### TAMIL

38/ 168 AD Innocent divorcee working in Australia seek Christian professionals below 40, willing to relocate Australia 9840255028, 9940678431.

TAMIL MUSLIM 23/165 MBBS, Fair, Parents seek prof. qualified groom. Ct: 9840488731

WANTED A Christ realized Sifil filled never married Boy within 37 years of age for a Christ oriented Giria aged 35 years. 95351 16520

Tamil Muslim Sunni MD PAED 28 / 154 cm. Seeks doctor or PG Engineer from Tamilanad. Call: 98846 23120

CSI CHRISTIAN Nadar Girl Fair, Good Looking, 03-04-1986 born / 152cm / M.Sc.M.Phil , working as Assistant Professor in a Reputed Women's College, Mount Road, Chennai. Both Parents Doctors (Private) , Suitable Alliance, Employed / Settled in Chennai / With Clean Habits from Same Community. Contact: 9841182514

SC/AD MELA Aruppukottai native DOB 17.5.90 WKG in MNC Chennai Sla 9LPA seek RC Christian other prf from South Dt wkg Chennai Ct 9444056939

TAMIL RC (BC) 26 years,150cms, 58kgs Wheatish, B.Des.M.A.(Fashion Promotion) Well Employed seeks PG, well-employed Groom with clean habits in Chennai only. Ct: 9444132111

CHRISTIAN BC divorced single mom, 42 5 Lpa, 5 ft, MBA, having own church seeks employed born again bridegroom. Ct. 9826917580

SC/AD MELA Aruppukottai native DOB 17.5.90 WKG in MNC Chennai Sla 9LPA seek RC Christian other prf from South Dt wkg Chennai Ct 9444056939

TAMIL Iyer Boy 24 B.S. MBA Raagu Keathu, Chennal need Well Employed Groom. 9965109064 / 9976602997

Casto No Bar Chettiar 1977 Nov/MCA/ fair/young look Chennai seeks. 94430 80442. alliancesree1@gmail.com

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR Chennai 06.10.1987, M.Sc, Ph.D, Mudalar Bride Middle Class Rs.70,000/- P.M. Weatish Complexion Meenam. Father Seeks alliance from Unmarried 33 to 37 years Bachelor Bridegroom, Employed (Asst. Prof., Scientific Officer / Researcher / SW Engineer / Bank Official) from Any Mudalar Sub-sect (Arcto / Chengalpet / Tulva velala/ Senguthar / Agumada / Mudalar / Soliya Vella Pillai) Contact my Daughters after college and Hospital Duty Hours / Ct Phones(8pm) 7550245659 / 9940840760

CSI BORN Again Tamil Girl, 39/yr/160 cm Mba Employed in USA MNC, seeks CSI. Born again Unmarried grooms in USA (BE/MBA) below 42yrs Cb: 9677249058

CSI Protestant Tamil Nadar Divorcee no issues 40ys Dentist. Own Clinic chennai seek equal status Groom from Chennai. 9940652135, 8105290871

ROMAN CATHOLIC, Tamil, B.C/27 yrs, B.Tech MBA, Seeks well Educated Groom. Ct: 9945021644

SC AD Kongu 24 B.S. MBA Raagu Keathu Chennal need Well Employed Groom. 9965109064 / 9976602997

Casto No Bar Chettiar 1977 Nov/MCA/ fair/young look Chennai seeks. 94430 80442. alliancesree1@gmail.com

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR Chennai 06.10.1987, M.Sc, Ph.D, Mudalar Bride Middle Class Rs.70,000/- P.M. Weatish Complexion Meenam. Father Seeks alliance from Unmarried 33 to 37 years Bachelor Bridegroom, Employed (Asst. Prof., Scientific Officer / Researcher / SW Engineer / Bank Official) from Any Mudalar Sub-sect (Arcto / Chengalpet / Tulva velala/ Senguthar / Agumada / Mudalar / Soliya Vella Pillai) Contact my Daughters after college and Hospital Duty Hours / Ct Phones(8pm) 7550245659 / 9940840760

FOR A REPUTED FAMILY HINDU NADAR GIRL 26, 5'2", FAIR, Studied in Premier Institutions. Management Graduate. Two Post Graduate Degrees in United Kingdom. Currently Director in Family running Company. Also working in a company at Chennai. Seeks Similar well Settled Groom.

VANNIYAR, 26, fair and good looking BDS girl, seeking a Groom with BDS/ MDS/MBBS/MD/MS from same community with good family background. send profile, photo and horoscope to: 98942 73699.

HINDU SC/AD 32/152 B.E. Middle Class. Divorcee. Seeks Suitable Educated and Family background Groom. Casto No Bar. 94896 95984

SC AD, 38/165, Revathi, Meena rasi, MBBS, MD, Govt. Doctor, Bangalore, divorcee, no issues seeks suitable professional groom. Casto No Bar. Ct: 96164 7080, 025468640

SAIVA VELLALA Pillai(Veg) 40/ 162 BE Divorcee Seek Any Degree Well Employed Groom below 44. 944473129 / 044-25507181 / muttuvela1435@gmail.com

SEEKING A Tamil Iyer/ Iyer/ Saiva Vellala Pillai groom, Engineer or PhD in early thirties for a 29 yr old BSc MBBS girl. Please contact kvacasa@gmail.com with photos and family details.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OR OTHER COMMUNITIES FOLLOWING VEGETARIANISM (ACCEPTANCE OF OTHER RELEVANT COMMUNITY IS THE DISCRETION OF BRIDES FAMILY)

9677773391

WANTED UG/PG QUALIFIED ELITE GROOM, TAMIL CHETTIAR, RICH FAMILY BACKGROUND FOR MAY 1989 BORN, UNMARRIED, SLIM,

BEAUTIFUL CHETTIAR GIRL,

WHATSSAPP : 94421 10063

TELUGU

Naidu good look 1973/171cm MBA working seeks below 49yrs. 94446

ALLIANCE FOR Tamil Yadaiva Girl, 27, BE, MS (USA) Working in USA

165, MBBS MS (OS) Having Own Industry, Complex, Workaholic, Chennai, Seeks Groom Business Doctor - Engineer / 9839012419

CHETTIAR (CNB) : 500cr,V,Fair,25

MBBS,DH,SC,Pg,165,160,160,160

165, MBBS,MS (OS) Having Own Industry, Complex, Workaholic, Chennai, Seeks Groom Business Doctor - Engineer / 9839012419

SCAD, 45, B.Tech, MBA, 162cm, well Settled Family seeks Suitable

Professional groom. Ct: 9443553063

Mudalar, 25, B.Tech, MBA, 162cm,

well Settled Family seeks Suitable

Professional groom. Ct: 9443553063

SOUTH INDIAN Upper middle class brahmin family seeking highly qualified life partner for daughter, 25 years, from same background. Ct: 9703519977

AGE - 45, PhD, good looking, wheatish, never married, employed in ITT seeks well educated, never married and groom below 50 years of age from a decent family background. Contact: 9443553063

SMU PARENTS Chennai seek

professionally qualified and

suitably groomed, for daughter, fair, 28

years, 5'2", M.Phil, working aghouza22@gmail.com

PROGRESSIVE MINDED Nair Girl

from Cochin, Atham, 27/168 cms.Corporate Lawyer,Bangalore. 9847584504

91762 07999, 91764 20799

PROGRESSIVE MINDED Nair Girl

from Cochin, Atham, 27/168 cms.Corporate Lawyer,Bangalore. 9847584504

91762 07999, 91764 20799

PROGRESSIVE MINDED Nair Girl

from Cochin, Atham, 27/168 cms.Corporate Lawyer,Bangalore. 9847584504

## IN BRIEF



Plea against film shoot in Malampuzha reservoir

PALAKKAD: The Kerala Irrigation Department has asked the crew of a film production company shooting in the Malampuzha Dam reservoir to suspend their work for a week following complaints of rules violation and potential contamination of the dam water. In his complaint, rights activist Raymond Antony said a large set for film shooting was being prepared inside the reservoir and a road was being made by dumping more than 30 loads of soil.

## 3 from Bengaluru held for running fake firms

HYDERABAD: The cyber crime police of Hyderabad on Saturday announced the arrest of three persons for allegedly cheating people by creating and registering fake companies. The accused, Ashok Kumar Arumugam, 37, a consultant, and his colleague Sanjeev Kumar, 23, acting company secretary at Hanuvel Consultant India Pvt. Ltd at Kanchi and Asim Akhtar, 34, manager of HSBC at Bannerghatta Road, were developing fake online trading apps and cheating people through fraudulent transactions.

## Steps taken to prevent spread of brucellosis

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Animal Husbandry officials in Kerala have launched preventive measures after a few cases of brucellosis, a zoonotic infection, have been detected in animals at the Jersey Farm in Vithura, near here. Department officials said here on Saturday that there was no cause for concern surrounding the incident. Four cows at the farm have been culled as a precautionary measure.

# Bengaluru feels impact of virus spread

Patient dies without access to hospital; scramble for Remdesivir; nearly 3,000 cases in Telangana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The traumatic impact of COVID-19 was felt on Saturday in Bengaluru, when a 31-year-old resident of Shivajinagar died early in the day after being denied admission by two hospitals. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike ordered an inquiry.

Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Hospital in Vasanth Nagar and its branch in Girinagar

## COVID-19

did not admit the patient although ICU allotment was done by the 108 portal.

With a steep rise in cases, private hospitals reported acute shortage of Remdesivir, used to treat patients. The Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association sought the Health Department's help to get it through

## Rapid testing

To keep the virus at bay, the authorities have ramped up testing for COVID-19 infections. The graph shows the spread of the pandemic in the southern States



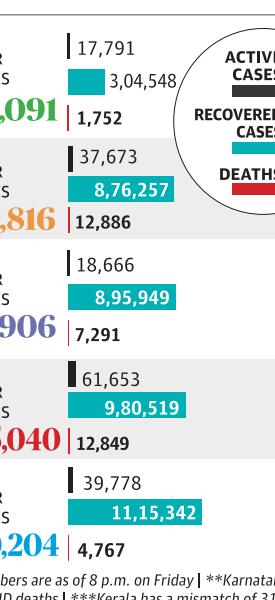
**Long queue:** People waiting to get COVID-19 tests done at a hospital in Visakhapatnam on Saturday.  
■ K.R. DEEPAK

the Karnataka State Drugs Logistics and Warehousing Society.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy

cancelled a visit to Tirupati for a bypoll campaign.

The State reported 12 new deaths due to COVID-19 and 3,309 new infections in the



\*Telangana numbers are as of 8 p.m. on Friday | \*\*Karnataka has 19 non-COVID deaths | \*\*\*Kerala has a mismatch of 317 cases due to unaccounted deaths, missing persons

ed two deaths each in the past day. Anantapur, Guntur and Krishna reported one new death each.

Kerala on Saturday added 6,194 new cases with a TPR of 10%.

There were 17 new deaths added as COVID fatalities.

Telangana recorded 2,909 cases on Friday falling just short of the highest single-day tally of 3,018 on August 25 last year. Six more COVID-19 patients died.

Tamil Nadu recorded close to 6,000 fresh cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, as 5,989 more persons tested positive for the infection. Chennai and three other districts – Chengalpattu, Coimbatore and Tiruvalur – accounted for over half the new cases.

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

## JSW painting competition results announced

STAFF REPORTER  
CHENNAI

cash prize of ₹2,000 each.

Sundaresan A.S., CEO of JSW Paints Private Limited, in a press release said that the JSW Group believed it was not just business alone that was important for a corporate, they also needed to associate themselves with promoting sports, art and culture to build a great nation, which was the driving thought behind the competition.

Anuradha Bose, vice-president, marketing, JSW

Paints, said in the press release that when art combined with the passion of youth, it was indeed an unstoppable force. Sridhar Aranal, vice-president, sales and distribution, The Hindu Group, said, "We, at The Hindu Group believe that every child is a prodigy, and we must strive to give every child an opportunity to showcase their immense talents. While the pandemic posed several challenges in maintaining a connect with our students, we found a way to make this happen despite all odds."

The list of winners can be viewed at <https://ywc.thehindu.com/jswpaints/results>

## Customs questions Kerala Speaker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

P. Sreeramakrishnan

A Customs (Preventive) team questioned Kerala Speaker P. Sreeramakrishnan at his official residence here on Friday. Later on Saturday, the agency reportedly inspected a flat allegedly owned by a close relative of his in Thiruvananthapuram. The investigators arrived at the Speaker's residence reportedly armed with a statement by UAE gold smuggling case accused Swapna Suresh.

She had purportedly claimed in a sworn statement that Mr. Sreeramakrishnan had asked her at the flat to hand over a sealed bag to the UAE consulate's

consul general. At the time, Swapna was the consul's executive secretary and the main go-between the State government and the diplomatic mission.

The contents of the bag and its end destination remained unknown.

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m. Barmer, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall AQI score of 363 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Nandesh, Gujarat recorded a healthy AQI score of 33.

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

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

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

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

## Arhtiyas withdraw strike over MSP, wheat purchase begins in Punjab

Amarinder Singh assures they will remain an integral part of procurement system



Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh

direct benefit transfer (DBT) of the minimum support price (MSP) to farmers for their crops, bypassing them.

The decision to call off the strike was taken by Arhtiyas after their leader Vijay Kalra, under the banner of the Fed-

eration of Arhtiyas Association of Punjab, held a meeting with Punjab Food Minister Bharat Bhushan Ashu in Ludhiana.

After the commission agents announced the rollback of the strike, wheat procurement kicked off in the State.

In Chandigarh, Chief Minister Amarinder Singh ordered various steps to ensure Arhtiyas continued involvement in the process.

The State Food Department has amended the procurement software so that the Arhtiyas continue to be involved in the process of release of payments to farmers, albeit in a modified man-

ner with farmers getting their payments in their bank accounts within 48 hours, as mandated by the State government, an official statement said.

A senior Food Department official said the commission agents will come to know how much payment is being released to farmers who are linked to them.

Declaring his unequivocal commitment to safeguarding the interests of Punjab's Arhtiyas, the State Chief Minister said that despite the government of India's directives to exclude them from MSP payments, "the Arhtiyas shall always be associated with the procurement".

## SP to form outfit named after Bhimrao Ambedkar

Akhilesh Yadav announces decision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW

Vahini' on the birth anniversary of Ambedkar [April 14], the SP chief said in a tweet in Hindi.

The outfit "will work in the districts, States and the country", he added.

Two days ago, Akhilesh Yadav had urged people to observe "Dalit Diwali", saying, "In the dark [Amavasya] period of BJP's politics, the Constitution, which gave a new light to independent India, is in danger." Hence, the SP will celebrate the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar as 'Dalit Diwali' in Uttar Pradesh, the country and abroad," he had added.

If the SP is embracing the followers of Ambedkar, why should the BJP and Congress have problems?" Mr. Yadav said.

## Rape survivor terminates pregnancy in 23rd week

CORRESPONDENT  
CUTTACK

Following an express order from Orissa High Court and the subsequent opinion from a medical board, doctors at SCB Medical College and Hospital here on Saturday medically terminated the pregnancy of a 14-year-old rape survivor, who was in the 23rd week of her pregnancy.

The High Court on Friday had directed the Superintendent of the referral hos-

pital here to constitute a Board of three medical experts and examine the minor girl and go for medical termination of pregnancy "at the very earliest" if the Board suggests so, without waiting for any court orders.

"The process of MTP has already begun as per the suggestion of a three-member Medical Board", informed the Hospital superintendent Prof Lucy Das on Saturday afternoon.

## INTACH opposes 'proposal' for partial demolition of Khuda Bakhsh library

Nitish govt. says no plan to harm heritage Patna structure

AMARNATH TEWARY  
PATNA

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) leaders, intellectuals and academicians of Patna have opposed 'proposal' of partial demolition of 130-year-old Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library in Patna as part of construction of an elevated road.

The government, though, said there was no such plan to harm the heritage of the library.

On Saturday the CPI-ML

legislators and leaders Sudama Prasad, Sandip Saurabh, Santosh Sahar, Kamlesh Sharma and Kumar Pravej visited Khuda Bakhsh library to take stock of the issue with library officials and public intellectuals. Earlier, a meeting was organised by party's State secretary, Kunal, on the issue, after which they demanded that the government should withdraw its proposal for the partial demolition of the library.

The INTACH and public intellectuals of Patna too had demanded that the go-

## Jayanthi Thangabalu receives Doctorate from University of Madras



**Doctorate in Tamil Medicine:** University of Madras celebrated its 163rd Annual Convocation on 8th April 2021 at the University campus. Vice Chancellor of the University Mr. Gowri awarded the students with degrees. Renowned social activist & Managing Director of Mega TV - Mrs. Jayanthi Thangabalu was conferred with a Doctorate during the event. She received the doctorate for her research thesis on Tamil Medicine. Students, faculty and many others were present during the ceremony. Mrs. Jayanthi Thangabalu is receiving appreciation for her Doctorate from across India.

## OBITUARY &amp; REMEMBRANCE

## BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

## BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

## Vakeesa Kalanidhi

## SRI. KI.VA. JAGANNATHAN

## 11.04.1906

For enquiries on announcements in this section, please contact our office at the following number between 10a.m. and 8p.m.

New Delhi : 011- 4357979

For New Delhi:

(Minimum Rs. 320/- 2 Lines)

Extra Line - Rs.160/-)

(B/W Display): Rs.60/Per Sq.cm

(Clr Display): Rs.70/Per Sq.cm

Log on to www.thehinduds.com

For Placing Advertisements Online

Online

## DEATH

Dr.(Mrs) INDIRA KALYANASUNDARAM (82)  
(D/o Pattada C.Uthaya)

Retired Professor, Centre for Advanced Study in Mycology and Plant Pathology, University of Madras. Passed away peacefully due to heart attack on April 4<sup>th</sup> at Mysore. She was a renowned Scientist and guided many Ph.D students.

Dhanu Uthaiyah 99451 80654 dhanuuthaiyah@gmail.com Dhenuka Srinivasan 99014 48964 dhenuka.srinivasan@in.abb.com

In memory of your loved ones To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:

011-4357979

from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. & For Placing Advertisements Online log on to www.thehinduds.com

DONATE EYES-GIFT SIGHT

## WEATHER WATCH

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Violence mars fourth phase of Bengal poll

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the other hand, accused Ms. Banerjee of inciting people against the Central forces.

In another incident under the same constituency, an 18-year-old youth was killed when miscreants opened fire on him when he was returning from booth number 285 at Pathantuli under Bolenhati gram panchayat. Two persons were detained, the CEO said.

Sitalkuchi, an Assembly segment bordering Bangladesh in Cooch Behar district, has been on the boil over the past few days and the convoy of BJP president Dilip Ghosh was attacked. The ECI had deployed the maximum of 188 companies of Central forces in the district. The Commission has deployed 793 companies of Central forces across the State for the fourth round of polling.

The State recorded about 76.16 % polling till 5 p.m. across 44 Assembly seats in the State that went to polls on Saturday. Cooch Behar district, where all nine As-

sembly seats went to polls, recorded 79.73% polling. Alipurduar where polling was held in all five constituencies recorded 73.65 %. In South Bengal, 10 Assembly seats in Hooghly recorded 76.02 % polls; nine in Howrah registered 75.03% and 75.49% of the electorate cast their votes in South 24 Parganas. Bhanger Assembly seat in south 24 Parganas witnessed the highest voting percentage with a turnout of 85.12%.

Other than Cooch Behar, there were reports of isolated incidents of scuffles and violence where the car of Locket Chatterjee, BJP candidate at Chinsurah, was attacked. BJP candidate in Kasba Assembly segment Indranil Khan also alleged electoral malpractices. The CEO, however, said except the two incidents in Cooch Behar, polling was peaceful.

With Saturday's polling, elections have been completed in 135 of the 294 Assembly seats in West Bengal. Four phases of polling are still to be held across 159 constituencies.

## Assamese Muslims plan 'mini NRC'

The Goria converted from various indigenous groups and tribes, the Moriya's ancestors were brought by the Ahom kings to make weapons and utensils, and the Deshi converted specifically from the Koch-Rajbongshi community.

"We are undertaking the exercise from April 15 on the Assamese New Year day. Applicants will be required to apply online for the inclusion of their names in the list of indigenous Muslims. The draft will be published following verification of documents," JSP's chief convener Syed Mominul Aowlal said.

The exercise would be similar to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) that left out 10.06 lakh of the 3.3 crore applicants, he said.

"We left out the Jolahas, who were converts from among the tea plantation workers, because we consider the pre-British era Muslims as indigenous," Mr. Aowlal told *The Hindu*.

He said the exercise was felt necessary as some migrant Muslims had undertaken an initiative to bring all Muslims living in Assam under one umbrella. "Our religion and names may be the same but the indigenous Muslims have a distinct identity, given by the Ahom

and Koch kings," he said.

"It is unfortunate that in the name of Islam, the Goria, Moriya and Deshi communities are being merged with the Miyas (Bengali-speaking migrant Muslims). We have to keep our identity distinct," Mr. Aowlal said.

The JSP has created a portal with a three-month window (from April 15) for some 40 lakh Assamese Muslims to submit all relevant documents given by the organisation and competent government authority. The organisation will publish the draft following verification of documents.

There are provisions to rectify errors in documents. "We will also publish a list of names of people who are rejected. We are receiving donations from indigenous Muslims for the exercise that will be wound up by the year-end," Mr. Aowlal said.

The JSP had expected the BJP-led government to conduct the census of Assamese Muslims and allocate ₹100 crore for it, as promised in the Assembly months ago. "We could not wait any longer," Mr. Aowlal said.

According to the 2011 census, Muslims account for 34.22% of Assam's population. The JSP claims the present Muslim population in the State is 1.4 crore.

## 10 killed as truck falls into gorge in U.P.

### INTERVIEW | MANOJ JOSHI

## India, U.S. differ on rules-based order'

ORF Distinguished Fellow speaks on the controversy surrounding FONOP

### ANANTH KRISHNAN

*On April 9, India protested against a U.S. decision to conduct a patrol in the Indian Ocean in India's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) near Lakshadweep. The U.S. said it had conducted the "freedom of navigation operation" (FONOP) to challenge India's "excessive" maritime claims. The latest FONOP underlines both countries have "huge differences" when it comes to what a "rules-based order" means for the region, says Manoj Joshi, Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation. Excerpts:*

**What does UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) tell us about the statements from India and the U.S.?**

UNCLOS is fairly straightforward on this. You have a 12 nautical mile territorial sea, an additional 24 nautical miles as a contiguous zone where you can have some law and order, policing etc.

## India, China agree to avoid new incidents on border

Both sides to resolve issues in an expeditious manner, says MEA after talks

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

India and China have agreed at the 11th Corps Commanders talks that the completion of disengagement in "other areas" would pave the way for the two sides "to consider de-escalation of forces and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity and enable progress in bilateral relations".

"The two sides had a detailed exchange of views for the resolution of the remaining issues related to disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh."

The two sides agreed on the need to resolve the out-



**Peace agenda:** Chinese soldiers during their disengagement along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh in February. ■ AFP

standing issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

"They also agreed to jointly maintain stability on the ground, avoid any new incidents and jointly maintain peace in the border areas."

### No joint statement

There was no joint statement this time unlike the past few rounds of talks.

The 11th round of talks were held at Chushul on Friday. The talks started at 10.30 a.m. and went on 11.30 p.m., a defence official said.

The two sides also agreed that it was important to take guidance from the consensus of their leaders, continue their communication and dialogue and work towards a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest, the statement added.

With disengagement complete on both banks of Pangong Tso in February, the focus of the talks is now on disengagement from patrolling points (PP) at Gogra and Hotsprings.



**Deft manoeuvre:** A file photo of an IAF IL-78 MKI tanker aircraft practising mid-air refuelling. ■ AFP

## IAF to adopt new process to lease refuelling aircraft

It will be based on hours of availability

### DINAKAR PERI NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF), which is looking to lease mid-air refuelling aircraft, will adopt a new methodology for the process based on the number of hours of availability per year as criteria, a senior defence official said.

"The leasing will be based on hours of availability per year indicating the minimum and maximum hours required," the official said. "We will use the leased tankers for training purposes and keep the existing IL-78s in service for operational purposes," the official stated.

On the number of refuellers that would be leased, the official said it would be decided based on the responses the IAF receives.

The IAF presently has six Russian IL-78 tankers and is looking at leasing a few tanker aircraft to meet immediate requirements as the deal for procuring six new tankers has repeatedly failed to fructify.

The IAF is also looking to lease Basic Trainer Aircraft (BTA) to fill the immediate

shortage for training rookie pilots. With the follow-on contract for Pilatus trainers now scrapped, the leased aircraft would plug the gaps in training till the indigenous HTT-40 being developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is inducted. A Request for Information was recently issued for leasing of BTA.

The IAF has 75 PC-7 MK-II BTA procured from Pilatus Aircraft Ltd under a ₹4,000 crore deal in 2012 for which deliveries were completed by 2015-end. However, following allegations of corruption, the follow-on deal for additional aircraft was scrapped.

With Kiran trainers being obsolete and indigenous HTT-40 in advanced trials, the IAF is looking to plug the gap through leasing of trainers. About 20 aircraft could be leased for four-five years, officials had stated earlier.

The option for leasing of military equipment was introduced in the Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020. The three services have since listed several platforms for leasing to cater for immediate shortages.

formed active and shell companies to 'grab' consultancy projects. Mr. Kumar has denied these allegations and attributed them to a disgruntled employee who was transferred out of the CSIR-NEERI. This person, he alleged, had created a "nexus of suppliers" and indulged in multiple instances of misconduct. Mr. Kumar, it is learnt, has withdrawn his petition challenging the constitution of the commission but said he reserves the right to challenge, if any, its findings. The High Court dismissed the petition on April 7.

## CBI reviews documents in Anil Deshmukh case

Allegations are serious and sensitive'

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The CBI on Saturday reviewed the statements and documents collected by it during the ongoing preliminary enquiry into former Mumbai police chief Param Bir Singh's allegations of corruption against former Home Minister of Maharashtra Anil Deshmukh, an official said.

"As the allegations are serious and sensitive in nature, the CBI team on Saturday reviewed the documents and statements," the official said. The CBI team has so far recorded statements of Mr. Singh, now DGP, Home Guards, suspended API Sachin Vaze, who is in the custody of the NIA, DCP Raju Bhujbal, ACP



Anil Deshmukh

Sanjay Patil, advocate Jayashree Patil, a petitioner, and hotel owner Mahesh Shetty.

The NIA is probing the case of an explosives-laden SUV found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house in Mumbai on February 25. Mr. Vaze is also under the scanner for the alleged murder of Thane businessman Mansukh Hirani, who was in possession of the SUV.

## CSIR removes Rakesh Kumar as NEERI Director

Move follows Central Vigilance Commission order for an inquiry into allegations of corruption against him

### JACOB KOSHY NEW DELHI

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has divested Rakesh Kumar, Director, National Environment Engineering and Research Institute (NEERI) in Nagpur of his post and transferred him to its headquarters in Delhi.

Sources confirmed to *The Hindu* that this was after the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) ordered an inquiry into allegations of corruption against Mr. Kumar and other employees at the institute. The allegations were le-

velled by a former employee of NEERI.

NEERI is one of the CSIR's most important institutes and works closely with the government as a consultant to multiple environment related projects and gives expert opinion in several disputes involving government and private companies on matters of air, water and land pollution. It also works in technology developments such as making "green firecrackers", under the directives of the Supreme Court to improve Delhi's air quality, and specialised air purifiers.

Based on the CVC's directions, a three-member fact-finding commission was constituted by the CSIR Director General's office in August 2020. Mr. Kumar, through a petition in the Delhi High Court, had challenged the formation of such a commission, primarily on the grounds that it didn't consist of members with the required technical expertise.

The commission's findings aren't known but based on it the CSIR leadership, that includes Minister of Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan and the Prime Minister,

decreed that Mr. Kumar cease to be Director and report to Delhi. The orders were passed on Friday evening and Mr. Kumar is expected to report on Monday. S. Chandrashekhar, Director, CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, has been given additional charge of the organisation, the CSIR's orders note.

"The fact-finding commission's findings are a prelude to the investigation," sources familiar with proceedings told *The Hindu*.

Shekhar Mande, Director General, CSIR, told *The Hindu*

that Mr. Kumar's transfer "was in public interest" though he didn't discuss reasons for the transfer. Mr. Kumar, in a text message to *The Hindu*, confirmed he'd been divested of the charge but didn't respond to additional questions.

**Whistle-blower move**  
Documents filed with the Delhi High Court detailing the case suggest that in December 2019, a whistle-blower complaint to the CVC alleged that Mr. Kumar led a "syndicate of influential corrupt officials" and had

formed active and shell companies to 'grab' consultancy projects. Mr. Kumar has denied these allegations and attributed them to a disgruntled employee who was transferred out of the CSIR-NEERI. This person, he alleged, had created a "nexus of suppliers" and indulged in multiple instances of misconduct. Mr. Kumar, it is learnt, has withdrawn his petition challenging the constitution of the commission but said he reserves the right to challenge, if any, its findings. The High Court dismissed the petition on April 7.

## Militant killed in encounter in Shopian

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SRINAGAR

An unidentified militant was killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday even as another gunbattle raged in nearby Anantnag district, police said.

Based on specific information about the presence of militants in Hadipora area of the south Kashmir district, security forces launched a cordon and search operation there, they said.

A police official said as the forces were conducting searches, militants fired upon them. The forces retaliated, the official said. One militant was killed in the operation. His identity and group affiliation was being ascertained, he said.

The gunfight in Anantnag district broke out at Semtan in Bijbehara area after security forces launched a search operation there based on an intelligence input about the presence of militants, the official said.

## 10 killed as truck falls into gorge in U.P.

### INTERVIEW | MANOJ JOSHI

## India, U.S. differ on rules-based order'

ORF Distinguished Fellow speaks on the controversy surrounding FONOP

### ANANTH KRISHNAN

*On April 9, India protested against a U.S. decision to conduct a patrol in the Indian Ocean in India's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) near Lakshadweep. The U.S. said it had conducted the "freedom of navigation operation" (FONOP) to challenge India's "excessive" maritime claims. The latest FONOP underlines both countries have "huge differences" when it comes to what a "rules-based order" means for the region, says Manoj Joshi, Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation. Excerpts:*

**What does UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) tell us about the statements from India and the U.S.?**

UNCLOS is fairly straightforward on this. You have a 12 nautical mile territorial sea, an additional 24 nautical miles as a contiguous zone where you can have some law and order, policing etc.

based order business'.

How does all this sit with the Quad – India, U.S., Australia and Japan – advocating a rules-based order for the region?

■ I presume when you say rules-based order, you're talking about UNCLOS. I can't see on what basis the Quad can implement UNCLOS. Do we do it on the U.S.-based understanding or Indian understanding? There are huge differences.

At the end of the day, when the U.S. talks about a rules-based international order, India is not following it. Neither the Straight Baseline claim nor notification is rules-based. I wonder whether there is a message to both China and India. The message to China, whose extravagant claims the U.S. has challenged in the South China Sea, is 'we don't do this only to you'. To India, it is 'straighten out your rules-

quest. Therefore, we will not be appealing any decision to grant bail,' said the Crown Prosecution Service, which appears in court on behalf of the U.S. authorities in extradition matters.

Moti, who has been behind the bars at Wandsworth prison in south-west London since his arrest in 2018, had appealed against his extradition order in the High Court in London and was awaiting judgment when the extradition request was withdrawn this week. The extradition request had stated that Moti reported directly to underworld don Dawood, who is a designated terrorist and wanted for the 1993 serial bombings in Mumbai.

"Mr. Motiwalla was granted unconditional bail by Westminster Magistrates' Court. The USA has withdrawn the extradition re-

quest.

The UK Home Office declined to make a statement,

saying it did not "comment on individual cases".

Last month, Pakistani media reports claimed that a former Federal Bureau of Investigations agent had come forward stating that his FBI bosses had ordered him to trap Moti at any cost.

CMYK

# Mamata blames Shah for Bengal deaths

PM Modi accuses her of inciting people, urges ECI to take stern action against those responsible

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

The death of four persons in Cooch Behar district during the fourth phase of polling in West Bengal on Saturday triggered strong reactions from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who blamed Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the incident and demanded his resignation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who addressed two public meetings in the State, accused the Chief Minister of inciting people against the Central forces.

Four persons were killed when the Central forces opened fire at polling booth number 126 at Amtal Madhyamik Siksha Kendra at Jor Patki gram panchayat under the Sitalkuchi Assembly segment.

"Central forces have opened fire and killed four persons. From the very first day, I have been saying that Central forces are not my enemy, but they are conspiring under the instructions of the Union Home Minister. They fired at voters who were standing in queue to



**Testing times:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addressing a rally in Bijapur in North 24 Parganas district on Saturday. • ANI

cast their vote," Ms. Banerjee said, addressing a rally at Bongaon in North 24 Parganas district.

#### 'What self-defence?'

While the Chief Minister appealed for peace, she refuted the claims of the police and the Election Commission of India officials that the Central forces had fired in self-defence. "What kind of self-defence? Who is injured?" Ms. Banerjee said at a press conference later in the day in

Siliguri. She alleged that video footage of the incident had been deleted. Ms. Banerjee called for State-wide protests against the firing.

Emphasising that law and order is a State subject, Ms. Banerjee said all the political parties in the Opposition should take note of the manner in which the elections are being conducted. "It is a shame on democracy," Ms. Banerjee said. The Chief Minister said West Bengal was witnessing an "undeclared

imposition of Article 356", and all police officers, including the Superintendent of Police, Cooch Behar, had been changed at the instruction of the Election Commission.

#### CID probe

Ms. Banerjee said the Crime Investigation Department would conduct an investigation into the matter.

Earlier in the day, a Trinamool Congress delegation, comprising senior leaders,

visited the office of the Chief Election Officer and demanded an investigation into the matter.

#### 'CM providing training'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Chief Minister was providing training on how to "gherao and assault security forces".

Speaking at a public rally in Kalyani, Mr. Modi said security forces conducted elections across the country. "The issue is not with security forces but in the politics of violence perpetrated by you," Mr. Modi said, targeting Ms. Banerjee. "With defeat staring *didi* in her face, she is inciting violence," Mr. Modi alleged.

Addressing a public meeting in Siliguri, Mr. Modi urged the Commission to take stern action against those responsible for the violence. "What happened in Cooch Behar is unfortunate and sad. I extend my condolences to the bereaved families and urge the Election Commission to take stern action against those responsible for the incident," he said.

# Assam a testing ground for poll managers of Congress

An electoral success in the State will help it plan U.P. strategy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The move by the grand alliance, or *Mahajot*, in Assam to shift their "potentially winning candidates" in the just concluded Assembly election to the Congress-ruled Rajasthan indicates the minute details being worked out by the Congress's election managers.

The thinking within the party seems to be that if it manages to reclaim Assam, once its stronghold, then the same campaign model can be replicated in Uttar Pradesh.

The party has already named Rajesh Tiwari, a close aide of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, as a secretary in Uttar Pradesh, a State handled by Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra.

Apart from being a sign of things to come, it also indicates the importance attached to Uttar Pradesh where the party has not been a major player for more than three decades.



**Poll pitch:** Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra with APCC president Ripon Bora and others in Tezpur. • FILE PHOTO

## Shifting to Jaipur a sign of frustration: Sonowal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister

Sarbananda Sonowal said the 10-party grand alliance, or *Mahajot*, betrayed signs of frustration by packing some of its candidates off to Rajasthan, citing possible horse-trading by BJP.

He was reacting to the All India United

Democratic Front (AIUDF)

and the Congress

flying out at least

20 of their candidates to Jaipur in a chartered flight on

Friday. The Congress and the AIUDF are constituents of the *Mahajot*.

"It is certain that the BJP-led alliance will form the government in Assam again. This (shifting of candidates out of Assam) is a ploy of the Opposition alliance to create confusion and stay visible after being rejected by the people," Mr. Sonowal said.

He exuded confidence about the BJP and its allies crossing the majority mark in the 126-member Assam Assembly.

things go as per plan," a senior leader said. Success in Assam will also be crucial for Mr. Baghel's standing in the party as his team has been closely involved in election planning in the State.

The Chhattisgarh Chief Minister, who was appointed as the party's observer, not only ensured that the Congress didn't face any "resource crunch" but also provided crucial manpower to carry out ground surveys and voter feedback.

He is also credited with the strategy to involve Ms. Vadra to campaign among women tea workers in Upper Assam, a traditional voting segment that had deserted

the Congress in 2016.

The party, in its assessment, believes a swing in the tea garden votes will change its poll fortunes, catapulting Mr. Baghel to the Hindi heartland of Uttar Pradesh.

"The next area of exploration for Team Chhattisgarh will be Uttar Pradesh if

## Big win for TIPRA in tribal council poll

A CORRESPONDENT  
AGARTALA

The Tripura Indigenous People's Regional Alliance (TIPRA) on Saturday registered a comfortable victory in the election to the 28-member Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAACD).

The TIPRA, the umbrella organisation of regional political parties floated by royal scion Pradyot Kishore Debbarman, won 18 seats, while the BJP bagged nine of the 12 seats it contested. One seat went to an Independent – a BJP rebel.

The Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT), which is a BJP ally, and the CPI (M)-led Left Front failed to open their account.

The election, postponed last year due to the pandemic, was held on April 6.

turday, the Commission said: "Please ensure that wide publicity of fresh poll is given by beat of drums in the polling areas of these polling stations and political parties and contesting candidates be informed in writing."

The re-election in the Ratabari booth follows a controversy over polling officials carrying electronic voting machines by taking a "lift" in a vehicle linked to Patharkandi BJP candidate Krishnendu Paul.

## NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY WARANGAL - 506 004

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST :EMANELMENT OF SUPPLIERS OF BOOKS (PRINT), E-BOOKS, JOURNALS (PRINT) & E-JOURNALS Applications are invited from reputed publishers / distributors / vendors to seek empanelment as registered vendor for Supply of Books (Print), e-Books, Journals (Print) and e-Journals to Central Library, NIT Warangal. Application as per the prescribed format with necessary documents and registration fees may be submitted to the "Director, NIT Warangal" by speed/registered post to reach within 05.00 pm on 10-05-2021. For details visit [www.nitw.ac.in](http://www.nitw.ac.in)

Registrar - NIT Warangal

Date: 09-04-2021

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY, e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 01/2021-22/KWA/PHC/D2/TVM, State plan 2016-17 water treatment plant at Neyyar Dam and allied works-Construction, trial running, commissioning and maintenance of 120 m<sup>3</sup>/sec Water treatment plant with Plate settler technology (lamella), construction, commissioning and maintenance of floating intake structure, Supplying and laying 1422mm M.S. pipe line, Construction of Pump house, Substation, Construction of Control room, centrifugal pump set, Supplying and erection of Transformer, construction of Substation Building, Installation of SCADA system for functioning of entire WTP components and allied works with full automation as per the design attached including trial running and commissioning of WTP and all allied works. EMD: Rs. 500000. Tender fee: Rs. 1500. Last Date for submitting Tender - 07-05-2021 03:00 pm. Phone: 0471-3232303. Website : [www.kwa.kerala.gov.in](http://www.kwa.kerala.gov.in)

www.etenders.kerala.gov.in

Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Thiruvananthapuram

Date: 07-05-2021

Last date and Time for submission of EOI

Date and Time of opening EOI

Sd/- Director (Offg.)

22.04.2021 (4.00 PM)

23.04.2021 (4.30 PM)

Sd/- Director (Offg.)

23.04.2021 (4.30 PM)

S



# Iran unveils advanced nuclear centrifuges

It comes after U.S. offered 'very serious' ideas on resetting ties and was awaiting Tehran's reciprocation

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

TEHRAN

Iran announced on Saturday it has started up advanced uranium enrichment centrifuges in a breach of its undertakings under a troubled 2015 nuclear deal, days after the start of talks on rescuing the accord.

The United States had said on Friday that it had offered "very serious" ideas on reviving the accord but was waiting for Tehran to reciprocate, something Saturday's move signally failed to do.

President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated the three cascades of 164 IR-6 centrifuges, 30 IR-5 and another 30 IR-6 devices at Iran's Natanz uranium enrichment plant in a ceremony broadcast by state television.



New tests: President Hassan Rouhani, second right, at an exhibition of Iran's nuclear achievements in Tehran. AP

The television aired no images of the injection of uranium hexafluoride gas into the cascades, but broadcast a link with engineers at the plant who said they had started the process.

Iran's latest move to step up uranium enrichment fol-

lows an opening round of talks in Vienna Tuesday with representatives of the remaining parties to the nuclear deal on bringing the U.S. back into it.

Former President Donald Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018 but his suc-

sor Joe Biden has said he is ready to return, arguing the deal had been successful in dramatically scaling back Iran's nuclear activities.

The Vienna talks are focused not only on lifting crippling economic sanctions Trump reimposed, but also on bringing Iran back into compliance after it responded by suspending several of its own commitments.

All sides said the talks, in which Washington is not participating directly but has the European Union as intermediary, had got off to a good start.

## Iran wants curbs lifted

Iran has demanded that the U.S. first lift all sanctions imposed by Trump, which include a sweeping unilateral ban on its oil exports, before

it falls back in line with obligations it suspended.

The U.S. – which caused this crisis – should return to full compliance first," Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet, adding that "Iran will reciprocate following rapid verification."

Washington has demanded movement from Tehran in return.

"The United States team put forward a very serious idea and demonstrated a seriousness of purpose on coming back into compliance if Iran comes back into compliance," a U.S. official told reporters as talks broke for the weekend.

But the official said the U.S. was waiting for its efforts to be "reciprocated" by Iran.

# Prince Philip honoured with gun salutes, funeral on April 17

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON

Military teams across the U.K. and on ships at sea fired 41-gun salutes on Saturday to mark the death of Prince Philip, honouring the former naval officer and husband of Queen Elizabeth II.

Batteries in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast – the capitals of the four nations that make up the United Kingdom – as well as other cities around the U.K. and the Mediterranean outpost of Gibraltar fired the volleys at one-minute intervals beginning at mid-day.

Prince Philip, who was also known as the Duke of Edinburgh, died on Friday at Windsor Castle, two months before his 100th birthday.



National mourning: Gun salutes being fired to mark the passing of Prince Philip at the Tower of London. AP

Members of the Commonwealth were also invited to honour Prince Philip. The Australian Defense Force began its salute outside Parliament House in Canberra.

**Harry to attend funeral**  
Prince Philip's funeral will take place April 17 at Wind-

sor Castle in a family service that will be closed to the public.

Prince Harry will attend the service along with other members of the royal family. His wife, the duchess of Sussex, who is pregnant, has been advised by her doctor not to attend.

# Toll mounts as battle for Yemen's Marib heats up

Houthis are fighting to seize the region

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MARIB

Fighting for the key Yemeni region of Marib has intensified, with 53 pro-government and Houthi rebel fighters killed in the past 24 hours, loyalist military officials said on Saturday.

The Houthis have been trying to seize oil-rich Marib, the government's last significant pocket of territory in the north, since February.

"The rebels have managed to seize a bit of territory" in the latest fighting northwest of the city, a pro-government military source said, assessing the city of Marib itself was not under threat.

The same source said 22

government soldiers including five officers had been killed, along with 31 rebels.

The Houthis rarely announce casualties on their own side.

The Iran-backed rebels in late 2014 overran the capital Sanaa. That prompted a Saudi-led coalition to intervene in March 2015 to prop up the government.

Loyalist military officials said on Saturday that coalition aircraft had carried out strikes against the rebels, but the Houthis had pushed on with their offensive.

The loss of Marib could lead to humanitarian disaster as huge numbers of civilians displaced from fighting elsewhere have sought refuge in Marib camps.

# At least 80 killed in Myanmar as UN envoy calls for 'action'

At UNSC meet, Kyaw Moe Tun called for targeted sanctions

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
YANGON

Reports emerged on Saturday of more than 80 killed in the latest bloodletting by Myanmar's military, as the country's own Ambassador to the United Nations called for "strong action" against the junta.



Kyaw Moe Tun

rifles, as explosions could be heard in the background.

Authorities had refused to let rescue workers near the bodies, said a resident. "They piled up all the dead bodies, loaded them into their army truck and drove it away," he said.

State-run *New Light of Myanmar* newspaper on Saturday blamed the crackdown on "rioters", and reported only one dead.

## Creative protests

The violence in Bago will add to AAPP's current death toll of 618 civilians killed since the coup.

The junta has a far lower number – 248, according to a spokesman on Friday – and has branded the victims as "violent terrorist people".

Despite the daily bloodshed, protesters have continued to take to the streets, with demonstrators manifesting their discontent in pointedly creative ways.

In Yangon, crimson paint – representing the blood already spilled – was splashed across the streets in view of the historic Shwedagon Pagoda.

"Let us unite and boldly show in red that the dictatorial regime will not be allowed to rule us at all," a student activist announced on Facebook.

Berlin envoy takes stand against junta

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BERLIN

Up until recently, one of Chaw Kalyar's tasks at the Myanmar Embassy in Berlin consisted of providing assistance to fellow nationals stripped of their citizenship by their country's former military rulers.

But today, the diplomat finds herself facing the same predicament.

Along with two other colleagues, Ms. Kalyar, who holds the rank of third secretary at the Embassy, has joined a civil disobedience movement against the junta that ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi and seized power in February.

"At the beginning of February, I despaired of the coup, whereas since 2015 Myanmar was on the right track," said Ms. Kalyar. "History was repeating itself. I decided to do something," added the 49-year-old diplomat.

"We have to take part in that movement to overtake the coup."

Ms. Kalyar, who as a high school student in 1988, took part in protests against the then military regime.

She said on March 4, she and two colleagues joined the movement and posted on Facebook a message of support to the protests back home. Less than a week later, the trio were fired and their passports withdrawn.

# U.S. Congress advances slavery reparation proposals

Bill moots remedies, including financial aid, for descendants

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

U.S. lawmakers next Wednesday will consider a Bill to study paying reparations to descendants of enslaved people, which could open the door for a potential vote on an issue that has gained momentum in recent years.

On April 14, the House Judiciary Committee will hold the first-ever markup – the process by which committees debate and amend legislation – on a Bill that creates a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for Black people.

Friday's announcement comes during the murder trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who is accused of killing Black man George Floyd.



whose death triggered nationwide protests highlighting the country's racial injustice.

The Bill was first introduced more than 30 years ago but never advanced.

It addresses the period of slavery and discrimination in the U.S. from 1619 to the present day, and will propose remedies including fi-

nancial reparations. "The historic markup of HR 40 is intended to continue a national conversation about how to confront the brutal mistreatment of African Americans during chattel slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and the enduring structural racism that remains endemic to our society today," House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler said.

Americans still face racial disparities in access to education, health care, housing, employment and other social provisions, he added.

President Joe Biden has repeatedly addressed the need to end systemic racism, and the White House has expressed support for the Commission.

# We've never shied away from talks, says Pakistan

'But an enabling environment is needed'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Friday stopped short of categorically denying its involvement in some kind of backchannel talks with India though Islamabad has been insisting publicly that New Delhi should create an "enabling environment" for "meaningful dialogue".

Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhry at the weekly press briefing was asked by several journalists about reported back-channel talks with India.

Instead of rejecting it outrightly, he said: "States have their ways and means to communicate which remain available even during wars. Therefore, whether any talks are taking place between India and Pakistan is not important."

"As for talks, Pakistan has never shied away from talks with India..." Mr. Chaudhry said.

"India has vitiated the atmosphere, and the onus is on India to create an enabling and conducive environment for talks between the two countries," he said.

The executions come as a Saudi-led military campaign intensifies in neighbouring Yemen and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, consolidates his grip on power.

The soldiers were convicted of "the crime of high treason in cooperation with the enemy" in a way that threatens the kingdom, the Ministry said.

The statement named the three soldiers – Mohammed bin Ahmed, Shaher bin Issa and Hamoud bin Ibrahim –

# Saudi Arabia executes 3 soldiers for 'high treason'

Conviction for aiding unspecified enemy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
RIYADH

without identifying which enemy they were accused of aiding.

Saudi Arabia, a Sunni powerhouse, views Shi'ite Iran as its main regional foe and identifies Yemen's Tehrani-aligned Houthi rebels as a major security threat to the oil-rich kingdom.

The statement makes a rare announcement of military executions in the kingdom, which is known to be highly secretive about its armed forces.

"The fact that the names of the deceaseds were published means the Saudis must consider their alleged misconduct to be exceptionally egregious and thus worthy of exemplary punishment," David Des Roches, from the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies in Washington, said.

THE HINDU GROUP

Ring around the Rosie  
Ringa Ringa Roses  
Posies - a small bunch of flowers  
Atishoo! Atishoo!  
Hussla! Bussha!

we All Fall Down.

Put your child's English skills on the right course!

After helping hundreds of students and winning generous appreciation from parents, STEP LIVE Junior is back!

Enrol now and gift your children an engaging English programme.

Focus on grammar & vocabulary  
Syllabus that is never taught in school  
Fun-filled 1-hour class per day  
Entertaining exercises and tests  
Child-friendly context

Exclusively designed for children in Classes 4 - 7

Scan the QR code  
New summer special batch starts on 19<sup>th</sup> April (Monday to Friday)  
Timing: 11:00 am to 12:00 noon  
Visit [BIT.LY/JUNIORLIVE](http://BIT.LY/JUNIORLIVE)

STEP LIVE Junior



## CPI (MAOIST)

# The 'armed struggle' that goes nowhere

Maoist insurgents, despite facing desertions and counter-attacks, stick to armed struggle, continuing to target security personnel

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

**H**urt by incarcerations and "encounter" killings of senior leaders, facing desertions due to surrenders by cadres to security forces in various States, unable to build a workable organisation in new areas, and hemmed into what seems to be their last stronghold – South Bastar – such has been the status of the Indian Maoists lately. But this did not deter the insurgent group's audacious ambush and killing of more than 20 paramilitary personnel in the Tarrem area in the Bijapur-Sukma district border in southern Chhattisgarh in early April, suggesting that the Communist Party of India (Maoist) might be down but was certainly not out.

The Tarrem attacks is believed to have been led by the heavily armed Battalion 1 belonging to the Maoists' People Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) and is led by a tribal guerrilla leader, Hidma. This ambush raised the number of security forces killed in the Bastar region to more than 175 since the killing of 76 CRPF personnel in the Chintalnar attack in April 2010.

**Turning point**  
The Maoists have also been at the end of strong attacks by paramilitary and police forces in areas such as the Andhra-Odisha border that is close to south Chhattisgarh, in Gadchiroli in Maharashtra and even as far as the western ghat forests in the tri-state junction between Kerala, Tamil Nadu and



ILLUSTRATION : R. RAJESH

Karnataka. The Chintalnar attack might have marked a turning point in the offensive by the Indian state against the insurgents – with a focus on no-holds barred military campaign against the guerrillas even as governments sought to increase developmental work and infrastructure building in the remote areas with a strong presence and influence of the PLGA and Maoist organs to undercut any popular support.

The CPI (Maoist) came into being following the merger of two of the strongest Naxalite groups – the Peoples' War Group (PWG) and the Maoist Communist Centre – in 2004. The PWG was formed in 1980 by Kondapalli Seetharamaiah from the splinter groups that had broken away from the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), led by general secretary Charu Mazumdar in the early 1970s.

The PWG had a sizeable following in the 1980s and

90s in undivided Andhra Pradesh as it had led mass agitations on various issues, including peasant wages and land struggles. It had also graduated into a military force by forming guerrilla zones in northern Telangana, extending up to the Nallamalla forests. Anticipating state actions, a group from the PWG had already moved to present-day Chhattisgarh in the early 1990s and had formed mass organisations in the tribal areas in the southern part of the State. Mass organisations of the PWG included the Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Mazdoor Sangathan (DAKMS), which focussed on mobilising tribal villagers for rights to collect forest produce, besides some developmental work. While doing so, armed cadres of the PWG also used the difficult terrain to build guerrilla zones. Today, in places such as the Abujmarh forested areas in southern Chhattisgarh, the Maoists claim to have

set up "janathana sarkars" – local government units. The merger with the MCC, another armed Naxalite group that was founded by Kanai Chatterjee in 1975 and had strongholds in the Jharkhand forests,

**Indian Maoists, inspired by the Chinese model, have steadfastly held that armed struggle is a must in their aim to achieve a socialist revolution in India**

gave a fillip to the newly formed CPI(Maoist). By 2010, the Indian government already identified the Maoists as the "single biggest internal security challenge".

**Military force**  
While the PWG, in its initial years, combined mass

activism with guerrilla warfare and violent attacks on police, the group, especially after its merger with the MCC, had largely evolved into a military force. The Indian Maoists have steadfastly held that violent armed struggle is a must in its aims to achieve a socialist revolution in India and have sought to follow the Chinese path to revolution in the 1920s that sought to mobilise peasants in an armed struggle to overthrow the state and to form a one-party communist government.

The CPI(Maoist) rejects Indian democracy and electoral politics as they terms India to be a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country and the Indian state beholden to "imperialism, comprador big bourgeoisie [big business that is subordinate to foreign big capital] and feudalism" and which necessitates its recourse to armed struggle from the countryside to later encir-

cling cities and capturing power. This is right from the playbook of the Chinese communists led by Mao Zedong in the 1920s. Yet, far from mobilising peasantry or even gaining their sympathies, the Indian Maoists have been reduced to seeking refuge in remote forested areas which offer them the camouflage and difficult terrain to engage in guerrilla warfare and to seek support from tribal people living in areas that are either under-developed or have limited access to the institutions of the Indian state.

In Bastar, the Indian government's recourse to counter-mobilisation of tribals into armed resistance groups such as Salwa Judum was brought to a closure by the Supreme Court in 2011 following the resultant militant backlash that severely affected the tribal population. Tribal disenchantment with both severe state repression as well as Maoist violence had increased in the last

decade, a fact that is also lamented by the Maoists in their internal documents and has limited their support and growth.

Despite severe reversals and setbacks – the capture and deaths of influential senior leaders and desertions by activists – the Maoists remain committed to militant insurgency even as they reject any call for a recourse to peaceful agitations or to enter the democratic process to further their goal. The elevation of Nambala Keshava Rao, a senior leader of the Maoists' Central Military Commission, to the general secretary of the party in 2018, after replacing aged leader Muppala Lakshmana Rao was an indication that the proscribed outfit will continue to focus on military tactics and what it terms "strategic defence".

This is despite its inability to graduate from guerrilla warfare and to build base areas where they could offer alternative governance – a key step for advance that has eluded them for decades. In other words, the Maoists refuse to change their understanding of the nature of the Indian state and continue to deny that conditions and aspirations of the poor necessitate alternative political work that do not draw from revolutions elsewhere.

The Maoist movement in India seems headed in the same direction that several violent and failed insurrections, inspired by the Chinese revolution, went – from the Shining Path in Peru to the Communist Party of the Philippines. There have been exceptions – the Nepali Maoists, for example, managed to partake in power after peacefully ending the civil war – but if the Indian Maoists' denunciation of these steps taken by their Nepali counterparts are any indication, such a step does not seem to be in the offing.

**Amul**



Lassi  
1L | ₹70\*

**Amul tru**



Mango  
180mL | ₹10\*

**Amul Kool**



Kesar  
180mL | ₹20\*

**Amul Star Anise Doodh**



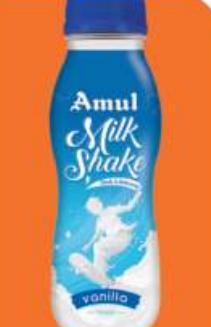
Star Anise Doodh  
125mL | ₹25\*

**New Amul Lassi Pineapple**



Pineapple Lassi  
200mL | ₹20\*

**Amul Milk Shake Vanilla**



Vanilla milkshake  
500mL | ₹60\*

Visit your nearest Amul Parlour for our entire range of exciting products.

**Amul**



\*MRP (incl. of all taxes), Conditions apply.

## HAMZAH BIN HUSSEIN

# The rebel prince

The palace feud has exposed the long simmering tensions in Jordan

STANLY JOHNY

**W**hen Jordan's King Hussein was on his deathbed, fighting cancer, he surprised the nation by dismissing his brother Hassan bin Talal as Crown Prince in favour of his son Abdullah. Prince Hassan had been Crown Prince for more than three decades and was almost sure to ascend the throne. But he accepted the King's decision and when Hussein died on February 7, 1999, Abdullah became the new monarch. As per the dying wishes of his father, King Abdullah II appointed his half brother Hamzah bin Hussein as the new Crown Prince. Hussein, who sacked his brother from the line of throne for his son, may have hoped that power would transfer from his one son to another in the future. But history repeated in a few years. In 2004, after consolidating power both within the royal court and the Hashemite family, King Abdullah stripped Hamzah of the Crown Prince status. In 2009, the King named his 15-year-old school-going son, Hussein bin Abdullah, the new Crown Prince.

Prince Hamzah, like his uncle Hassan, accepted the King's decision. But he did not stay silent forever. He occa-



ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R KUMAR

sionally raised criticism over the way the country was run. The growing discord in the royal family burst into the open last week when Prince Hamzah and a few other officials were detained for targeting the country's "security and stability". Intelligence sources told western media that the Prince was put under house arrest over a plot to unseat the monarch.

Born in 1980 to King Hussein's fourth wife, the American-born Queen Noor, Prince Hamzah was one of the favourite sons of the late monarch. King Hussein often described him as "the delight of my eye". He attended Harrow School in England and then joined the U.K.'s Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He also attended several military courses in Jordan and is holding the rank of Bri-

gadier in the Jordan Arab Army. Over the years, Prince Hamzah, who has a strong resemblance to his father Hussein, has also cultivated strong ties with the Bedouin tribes of the East Bank, the core support base for the monarchy. And he often amplified the voices of dissent and criticism in the Kingdom.

**Stable kingdom'**  
The Hashemite Kingdom has long projected itself as an oasis of stability in a volatile region. Jordan has been an important American ally for years. The palace feud has cut open the long-simmering wounds within the Hashemites, who claim their ancestry to the Prophet Mohammed.

A key challenge King Abdullah faces is the growing anger among Jordanians about go-

vernment policies. There are widespread corruption allegations. As a stable country in the middle of a conflict zone, Jordan has accepted millions of refugees from around the region over the years, which has stretched its finances. The economic woes mounted in recent months after COVID-19 struck the country. About 7,000 died due to the virus in a country of 10 million people.

When nine COVID-19 patients died after a government hospital in Salt, a hillside town near Amman, ran out of oxygen last month, anti-government protests broke out. Later Prince Hamzah visited the town, met the families of the deceased and consoled them. Local people invited the Prince for a traditional feast two weeks later. Within a few weeks, the palace crackdown on Prince Hamzah unfolded.

King Abdullah now says the crisis has been resolved. But it is unlikely so. Even when he was detained, Prince Hamzah remained defiant, as the leaked messages show. He refused to keep quiet and accused the government of corruption, nepotism and misrule. The monarch may have bought peace for now. But can he keep Prince Hamzah away from politics forever? As per local reports in 2019 from Mr.

Deshmukh's Assembly constituency Katol in Nagpur district, the NCP leader had second thoughts on contesting the Assembly election on NCP ticket. Prior to the 2019 Lok Sabha election, several Congress and NCP leaders had joined the BJP. Mr. Deshmukh was said to be among those interested to switch sides as Ashish Deshmukh, his nephew and political rival who had defeated him in the 2014 Assembly polls, rejoined the Congress from the BJP, leaving no winnable candidate for the saffron party. However, things did not go as planned for the BJP. Mr. Deshmukh filed his nomination at the last moment as the NCP candidate. With no strong candidate against him, he managed to reclaim his home-turf.

Mr. Deshmukh first won the Katol Assembly seat in 1995 as an Independent after the Congress declined him ticket. The then Shiv Sena-BJP government in Maharashtra survived on the support of Independents and Mr. Deshmukh was made Minister of State for Education.

**NCP entry**  
In 1999, when Mr. Pawar floated the NCP, he joined the party. Since then, Mr. Deshmukh maintained his winning streak till 2014. Since 1995 to 2014, he worked under all Chief Ministers and handled departments such as Public Works, Excise, Food and Drug Administration, and Food and Civil Supplies.

According to party insi-

ders, one of the key reasons why he got the Home Minister's job was his administrative experience and lack of politi-

cal ambition. In his first year as Home Minister, Mr. Deshmukh walked a tight rope, especially with incidents such as the lynching of sadhus in Palghar district and the implementation of lockdown during the pandemic.

The year became eventful with high-profile cases such as the arrest of Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnaab Goswami, the TRP scam case and finally the Antiilia case where gelatine sticks were found near the house of industrialist Mukesh Ambani. And there were talks that Mr. Deshmukh was struggling to master control over the IPS lobbies within the police force. All hell broke loose when a letter-bomb was dropped by former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh, accusing the Home Minister of asking suspended assistant police inspector Sachin Waze to collect extortion money of ₹100 crore.

Mr. Pawar who chose him for the job held two press conferences in his defence, a rare gesture by the veteran politician. But the Supreme Court's go-ahead to the CBI in this case cast a dark shadow on Mr. Deshmukh's future in politics. The flamboyant politician who loves his caps is forced to go silent for now.

## ANIL DESHMUKH

# Fall from the top

The extortion case has cast a dark shadow over the NCP leader's future

ALOK DESHPANDE



ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

When Anil Deshmukh met Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar offering his resignation following the Bombay High Court order for a preliminary probe by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against him, it was accepted in an instant without hesitation. But more than his exit, many believe, his appointment as Maharashtra's Home Minister in 2019 was a bigger surprise.

Since becoming an MLA for the first time in 1995 till his first loss in 2014, Mr. Deshmukh, hailing from one of the strongest political families of Vidarbha, had always been a Minister. His feed with his cousin Ranjeet Deshmukh made sure that he did not join the Congress.

The 70-year-old Anil babu, as he is affectionately known in Nagpur, is now the NCP's face in Vidarbha. Many were surprised by Mr. Pawar's decision to pick him to handle Maharashtra's Home Department when the tripartite Mahavikas Aghadi government was sworn in. Among those who were discussed for the job were NCP state president Jayant Patil and senior leader Dilip Walse-Patil. As per local reports in 2019 from Mr.

Deshmukh's Assembly constituency Katol in Nagpur district, the NCP leader had second thoughts on contesting the Assembly election on NCP ticket. Prior to the 2019 Lok Sabha election, several Congress and NCP leaders had joined the BJP. Mr. Deshmukh filed his nomination at the last moment as the NCP candidate. With no strong candidate against him, he managed to reclaim his home-turf.

Mr. Deshmukh first won the Katol Assembly

seat in 1995 as an Independent after the Congress declined him ticket. The then Shiv Sena-BJP government in Maharashtra survived on the support of Independents and Mr. Deshmukh was made Minister of State for Education.

**NCP entry**

In 1999, when Mr. Pawar floated the NCP, he joined the party. Since then, Mr. Deshmukh maintained his winning streak till 2014. Since 1995 to 2014, he worked under all Chief Ministers and handled departments such as Public Works, Excise, Food and Drug Administration, and Food and Civil Supplies.

According to party insi-

ders, one of the key reasons why he got the Home Minister's job was his administrative experience and lack of politi-

\*MRP (incl. of all taxes), Conditions apply.



## The abolition of FCAT

How will the recent ordinance on tribunals impact filmmakers seeking redressal on certification and cuts?

ANURADHA RAMAN

**The story so far:** On April 4, the Centre notified the Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021, issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice. The Tribunals Reforms Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in February, but was not taken up for consideration in the last session of Parliament. The President later issued the ordinance, which scraps the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT), a statutory body that had been set up to hear appeals of filmmakers against decisions of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), and transfers its function to other existing judicial bodies. Eight other appellate authorities have also been disbanded with immediate effect. The ordinance has amended The Cinematograph Act, 1952, and replaced the word 'Tribunal' with 'High Court'.

### When did the FCAT come into being?

In 1983, a decision was taken to establish the FCAT, a statutory body under The Cinematograph Act, headed by a member from the legal fraternity. Before the FCAT, filmmakers had no option but to approach the court to seek redressal against CBFC certifications or suggested cuts. So, the FCAT acted like a buffer for filmmakers, and decisions taken by the tribunal were quick, though not always beyond reproach.

**The move to abolish the FCAT is surprising, say experts, as it comes in the backdrop of recommendations of two influential panels, the Mudgal and Benegal committees, both of which suggested an expansion of its jurisdiction**

**How important was the FCAT in the certification process?**  
Films meant for distribution in theatres require to be certified as 'U' (unrestricted public exhibition), 'UA' (unrestricted public exhibition subject to parental guidance for children below the age of 12), 'A' (restricted to adult audiences) or 'S' (restricted to specialised audiences such as doctors or scientists) by the CBFC, which has an examining committee and a revising committee.

According to observers, the CBFC was increasingly getting stacked with people close to the ruling dispensation, both the Congress and the BJP. Of late, the body has been headed by chairpersons who have ruled with a heavy hand and ordered cuts to films critical of the government. The clash between the film fraternity and the certification body became more pronounced in 2015 with the appointment of Pahlaj Nihalani as the chairman of the CBFC, and the FCAT had to step in often to sort out disputes. "In the context of a ban on a film or an order to delete scenes and dialogues from a film, the FCAT was called upon to frame the objections of the certification board in the context of the constitutional framework of freedom of expression," said Lalit Bhasin, former chairperson of the FCAT. Some recent films like *Shahab Bibi Golaam* and *Lipstick Under My Burkha*, both released in 2016, got a favourable hearing from the FCAT. The documentary, *En Dino Muzaffarnagar*, made by filmmakers Shubhadeep Chakravorty and Meera Chaudhary, was denied certification.

Mr. Bhasin, who was also part of the Justice Mukul Mudgal Committee, which examined the certification process and suggested recommendations, said, "Neither the Mudgal committee nor the Shyam Benegal committee recommended that the FCAT be scrapped." Among other objectives, the rationale for setting up the FCAT was to reduce the burden on courts by functioning as an appellate body. Mr. Bhasin added that the tribunal, under him, took swift decisions, usually in six weeks.

### Why has the tribunal been abolished?

The move to abolish the FCAT along with other tribunals follows a Supreme Court order in *Madras Bar Association vs. Union of India*. In November last year, a two-member Bench directed the government to constitute a National Tribunals Commission. It said the Commission would "act as an independent body to supervise the appointments and functioning of Tribunals, as well as to conduct disciplinary proceedings against members of Tribunals and to take care of administrative and infrastructural needs of the Tribunals, in an appropriate manner". The top court, addressing the issue of dependence of tribunals on the executive for administrative requirements, recommended the creation of an umbrella organisation that would be an independent supervisory body to oversee the working of tribunals.

"The court had expressed that the functioning of tribunals could be strengthened. So, the government cannot take advantage of the order and take shelter under it," said Mr. Bhasin. The move to abolish the FCAT is surprising as it comes in the backdrop of the recommendations of two influential panels – the Mudgal Committee and the Benegal Committee – both of which suggested an expansion of the body's jurisdiction.

### What happens now?

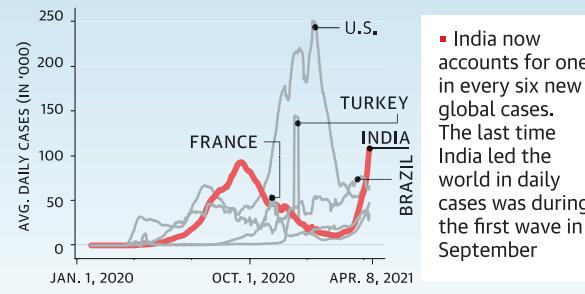
Now that the FCAT has been disbanded, it will be left to the already overburdened courts to adjudicate. With the government tightening its control on over-the-top (OTT) content and ordering players in this area to set up a grievance redressal body to address the concerns of the viewers, many observers point out that the courts will have to play a greater role as an avenue of appeal. With cases pending for years, it is anybody's guess how long the same courts will take to adjudicate on matters of film certification. The role played by the FCAT, which used to handle at least 20 cases a month, will now have to be performed by courts. That includes watching and reviewing films in their entirety to understand the process of certification.

# Dissecting India's second COVID-19 wave

The second wave of COVID-19 in India appears to be ascending faster than the first wave that peaked in mid-September last year. It is crucial to note that the number of COVID-19 tests being conducted daily during the second wave is much higher than the first. Currently, the positivity rate (cases found per 100 tests) is still lower than that in the first wave in many high-burden States. Also, due to an enormous rise in cases and a not-so-sharp rise in deaths, the Case Fatality Rate (CFR: deaths/cases) is either stable or even decreasing across States. Nevertheless, India is already leading the world in terms of average daily cases detected and registers the third-highest average daily deaths. A significant drop in already low testing levels after the first wave and a weakened contact tracing system as the pandemic advanced, besides a surge in public mobility, could be the reasons behind the second wave. Initially, the second wave was confined to a few States. Currently, barring a few States and Union Territories, all regions are recording spikes in varying degrees. While the States have responded well by increasing testing levels, this is still not sufficient compared to the size of their respective outbreaks. Also, India's vaccination drive is on a slow lane, and wide disparities exist among States in the number of doses being administered.

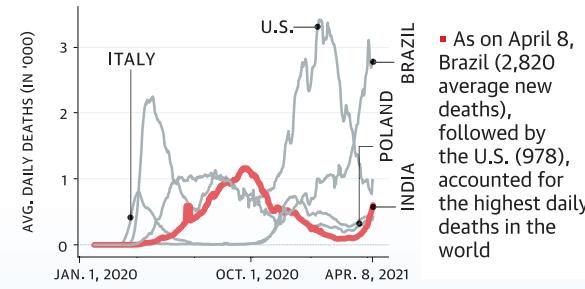
By Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Suman Sen and Naresh Singaravelu

**■ NO. 1 IN CASES** | Since April 3, India has been consistently recording the highest number of daily cases globally, surpassing the U.S. and Brazil on an average



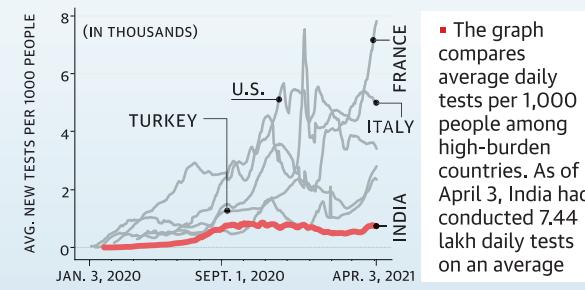
India now accounts for one in every six new global cases. The last time India led the world in daily cases was during the first wave in September

**■ NO. 3 IN DEATHS** | Since April 4, India has been consistently recording the third-highest number of average daily deaths due to COVID-19 globally after the U.S. and Brazil



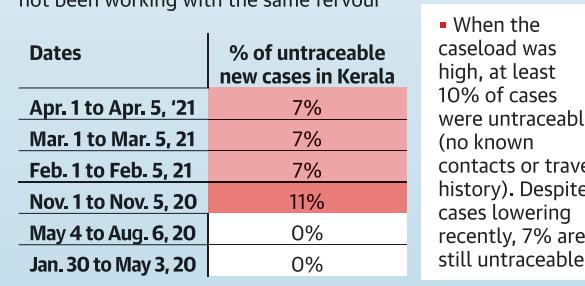
As on April 8, Brazil (2,820 average new deaths), followed by the U.S. (978), accounted for the highest daily deaths in the world

**■ LOW TESTING** | India's testing levels, though higher in absolute numbers, have always remained lower relative to its population. They dropped further after the first wave ended



The graph compares average daily tests per 1,000 people among high-burden countries. As of April 3, India had conducted 7.44 lakh daily tests on an average

**■ POOR TRACING** | As cases ballooned, many contacts of patients could not be traced by States. Even Kerala's contact tracing mechanism, its strong suit during the first wave, has not been working with the same fervour



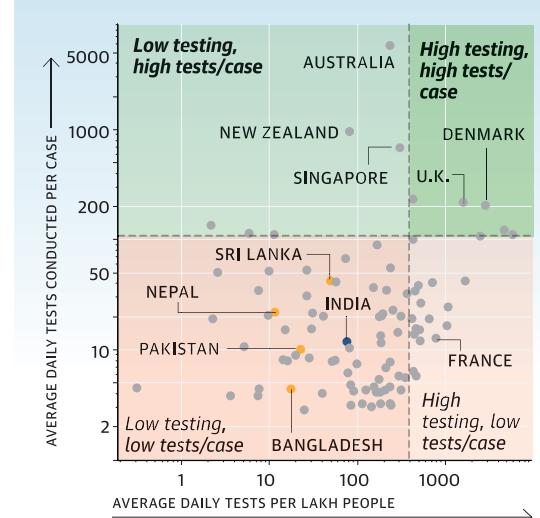
When the caseload was high, at least 10% of cases were untraceable (no known contacts or travel history). Despite cases lowering recently, 7% are still untraceable

**■ MOBILITY RETURNS** | After the first wave ended by October 2020, public mobility (measured by Google) improved

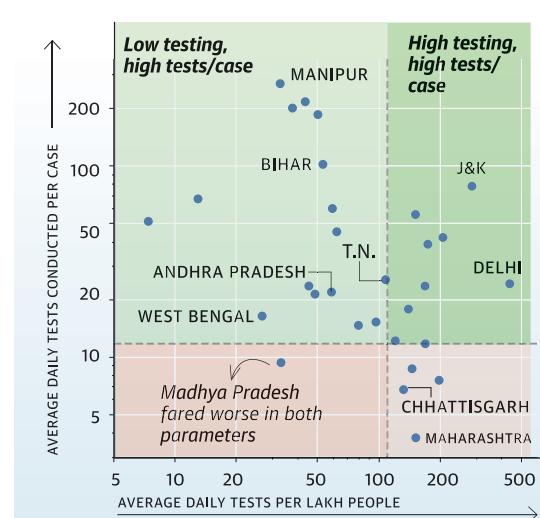


"Grocery and pharmacy visits" crossed into the positive territory (more mobility than baseline value) after November. Other mobility indicators also improved

**■ TESTING RESPONSE** | While India has conducted more tests during the second wave than it did during the peak of the first wave, it still lags behind many other nations in daily tests and testing levels relative to the size of the outbreak. However, the trend is uneven across States



**Global scenario**  
The chart plots the average daily tests conducted per lakh people against the average daily tests conducted per confirmed case (TPC) in various countries as on April 6. For both parameters, the higher the number, the better is the testing response



**Among States**  
The graphic repeats the above exercise for Indian States  
**India** has conducted a relatively low number of tests, which was insufficient for the size of the outbreak. Among States, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra were not testing adequately for their outbreak size

**■ ON A SLOW LANE** | India has administered 6,840 doses per 1 lakh people as of April 8, lower than the world average of 9,410 doses. India's vaccination rate is relatively slower than that of comparable economies

COUNTRY	MARCH 1	MARCH 15	APRIL 8
U.K.	31,410	39,040	55,830
U.S.	22,990	32,620	52,290
Brazil	3,980	5,600	11,750
China	3,650	4,510	10,780
World	3,390	4,930	9,410
Russia	3,590	5,280	9,150
India	1,080	2,390	6,840

**■ VACCINATION RESPONSE** | The table repeats the above exercise for four major States with the highest and lowest vaccine doses administered as on April 8

STATE	MARCH 1	MARCH 15	APRIL 8
Gujarat	1,675	3,913	13,269
Chhattisgarh	1,508	3,077	12,598
Kerala	1,751	4,343	12,205
Himachal	1,719	5,842	11,296
Bihar	516	1,251	3,339
Uttar Pradesh	626	1,088	3,424
Tamil Nadu	617	1,858	4,371
Telangana	1,102	1,804	4,631

**BOTTOM 4**  
TOP 4



S. SIVA SARAVANAN

after India started seeing a visible rise in daily infections and with universal acknowledgement from government and experts that the country was in the midst of a second wave. This may explain the growing number of takers for vaccines from late March. Though India in the initial vaccination phase prioritised healthcare and frontline workers and those above 60 years of age and above 45 with comorbidities, the roll-out was planned at a time when cases had plummeted. It seemed, and several government-backed epidemiological modelling exercises proffered mathematics to support this, that India had dodged a second wave, with COVID-19 expected to extinguish itself by February. But concerns remained, especially with new and more transmissible variants being reported internationally, and the government continued to emphasise the importance of safety measures. But engineering, mass gatherings such as the ongoing Kumbh Mela, normalising of economic life, and an eschewing of safety etiquette may have led to a belligerent rise in infections.

Meanwhile, India has donated and exported nearly 6.45 crore vaccine doses so far, which is over two-thirds of what it has administered to its own population – over 9 crore doses. The second COVID-19 wave appears to have upset supply calculations.

**When is the shortage expected to end?**  
Both SII and Bharat Biotech have asked the Centre for more funds to expand their facilities. The SII said it expects supply constraints till July. The PMO presentation also revealed that other vaccines – from Johnson & Johnson, Zydus Cadila, Novavax and a nasal spray-based vaccine from Bharat Biotech – would be available after July "at the earliest". Russian jab Sputnik V, to be supplied by Dr. Reddy's and four other manufacturers, would likely be available from May or June.

While the Centre now permits workplaces to coordinate vaccine administration, the prescribed age limits have not been changed. Thus, India, despite being among the top five countries in terms of daily vaccinations, is in the bottom half in terms of its ability to administer the two full doses or inoculating a substantial fraction of the population.

# Running low on vaccines as cases rise

What is behind the alarming shortfall being faced by

## Maharashtra skips curbs on jewellery units

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government has allowed gems and jewellery export units to resume operations with restrictions on the number of people working in the premises during night curfew and the weekend lockdown.

This follows persistent requests made by the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) and other trade associations, GJEPC said.

Government officials clarified that as long as work was carried out in shifts, gem and jewellery manufacturing and ancillary activities in the State would be exempted from emergency measures such as night curfew and restrictions on people's movement during weekends.

# China slaps \$2.8 bn fine on Ma's Alibaba

Regulator cites e-commerce giant's 'abuse of dominant market position' as reason for record penalty

ANANTH KRISHNAN

ties over Alibaba's amassing of consumer data, which regulators felt gave it an unfair advantage over its rivals.

On Saturday, the SAMR said it had levied an 18.23 billion yuan (\$2.78 billion) fine on the Alibaba Group "for indulging in a monopolistic act of abusing its dominant market position", state broadcaster China Global Television Network (CGTN) reported.

### Stop illegal activities'

The notice from the SAMR "ordered the group to stop illegal activities and imposed a fine of 4% on its 2019 domestic sales of 455.71 billion yuan (\$69.57 billion), totalling 18.23 billion yuan (\$2.78 billion)", CGTN reported, adding that the regulator "concluded from a four-month investigation that Alibaba has been abusing its market dominance since 2015 by pro-



Facing the music: China said Alibaba had hurt consumers' interests and hindered competition in the market. ■REUTERS

hibiting merchants from opening stores or participating in promotional activities on other competitive platforms."

Alibaba's "one out of two" requirement, which re-

quired users of the platform to not use rival merchants' services, had "hurt consumers' interests", the SAMR said, adding that the policy "hinders competition in China's services market involv-

ing online retail platforms, impedes the free flow of goods, services and resources, and infringes the legitimate rights and interests of merchants on the platform as well as the interests of consumers."

### Exclusive dealing'

The SAMR said the group had "abused its dominant market position" and "also used market forces, platform rules, data, algorithms and other technical means to ensure the implementation of the exclusive dealing agreement".

Alibaba in a statement said it "accepts the penalty with sincerity and will ensure its compliance with determination." Mr. Ma has kept a low profile even as the group said it would cooperate fully with the authorities as they conducted the probe.

## Balrampur Chini to spend more on plant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Sugar firm Balrampur Chini Mills said in a regulatory filing that its board had approved a higher investment of ₹425 crore for a new distillery plant of 320 kilolitres per day (KLPD), which is expected to start operations by December.

On November 4, it had approved a ₹320-crore investment. "The increase in capex is mainly owing to the inclusion of 20 KLPD of extra-neutral alcohol, higher storage capacity for raw material and finished goods, sharp rise in steel prices and change in design of equipment," it said.

The sugar manufacturer plans to borrow ₹220 crore under the scheme for extending financial assistance for enhancement of ethanol capacity.

**Amul**

**Bombay Kulfi**  
₹25\* | 60 mL

\*MRP (not of all taxes). Conditions apply.

**Amul**

**Rosogolla Kulfi**  
₹20\* | 60 mL

\*MRP (not of all taxes). Conditions apply.

**Amul**

**Tricone Dark Chocolate**  
₹40\* | 120 mL

**Amul**

**Tricone Cookie Crunch Delight**  
₹30\* | 120 mL

**Amul**

**Jumbo Cup Haldi**  
₹30\* | 125 mL

**Amul**

**Sugar Free Kesar Badam**  
₹40\* | 125 mL

**Amul**

**Camel Milk Medium Fat Ice Cream**  
₹30\* | 125 mL

**Locate Amul**

Amul products near me

Download 'Locate Amul' app for easy search of Amul products within 3 km area of your current location.

GET IT ON Google Play

## Shriram Properties files draft prospectus for ₹800-cr. IPO

Company says issue proceeds to be utilised for paring debt

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Shriram Properties Ltd. (SPL), a realty firm focussed on the mid-market and affordable housing categories, filed a draft red-herring prospectus with the Securities and Exchange Board of India to raise about ₹800 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

The IPO would comprise a fresh issue of ₹250 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up ₹550 crore by current shareholders and promoters. The OFS would comprise sale of shares worth ₹147.1 crore by Omega TC Sabre Holdings, ₹13 crore by Tata Capital Financial Ser-



SPL focusses on mid-market and affordable housing categories. ■AFP

vices, ₹148.9 crore by TPG Asia SFV Pte Ltd., ₹216 crore by WSI/WSQI V (XXXII) Mauritius Investors Ltd. and ₹25 crore by other selling shareholders, said SPL.

The firm proposes to use net proceeds from the fresh issue towards repayment/prepayment of certain borrowings by the company and some of its subsidiaries.

**Residential space**  
According to realty advisory JLL, SPL is among the five largest residential real-estate companies in south India in terms of the number of units unveiled between calendar 2015 and 2020.

Bengaluru and Chennai, being part of key residential markets in the country, contributed to approximately 30% of home launches in the country between calendar years 2012 and 2020.

## SAT gives SEBI six months in CG Power case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) has asked markets regulator SEBI to pass final orders in six months in a case related to CG Power and Industrial Solutions, wherein the company's ex-chairman Gautam Thapar and three other former officials were banned from the securities market. Besides Mr. Thapar, the other officials banned were CG Power's former chief financial officer V.R. Venkatesh and former directors Madhav Acharya and B. Hariharan.

The SAT ruling comes after Mr. Thapar and others moved the tribunal against a SEBI confirmatory order passed in March 2020.

## Rapid growth of e-sports spurs calls for regulatory framework

Online gaming revenue may touch ₹11,880 cr. in FY23: KPMG

LALATENDU MISHRA  
MUMBAI

The electronic sports (e-sports) segment needs a governing framework for harnessing its full potential, say industry officials.

The demand comes in the backdrop of the segment recording rapid growth in recent years with the sports headed to the Asian Games and probably, the Olympics.

As per a KPMG report, the revenue of the online gaming market, of which e-sports is a part, may touch ₹11,880 crore in FY23 with hundreds of firms, content developers and millions of players fuelling its growth.

"The proliferation of af-

fordable smartphones, high-speed Internet and falling data prices are the primary catalysts for this rapid growth," KPMG said.

**Self-regulation**  
"e-Sports is going to evolve in a multifold fashion," said Bimal Julta, chairman, Fed-

eration of Indian Fantasy Sports. "There should be a self-regulatory framework to govern them."

"The Fantasy Sports Regulatory Authority has been formed with eminent people coming on board. We are trying to bring various bodies under one umbrella as we understand what kind of innovations and creativity we need to have," he said.

"The biggest challenge is how to regulate different federations because their memorandum deeds must be different and it will take time to streamline and bring in transparency," said Vinod Kumar Varma, president, Indian Sports Federation.

## SPORT

### Young carries Hawks past Bulls

Celtics sweat to beat minnows Timberwolves

#### NBA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LOS ANGELES

Predator: Hawks' Trae Young, right, did not let slip any scoring opportunity, rustling up 42 points against Bulls. ■AP

the Celtics needed overtime to beat last-place Minnesota Timberwolves 145-136.

**The results:**  
Milwaukee Bucks 119 lost to Charlotte Hornets 127; Atlanta Hawks 120 bt Chicago Bulls 108; Boston Celtics 145 bt Minnesota Timberwolves 136 (OT); New York Knicks 133 bt Mem-

phis Grizzlies 129 (OT); Golden State Warriors 107 lost to Washington Wizards 110; LA Clippers 126 bt Houston Rockets 109; Denver Nuggets 121 bt San Antonio Spurs 119.

New Orleans Pelicans 101 bt Philadelphia 76ers 94; Orlando Magic 106 lost to Indiana Pacers 111.

#### DELHI ROUND-UP

##### Vision Panchal makes merry

Vision Panchal's blistering, unbeaten 80 (23b, 11x6) and Kartik Pawar's four for 59 helped Rann Star Club to a six-run victory over SS Sports in the pre-quarterfinals of the 31st Hitkary Om Nath Sod memorial tournament at RSKP ground, Pitampura, on Saturday.

**The scores:** Rann Star CC 294/6 in 40 overs (Vision Panchal 80 n.o., Abhishek Goswami 79, Vaibhav Kandpal 41, Prince Mehra 3/47) bt SS Sports 288/8 in 40 overs (Jitesh Saroha 130 n.o., Dhruv Singh 45, Kartik Pawar 4/59).

**Ritwik picks four**  
Ritwik Sharma (4/46) bowled MRV Academy to a 34-run win over Delhi International School in the fourth Dobhal cricket tournament at the MRV School, Dwarka.

**The scores:** MRV Academy

219 in 38.4 overs (Vineet Dhankar 59, Sikander Kaushilya 38, Prateek Sehrawat 34, Rishabh

Manchanda 4/48) lost to M-10 Academy 223/7 in 40 overs (Ritwik Singh 46, Sahil Tada 37,

Somveer Singh 3/35).

**Kairav Singhani shines**  
Kairav Singhani (4/38 & 70

n.o.) starred in Sonnet Club's eight-wicket victory over Bal Bhawan Academy in the Budhram Rajpoot memorial under-14 cricket tournament.

**The scores:** Bal Bhawan Academy 189 in 48.3 overs (Mohak Kumar 78, Naman Rawal 25, Kairav Singhani 4/38, Anirudh Kumar 3/35) lost to Sonnet Club 190/2 in 35 overs (Kairav Singhani 70 n.o., Ashmit Jindal 51, Rohit Sharma 39).

**Ankit Dabas excels**  
Ankit Dabas' all-round show (58 & 5/35) saw Hari Singh Academy beat Delhi Indians by 19 runs in the fourth RK Kapoor T20 tournament.

**The scores:**

Hari Singh Academy 226/6 in 20 overs (Ankit Dabas 58, Rahul Dalal 56, Abhishek Pandey 31) bt Delhi Indians 207/7 in 20 overs (Nitish Rana 86, Ujjwal Gupta 48, Ankit Dabas 5/35).

## TV PICKS

**IPL:** Star Sports 1 & SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

**Premier League:** SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 4.30 p.m., 6.35p.m., 9 p.m. & 11.30 p.m.

**Serie A:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 4 p.m., 6.30 p.m., 9.30 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Monday)

**Augusta Masters:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 11.30 p.m.

**FIH Pro League:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Monday).

## IN BRIEF

**Hero Apollo Tyres:** Hero Apollo Tyres Ltd. has appointed Csaba Laszlo as its new head coach for the 2021-22 season.

**Chennaiyin FC parts ways with Csaba Laszlo**

CHENNAI: Chennaiyin FC has parted ways with its head coach Csaba Laszlo, the club tweeted on Saturday. The club has also released Admir Kozlic (asst. coach), Csaba Gabris (sports scientist) and Martin Raska (goalkeeping coach). Under the 57-year-old, the two-time champion had one of its worst seasons last time around, finishing eighth and scoring the least number of goals (17).

**Awesome to see Stokes talk about WIPL: Knight**

LONDON: England women's skipper Heather Knight has said it was amazing to see Ben Stokes speaking about having a full-fledged Women's Indian Premier League (WIPL). Knight has also agreed that an IPL equivalent tournament would go a long way, and she praised Stokes for speaking out in support of women's cricket.

**FIFA U-17 women's WC tournament director resigns**

NEW DELHI: Roma Khanna on Saturday stepped down as the FIFA U-17 women's world cup and AFC women's Asian Cup tournament director, to be held in India in 2022, citing personal reasons. PTI



Pragganandha... making the right moves. ■FILE PHOTO

Leon Mendonca, the other Indian in the fray, was tied 11th with five points. Nine more rounds remain.

For the second successive day, Team Kramnik and Team Polgar split the points equally to make it 50-50. The top three players conti-

nue to be from Team Kramnik.

Pragganandha stretched his winning streak to eight games by beating Carissa Yip (USA), Zhu Jiner (China) and Nurgul Salimova (Bulgaria) before receiving a walkover from Dinara Saduakassova (Kazakhstan), who faced internet connectivity issues.

In the day's final round, Pragganandha drew with Awonder Liang (USA).

What also helped the Indian teenager emerge as the leader was Leon Mendonca's stunning victory over favourite Nodirbek Abdusattorov in the ninth round.

Second seed Nihal scored three wins and two draws, including one against Guakesh in the 10th round. Guakesh, on the other hand, posted three wins and a draw while his lone loss came against the top seed.

## HFC's Liston Colaco moves to ATKMB

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB) has roped in promising midfielder Liston Colaco ahead for the next season of the ISL. Colaco, who had an impressive outing with Hyderabad FC in the previous edition, had caught the eye of the ATKMB coach Antonio

# Dhawan and Shaw pulverise CSK, power DC to victory

Raise 138 in quick time to make short work of 189-run chase; Woakes, Avesh shine with ball for Delhi, Raina's stirring return a bright spot for Chennai

## IPL 2021

AMOL KARHADKAR

Surendra Raina marked his return with a trademark fifty. All-rounders Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran reprised their exploits from the United Arab Emirates. And Moeen Ali made a significant contribution with the willow on his Chennai Super Kings debut.

Still, such was the onslaught of the Delhi Capitals opening combination that it chased down a target of 189 without any fuss to begin its campaign on a high. Despite an impressive batting performance, CSK couldn't get its bowling act right on a belter of a pitch at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.

The PowerPlay turned out to be the difference between the sides. DC, with a new captain in Rishabh Pant, dominated the first six overs in both the halves, which proved decisive.

After electing to field, despite missing last year's new-ball bruisers, Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje, the DC pacers restricted CSK to a meagre 33 for two in the first six.

Avesh Khan, preferred over veteran Ishant Sharma, justified his presence and Chris Woakes made his DC debut count as the duo got rid of openers Faf du Plessis and Ruturaj Gaikwad.

In the latter half, it was DC's opening batsmen who dominated the proceedings to virtually seal the fate of the game. While Shikhar



**Hogging the limelight:** Capitals' Shaw and Dhawan were simply unstoppable during the chase, while Raina was back with a bang for Super Kings before he was run out. Avesh's spell ensured that Dhoni's side was kept below 200. ■ SPORTZPICS/BCCI



## SCOREBOARD

### CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

Ruturaj Gaikwad c Dhawan b Woakes 5 (8b, 1x4), Faf du Plessis lbw b Avesh 0 (3b), Moeen Ali c Dhawan b Ashwin 36 (24b, 4x4, 2x6), Suresh Raina run out 54 (36b, 3x4, 4x6), Ambati Rayudu c Dhawan b Tom Curran 23 (16b, 1x4, 2x6), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 26 (17b, 3x4), M.S. Dhoni b Avesh 0 (2b), Sam Curran b Woakes 34 (15b, 4x4, 2x6); Extras (lb-7, w-2, nb-1): 10; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 188.

(not out) 0 (0b), Extras (nb-1, w-3): 4; Total (for three wkts. in 18.4 overs): 190.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-138 (Shaw, 13.3), 2-167 (Dhawan 16.3), 3-186 (Stoinis, 18.3).

### SUPER KINGS BOWLING

Deepak Chahar 4-0-36-0, Sam Curran 2-0-24-0, Shardul 3-0-53-2, Jadeja 2-0-16-0, Moeen 3-0-33-0, Bravo 4-0-28-1.

### Toss:

Delhi Capitals.

### Man-of-the-Match:

Dhawan. Delhi Capitals won by seven wickets with eight balls to spare.

### Innings scan

CSK	DC
46	Dots 27
16	Fours 24
10	Sixes 5
33/2	PP 65/0
9.40	RR 10.17

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-7 (du Plessis, 1.4 overs), 2-7 (Ruturaj, 2.1), 3-60 (Moeen, 8.3), 4-123 (Rayudu, 13.5), 5-137 (Raina, 15.1), 6-137 (Dhoni, 15.3), 7-188 (Sam Curran, 19.6).

### CAPITALS BOWLING

Woakes 3-0-18-2, Avesh 4-0-23-2, Ashwin 4-0-47-1, Tom Curran 4-0-40-1, Mishra 3-0-27-0, Stoinis 2-0-26-0.

### DELHI CAPITALS

Prithvi Shaw c Moeen b Bravo 72 (38b, 9x4, 3x6), Shikhar Dhawan lbw b Shardul 85 (54b, 10x4, 2x6), Rishabh Pant (not out) 15 (12b, 2x4), Marcus Stoinis c Curran b Shardul 14 (9b, 3x4), Shimron Hetmyer

### Next assignment

**DC:** April 15 vs. RR, Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

**CSK:** April 16 vs. PBKS, Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

**C** He [Pant] kept his calm, kept motivating the boys and made good changes

SHIKHAR DHAWAN  
on Pant's captaincy

**C** Suresh Raina (at No. 4) was in an aggressive role. It's a real positive sign for the team

STEPHEN FLEMING  
CSK coach

and Amit Mishra, Jadeja and Sam Curran, who won the mini-battle against elder brother Tom (on debut for DC), ended the innings on a high.

In the end, it wasn't enough.

**Amul**



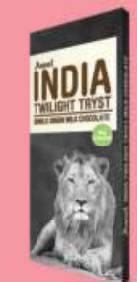
Milk Chocolate  
150 g | ₹ 100\*



55% Dark Chocolate  
150 g | ₹ 100\*



Fruit 'N' Nut  
55% Dark Chocolate  
150 g | ₹ 100\*



India Origin Milk Chocolate  
125 g | ₹ 150\*



Peru Origin  
55% Dark Chocolate  
125 g | ₹ 150\*

**Rohit bats for rhino conservation**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHENNAI

Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma wore shoes highlighting the 'Great One-Horned Rhinoceros' during the IPL opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore to help build awareness for the need to conserve the endangered species.

## Past champions will battle it out in an early test of strength

Knight Riders have improved with Shakib's addition; Sunrisers will believe their bowling gives them the edge



**S. DIPAK RAGAV**

After failing to make the playoffs in the last two editions, two-time champion Kolkata Knight Riders will hope to start well against 2016 winner Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Sunday.

The team has had some issues with its batting order in recent years, and midway through the last season, Eoin Morgan took over as captain from Dinesh Karthik. The England white-ball skipper will now have the opportunity to implement his ideas from the beginning.

KKR managed some cru-

cial signings in the auction. The return of Shakib Al Hasan gives the side significantly better balance, especially when he slots in alongside the explosive Andre Russell, another multidimensional cricketer.

The Sunil Narine experiment at the top of the order has run its course. A lot rides on whether Rahul Tripathi or Nitish Rana can set the tone with established opener Shubman Gill. With the ball, the team has a balanced attack.

Pat Cummins and Prasidh Krishna head the pace department, while the spin of Shakib and Varun Chakravarthy, if he is fit, could be more

than handy at Chepauk.

In SRH, KKR faces the best bowling side in the competition, especially with the return of Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who excelled against England recently. Sandeep Sharma and T. Natarajan add to a strong seam attack, while leg-spinner Rashid Khan is one of the most lethal game-changers in T20 cricket.

The team's only area of concern will be the performance of Indian all-rounders Abdul Samad and Vijay Shankar. The duo will be called upon to shoulder the finishing duties with the bat and contribute to the fifth bowler's quota if the team wants

to play both Jonny Bairstow and Kane Williamson ahead of Jason Holder. The wicket on Friday was two-paced, and SRH, with its potent bowling attack, will feel it has an edge.

### TODAY'S MATCH

**CHENNAI, 7.30 P.M.**

#### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 19

SRH 7 | KKR 12

In 2020

Played 2 | SRH 0 | KKR 2

STAR SPORTS 1 & STAR SELECT 1 (SD & HD)

Rizwan excels in Pakistan's thrilling win

## Dallas helps Leeds stun Man City

Liverpool beats Villa; Union Berlin holds Bayern



Stuart Dallas. ■ AP

ran Torres equalised 14 minutes from time.

But Leeds still summoned the energy to pose a threat on the counter-attack and gained its reward when Dallas slotted below Ederson.

Trent Alexander-Arnold's injury-time winner ended Liverpool's record run of home defeats as it beat Aston Villa 2-1 and moved up to fourth.

In the Bundesliga, Marcus Iglesias scored late for Union Berlin as it grabbed a 1-1 draw against Bayern Munich.

**Important results:** Premier League: Manchester City 1 (Torres 76) lost to Leeds 2 (Dallas 42, 90+1), Liverpool 2 (Salah 57, Alexander-Arnold 90+1) bt Aston Villa 1 (Watkins 43). On Friday: Fulham 0 lost to Wolves 1 (Traore 90+2).

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 1 (Musiala 68) drew with Union Berlin 1 (Iglesias 86).

Werder Bremen 1 (Rashica 61+pen) lost to RB Leipzig 4 (Olmo 23, Sorloth 32, 41, Sabitzer 63).

## Zalatoris, Harman close the gap

Cut Rose's lead to one stroke; top guns troop out

### AUGUSTA MASTERS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
AUGUSTA

Top-ranked defending champion Dustin Johnson has more time to prepare for next week's US PGA Heritage Classic than he really wanted after missing the cut at the 85th Masters on Friday.

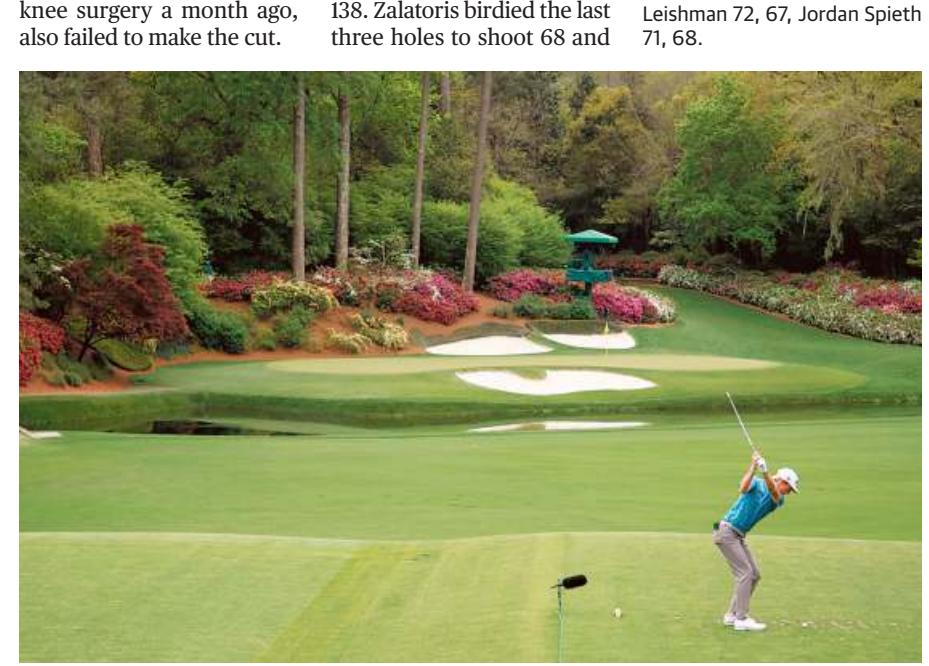
Four-time Major winner Rory McIlroy also failed to reach the weekend for only the second time in 13 trips to Augusta National.

Four-time Major champion Brooks Koepka, who battled to play after right knee surgery a month ago, also failed to make the cut.

Koepka and Johnson both shot 75 to finish five-over 149, while McIlroy was 150 after a closing 74.

Meanwhile, Justin Rose squandered a four-shot advantage, then birdied three of the last six holes to seize a one-stroke lead after the second round. The 40-year-old Englishman overcame a nightmare start to fire a level par 72 and stand on seven under 137.

Will Zalatoris, who could become the first Masters debutant winner since Fuzzy Zoeller in 1979, and Brian Harman shared second on 138. Zalatoris birdied the last three holes to shoot 68 and



**His best shot:** Debutant Will Zalatoris kept himself in the running for Masters glory. ■ AFP

## WRESTLING

Y.B. SARANGI  
KOLKATA

Eighteen-year-old Sonam Malik became the youngest Indian female wrestler to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics as the country bagged two quota places in the Asian Olympic Games qualifiers in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Saturday.

Sonam and Anshu Malik

reached the finals of 62kg and 57kg respectively to book their berths for the Tokyo Olympics.

Sonam, who picked up an injury during the semifinals, did not fight the final against Jia and settled for the silver medal.

Nineteen-year-old Anshu beat Olympian Jieun Um of South Korea 10-0 and Emma Tissina of Kazakhstan 10-0 in Group A matches and Shokhida Akhmedova of Uzbekistan 12-2 in the semifinals to

make it to the Olympics.

Anshu lost to Khongorul Boldsaikhan of Mongolia 7-4 in the title clash to take the silver. Nisha (68kg) and Pooja (76kg) claimed bronze medals.

**The results:**  
57kg: Anshu Malik bt Jieun Um (Kor), bt Emma Tissina (Kaz), bt Shokhida Akhmedova (Uzb).  
62kg: Sonam Malik bt Jia Long (Chn), bt Hsin Ping Pai (Tpe), bt Ayaulym Kassymova (Kaz).

**Chocolate Syrup**  
650 g | ₹ 140\*

\*MRP (incl. of all taxes). Conditions apply.

**Energy Bar**  
40 g | ₹ 25\*

**Chocozoo**  
250 g | ₹ 120\*

11556347

AND-NDE