



Govt. data show three in 4 COVID-19 patients have comorbidities
page 10



U.S. judge blocks govt. order to remove Chinese app WeChat
page 11



UN sanctions back in Iran, says U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo
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Sunrisers faces the Royal Challengers test in IPL today
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NEARBY



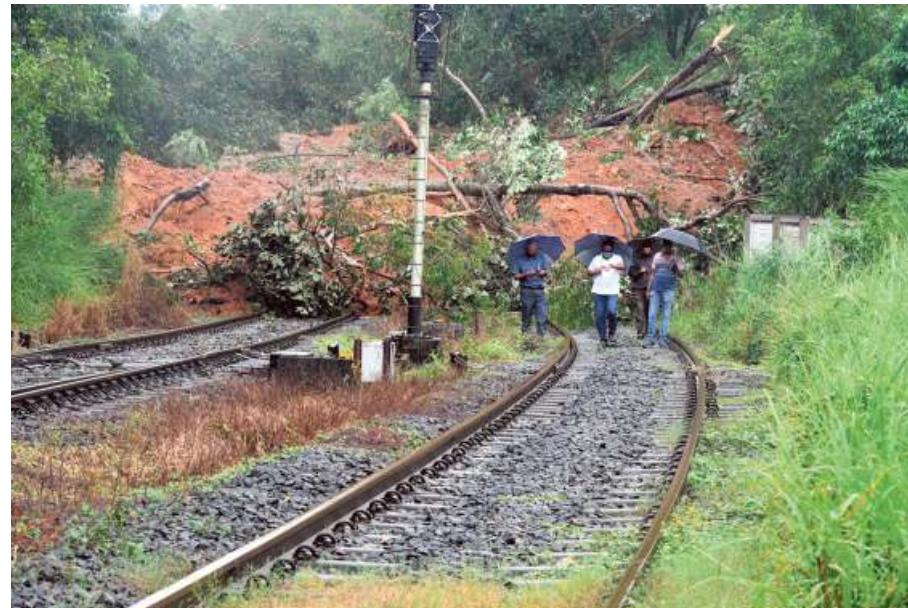
Fresh COVID cases come down slightly in Delhi

NEW DELHI
The national capital recorded 3,812 fresh COVID-19 cases and 37 deaths in the past 24 hours, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Sunday. In all, 52,405 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 7.27%. The total number of cases stands at 2,46,711 with 4,982 deaths and 2,09,632 recoveries. There are currently 32,097 active cases in the city.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

EDUCATIONPLUS ▶ PAGE 5

Unscheduled stop



Link cut: Landslips triggered by heavy rain blocked the line between the Konkan and South Western Railway networks near Padil in Mangaluru on Sunday. ■ H.S. MANJUNATH (SEE PAGE 8)

Govt. tables Bill to amend FCRA

Bid to enhance transparency; it will make Aadhaar mandatory

VIJAYA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Centre is set to amend the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act and proposes to make Aadhaar a mandatory identification document for all the office-bearers, directors and other key functionaries of an NGO or an association eligible

ble to receive foreign donations.

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Sunday by Minister of State for Home Nitin Gadkari.

The Bill says the amendment is required to enhance transparency and accountability in the receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions worth thousands of crores of rupees every year and facilitating the "genuine" non-governmental organisations or associations

who are working for the welfare of society.

The Bill proposes to include "public servant" and "corporation owned or controlled by the government" among the list of entities who are not eligible to receive foreign donations, the draft says.

Bars public servants

"Amendment of clause (c) of sub-section (1) of section 3 to include public servant also within its ambit, to provide that no foreign contribution shall be accepted by any pu-

blic servant," the Bill says.

In 2016, the Home Ministry had cancelled the licence of Lawyers Collective, run by noted lawyers Indira Jaising and Anand Grover for various violations. The Ministry, in its suspension notice, had said that Ms. Jaising – as a government servant – had received foreign funds over ₹96 crore when she held the post of Additional Solicitor General (ASG) between the years 2009 and 2014, in violation of FCRA norms.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Death warrant: Congress

The Rajya Sabha saw a peaceful debate till 1 p.m., when the proceedings were scheduled to end. The Congress, the Trinamool Congress, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, the Samajwadi Party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the Rashtriya Janata Dal, the Aam Aadmi Party and the two Left parties vehemently opposed the Bills, asking the government to send them to a Parliament panel for further scrutiny.

The legislation – the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, were cleared by the Lok Sabha last week.

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Where all lines merge

Construction is set to begin soon on the Regional Rapid Transit System station at Sarai Kale Khan, which will see the integration of three Phase I RRTS corridors as well as train, metro and bus networks

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

Work on one of the country's most significant multimodal passenger transit hub is poised to begin soon in the heart of the Capital, even as construction on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor of the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) is going on in full swing in Uttar Pradesh.

Sources said that construction of the RRTS station at Sarai Kale Khan – where all the three Phase I RRTS corridors (Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut, Delhi-SNBL and Delhi-Panipat) will converge – should begin soon despite issues related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The RRTS station at Sarai Kale Khan will be seamlessly integrated with the Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station, the Delhi Metro Pink Line's Hazrat Nizamuddin station and the Sarai Kale Khan Inter State Bus Terminal.

Easy movement

The station architecture has been designed to facilitate commuter movement between the different modes of transportation.

"Several pre-construction activities, including site survey, have begun at the site," said Sudhir Kumar Sharma, group general manager (strategic planning) of the National Capital

Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC).

Though Mr. Sharma did not comment on when exactly construction would start, sources said it is likely to commence over the coming few months and latest by the end of the year.

Top-priority

Sources said the Letter of Agreement to a construction agency was in the process of being awarded, following which manpower, equipment and other necessary resources will be mobilised for construction process. Given the 'top-priority' status of the project, sources said the NCRTC had undertaken significant pre-construction activities on its own so that the construction agency could get started on the station as soon as possible.

The NCRTC said that detailed designing of the station has been completed and its multimodal integration was finalised after deliberations and discussion with all stakeholders. All the requisite approvals have been obtained, soil investigation is complete, and pile load test and diversion of utilities such as 11KV, 33KV (BSES & DTL) lines are in progress.

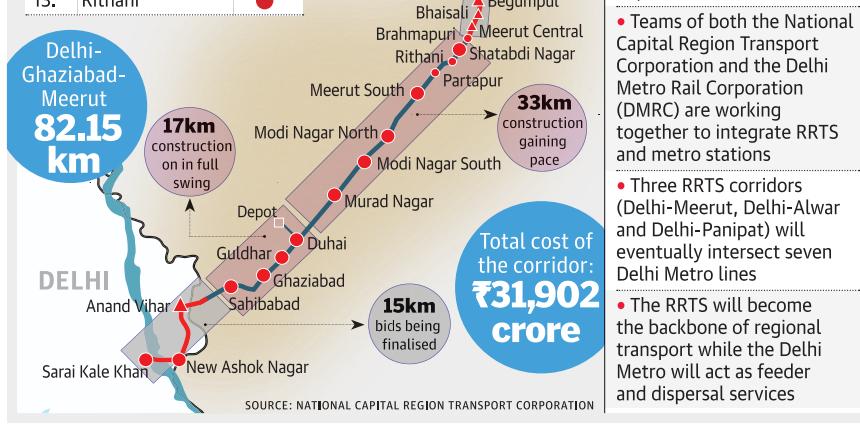
Meanwhile, construction on over 50 km of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS is on in full swing. The NCRTC said it success-



Seamless transport

Salient details of the ambitious Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

S. No.	Station Name	Station Type	S. No.	Station Name	Station Type
1.	Sarai Kale Khan	ELEVATED STATION	14.	Shatabdi Nagar	UNDERGROUND STATION
2.	New Ashok Nagar	▲	15.	Brahmapuri	●
3.	Anand Vihar	●	16.	Meerut Central	▲
4.	Sahibabad	●	17.	Bhaishali	▲
5.	Ghaziabad	●	18.	Begumpur	▲
6.	Guldhara	●	19.	MES Colony	●
7.	Duhai	●	20.	Dauri Metro	●
8.	Murad Nagar	●	21.	Meerut North	●
9.	Modi Nagar South	●			
10.	Modi Nagar North	●			
11.	Meerut South	●			
12.	Partapur	●			
13.	Rithani	●			



SOURCE: NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORT CORPORATION

fully undertook civil construction work on the stretch from Sahibabad to Shatabdi Nagar (Meerut) around 16 months ago. Foundation work for the viaduct is progressing at a fast pace, said the NCRTC.

Over 2,500 piles and 209 pile caps have been laid and around 100 pillars have been erected on the 17-km priority section between Sahibabad and Duhai.

The launching of viaduct

spans is in progress and the superstructure for the viaduct is now visible on the stretch. Construction of stations on the priority section (Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhara and Duhai) is also in progress. The particular stretch is scheduled to start operation by 2023, while the full 82 km RRTS corridor will be open to public by 2025.

Civil construction work

The NCRTC has also

• 82.15 km total length of Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor. It will start at Sarai Kale Khan (Delhi) and end at Modipuram (Meerut)

• 22 total number of stations

• ₹1,138 crore share of Delhi government's investment in the scheme

• 13 km length of corridor in jurisdiction of Delhi

• The Delhi portion of the corridor will include elevated stations at Sarai Kale Khan and New Ashok Nagar, and one underground station at Anand Vihar

• The corridor is being implemented under Phase I of the RRTS

• It is the first RRTS to be implemented in India

• Teams of both the National Capital Region Transport Corporation and the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) are working together to integrate RRTS and metro stations

• Three RRTS corridors (Delhi-Meerut, Delhi-Alwar and Delhi-Panipat) will eventually intersect seven Delhi Metro lines

• The RRTS will become the backbone of regional transport while the Delhi Metro will act as feeder and dispersal services

kicked-off civil construction work on the 32-km section from Duhai to Shatabdi Nagar (Meerut), which will host seven stations: Murad Nagar, Modi Nagar South, Modi Nagar North, Meerut South, Partapur, Rithani and Shatabdi Nagar. The foundation work for the Modi Nagar and Shatabdi Nagar stations is on in full swing; road widening and utility diversion work is under way between Duhai to Modipuram.

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The launching of viaduct

Timings

DELHI

MONDAY, SEP. 21	RISE 06:09	SET 18:19
	RISE 10:12	SET 21:22
TUESDAY, SEP. 22	RISE 06:10	SET 18:18
	RISE 11:19	SET 22:08
WEDNESDAY, SEP. 23	RISE 06:10	SET 18:16
	RISE 12:24	SET 22:59

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 37 27
Safdarjung 37 27
Palam 37 28

Delhi Palam Today
38°C Day would become very warm and humid with partly cloudy sky.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
36°C Clouding would increase towards evening. Rain and thunderstorm with gusty winds likely during night.

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THE HINDU
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IN BRIEF

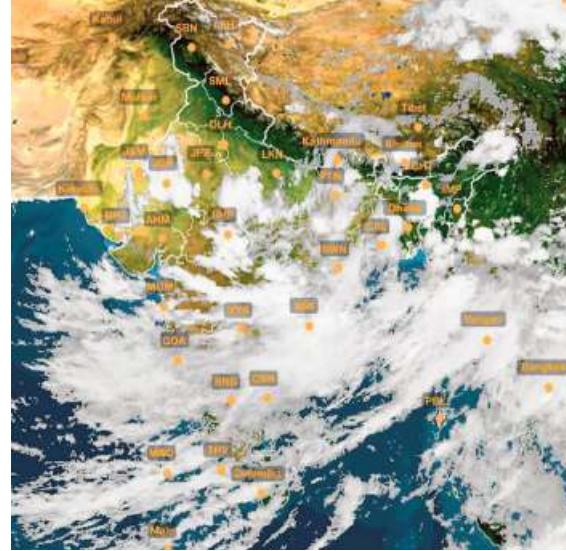
Delhi zoo to get more than 10 animal species

NEW DELHI

The Delhi zoo, which hogged the headlines due to a large number of animal deaths over the past two years, will bring in more than 10 species of wildlife, including a rhino, a tigress and crocodiles, from other States through an exchange programme, according to officials. The zoo's director, Ramesh Pandey, said the animal mortality rate in the zoo had declined by around 45% in the last six months by implementing a series of measures. "There are 83 species of animals in the zoo at present. Work is underway to add more than 10 animal species to its population," Mr. Pandey said.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



Forecast for Monday: Thunderstorms with lightning likely at isolated places over east Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, interior Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	39.6	36.0	28.2	Kozhikode	106.1	20.7	23.6
Ahmedabad	2.6	36.3	26.3	Kurnool	—	30.2	24.6
Aizawl	—	31.1	22.4	Lucknow	—	37.5	27.2
Allahabad	1.2	36.2	27.0	Madurai	1.8	30.4	23.5
Bengaluru	20.8	22.1	20.0	Mangalore	180.6	25.3	22.1
Bhopal	18	33.3	23.2	Mumbai	2.8	31.0	25.5
Bhubaneswar	1.2	28.2	26.1	Mysuru	—	24.9	20.0
Chandigarh	—	36.0	26.5	New Delhi	—	36.8	26.6
Chennai	—	30.0	25.0	Patna	—	35.0	26.8
Coimbatore	4	28.3	22.4	Port Blair	35	29.8	23.3
Dehradun	—	34.6	24.4	Puducherry	—	30.6	25.4
Gangtok	—	24.6	19.1	Pune	29.1	32.5	21.8
Goa	10.7	29.0	23.4	Raipur	—	34.5	26.0
Guwahati	—	36.8	25.8	Ranchi	—	31.2	23.6
Hubballi	—	26.0	22.0	Shillong	—	28.6	19.5
Hyderabad	11.9	32.2	22.5	Shimla	—	28.0	19.0
Imphal	—	31.9	20.5	Srinagar	—	29.6	10.3
Jaipur	—	36.6	27.0	Thiruvananthapuram	27.2	29.8	22.3
Kochi	59.6	28.6	23.6	Tiruchi	—	32.8	25.4
Kohima	—	27.2	18.0	Vijayawada	1	29.8	26.2
Kolkata	2.5	32.2	25.5	Vishakhapatnam	—	33.8	27.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 pm, Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 234 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Kozhikode, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 11.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor □ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: 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.

Delhi HC says no to single mother's caste for children

'Certificate can't be given unless proved that they are deprived'

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

NEW DELHI

In a significant verdict, the Delhi High Court has ruled that children of single mother belonging to Scheduled Caste community, whose father belongs to forward caste, cannot be accorded caste certificates unless it is established that they have suffered deprivations, indignities, humiliations and handicaps faced by persons belonging to the caste community.

"In an inter-caste marriage between a tribal and non-tribal, the determination of the caste of the offspring is a question of fact to be decided on the basis of the facts adduced in each case. It has to be brought out that the children have suffered from any disability or disadvantage because of the abandonment by the father," a Bench of Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Subramoni Prasad said.

The court's observation came while rejecting a plea of a single Scheduled Caste woman, who married a man from a forward caste, seeking caste certificate for her children following their divorce.

Complete seclusion
The woman is a senior ranking Air Force Officer from Assam, who married her colleague in the Air Force. Two children were born from out of the wedlock. Following their divorce in 2009, the children remained with the single mother, who has been staying at her official accommodation at various Air Force Stations as per her postings. She contended that the children have never grown up



In an inter-caste marriage between a tribal and non-tribal, the determination of the caste of the offspring is a question of fact to be decided on the basis of the facts adduced in each case

HIGH COURT BENCH

with their father or interacted with the members of his community and there is no likelihood of their being considered as a part of their father's community.

Senior advocate Sanjay R. Hegde, representing the woman, argued if a father is from a Scheduled Caste community and is singly raising the children, then that alone is considered sufficient for issuance of a caste certificate.

However, if the child is brought up by a single Scheduled Caste mother, who had married someone from the forward caste, then apart from her certificate, it is also required to be demonstrated that the child has faced deprivations. This, Mr. Hegde said, put the mother to a more disadvantaged position which is arbitrary, discriminatory

and unsustainable in law.

The High Court, however, said that the woman has "miserably failed to rebut the presumption drawn against her that the children have the caste of their father, who belongs to a forward caste".

"Apart from contending that the ex-husband of the appellant [woman] has remarried and has nominated his children from the second marriage for all the benefits and that he has not provided any alimony to the appellant, no evidence has been brought on record to demonstrate the deprivations, humiliations, handicaps, faced by the appellant or her children in their life," the court noted.

Surname quandary

It further pointed out that after the divorce, the children continued to keep the surname of the father, going to show that they have projected themselves to the society as belonging to a forward community.

"Thanks to the appellant serving at a senior post in the Indian Air Force, her children have had the advantage of a safe, secure and sheltered environment, excellent schooling and other related opportunities," the court observed.

"On the contrary, issuance of a caste certificate to the appellant's children would result in depriving a genuine Schedule Caste person of an opportunity to claim entitlement to the limited number of Schedule Caste seats reserved in higher education and in service, thereby causing a setback to the equality goal enshrined in the Constitution," the court said.

The Capital recorded 3,812 fresh COVID-19 cases and 37 deaths in the past 24 hours, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Sunday.

It also stated that 3,742 patients have recovered and 52,405 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 7.27%. The total number of cases now stands at 2,46,711 with 4,982 deaths and 2,09,632 recoveries. There are currently 32,097 active cases in the city.

In response to the Delhi Health Minister's statement that the Centre should have

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The Capital recorded 3,812 fresh COVID-19 cases and 37 deaths in the past 24 hours, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Sunday.

It also stated that 3,742 patients have recovered and 52,405 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 7.27%. The total number of cases now stands at 2,46,711 with 4,982 deaths and 2,09,632 recoveries. There are currently 32,097 active cases in the city.

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Families of migrant workers who died during lockdown hope for compensation

With the Centre recently telling Parliament that it had no data on deaths and unemployment of migrant workers, their kin hold their breath in hope of some respite

OMAR RASHID LUCKNOW

Four months after he lost his brother and sister-in-law to a tragic accident, Ram Kumar Sahu still wonders what would have happened if the couple had not been compelled to attempt that perilous 700-km journey back home to Chhattisgarh's Behmetara.

Krishna and Pramila Sahu, who had set out on a bicycle, were crushed to death by a vehicle on the outskirts of Lucknow in May. Their two children, Chandni and Nikhil, survived miraculously.

"If the government had provided facilities and ration then, why would my brother try to go back?" asked Ram, when told that the government had claimed it did not have any data on the migrants who died or lost their jobs during lockdown. "What would he do in a foreign land, when there was no work?"

On Wednesday, Ram finally immersed the mortal re-

mains of Krishna and Pramila in the Ganga in Prayagraj once he felt it was safe to travel.

Like thousands of migrant workers and labourers across the country, the Sahus were stranded – without work, money and transportation – during the lockdown, when desperation forced them to return to their village where they sensed a better chance at sustenance.

Added responsibility

Ram and his wife Kaushalya have three kids of their own to take care of besides the additional responsibility of Chandni and Nikhil. This has forced Kaushalya from going to work at a brick kiln.

Ram, a labourer himself, earns ₹300-400 per day, making it a struggle to feed the entire family.

Since the incident, the family says that the State government has been silent on any financial support as they wait in hope for the ₹5 lakh



Ram Kumar Sahu and his wife with Roshni, the daughter of his brother Krishna and wife Pramila who died while trying to cycle back to Chhattisgarh from Lucknow. • OMAR RASHID

compensation promised by the Chhattisgarh government. The only monetary sum received, says Ram, was through a local police inspector who deposited ₹1 lakh each in bank accounts opened for the two children.

As she prepares Chandni to go to a coaching class in the neighbourhood despite their humble means, she

wants to educate the children, Kaushalya says. "I am only sad that they lost their parents. Otherwise, we are making sure they are fed and taken care of. But when they grow up, they will think about their parents."

The lockdown against COVID-19, termed as ill-prepared in its implementation by several critics, brought ad-

ditional misery on the migrant workers across the country, many of whom were forced to return home, by bus, train or even on foot in the absence of any livelihood and money.

Ninety-seven people lost their lives while travelling in the Shramik Special trains alone, the government told Parliament recently.

Son's grief

In Azamgarh, Kanhaiya Lal Chauhan, a science student still grieves for his father, Ram Avadh, who died onboard a special Shramik Express while trying to desperately return to their native district from Kalyan near Mumbai, where he worked as a mason.

His body was de-boarded at Kanpur station in May and the family had then alleged that while they were served puri sabzi and a pouch of water each on the train, they did not get anything to eat at the Jhansi Paramedical College

where they spent the night after arrival in a bus. Their last proper meal was in Guna, 190 km away.

Kanhaiya is haunted by the fear of dropping out as he is unable to submit his college fees and return to Maharashtra. The support offered by his uncle, a government clerk, is insufficient.

Other than the ₹1 lakh they received from a political party, the family got nothing. He wants the government to subsidise the tuition fees too.

"What else can I ask? As if the government will provide us anything. It's been three-four months... if they wanted to hear us, they would have called by now," he said.

Kanhaiya blames the government for imposing and extending the lockdown without informing migrants about the time-frame.

"They should have told us before implementing it so that those who wanted to return home, could have. Prices of all food items had gone

up and the promised ration did not arrive. So what else could we do to survive?" He asked.

Death in train

Rajesh Gaud's father, who sold pan in Mumbai, also lost his life in a Shramik train allegedly due to lung disease. But his family feels it was due to the fatigue and exertion in the summer heat during the journey.

Rajesh, who is now the sole breadwinner with three kids, is earning through farming on one bigha land but is unable to return. "We should definitely get compensation. This incident happened in the train," he said. "Had my father not travelled, maybe this would not have happened. He had told me his health was fine," said Rajesh.

For Sipahil in Lakhimpur Kheri, the battle is more for justice. His brother Roshan was found hanging in the fields of his village Thariya Pipliya on March 31, three days

after he returned home in Lakhimpur Kheri from Gurgaon where he worked in a power tower firm.

His family alleged that Roshan was threatened, assaulted and wounded by policemen for allegedly escaping from the local quarantine centre, following which he hanged himself. The case is, however, yet to move forward. "No action has been taken yet. We have not got a penny from anywhere. I want action against the cops who killed him," Sipahil said.

In Gurgaon, Roshan earned a decent salary of over ₹20,000 per month. His death not only robbed the family of a loved one but also pushed them back financially.

Sipahil also feels the government should compensate his family, because his brother was pushed to death by the police. "If he had died of corona, then I would not have pressed the matter as much," he said.

'NEP will help J&K youth realise their dreams'

Its most encouraging feature is adherence to cultural ethos of each region: President

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR

President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday said the National Education Policy (NEP) would help Jammu and Kashmir youth "to realise their true potential and make their dreams come

true."

"My dream is to see Jammu and Kashmir emerge as a centre of knowledge, enterprise, innovation and skill development. In the field of education and scholarly pursuits, the region has set unmatched milestones. Many

of the core ideas and concepts that have shaped the Indian mind over the centuries have emanated from this region," President Kovind said in his address during a conference on the implementation of the NEP in the region.

He said the most encouraging feature of the policy was that it adhered to the cultural ethos of each region. The President said Jammu and Kashmir was a reservoir of extremely intelligent, talented and innovative children.

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LEGAL NOTICE

COURT NOTICE (U/o Rule 28 CPC)

IN THE COURT OF Ms. Krishnantha Mittal Civil Judge (Junior Division), Kharar ASHOK KUMAR

Vs.

RAKESH KUMAR

CNR No. PBSAAO-001494-2019

Next Date: 26-10-2020

PUBLICATION ISSUED TO:

1. DALJIT KUMAR S/O LATE SUDESH RANI D/O AMIR CHAND

2. BALJIT KUMAR S/O LT. SUDESH RANI D/O AMIR CHAND

3. ANIL KUMAR S/O LT. SUDESH RANI D/O AMIR CHAND R/o VILLAGE MALAKPUR, P.O. CHOLTA, TEHSIL KHARAR, DISTT SAS NAGAR, MOHALI

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 26-10-2020 at 10:00 a.m. For details log on to https://highcourtchd.gov.in/trs/district_notice/district-SAS_Nagar

Dated, this day of 17-09-2020

Civil Judge (Junior Division), Kharar

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Loading ... learning

Satya Raghavan, Director, Content Partnerships, YouTube in India, speaks about how the video platform is gaining significance in a post-pandemic learning ecosystem

■ MADHUMITHA SRINIVASAN

Long before ed-tech platforms became the mainstay, videos on YouTube were students' go-to for voluntary and supplementary learning. The term 'learning' here encompasses curriculum, hobby and skill development; domains that content creators have evolved into over the years.

Acknowledging its role as a learning tool, YouTube began hosting EduCon, an annual event around the learning vertical, covering content related to hobbies, professional skills, curriculum supplemental materials and other soft skills.

With the third edition of EduCon concluding recently, Satya Raghavan, Director Content Partnerships, YouTube in India, spoke about the video platform's growing significance in education, especially in the post-pandemic learning ecosystem.

Can you tell us about the evolution of learning videos on YouTube in India, in the context of their creation and consumption?

People from the metros would have come to YouTube around eight to 10 years ago, as the first set of consumers, mainly

for entertainment. As connectivity improved because of the telecom boom, people from smaller cities started consuming videos too. With information still not easily accessible to them, consumers came here for that as well. So, YouTube suddenly became the place where many people started coming in for information, be it news or recipes, which is also a kind of learning.

Over the last couple of years, three board horizontals have come to encompass learning at YouTube: Education; the classic school and college, and competitive education;

Enrichment: hobby or skill learning like music and dance;

Skilling: white-collar skills like coding and blue-collar skills such as construction and electronics.

What trends were fast-tracked because of the pandemic?

YouTube was earlier seen as a platform where one sought information voluntarily. But, over the past few months, we have seen it move into the zone of supplementing what kids are learning in the classroom. Many teachers and schools recommend specific videos on YouTube so that children can learn more. Thus, YouTube's supple-

mentary nature was more established in the last few months.

Second, many state education boards started using YouTube as a part of their pedagogy. They ended up doing live classroom sessions with teachers teaching from home. In cases where schools may not have a learning management system, YouTube becomes that tool.

Third, there is the impact of the pandemic on the creator ecosystem. Our classic creator was someone not necessarily from the education sector but was passionate about education. But, now, we are also seeing a lot of teachers start their own channels. It is a great opportunity for them because they are passionate about education, and now they have the time as well.

How is YouTube being deve-

It is a learning destination of sorts that gives users a more curated experience driven by playlists on various topics related to education.

loped as an educational tool?

The minute the lockdown happened, we realised we needed tools to help the ecosystem maximise its potential. So, we created YouTube.com/learning. It is a learning destination of sorts that gives users a more curated experience driven by playlists on various topics related to education. There are playlists that show teachers how to use YouTube as a tool, and those for learners are sorted according to different topics or subjects.

Many ed-tech companies also use YouTube as a way to reach out to consumers. We work with them to help them understand the power of the platform from a content and advertising point of view.

YouTube has a feature called Memberships, whereby existing YouTube channels can give a paid offering specifically for its members. This allows our creators to come up with their own courses that can be offered through YouTube.

Ganesh Pai whose channel 'Don't Memorise' on YouTube has 1.39 million subscribers, shares some tips to create education/learning content:

Keep it simple. Simplicity is the key to creativity.

Ask questions to the viewers. This helps them think and also gives them a direction.

Avoid jargon and buzz words, else, you will lose the viewer.

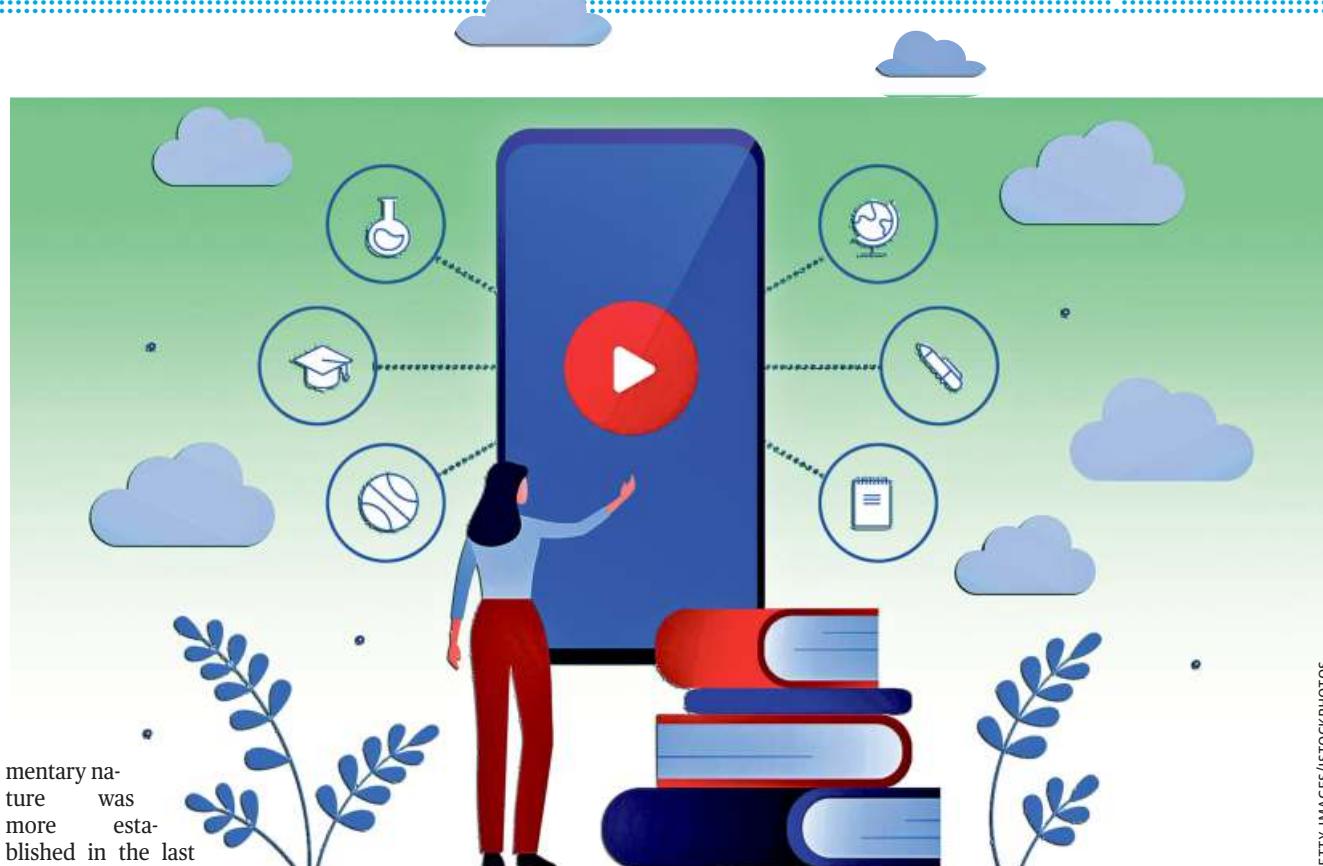
Use humour. Make them laugh. The audience appreciates it.

Use a linear path and signal where the video is going next. Viewers can focus better if they have a sense of what is coming next.

Keep it short. Attention spans are dropping drastically. An average length of 2-3 minutes works best.

Tell a story. We all know that people love listening to stories. People lose focus when they are presented with only facts, definitions and figures.

Satya Raghavan



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTOS

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DRDO-DFRL Mysore Junior Research Fellowship

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ELIGIBILITY: Candidates with a PhD and good publication record in Image Processing/Computer Vision/Pattern Recognition/Machine Learning. They must have knowledge of traditional and deep feature extraction for machine learning and good background knowledge in signal processing.

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APPLICATION: By email or by post to Dr. Partha Pratim Roy, Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee - 247 667, Uttarakhand, India.

DEADLINE: September 25
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Department of Physics and Astronomy Junior Research Fellowship, NIT Rourkela

The National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela, invites applications for the project "Probing the structure and dynamics of directly cross-linked gellan gum hydrogels".

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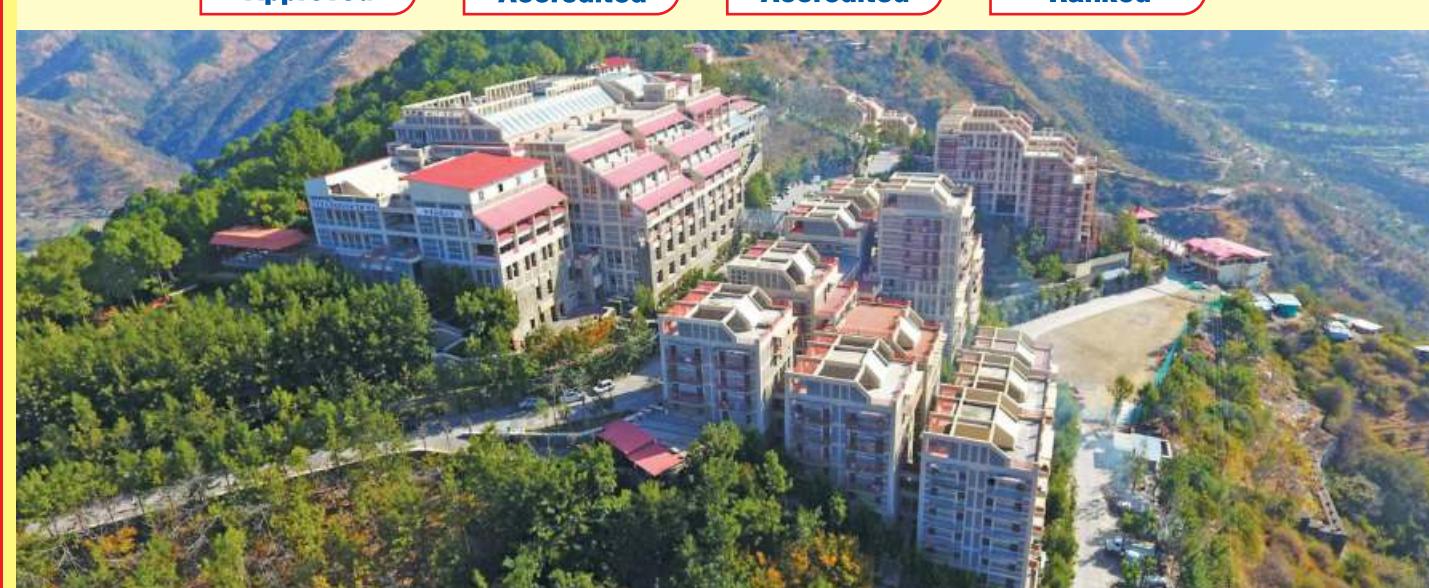
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CIVIL	27	11	41%	11	41%
Total	283	248	88%	405	143%

Placement Highlights 2020 Passout Batch as on 31 August 2020 (still continuing)

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- 3rd Highest Salary – 12.45 Lacs by Google

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- 12 Cos. placed students with CTC between 6 & 7.2 Lacs (ZS Associates, GreyB, Decision Point, Paxcom to name a few)
- 27 Cos. placed students with CTC between 3 & 5.5 Lacs (Gemalto, Infosys, Cognizant, Genpact, Wipro, NTT Data, Ericsson to name a few)

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Fair and unfair

HC advice on restraint in criticism should not allow for frivolous efforts to invoke contempt

It is a matter of relief that the Madras High Court has decided not to pursue the ill-conceived attempt to initiate action against film actor Suriya for contempt of court. In a detailed order, the Court has rightly noted that "it is not the job of a constitutional court to use a sledgehammer for avoidance of something which can be perceived to be not capable of even being propped up as contempt, much less debated to the level of criminal contempt". In the course of a statement against the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for medical admissions in the country, the actor had indirectly questioned the propriety of the Supreme Court allowing NEET to be held across the country during the pandemic when the Court itself was holding virtual hearings out of fear of infection. A judge of the High Court had sought to construe the remark as an adverse comment on the judiciary in general and one questioning the devotion and integrity of judges. The observation might have been unwarranted, but it was quite clear from the beginning that it constituted no contempt, inasmuch as it did nothing more than raise the question whether Courts that went virtual in the interest of the safety of judges, lawyers, staff and litigants, could afford to risk the health of thousands of students. Fortunately, the Advocate-General, Vijay Narayan, whose opinion was sought by the Chief Justice of the High Court, Amreshwar Pratap Sahi, declined consent for initiation of criminal contempt proceedings. Agreeing with his opinion, a Bench headed by the Chief Justice, decided not to pursue the matter further.

However, the Court's 29-page order is not an unmixed blessing. It lays much emphasis on the idea that criticism about the judiciary should be restrained, lest the line of fair comment be crossed. There is a lengthy section on the need for prudence and restraint on exuberance, but such observations would be relevant and apposite only if made in the context of a strident attack on the judiciary. Did the actor's statement contain such unbridled criticism? There is no effort to parse the offending sentence to see if there was any adverse comment on judges in general, or any aspersions cast on the system of virtual courts. If only the Court had seen it as a comment limited to orders of the Supreme Court, it could have dropped the issue for lack of jurisdiction, as laid down by the apex court in *Vitusas Oberoi* (2017). In fact, the order itself notes that no court in Tamil Nadu has dealt with the NEET issue. While the advice for restraint is, without doubt, reasonable and well-articulated, its elaborate delineation should not open up the possibility of more such demands for contempt action in the name of deterring unfair criticism. As long as there is no effort to obstruct the course of justice, criticism, whether fair or unfair, does not warrant initiation of contempt proceedings.

Cricket in action

The IPL is in the UAE, but the venues do not matter for bio-bubble cricket

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is seen as the giddy high of the cricketing season, with its daily share of short bursts of thrills stretched across the summer. Since its launch in 2008, the IPL became a seasonal fix as inevitable as soaring temperatures and the reflexive craving for ice creams. The Twenty20 tournament seemingly brooked no resistance while the purists leant on the classical air that permeated Test cricket. Even in 2009 and 2014 when the Lok Sabha elections clashed with the IPL's schedule, the Board of Control for Cricket in India solved the logistical nightmare. South Africa played host in the first instance while the United Arab Emirates (UAE) conducted the initial set of matches in 2014. But 2020 has been a difficult year for humankind with the relentless spread of the coronavirus pandemic. Since March, sport with its social-gathering moorings had to pause: the Olympics was postponed and Wimbledon cancelled. The IPL was rescheduled too from its original start-date of March 29, before a window opened up for the event to be held in the UAE. Saturday night's inaugural contest of the IPL's 13th edition at Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Zayed Stadium, that pitted defending champion Mumbai Indians and last year's runner-up Chennai Super Kings, dished out a last-over climax with the latter stunning the former.

The lay-off from the game and the attendant rust was evident in the way the rivals fielded while the artificial crowd sound infused into the live telecast, reflects these fraught times of empty stadiums and bio-bubbles. Because of the constraints imposed by the virus and the cancellation of domestic cricket in India for now, the IPL at the Emirates, has turned out to be the season opener for the national players while also offering an opportunity for overseas stars to have a biff in the park. Eight teams playing 60 matches in 53 days across Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah, with a summit clash on November 10, will present its own set of challenges. The organisers have set stringent protocols even as a few tested positive in the lead-up to the championship. The players have to watch their health parameters while helping cricket find its feet, an endeavour that England did first with remarkable efficiency by hosting the West Indies, Pakistan and Australia. It is a template worth emulating as fans starved of action wait to catch live moving images of M.S. Dhoni, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Steve Smith, Kane Williamson, AB de Villiers and other icons. Cricket in the Indian context has made a start and a lot is at stake as this IPL also offers a stage for Kohli and company to prepare for the coming tour of Australia.

Define the contours of hate in speech

The Sudarshan News case is a chance to infuse clarity on offensive speech, hate speech, and the exceptional cases



SUHRITH PARTHASARATHY

On Tuesday, the Supreme Court of India injunction a Hindi-language television channel, Sudarshan News, from continuing its broadcast of a series titled "Bindas Bol". This decision marked a departure from an order delivered on August 28, when the Court said that it must be circumspect in imposing any prior restraint on speech, especially since statutory authorities were vested with powers to ensure compliance of the law. But circumstances changed – following the Court's original order, four episodes in the series were aired, portraying what the channel described as a *jihadi* conspiracy by Muslims to infiltrate India's civil services.

To this allegation, the show added a number of evidently false statements. For example, it claimed that the upper age limit for Hindus attempting the civil service examination was 32 years, while the age limit for Muslims was 35; that Muslims were entitled to nine attempts at the examination when Hindus were entitled only to six. These assertions, the Court noted, were not only "insidious" but were also made in "wanton disregard of the truth". Therefore, even on the face of it, the episodes had brought the entire Muslim community into "public hatred and disrepute", and, in the process, had breached the Programme Code that regulated cable television.

Delineating the ambiguous
The channel's contempt for facts, and its attempt to denigrate Muslims, might appear to be an ob-

vious case of hate speech, but our laws present several complications when an attempt is made to distinguish permissible speech from hateful criminal conduct. The Supreme Court's own past precedent has scarcely helped clarify matters. This case, therefore, represents something of an opportunity: to infuse clarity in our legislation by identifying the distinction between merely offensive speech and hate speech, and by making clearer still those categories of exceptional cases where the Constitution permits prior restraint. To be sure, this exercise has to be delicately handled. But that it is fraught with difficulties must not deter the Court from delineating what has long remained ambiguous.

A working definition of hate speech will have to be gleaned by interpreting our laws in conjunction with the constitutional right to free speech. But in attempting to draw a line, it might be valuable to study the basic thesis that undergirds a consensus across most liberal democracies – with the notable exception of the United States – on why states must deny protection to hate speech. This view is predicated on a philosophical defence which is perhaps best exemplified in the works of the scholar, Jeremy Waldron.

In Prof. Waldron's definition, hate speech refers to utterances that incite violence, hatred, or discrimination against people on the basis of their collective identity, be it race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexuality. He says the limitation in these cases should be restricted to those categories of minorities who are vulnerable. Under this conception, a merely offensive statement would not qualify as hate speech. For example, a mockery of Buddhism's tenets would not be illegal simply because it offends the sensibilities of its practitioners; on the other hand, speech



that describes all Buddhists as amoral would qualify. Similarly, a work of satire on a religious figure that outrages the sentiments of his followers will be safeguarded, but speech that vilifies an entire community by describing them, say, as "anti-nationals" would go unprotected. This is because hate speech, as Prof. Waldron argues, attacks two key tenets of a democratic republic: the guarantee of equal dignity to all, and the public good of inclusiveness.

Downside to more speech
Prof. Waldron's thesis has been met with substantial resistance from First Amendment scholars in America.

They argue that censorship is a bottomless pit, that it is impossible to conceive bright-line rules that can distinguish between speech that only offends and speech that arouses hatred. They do not deny that a right to absolute freedom of speech can be abused. But they believe the only answer to misused freedom is more speech. While there is some merit in this response, it ignores at least three significant factors.

One, that even under the First Amendment, not all speech is equal – commercial speech, libel, and fighting words are afforded a lower standard of protection. Two, that almost all laws are a matter of construction; after all, most European democracies adopt principled standards that distin-

guish hate speech from merely offensive or rebarbative speech. Three, that countering speech with more speech is plausible only when there is a balance of power across society. Experience shows us that there can be no assurance that hate speech will somehow be sieved out of the veritable marketplace of ideas.

India's laws

Prof. Waldron's theory is also appealing because it fits with India's democratic vision. Specifically, it animates the values of liberty, equality and fraternity that the Constitution's framers viewed as foundational. Until now, however, the country's hate-speech laws have suffered from a Delphic imprecision. Read literally, Section 153A and Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which criminalise, respectively, speech that seeks to promote enmity between different groups and speech/acts that outrage/s religious feelings, are no more than a poor imitation of what hate speech laws ought to be. They are vaguely worded, and they are frequently invoked to quell speech that so much as offends a person's belief. As a result, they militate against the permissible grounds for limiting free speech enumerated in Article 19(2) of the Constitution, and, in particular, the restrictions allowed on considerations of public order and morality.

The first of those grounds demands that speech must reach a level of incitement to be criminalised. That is, the utterance in dispute must go beyond advocacy. The second ground requires a re-imagination of our hate speech laws. It obliges us to read morality not as societal morality but as constitutional morality. Seen this way, speech that merely causes offence and is no more than disparaging or unpleasant, would continue to remain shielded. But speech that

treats communities with disparate concern, by creating in them a sense of dread, a sense of exclusion from civic life, will go unprotected.

Issue of prior restraint

While it is clear that the Constitution offers no protection to hate speech, the state's failure to apply the Programme Code uniformly is linked to a wider incongruence in the law's contents. Just like the substantive hate speech provisions in the IPC, the Programme Code is also much too vague. The Supreme Court must chisel its contents into a feasible, constitutionally committed model. Hard as this exercise sounds, this is the easy part – it is in deciding whether a prior restraint on speech can be imposed that the Court must tread a finer line.

We have repeatedly seen the deleterious impact that injunctions on speech have on the right to information and democracy. Only last week the High Court of Andhra Pradesh gagged the press from reporting on a charge made against a former Advocate General of the State, despite the manifest public interest in the case. Likewise, the pitfalls of a rule of absolute prior restraint under the Cinematograph Act have been all too evident. We certainly do not need an analogous regime for the broadcast media. But, at the same time, a rule against prior restraint cannot be unconditional. When it becomes evident that the basic objective of a broadcast is to evoke hatred and to vilify a vulnerable minority the law must find a way to foil the harm. A lot will ride on how the Court strikes this balance – for hate speech, once uttered, not only leaves little room for restitution but can also ramify to serve all manners of undemocratic ends.

Suhirth Parthasarathy is an advocate practising at the Madras High Court

It's a no green signal from the farm world

There is good reason why opposition to the agriculture Bills may be a reflection of the genuine concerns of farmers



HIMANSHU

In a virtual rally, the Prime Minister blamed the Opposition parties for misleading farmers about the three Bills on agriculture, in Parliament. While the Opposition may have taken up the cudgels recently, the fact is that farmers have been protesting against the Bills ever since it was promulgated as ordinances in June. These are The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The resignation of Food Processing Industries Minister (and Shiromani Akali Dal MP), Harsimrat Kaur Badal, from the Union Cabinet, and dissenting voices from various mass organisations affiliated to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh suggest that the opposition to the Bills may not be politically motivated; rather, it may be a reflection of the genuine concerns of farmers.

In brief, the Bills aim to do away with government interference in agricultural trade by creating trading areas free of middlemen and government taxes outside the structure of Agricultural Produce

Market Committees (APMCs) along with removing restrictions of private stockholding of agricultural produce. Attempts to reform the APMC are not new and have been part of the agenda of successive governments for the last two decades. Most farmer organisations also agree that there is excessive political interference and there is need for reform as far as functioning of mandis are concerned.

No consultation

Several reforms at the level of the central government as well as at the State level have been introduced and welcomed by farmers. However, in this particular case, the issue is not about the Bills; it is also about the process of their introduction. As was pointed out by Ms. Badal, the government has failed to have or hold any discussion with the various stakeholders including farmers and middlemen. This is also true when it comes to consultation with State governments even though the subjects of trade and agriculture are part of subjects on the State list. The attempt to pass the Bills without proper consultation adds to the mistrust among various stakeholders including State governments. While the lack of consultation has certainly added to the element of mistrust between the government and farmers, some of the issues raised by farmer organisations are also genuine; recent trends in agricultural prices and incomes have only confirmed these fears.

While farmer organisations see

these Bills as part of the larger agenda of corporatisation of agriculture and a withdrawal of government support, the immediate concern has been the attempt to weaken the APMC mandis and eventual withdrawal of the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) guaranteed by the government. Although the government has clarified that these Bills do not imply withdrawal of procurement by the State at MSP, there is a genuine fear among farmers about the true intentions of the government. The mistrust is not unfounded given the track record of this government on many issues including demonetisation of 2016, the introduction of Goods and Services Tax and so on. There may not be direct evidence of crony capitalism, but the entry, in a big way, of two of the biggest corporate groups (Adani and Reliance) in food and agricultural retail and the timing of the Bills have not gone unnoticed.

Reflects poor understanding

The idea of allowing greater participation of traders and farmers outside the APMC has already been in place in different form. Even otherwise, APMCs account for less than a fourth of total agricultural trade. But APMCs do play

an important role of price discovery essential for agricultural trade and production choices. The vilification of APMCs and the middlemen who facilitate trade in these mandis is a poor reflection of the understanding of functioning of agricultural markets. The middlemen are a part of the larger ecosystem of agricultural trade, with deep links between farmers and traders. Most farmers are familiar with the functioning of mandis and see it as an essential part of agricultural trade despite shortcomings. While the proposed Bills do not do away with the APMC mandis, the preference for corporate interests at the cost of farmers' interests and a lack of regulation in these non-APMC mandis are cause for concern. The absence of any regulation in non-APMC mandis is being seen as a precursor to the withdrawal of the guarantee of MSP-based procurement.

The Bihar example

The dominant concern in this regard has been expressed by farmers in Punjab and Haryana. Farmers in these States have genuine concern about the continuance of the MSP-based public procurement given the large-scale procurement operations in these States. These fears gain strength with the experience of States such as Bihar which abolished APMCs in 2006. After the abolition of mandis, farmers in Bihar on average received lower prices compared to the MSP for most crops. For example, as against the MSP of

Katju. It is that same level of intolerance which overflowed in the case of Prashant Bhushan too. Courts should not resort to the Contempt of Courts Act to caution citizens; rather, they must be cautious in using it against citizens. Physicians heal themselves would be an appropriate adage on this occasion.

N.G.R. PRASAD,
Chennai

Reflections on Day 1
Chennai Super Kings batsman Ambati Rayudu sure made a very strong statement with his sizzling, breezy, match-winning innings of 71 in the IPL opener against Mumbai, showing that he is still a

very reliable player as he was always before ('Sport' page, "Rayudu and du Plessis orchestrate Super King's victory," September 20). Fa du Plessis's crucial innings also contributed to CSK's emphatic victory. It is still quite baffling as to why the experienced Rayudu was not in the reckoning for the Indian ODI team for the World Cup last year despite his good track record. It takes many years to create a dedicated and successful national-level cricketer, and all it needs is one wrong, poorly judged decision by the team selectors to bury the international career of a promising player.

A. MOHAN,
Chennai

Though the crowds will be missing in stadia, IPL cricket fans will look forward to the actions of the dazzling stars in the world of cricket. The two-month-long action-packed programme will indeed be a source of relief for sports lovers. The gradual and welcome return of sport will give the world a chance to understand the timeless values and lessons of sportsmanship – courage, unity, positivity, patience, perseverance, and the immense hope and spirit that the world shall overcome any crisis.

M. PRADYU,
Thalikavu, Kannur, Kerala

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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Maternal health care
There are definitely 'miles to go' in maternal and child health care (Page 1, "It's miles to go for a safer childbirth in Odisha's Kalahandi", September 20). India accounts for a quarter of global maternal deaths during pregnancy, and unless there is strong political will, health sector reforms and focused efforts on improving antenatal services occur, there will still be 'miles to go' before we can hold our heads high on the world stage. Increasing the abysmal 1.28% allocation of gross domestic product on health services and improving the slow bureaucratic processes in the government to make

funding available at peripheral areas will definitely help in improving maternal health care.

Dr. THOMAS PALOCAREN,
Vellore, Tamil Nadu

Heal thyself

The First Bench of the Madras High Court, with considerable statesmanship, has drawn the curtain by refusing to initiate contempt against Tamil actor Suriya. The matter would not have gained so much of controversy had the High Court judge concerned exercised restraint and not written a letter to the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court. It really was a case of much ado but nothing. As

the Chief Justice himself said, there is no need to use a sledgehammer to kill a fly. However the suggestion that the actor could have used a little more restraint is slightly off the mark as his comment was only normal and natural. It is the antithesis of democracy and rule of law. Courts are not immune from this and have got into such a situation largely on account of themselves. One recalls the courts initiating contempt against Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer and Justice Markandey

China's nationalist turn under Xi Jinping

How he established himself in the Party lexicon as its third great leader, after Mao and Deng



ANANTH KRISHNAN

As a reporter for The Hindu and then India Today from 2009 to 2018, Ananth Krishnan travelled the length and breadth of China. His new book, India's China Challenge: A Journey through China's Rise and What It Means for India, provides an on-the-ground perspective of China's political, economic and social transformations over the past decade, and what they mean for India. An excerpt:

Xi Jinping had to apply no less than eight times before getting into the Communist Youth League – an organisation for young Party members. He then had to again apply ten times before the Communist Party accepted him – all because of his family's history.

Xi's father, Xi Zhongxun, was Red royalty – a hero of the Communist revolution. But he would later fall out with Mao Zedong, and had to endure humiliating public 'struggle sessions' at the hands of Mao's Red Guards.

'Where is the verdict against my father?' Xi once asked. 'When a fault is committed, there is a verdict. But where is the one against my father? What have I done? Have I written or chanted counter-revolutionary slogans? I am a young man who wants to build a career. What is the problem with that?'

Yet the lesson Xi seems to have learnt from his father's story may seem counterintuitive. Institutionalising the exercise of political power is not seen as the answer to curbing its excesses. Wielding it is.

Since taking over as the General Secretary of the Party in November 2012, Xi has proved far more adept and skilful than his predecessors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, in exercising power. Within five years of taking over from Hu, Xi established himself in the Party lexicon as its third great leader, after Mao and Deng Xiaoping. In a short span of time, he has dismantled the collective leadership system that restrained both Jiang and Hu.

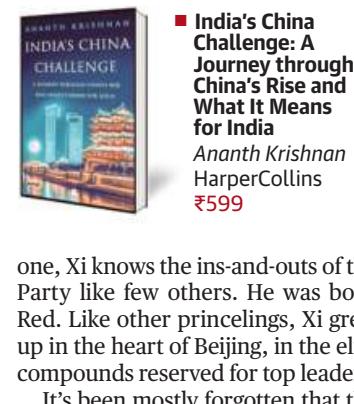
Indeed, it was this model of collective leadership put in place by Deng



that arguably allowed China to escape the fate of other authoritarian countries ruled by the whims and fancies of a single dictator.

Restructuring the party

Xi has dramatically restructured the Party-state apparatus, giving the Party a greater say in running the country, and breaking down the walls between the Party set-up and the state machinery that had, in the past, given China's bureaucrats a veneer of insulation in running government and policy.



one, Xi knows the ins-and-outs of the Party like few others. He was born Red. Like other princelings, Xi grew up in the heart of Beijing, in the elite compounds reserved for top leaders.

It's mostly forgotten that the year of Xi's ascension, 2012, was an extraordinarily tumultuous one in Chinese politics. The Bo Xilai scandal had exposed a split in the leadership, while there were grumblings among the Party elite that Hu Jintao's staid style had led to a drift, both in policy and leadership. There was a yearning for change.

Xi made the most of it. In one sense, as the scholar Cheng Li argues, Xi was 'lucky enough to arrive at just the moment in history when his consolidation of power – to upset the inertia and possibly even prevent a split of the CPC leadership – was appealing to the Chinese public and most other Chinese leaders'.

What helped him in this quest was his 'assembly of strong loyalist networks' in the Party, particularly among his fellow 'second Red generation', or Hongerdai. This gave Xi the space to carry out 'bold political moves... endorsed by the political establishment, but only as urgent, ad hoc measures to safeguard Communist Party rule.'

Xi was the right man, at the right place, at the right time, Zhang Lian,

a historian and follower of elite Party politics who lives in Beijing, told me. 'Before he came to power, there were many negative feelings about the collective leadership system inside the Party. Every member of the Politburo Standing Committee had their own power, their own opinion, and no one was taking responsibility. They wanted a strongman to take charge and change this situation.' They perhaps got more than they bargained for.

The consequence of centralisation is that all responsibilities fall on you too,' Zhang told me. 'If you do well, everyone will support you.' However, the reverse, of course, is also true. Fall at any of the hurdles, and there will be no shortage of people ensuring there is no second chance. And in China's system, failure is unforgiving. Ask Bo Xilai.

Xi knows he has to succeed at any cost. The Chinese legal scholar Jiang Shigong, who has emerged as one of the influential intellectuals in the Xi era, argues one key asset in Xi's favour is the Party's turn to nationalism, captured in Xi's signature political campaign, which is 'The Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese nation'.

Selling the Chinese dream

In Jiang's view, the Party under Xi is turning 'the brilliant political imagination of thousands of years of Chinese civilisation [to] successfully fill the spiritual vacuum left by the weakening of the Communist vision', something he blames on Xi's predecessors.

A sense of 'national self-confidence and feeling of pride' are the Party's biggest asset, in his view, which would lead Xi to adopt a strong nationalist governing philosophy. This explains why Xi's first big campaign was selling the 'Chinese Dream' of rejuvenation.

One compelling reason for Xi's emphasis on ideology and nationalism is the awareness that the basic post-Tiananmen compact has a shelf-life. The Party is turning to nationalism as an important source of legitimacy and unity, having come to one key realisation: economic growth cannot forever remain the source of its legitimacy.

Excerpted with permission from HarperCollins. The book will be published on September 30

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Tilting at windmills

There seems to be no common ground to address the vexatious question of bias in our polarised reality



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

In 2008, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe under the leadership of its Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklós Haraszti, brought out 'The Media Self-Regulation Guidebook', which over the years has become a tool for most news ombudsmen to deal with specific complaints. Mr. Haraszti has an excellent definition for self-regulation. He wrote: "Media self-regulation is a joint endeavour by media professionals to set up voluntary editorial guidelines and abide by them in a learning process open to the public. By doing so, the independent media accept their share of responsibility for the quality of public discourse in the nation, while fully preserving their editorial autonomy in shaping it."

I have read several manuals on media regulations as well as various codes of ethics that guide journalists. This rich oeuvre of literature dealing with media regulations aimed at balancing rights and responsibilities has concrete ideas to handle and resolve complaints on issues such as breach of privacy, inaccuracy, non-protection of vulnerable persons, discrimination, fairness, balance, good taste, use of anonymous sources, invasion of privacy, plagiarism, and conflicts of interest. The role of a self-regulatory mechanism is to ensure that the news organisation adheres to its code of ethics or editorial values.

Measuring bias

In this context, it is evident that there is no universally accepted yardstick to measure 'bias in media' coverage. An ombudsman adjudicates on issues based on facts and the core values of journalism. If a news report is editorialised or packed with comments, then it is fairly easy to point out the breach. However, if there are complaints of bias against opinion articles, editorials and analytical pieces, then it becomes a conflict of two views. There seems to be no common ground to address this vexatious question of bias in our polarised reality. In earlier columns, I dealt with the idea of 'filter bubbles' and 'confirmation bias' in an age of technological disruption, yet they failed to address the question of bias in a language that was

acceptable to all.

For instance, S. Pushpavanam, a reader from Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, considered the editorial 'Ill-advised move' (September 16), which was on the threat of contempt proceedings against actor Suriya's observation on NEET, a media excess. He contended that the sentence in the editorial, "No reasonable person who reads Mr. Suriya's statement would construe it as contempt of court", an attempt to brand all other opinions as unreasonable. He was unhappy with the newspaper's stand on the contempt proceeding against advocate Prashant Bhushan. He drew our attention to another editorial, "Something rotten" (September 11), on actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death and social prejudices. The editorial had said that sections of the media had "handed out instant verdicts in the newsroom". He wondered how *The Hindu*'s editorial on judicial contempt was different from these sections of the media which the newspaper criticised. The difference is in the distinction between news and views. In *The Hindu*, all news is reported without fear or favour. But the editorial is a considered opinion of the newspaper, and readers are free to disagree with it.

Polarised environment

The latest study by the 'Trust, Media and Democracy' research programme of the Gallup and Knight Foundation gives us some pointers to understand bias. Its 2018 report found out that "while Americans valued the role of the news media as an important institution in a free society, they did not believe it was fulfilling its democratic roles well." Its recently released 2020 study documents many issues that contribute to the idea of media bias among citizens. The vast majority (84%) of Americans believe that the media is vital for democracy. At the same time, nearly half (49%) of all Americans think the media is very biased. Most importantly, the survey pointed out that distrust of the media runs along partisan lines, where nearly 71% of Republicans have an unfavourable view of the media compared to only 22% of Democrats. Also, more Americans (69%) say they are concerned about bias in the news other people are getting than say they worry about their own news being biased (29%).

I can safely say that the polarised environment is not restricted to the U.S., but has a debilitating and corrosive presence in India too.

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Great power, little responsibility

The way the international system is structured poses enormous obstacles to peace

SREERAM SUNDAR CHAULIA

regional actors to prey upon weak states for counterbalancing rivals and sustaining profits of their military-industrial complexes.

Not to be left behind the U.S. and Russia, China has catapulted into the ranks of top sellers of weapons. Chinese small arms enable ethnic violence and extreme human rights abuses from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo to Pakistan and Myanmar.

China also aims to tighten its grip over developing countries through 'internal security' aid, a code for technological tools of domestic surveillance and repression, which in turn build up societal pressure and armed revolts against authoritarian regimes. Moreover, China's own hegemonic expansionism against its neighbours and its 'new Cold War' with the U.S. have significantly raised risks of military clashes in Asia.

This year, the UN Secretary General is campaigning for a "global ceasefire" so that everyone's attention shifts to fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN as well as regional organisations like the African Union and the European Union are trying to negotiate cessation of hostilities in various war zones.

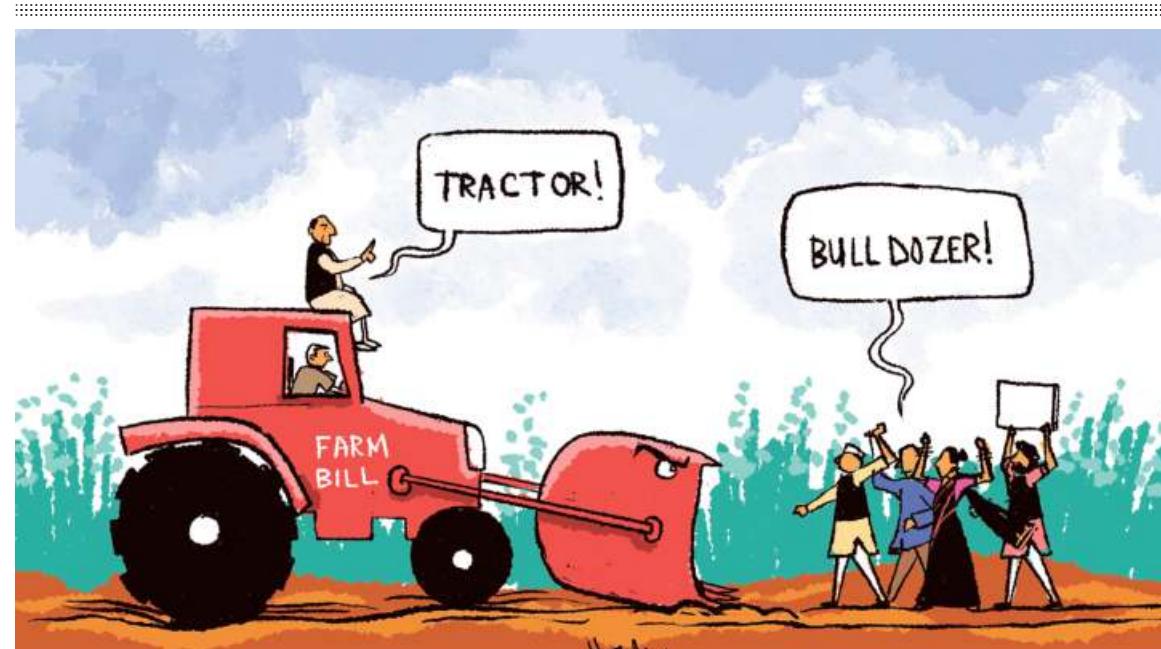
The core problem

But targeted micro-level diplomatic initiatives cannot ameliorate the underlying macro-level problem of great powers and their allies acting with brazen impunity. On the International Day of Peace, we should diagnose the core problem – the unjust structure which privileges great powers and permits their ghastly machinations – and challenge it.

Altering the structure and nature of world politics is not child's play. But we must strive for it. Remember that if one fire is doused in Afghanistan through a peace process, 10 more fires can be lit as long as the global 'system' that reproduces violence and aggression is in place.

Intellectuals, social movements and responsible states should prioritise struggling for an equitable world order. Nothing less will suffice to silence the guns.

Sreeram Chaulia is Dean, Jindal School of International Affairs



DATA POINT

Farmer angst

The two agriculture-related Bills passed in the Rajya Sabha on Sunday have been opposed by several farmer organisations for various reasons. The chief concern seems to be the fear of losing government procurement at the Minimum Support Price. Farmers in Punjab and Haryana depend more on procurement by government agencies compared to their compatriots elsewhere in the country. This could explain why protests are concentrated in these States. By *The Hindu* Data Team

1. TOP BENEFICIARIES | In the last two years, close to 45% of all the rice and wheat procured by govt. agencies came from just two States – Punjab (28.9%) and Haryana (15.9%). M.P. was a distant third at 10.4%.

2. MOST PRODUCE PROCURED | In FY19, govt. agencies procured more than 75% of all the rice and wheat produced in Punjab and Haryana. Rice and wheat are the two major commodities procured by the govt.

3. DEPENDENCE ON RICE AND WHEAT | About 65% of Punjab's total farm output* in FY19 was only rice and wheat. For Haryana, it was 46%. These were the only States where the contribution of rice and wheat to total farm output exceeded 45% that year.

4. REVENUE SOURCE | The Bills allow farmers to sell outside government-regulated markets. Such a move will hit the income that States earn through taxes and levies charged on commodities sold in such markets.

5. TAX AND LEVIES ON RICE AS A % OF MSP | The Bills allow farmers to sell outside government-regulated markets. Such a move will hit the income that States earn through taxes and levies charged on commodities sold in such markets.

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31. TAX AND LEVIES ON WHEAT AS A % OF MSP | The Bills allow farmers

FROM PAGE ONE

Amid fierce protests, RS passes two farm Bills

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar was in the process of wrapping up his reply to the debate when the situation started spiralling down after Mr. Harivansh rejected the demand from the Opposition benches to end the session for the day as per the schedule. The Opposition wanted the Minister to conclude the reply on Monday.

Leader of the Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad also suggested that tradition dictates that the decision to extend the time of the House is not taken on the strength of the numbers but on the basis of consensus. Aam Aadmi Party MP Sanjay Singh, TMC members Dola Sen and Arpita Ghosh marched into the well of the House raising slogans against the legislations. The breaking point came when Mr. Harivansh called out for statutory resolution disapproving the legislation moved by CPI(M) MP K.K. Ragesh. Mr. Ragesh

was in the well of the House when his name was called out, but on the directions from the Deputy Chairman, he claims, he ran to his seat. "The rules dictate that even if one member of the House asks for a resolution to be put to vote, it should be," Mr. Ragesh said.

The situation had got out of hand with AAP's Sanjay Singh and Congress members Rajeev Satav and Syed Naseem Hussain climbing on the table in front of the Secretary General. They were carried away by the marshals. The MPs shot the proceedings on their phones because for many minutes the Rajya Sabha TV went mute and also made sure that the Opposition protests were not shown on the screen. The House was adjourned close to 1.26 p.m. for 15-minutes. When it was reconvened, two rings of marshals protected the Chair. The Bills were passed hurriedly amid the din.

Govt. tables Bill to amend FCRA

Ms. Jaising refuted the Ministry's allegations and had said she was a "public servant" not "government servant."

FCRA regulates foreign donations and ensures that such contributions do not adversely affect the internal security of the country. The Act, first enacted in 1976 was amended in the year 2010 when a slew of new measures were taken by the Union Home Ministry to regulate foreign donations.

The Bill proposes that not more than 20% of the total foreign funds received could be defrayed for administra-

tive expenses. At present the limit is 50%.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill further states, "The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 was enacted to regulate the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality by certain individuals or associations or companies and to prohibit acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality for any activities detrimental to the national interest and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

Make ethics code must for all news channels'

The court said the NBA was "toothless" and its penalties hardly a deterrence for channels.

The NBA said the News Broadcasters Services Authority (NBSA) should be granted recognition as an "independent self-regulatory mechanism" to receive and deal with complaints.

The orders passed by the NBSA should be made binding and enforceable on the channels. Recognition to the NBSA would strengthen News Broadcasting Standards Regulations, the affidavit said, adding that penalties should be made stringent.

Primarily, submission to the NBSA regulatory mechanism should be made mandatory for granting/renewal of uplinking/downlinking permissions by the government. The govern-

ment should take into consideration any previous orders passed by the NBSA while granting or renewing uplinking/downlinking permissions.

Meanwhile, Sudarshan TV, in a separate additional affidavit, urged the court to vacate the stay on its programme. The channel said it will "strictly" comply with the Programme Code and directions of the Ministry of Information and Broadcast-

The channel referred to NDTV's 2008 broadcast of a programme anchored by Barkha Dutt on "Hindu Terror" showing a "Hindu saint" with a tilak, chillum and trishul. Sudarshan TV said it was "shocked and pained".

The court is scheduled to hear the case on September 21.

Pandemic puts on hold Kashmiri tradition

Many feel the new culture forced by the pandemic poses a threat to the ancient 'Trami'. "Affluence attained by locals during the Sultan period, especially during eighth Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin, between 1418 and 1470, saw popularisation of 'Trami'. Since then, it has become central to weddings, with very minor changes in the sequencing of dishes over the centuries," Zareef Ahmad Zareef, 73, the Valley's well-known poet and writer, told The Hindu.

Serving of 'Wazwan' (array of meat dishes) on 'Trami' during weddings was adopted increasingly by the local population during the Sultan period in the 14th century and it became a unique feature.

Mr. Zareef fears that the pandemic may wipe off this slice of culture from Kashmir.

New cases in Kerala stay steady, testing drops

Telangana, too, cuts testing by about 5,000; A.P. reports 7,738 new infections and 57 deaths; 8,191 new cases in Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

COVID-19 tests dropped to around 55,000 a day in Telangana. Between August 25 and September 11, around 60,000 tests were undertaken daily, barring Sundays. The fall was observed since September 12.

On Saturday, 53,811 people were tested and 2,137 cases were detected. Eight patients died on Saturday, the lowest

COVID-19

toll this month.

Of the total cases, 30,573 were active.

Fresh mortality in Karnataka stood at 101 deaths on Sunday. Of the total 8,023 deaths so far, the majority - 2,657 - were reported in Bengaluru Urban. Meanwhile, 8,191 new cases were reported on Sunday.

An official health bulletin

said total active cases stood at 98,043, and 811 patients were in intensive care. A total of 60,477 tests were conducted on Sunday, of which 26,731 were rapid antigen tests.

Kerala on Sunday added 4,696 new cases, even with a drop in samples tested to 41,630, a dip of over 5,000 compared to the past two days. The test positivity rate rose to 11.2% in comparison to the previous day's 9.7%.

Of the active cases, 329 persons were critically ill and in ICUs with 84 on ventilator support.

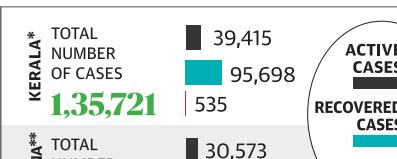
The State's death toll was rising, with another 16 deaths added to the official list (provisional) by the Health Department. The official toll was 535. The 16 deaths had occurred between August 28 and September 17. Five were reported from Kottayam, three from Malappuram, two each from

New normal

Despite rising COVID-19 cases, people are returning to normal life, keeping in mind safety protocols. The graphs show the spread of the pandemic in the southern States.



Safety first: Ward and Village Secretariat examination candidates sanitising hands before entering a centre in Vijayawada on Sunday. ■ K.V.S. GIRI



*Kerala has a mismatch of 73 cases due to unaccounted deaths, missing persons | **Telangana numbers are as of 8 p.m. on Saturday | ***Karnataka has 19 non-COVID-19 deaths

The tests per million ratio came to 95,582 and the confirmed cases per million ratio to 11,714. East and West Godavari districts reported over 1,000 cases again at 1,260 and 1,005 respectively.

Krishna district with the highest death rate reported eight new deaths, the maximum.

With 5,516 more persons being diagnosed as positive for COVID-19 infection on Sunday, Tamil Nadu's tally rose to 5,41,993.

At the same time, 5,206 persons were discharged from health facilities after treatment, taking the total number to 4,86,479.

As of Sunday, there were 46,703 active cases (including those in home isolation), while 60 persons died. So far 8,811 persons have died after contracting the infection.

(With inputs from Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram and Vijayawada bureaus)

Heavy rain lashes Udupi, Dakshina Kannada districts

Normal life severely affected; floodwaters from Indrani rivulet enter Rajangana on Sri Krishna Math premises

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

Life was severely affected in the Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts of Karnataka as heavy rain continued to lash the coastal belt for the second straight day on Sunday.

Eight persons were injured and more than 1,100 houses and public properties were damaged in the Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts. There was no loss of life.

Some parts of Udupi city and houses in low-lying areas in 77 villages in the district were the worst hit as the region witnessed unprecedented rain and floods in decades.

Floodwaters from the overflowing Indrani rivulet at Kalsanka in Udupi city entered the Rajangana on Sri Krishna Math premises. The entire parking area of the



Under water: Vehicles submerged in a flooded area in Kalsanka near Udupi Krishna Mutt. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

mutt was submerged. The four-lane Udupi-Manipal Road was flooded and water entered some shops and houses in the Kalsanka area.

According to B. Sadashiva Prabhu, Additional Deputy Commissioner, 2,874 people from 827 affected families had been evacuated in Udupi district till the evening. As many as 1,107 houses were damaged and 1,201 people,

including 563 women, were housed in 31 relief camps. Others took shelter in the houses of relatives. The worst-affected villages/areas were in Udupi, Kapu, and Brahmapur taluks.

Road traffic hit
Traffic on the Udupi-Manipal-Hebri-Shivamogga Road was affected after floodwaters cut off connectivity at

Puthige. Hence, traffic was diverted through other routes, Mr. Prabhu said.

Around 25 houses were damaged in rain in Dakshina Kannada. Six persons were injured in a landslip near Vitla in Bantwal taluk, and two others in another landslip at Saripalla in Mangaluru.

Water from the Shambavi entered the premises of the Bappanadu Durgaparameshwari temple in Mulki.

There was a landslip on the bypass railway line between the Konkan Railway network and the South Western Railway network, near Padil, in Mangaluru. It completely covered the track, affecting movement between Konkan Railway and Hassan/Mysuru/Bengaluru.

There was a landslide on Adyapadi Road near the Mangaluru International Airport in Kenjar village on the outskirts of Mangaluru.

Orange alert issued by Met Dept. in Kerala

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Heavy rainfall is likely to continue in Kerala till Tuesday under the influence of a low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has put 10 central and northern districts on orange alert for Monday, given the possibility of isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall.

The districts are Kottayam, Ernakulam, Idukki, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod.

Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha have been put on yellow alert, for like-

ly isolated heavy rainfall.

With heavy rainfall continuing in central and north Kerala districts, three teams of the National Disaster Response Force arrived in the State on Sunday for tackling rain-related contingencies.

They had been deployed in Wayanad, Malappuram and Thrissur, the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority said. Two NDRF teams were positioned in Idukki and Kozhikode. "The southwest monsoon is very strong in Kerala under the influence of a low pressure area," K. Santhosh, Director, IMD Meteorological Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, said.

Bid to draw ₹112 crore from CM fund using fake cheques

Accused made attempts in Karnataka, Delhi & West Bengal

STAFF REPORTER

VIJAYAWADA

The Thullur police of Guntur Rural district on Sunday registered a case of "forgery, cheating and fraud attempt" against unidentified persons who allegedly tried to draw



ANDHRA PRADESH

₹112 crore using fake cheques under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF), Andhra Pradesh Secretariat.

The accused allegedly presented the cheques in Karnataka, New Delhi and West Bengal. However, their attempt came to naught when alert bank authorities cross-checked the transactions with their counterparts in Guntur and Vijayawada.

The complainant said officials of the Revenue Department had issued a cheque (number 694499) on November 8, 2019, for ₹16,000 to Kolli Rataiah. However, it was alleged that a fake cheque dated September 18,

Following a complaint lodged by P. Murali Krishna Rao, Assistant Secretary to the Government, Revenue Department, Secretariat, Velagapudi, the Thullur police registered a case under Sections 170 (pretending to be a public servant), 419 (cheating by personation), 420 (cheating), 465 (forgery), 467, 468 and 471 (dishonestly using as any genuine document knowingly to be a forged document).

The complainant said officials issued a cheque (number 792893) for ₹45,000 on June 29 to Ramya Sri. However, a cheque bearing the same number for ₹24.65 crore was issued to the Mallabpur People Rural Development Society in West Bengal.

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Kerala mulls moving SC against farm Bills

Planning Board asked to study impact

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Calling for concerted efforts to oppose the controversial farm Bills, Agriculture Minister V.S. Sunil Kumar said on Sunday that the Kerala government had sought advice from the Law Department on the feasibility of challenging them in the Supreme Court.

The government has asked the Planning Board to study their impact on various sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, labour, animal husbandry and dairy development, Mr. Sunil Kumar said on Sunday. The Planning Board has been directed to submit its report by September 30.

He hinted that the Kerala government would seek the cooperation of like-minded

States, such as Punjab, in opposing the Centre's "unilateral decision".

Though 'Agriculture, including agricultural education and research, protection against pests and prevention of plant diseases' falls in the State List as per the Seventh Schedule, the Centre neither discussed the Bills with the States nor heeded their concerns, he said. The legislation serve only the interests of corporates, Mr. Sunil Kumar added.

MEA official to attend military talks

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India and China are scheduled to hold the 6th round of Corps Commander talks at 9 a.m. on Monday on the Chinese side at Moldo opposite Chushul, a defence source said on Sunday. For the first time, a Joint Secretary-level official from the Ministry of External Affairs will be part of the delegation, the source said.

Joint Secretary East Asia Navin Srivastava will be part of the Indian delegation, a second source said. He has been part of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) talks between India-China border affairs.

The talks assume importance following the meeting between the External Affairs Ministers S. Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Moscow on September 10, where they agreed on a five-point plan for disengagement and de-escalation along the disputed boundary in Ladakh.

The focus would be on complete disengagement.

12 parties give no-trust notice

They allege that Harivansh circumvented all demands for proper voting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI



Breaking point: Trinamool MP Derek O'Brien (face not seen) entering the well of the House and showing the House rule book to Harivansh Singh on Sunday. ■ ANI

the speech by former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda. Congress leader Jairam Ramaswamy tweeted, "Deputy Chairman of RS has been a very close personal friend of mine for long. Till July 2017 he was a bitter critic of the PM, until his party abandoned the grand alliance in Bihar. Since then he has become an unthinking rubber stamp in the important position he occupies. Very sad."

Senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel said the Rajya Sabha witnessed the murder

of democracy. Tiruchi Siva of the DMK said his repeated calls for division were completely ignored. "He had his head down looking at his papers. And no matter how many times I called out, he never looked. This is unacceptable," Mr. Siva said.

Sources said Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu would take action against the Opposition MPs for unruly behaviour. However, Opposition members are unfazed. "Yes. An Opposition MP broke a microphone in the

Rajya Sabha. Today, BJP tried to break the back of yet another great institution of our democracy #Parliament ... " Mr. Derek O'Brien of the Trinamool Congress tweeted.

APMP Sanjay Singh said, "Yes, I stood up on the table, I am owing it up, because what happened today in Rajya Sabha was far worse. All rules were ignored and the farmers have been thrown at the mercy of the big corporations by bending all possible rules."

The Opposition parties condemned the Deputy Chairman for cutting short

Death warrant for farmers: Oppn. parties

MPs flag threat to MSP guarantee and 'unfettered liberalisation' of agriculture under new Bills

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Opposition in the Rajya Sabha on Sunday said the two agriculture Bills brought by the government would lead to the corporate takeover of farming and Parliament passing them would be the death warrant of the farmers.

Congress MP Partap Singh Bajwa said the Bills were "ill-conceived and ill-timed" and that farmers in Punjab, his home State, and Haryana viewed them as attacks on their spirit. He said farmers had understood the Bills to be a way of doing away with MSPs and take-over of farmlands by corporations. "We will not sign on this death warrant of farmers," he said, saying the Congress opposed them.



Hitting the streets: Members of various farmers' organisations staging a protest in Patiala on Sunday. ■ PTI

Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien said the Bills raised an issue of federalism. "You promised to double farmers' income by 2022, but at the current rate it will not double till 2028 ... Your credibility is low to make promises," he said.

AIADMK MP S.R. Balasubramonian said the Bills

would lead to farmers being "reduced to farm workers" and big corporations taking over "large swathes of land". T.K.S. Elangovan of the DMK said the Bills were "an insult to farmers" and would lead to farmers "becoming slaves" and "commodities". He said the Bills not only sought to replace

ordinances, but to "repeal the promise of the government to implement the MS Swaminathan report".

Samajwadi Party MP Ram Gopal Yadav questioned the timing of the Bills, which were introduced to replace ordinances promulgated during the COVID-19 lockdown. "It seems there is some compulsion that the ruling party doesn't want to discuss or debate, they are rushing with the Bills," he said, adding that farmers would not be able to compete with big companies.

Telangana Rashtra Samithi MP K. Keshava Rao said the Bills were an attack on the rights of States and the Constitution. "If this is the new-age agriculture, then we are against it," he said.

CPI(M) MP K.K. Ragesh

said the Bills would lead to "unfettered liberalisation of Indian agriculture" and was an abdication of responsibility on the part of the government.

Will affect Bihar poll

Referring to the upcoming Assembly elections in Bihar, RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha said the impact of the Bills seen in Punjab and Haryana would be seen in Bihar too. He said the farmers had "issued a whip" and that by passing the Bill, "you are writing the obituary of farmers".

Naresh Gujral of the Shromani Akali Dal said: "There is a trust deficit or communication gap, which is why we are telling this party to send it [the Bills] to select committee."

Shashi Tharoor in the Lok Sabha on Saturday.

had already been prepared.

Stating that the lockdown period was utilised to create the necessary infrastructure, the Minister said against just one laboratory, there were now 1,773 units across the country and as a result, 6.37 crore tests had been conducted so far. He added that during the pandemic, the government had brought in over 12 lakh people stranded abroad. It provided ₹50 lakh insurance to more than 22 lakh healthcare and frontline workers.

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said the Centre did not listen to his party leader Rahul Gandhi's warning and that it did not make much effort to consult with the State governments and the Opposition, and rather, appeared more interested in toppling the then Madhya Pradesh government.

Earlier, Congress leader

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said the government was still not accepting that there was a community transmission. The epidemic could not be prevented but its intensity could have been mitigated by timely and well laid-out strategy, he said. He raised suspicion about under reporting of deaths. He also suggested a separate ministry for migrant labourers.

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Torture, not firing, behind China border deaths in 1975, recalls veteran

Col. B.R. Shah (retd.) remembers vividly the shock and horror that followed when he went to retrieve the bodies of the four Assam Rifles jawans

ANANTH KRISHNAN

The four Indian soldiers who were killed in Teling La in 1975 – the last reported firing and combat deaths along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) until the incidents of this summer in Ladakh – were not likely killed in firing but captured alive and tortured to death, recalls a veteran who was tasked with recovering their bodies 45 years ago.

The Teling La incident has been frequently invoked in the wake of the recent firing incidents south of Pangong Lake in late August and early September. In the 45 years that have followed, the memory of what really transpired on the Teling La ridge

line, in the eastern sector of the India-China border in Arunachal, has been not only forgotten but rewritten in subsequent retellings of the event, according to Col. B.R. Shah (retd.), who is now 84 and remembers the sequence of events as if it all happened yesterday.

At the time, he was a Lieutenant Colonel who was the commanding officer of the 3/1 Gurkha Rifles, stationed at Sela top. Speaking to *The Hindu*, Col. Shah remembers the minute details of his three-day journey to Teling La, and of the shock and horror that followed when he went to retrieve the bodies of the four Assam Rifles jawans who had gone missing on October 20, eerily

on the exact anniversary of the 1962 attack.

"At 10 in the morning on October 20, I was in my bunker at Sela top, when we received a message from Tezpur," he said. "Two of the patrol had returned saying they had been ambushed. The situation was grave. I volunteered to go with my men and find out what happened, but we were not given the go-ahead to approach the Chinese."

Teling La was a barren ridge line that was three days away from Sela. When Col. Shah arrived there on October 23, there was a sense of fear and low morale among the Assam Rifles jawans there.

For seven days, they wait-



Col. B.R. Shah

ed for clearance. "Finally," he said, "it came 45 minutes after midnight on October 28. The message came that the Prime Minister [Indira Gandhi] had said I could proceed, with 19 of my men, and we had to meet the Chinese at 11.30 a.m. on October 28."

Then came the first pro-

blem. He was told he cannot take the Indian flag but to go with a blue flag. Moreover, they had to be completely unarmed – a decision that did not go down well with the men, following the October 20 ambush. "Where was I to find a blue flag in a few hours? All I had was a white bedsheet, so I went around asking every man to empty the ink from their pens, and we dyed it blue," he said.

Four-hour climb

Teling La sits at 17,200 feet, and is a four-hour climb from its base at Lungar. They made the climb early on October 28, and the Chinese were waiting for them. "The first thing I saw is they

had used explosives and demolition, flattened the entire ridge and made bunkers for their guns," he said, saying this showed the ambush had been entirely planned, and taken the patrol, which was on its usual route up to the ridge line where the border ran, by complete surprise.

What troubled Col. Shah was why it took seven days for the Chinese to acknowledge what had happened.

"When I saw the bodies, I knew immediately," he said. "There were marks from cigarette burns all over, and at odd places, they had been punctured by bayonets. This was the only indication that at least some of them had been alive when they were

captured, and not killed in firing. They must have tried their best to extract what they could, but what information could they give? They were soldiers."

Before they had the chance to question the Chinese – which was, in any case, an impossible task without interpreters – they had to end the exchange abruptly when the accompanying Assam Rifles jawan in the group, who was there to help identify the bodies, turned emotional at the sight of the bodies.

"The sad truth is from 1962 to 1975, we had just become too casual, and this was the entire political leadership and the military leadership," said Col. Shah.

"We never learnt any lessons. I felt terrible at what had happened, and how we just accepted it. Is this how we accept loss every time?"

The unanswered question, 45 years later, is why the ambush happened in the first place and what motivated the Chinese moves on the ridge line. Only five years later, another patrol that was lost in the fog and crossed the border in the Sikkim sector was met by the Chinese, returned unharmed, and treated well by their accounts, over a period of a few days.

The motivations for the PLA's actions still remain a mystery – one thing, Col. Shah notes, that hasn't really changed 45 years later.

Mandatory service for M.D. students

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Central government has made it mandatory for all students pursuing MD or MS to undergo compulsory posting at a district hospital for three months, starting from the 2020-21 academic session.

A gazette notification issued last week noted that "all postgraduate students pursuing MD/MS in broad specialities in all medical colleges/institutions under the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 shall undergo a compulsory residential rotation of three months in District Hospitals/District Health System as a part of the course curriculum."

It said, "Such rotation shall take place in the 3rd or 4th or 5th semester of the postgraduate programme. This rotation shall be termed as 'District Residency Programme' (DRP) and the postgraduate medical student undergoing training shall be termed as a 'District Resident'."

The main objectives of the DRP are to expose the students to the District Health System and involve them in healthcare services being provided at district hospitals for learning while serving the citizens, acquaint them with the planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment of outcomes of the national programmes.

ICMR's second sero-survey ends

First survey was conducted in May in 400 districts to gauge spread of infection

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has completed its second national sero-survey to gauge the prevalence of COVID-19.

The first survey was conducted in May across 400 districts and about 28,000 were sampled – most of them in rural India – to gauge the spread of the infection.

After a long delay, the ICMR finally published its results this month that suggested that nearly 6.4 million were likely infected with the virus by May.

There were 82,130 infections that went undetected for every confirmed case in May.

However, newspaper reports on Sunday, citing unnamed authors of that study, alleged that a portion of their results were expunged, which showed high prevalence of the infection in hotspots in 10 cities that were originally part of the paper. This suggested that in May the possible prevalence of the infection was 36% in Dharavi, Mumbai; 48% in Ahmedabad and 30% in Kolkata.

Lockdown effect

These findings undermined the effectiveness of the lockdown in containing the spread of the virus and the government's insistence that abrupt shutdown of the country had restricted the

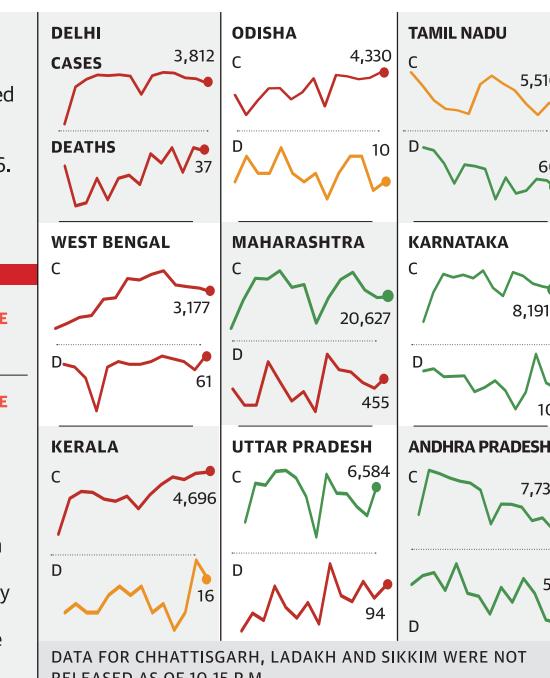
Viral tracker

With 86,296 COVID-19 cases recorded on Sunday, India's tally stood at 54,84,496. As many as 1,125 deaths were added, taking the toll to 85,926. A total of 6.36 crore samples have been tested as of September 19, according to the ICMR

NEW CASES AND DEATHS

CASES 86,296	7 DAY-CHANGE +9.5%
DEATHS 1,125	7 DAY-CHANGE +9.4%

The graphs depict the new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. If average cases and deaths in the last seven days are higher than the previous seven days, then the cases and deaths are rising ■; if they are lower, then dropping □; if they are similar, then cases and deaths are flattening ▨ in that State



virus transmission to only a few dense urban agglomerations.

The government also emphasises that there is, as of today, no evidence of community transmission in India.

"Containment zones, that refer to a specific geographical area where positive cases are found, are dynamic in nature. They do not fit into nationally representative sampling," the ICMR tweeted on Sunday evening but did not refer to the newspaper reports.

"The second round of nationwide sero-survey led by ICMR has been successfully completed. The se-

cond objective of estimating fraction of population who has been infected in containment zones of hotspot cities is in the process of completion," the Health Ministry said in a statement released on June 11, which has been available on the website of the Press Information Bureau.

On that day, Balram Bhargava, Director-General, ICMR, had said the prevalence of the disease was 0.73% nationally and that compared to rural areas, risk of spread was 1.09 times higher in urban areas and 1.89 times higher in urban slums.

On mutation in the virus, Dr. Harsh Vardhan assured that "no significant or drastic mutations have been found in strains of SARS-CoV-2 in India till now".

Large-scale sequencing

He said the ICMR has been conducting large-scale sequencing of nationally representative strains of SARS-CoV-2 virus collected over the past several months over different time-points and detailed results on mutations and evolution of the virus will be available in early Oc-

tober. He also noted that it would take substantive time for herd immunity to develop so as to be able to cover about 70% of the population.

"Hence the focus of the government is primarily towards putting together a strategy that combines containment and hospital management," he said.

Dr. Vardhan said there is enough oxygen being produced in the country and the Health Ministry is closely monitoring the situation.

"The Ministry had dispatched oxygen concentrators to the rural parts of the

country specifically to avert the logistic issues coming to light," he said.

Asked about the trials of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine candidate being paused, the Minister said vaccine development is a complex process and trials have been restarted only after an independent investigative expert committee gave its nod.

Relief for kin

If so far a total of 155 families of COVID warriors have claimed relief under the Pradhan Mantri Gaurav Kalyan Yojana.

"These include 64 doctors, 32 auxiliary nurse midwives and multipurpose healthcare workers, 14 ASHA workers and 45 other front line workers who lost their lives."

Speaking about the impact of COVID-19 on mental health, Dr. Vardhan said the current COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on everyone's mental health, especially elderly persons who are aware of being at a higher risk.

"Coronavirus becomes fatal for the elderly and the co-morbid but this does not mean that a younger person cannot die due to COVID-19 though the risk of death is far lower in this case for younger people," he said.

'Three out of four COVID-19 patients have co-morbidities'

Fewer patients with diabetes, hypertension now: IDSP data

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

Nearly three in four COVID-19 patients have co-morbidities and the proportion of those with diabetes and hypertension – the most common of secondary ailments – has fallen since July, an analysis of data on trends in COVID-19 prevalence maintained by the Health Ministry's Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) reveals.

The data are sourced from details of hospital records from all over the country that are provided to the IDSP and, as of September 20, consists of a sample of 34,616 positive people and is a sliver of India's 5.4 million case load as of Sunday.

In July, when comparable data was made public by the organisation, only 8% of 16,155, whose data were publicised by the IDSP, were diabetic and 9% hypertensive. That has now fallen to 5.74% and 5.21% respectively and a category called 'others' that denotes a patient with at least one comorbid condition, has jumped to 58.85% from 30% in July.

An official connected to the IDSP said with a rise in



Wide variety: Patients leaving the COVID-19 ward at the Kilpauk Medical College in Chennai. People with various co-morbidities have been infected. ■ FILE PHOTO

States told to ramp up testing

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

As COVID-19 cases continued to rise, the Health Ministry has advised the States and Union Territories to take immediate steps to facilitate testing at the earliest by enabling all qualified medical practitioners, including private practitioners, to prescribe a test to any individual fulfilling ICMR criteria for testing.

For the first time a record number of more than 12 lakh COVID tests have been conducted in a single day, added the Health Ministry "... the cumulative tests have crossed 6.36 crore (6,36,61,060)," said the Ministry.

It added that higher testing leads to early identification of positive cases, and timely and effective treatment. This eventually leads to a lower mortality rate.

Meanwhile the country reported more than 94,000 recoveries for two successive days, Health Ministry data said. "94,612 recoveries have been registered in 24 hours. With this, the total number of recoveries has crossed 43 lakh (43,03,043)," said the Ministry.

Review of documents

Besides paving the way for universal eligibility in the

World Bank seeks 'universal eligibility'

In a blow to 'Make in India', its \$1 billion loan to curb pandemic sets the condition

S. VIJAY KUMAR

CHENNAI

The \$1 billion World Bank loan to prevent, detect and respond to the threat of coronavirus and strengthen national health systems for preparedness as India combats the ongoing pandemic comes with a condition of "universal eligibility" in procurements.

This would mean that all preferential market access policies, including Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) Order, Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) Policy, certain benefits to start-ups, shall not be applicable on purchases made while implementing the national project.

Confirming this, the Ministry of Railways, in a note to all Zonal Railways, production units and other major establishments, said the tender documents should be amended to remove such references and ensure that contractors explicitly agree to comply with the relevant provisions of the World Bank's anti-corruption guidelines and prohibited policies of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

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Review of documents

Besides paving the way for universal eligibility in the



Taking charge: The Railways will spend ₹399 crore to strengthen infrastructure to combat the pandemic. ■ FILE PHOTO

supply system, the World Bank would have the right to review the procurement documents, inspect/audit all accounts, records and other files relating to the project. Compliance to these conditions has been made mandatory for the funding.

The Railways will spend ₹399 crore across its network to strengthen health infrastructure in the combat against COVID-19 in this financial year. The focus will be on creating more isolation facilities with medical equipment such as ventilators, oxygen cylinders etc.

This is part of the "India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Strengthening Project," a joint initiative of the Government of India and the World Bank that has \$1 billion loan

disbursed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The Railway Board said and added that the funds allocated should not be exceeded. In case any railway expected that it would not be in a position to spend the funds earmarked by March 31, 2021, the same should be communicated to the board latest by December 31, 2020.

The Railways, one of the largest employers in the country, has reported 14,714 COVID-19 cases among its employees and 336 deaths. The Central Railway has topped the list with 67 deaths and 1,323 cases followed by the South Central Railway with 54 deaths and 2,202 cases. While the Southern Railway, headquartered in Chennai, has reported 21 deaths and 1,145 cases, the ICF had 9 deaths and 422 cases among its employees.

I bought a cycle. Now what?

People around India have turned to cycling — it took us outdoors while still allowing for interactions, and it's a throwback to the fun of childhood. How long will it last?



SUNALINI MATHEW

"Dasu Da asked me to go along, so I thought, 'Chalo, ghoom ke aa jate hai,'" says Manoj Manna, 40, who is on a gearless "ladies' cycle" from Hero, going across the country with Thakur das Sasmal, who has a Facebook page under the name Dasu Da. Their plan is to hit Delhi-Mumbai-Chennai and then go back to Kolkata, from where they started. "Accha lag raha hai," says Manoj, as he rides Dasu Da's daughter's old cycle. He has never left Howrah, where he lives in Udaynarayanpur, and works on a farm.

A move towards cycling

Manoj and Dasu Da are mirroring an openness to cycling, in what is now an all-India phenomenon, cutting across ages, livelihoods, and the rural-urban

divide. In a post-lockdown world, with the COVID-19 pandemic still on, people are testing the waters with a commute, some are turning to it for adventure, while many are looking at it as a fitness activity that can also be done with family or a group of friends, while maintaining physical distance.

After the lockdown lifted somewhat, Diya John, from Kochi, got on her Decathlon bike and took to the relatively empty roads, always finishing her rides by 8 am. Through Instagram, her friends found out she had begun riding, and asked to come along. "I'll find a bike for them to try out," she says, in her endeavour to get people onto the saddle. As more and more people joined, they formed a WhatsApp group and began to ride longer. "I prefer slow, long rides," she says, adding that she is now considering upgrading

to an endurance road bike. Cycling has boomed in India, with brands, stores, and manufacturers reporting a surge in demand. "High-end bikes (above ₹20,000) have reached a 300% demand, up from last year's 5-10% hike around the same time," says Gaurav Wadhwa, whose family has

INDIA CYCLES4CHANGE CHALLENGE
The Smart Cities Mission hopes cities will introduce "quick interventions and promotional activities to encourage cycling." Your city can register here: Smartnet.niua.org/indiacyclechallenge/content/home



Riding in the hood (Clockwise from far left) A heritage ride in Delhi, Diya John, Manoj Manna, Satinder M Bedi

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



been in the cycle business in Delhi for 55 years. His brother Vivek, who handles their mass market and mid-range (also called semi-premium) bikes, says in these segments, where about 70% of the business was from older teens (15-19), today it is about 50%.

The rest comes from across ages and genders, with overall demand up to 400%. Amidst fielding about 200 calls a day each, where earlier they had about 50, the Wadhwas say hybrids sell the most in the high and medium (₹10,000 to ₹20,000) category. In the top segment, people are open to spending ₹30,000 to ₹40,000.

Pankaj M Munjal, chairman and MD, Hero MotoCorp, says that cycles over ₹12,000 have seen a rise in his company, though this segment is also seeing higher demand than production, because of the lag in supply of parts from China.

"While the imports have resumed now, manufacturers are consciously moving to limit their dependence on Chinese imports and strengthen self-reliance now in the wake of border tensions."

Geared bikes are doing better than non-gearled. In India, where a cycle is a social determinant of status, a geared bike that's higher in price, is somewhat higher in the cycle hierarchy. It's the reason Himanshu Shekhar is introducing a

BYOB (bring your own bike) plan to his business Delhi by Cycle, which does heritage city tours on bicycles.

"Most of our business came from inbound tourists," he says. "People here felt that 15-20 kilometres is a lot," says Himanshu, adding that people in India prefer geared bikes. With people's newly discovered interest in Nature, he is looking at organising short idyllic trips — Corbett is on the cards.

Bumps and potholes

The downside to all this interest in cycling is that people are getting onto the roads often without helmets, not using basic hand gestures to signal in traffic, and riding sans lights, says Gareema Shankar, founder of Cycloon, a group of about 200 cycling enthusiasts in Delhi.

She herself has not ventured on the road because she does not want to take a chance with speeding vehicles. For instance, on April 20, at the height of lockdown, five people were killed in three separate road accidents in Delhi alone. "I don't want to land up in a hospital when Corona is still on," she says. Instead, she has started using her indoor bike.

Infrastructure was a challenge that existed even in pre-lockdown times," says Jaymin Shah, who heads Scott Sports in India. But what has changed is that in non-metros, roads are still relatively not as crowded as they were in pre-lockdown times given that

education institutions are still shut and many are working from home.

He says this is the inflection point. "Right now, sales are at 3x. I don't expect them to continue this way, but I do expect them to stabilise at 2x," he says. He points to towns like Coimbatore, Surat, Jalandhar, but also to places like Gadhwaj, Washin (both Maharashtra), and Kayamkulam (Kerala), where Scott has sold about 15 units a month over the past few months.

It is not just about gyms and other indoor workout areas now being considered unsafe, but also about wider implications on the environment, which is why he says the sale of electric bicycles are going to pick up, especially for micromobility. In fact Hero has registered "an almost 100% jump in demand for E-cycles," says Munjal.

Smarter choices

Prachi Bhargava, who leads communication at Decathlon, sees this trend as part of the wider leaning towards people setting up small home gyms. "It wasn't just the beginner level equipment that was popular, but also the intermediate level," she says.

This overall 'higher education' is something that Jaymin and Gaurav point to as well. Scott set up a helpline to help people choose a bike, and the questions were about frame sizes and the suitability of a bike to the type of activity and terrain.

This change in people's approach to riding is seen in Satinder M Bedi, from Gurugram, who at 68, cycles on the inner roads of Gurugram, about 20-25 kilometres, five times a week, up from a couple pre-lockdown, when he went to the gym as well. After lockdown, he has bought a Cube, because it was lighter than his previous, but is waiting for improved infrastructure that he says is often promised, but never fulfilled.

Mostly though, what is needed, is a change in attitude, feels Balaji S, from Coimbatore, who uses his bike as a means of transport. The change has to come at different levels, he feels: at the policy level ("All we need to do is add a cycle lane each time a road is laid"); at a mindset level, so that other traffic respects cyclists and the lanes built for them; and at a safety level for women and children.

Munjal is optimistic. He feels that the pandemic has induced a "behavioural change towards cycling" that will "now create an organic demand from local communities for safe roads and cycling infrastructure".

• GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

HYPE OR HAPPENING?

F Factor Diet



SUSAN JOE PHILIP

Finding the perfect diet is not easy. Though there are many to choose from, some may not be sustainable while others may not suit our bodies. But none of this has stopped us from trying the different options available. A much-discussed diet these days is the F Factor Diet after influencer Emily Gellis Lande alleged that the diet is dangerous.

So what exactly is the F Factor diet? This was created by Tanya Zuck erbrot, a US registered dietitian, in 2006. According to their website, Ffactor.com (there's an app and book as well), the key to this diet is to combine high-fibre foods with lean protein at every meal (Tanya also markets bars and protein powders). F Factor allows people to eat carbohydrates, dine out, drink alcohol, and work out less.

Some of the sources of proteins include beans, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables. For proteins, it advocates chicken and fish. There are three phases to the F Factor Diet. The initial phase is designed to jumpstart the weight loss process and one can have up to 35 grams of net carbs in a day. According to Mayo Clinic, net carbs mean the amount of carbohydrates in a product excluding fibre, or excluding both fibre and sugar alcohols. As one moves on to the second and third phases, the serving can be increased to 75 grams and 125 gms respectively. "Though this is easy to follow, different people have different nutritional requirements. It is best to do it under the supervision of a nutritionist," says Vinitha Krishnan, consultant nutritionist, SIMS Hospital, Chennai.

Dr Sandeep MS, senior consultant gastroenterologist, Apollo Hospitals, Bengaluru, explains, "Fibre is a component in plants that our body can't

digest. It plays a key role in digestion as it helps to bind the food, absorbs toxins, and helps to prevent constipation."

There are two types of fibres: soluble and insoluble. The former is absorbed by the body. "It is found in oats and fruits. It decreases the spike in blood sugar and reduces cholesterol," says Vinitha. The latter cannot be digested and moves on to the large intestine. It is found in whole-wheat flour, nuts, beans and vegetables. "In the colon, it absorbs water and prevents constipation. Therefore, it is important to keep yourself hydrated while following a high fibre diet," she adds.

As fibres cannot be digested, it remains in the intestine for a long time. It creates a feeling of fullness and thereby reduces hunger pangs. "This results in us consuming less than we otherwise would have, leading to weight loss. These fibres help in the synthesis of fatty acids and help in the growth of (good) prebiotic bacteria in the colon," says Vinitha. Traditional Indian diets are rich in fibre, says Dr Sandeep. "Usually it adds up to 30 grams of fibre which is sufficient for a day," he adds.

But the diet is not perfect and can create difficulty in some. Says Dr Sandeep, "It can lead to bloating, abdominal irritation, and people can also feel gassy. In such cases, just reduce the amount of the fibre." Vinitha says that the F Factor diet also overlooks the importance of exercise. "It is important for the overall health of a person. I will not recommend the diet to those having ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, or Crohn's disease as it can aggravate the condition," says Vinitha.

In this column, we decode health trends and decide if it's all just 'hype' or actually happening.

HYPE

#MeatlessMondays

Meatless Mondays do not have to be the first step in turning vegan. Instead of focussing on cutting meat out, look at introducing one forgotten native vegetable into your diet every week.

On his Instagram, Chennai-based Akash Muralidharan points out how eight vegetables: beans, potato, cauliflower, tomato, onion, carrot, peas and okra, have dominated the menus and markets of urban India. In March this year, he led a 100-day campaign to cook one little-used local vegetable each day. "We cooked with almost 70 varieties of vegetables, and almost 40 of them were new to us," he says. These included karonda, snake gourd, roselle (gongura) and so on.

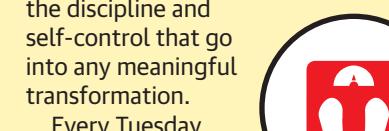
Joining communities of kitchen gardens will help you source vegetables, as many are difficult to come by. Here, you will also discover fun ways to cook with a variety of them, and of course, you can always ask your grandparents.

Akash, who still maintains the diversity on his plate after the project ended, says, "These vegetables not only help us lead a healthy life but also keep the environment healthy." Bringing them back means safeguarding our biodiversity.

#Transformation Tuesdays

Widely used online to compare before and after weight differences post training, its essence is the discipline and self-control that go into any meaningful transformation.

Every Tuesday, try and detox yourself from one habit you have been meaning to give up for a while now: smoking, bingeing on Netflix or social media, or excessive snacking. This practice has roots in cultures that advise us to fast on certain days of the week.



My calendar to better health



Working out, self care, eating 'clean', meditation — doing everything 'right' can get overwhelming for someone who has just started on the health journey. Here's a day-by-day breakdown to ease into the process with a little help from hashtags online

SWETA AKUNDI

#WellnessWednesdays

The middle of the work week is a good day for your foray into meditation.

"When I was learning at the International Centre of Yoga and Research in Puducherry, I stayed with a family that would sit together quietly for two minutes every day," says Shraddha Iyer, trainer at SARVA Yoga. "I understand that the general impression of meditation among people who don't do it is that it is boring. But the main point is focussing on your breath. Most of us use only 40% of our breath capacity."

So for the uninitiated, taking one day out to devote two minutes of your time to meditate will help you in eventually becoming more aware of your breathing. "You can choose which type of therapy you prefer," says Shraddha, adding that laughter yoga and sound healing are two popular ones. Something that helps quiet introspection is the act of maintaining a gratitude journal that you can fill in every Wednesday.



#ThirstyThursdays

Give a healthy spin to what is a hashtag to flaunt a cocktail; reserve Thursday mornings for homemade veggie-fruit juices (no added sugar), rich in fibre and micronutrients. Dietician Sheela Krishnaswamy believes this is a good way to hydrate as long as the sugar levels, with the rest of your diet in mind, are within the daily recommended intake. Try spinach and tomatoes/apples/cucumber, with a dash of lime. "Wheatgrass juice is another option," she says. You're trying to give your system an antioxidant blast.

#FitnessFridays

At least once a week, get out to play a sport like gully cricket or badminton. Given the times we are in, of course, make sure that the sport is non-contact, in the open air. Or use the day to vary your workout routine by letting a coin, or dice decide your plan. Heads can mean jumping jacks, push-ups and leg lifts, and tails can mean high knees, squats and lunges.



#WeekendWarriors

Finally, reserve your weekends to up your game in whatever you feel has been challenging you throughout the work week and you have been putting it off for 'when you have more time'. This could be levelling up on your workouts, adding weights to your training, cycling or walking two kilometres farther than you are used to, or trying a new sport or hobby. It doesn't have to be all physical fitness-related. You can take time out to prepare that elaborate healthy meal whose recipe you have bookmarked. Or simply clean your house and fix those little things that have been bothering you.

Never underestimate the mental health benefits of a clean room for an anxious mind.





Care 4 Chendamangalam, which works with weavers in Kerala, brings the eponymous GI-tagged sari for a fund-raiser exhibition to Bengaluru



Weft and weave (Clockwise from left) A weaver at the loom; trustees Meera Mammen (centre) and Minnie Menon (right) with a weaver from C4C; actor-VJ Paloma Rao wears a Chendamangalam sari

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Beating the drum for Chendamangalam

DEEPA ALEXANDER

In the first week of June, the monsoon begins its dark, moody romance with Kerala; sharp showers slam the sodden ground like iridescent sheets of gunfire. It turns the coastal State an unnatural shade of green, a landscape of red earth and pouring rain.

Chendamangalam is a small town near Ernakulam that stands at the crossroads of three rivers and centuries of history and culture. Dotted with Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Hindu places of worship, the town was part of the ancient port complex of Muziris and known for its fine cotton spun here by the Devanga Chettiaras, a community of weavers originally from Karnataka.



When the rivers ran riot during the Kerala floods of 2018, they not only threw sludge and mildew on the looms, yarns and finished goods of the Chendamangalam cluster of weavers, they also took with them the dreams and future of a community already struggling to stay afloat.

Meera Mammen, vice president – welfare, MRF, woke up one morning in August that year, her WhatsApp flooded with appeals to save the weavers and their looms. When she visited the town, which has nearly 600 weavers, she was distressed by the extent of destruction and reached out to friends who could help. It resulted in an ini-

tiative called Care 4 Chendamangalam (C4C) helmed by Chennai-based trustees Preetha Reddy, vice chairman, Apollo Hospitals; Minnie Menon, jewellery designer; Thejomaye Menon, artist; and Shekar Sitaraman, hotelier, with Meera as managing trustee.

In a phone interview, Minnie Menon says, "Shortly thereafter, Shekar and I visited Chendamangalam along with Meera. We assessed the havoc – worksheds were damaged, stocks were soaking wet. The weavers who met us had a sense of helplessness. Some of the societies were decades-old. We felt the need to restore normalcy in their lives; after all handloom is our national heritage. We identified and adopted a cluster of 42 women weavers, because women – when they are breadwinners – ensure their earnings go towards providing their families with a better life."

The GI-tagged Chendamangalam sari is recognisable by its *puliyalakarai* border, a thin black line that runs abreast with the sari's selvedge. With its extra-weft *chuttikara* and stripes

and checks of varying width, its look has changed little since the time of the Paliam family, once prime ministers to the Cochin maharajas, who invited the Chettiaras to settle here and produce these hand-crafted treasures.

"The saris made from the fine-count cotton yarn of 120s, 100s and 80s take between two to four days of painstaking labour, depending on the design vocabulary," explains Minnie. "A three-year road-map was drawn up and we requested established Kochi-based designer Sreejith Jeevan, founder of the city's popular Rouka boutique, to come on board. We collaborated with him to ensure design intervention, to appeal to the younger generation and a pan-India audience. Innovations are consciously confined to the graphic-edged finishes and textures with the characteristic *kasavu zari* borders. The result is a chic new take on the classic, Kerala handloom sari seen through a modern lens."

C4C started interactions with the society of woman weavers in January 2019 and hopes to help them reap benefits by 2021. "Our mission statement is to 'Uplift, Upscale, Uphold'. The price range of the sari is between ₹3,300 and ₹7,500. We have held exhibitions in Kerala, and in Chennai and Coimbatore but we have not broken even yet; COVID-19 has certainly not helped either. Our first exhibition in Bangalore, is still part of the journey of recovery for the weavers," says Minnie.

The exhibition is on from September 21-26, 11 am to 7 pm at Vermilion House, 78/1 Benson Cross Street, Benson Town, Bengaluru. For details, call 9986364168 or email vermilionhouse@gmail.com



Short stories, big ideas

'The One Day, One Story' campaign is an annual story reading affair started by Pratham Books to keep alive the joys of storytelling as well as mark International Literacy Day which is observed on September 8. Currently in its ninth edition, the campaign has gone online, much like everything else this year. For its 2020 storytelling sessions, Pratham Books has selected *Angry Akku*, written and illustrated by Vinayak Varma and *The Girl Who Could Not Stop Laughing*, written by Meera Ganapathi and illustrated by Rosh. Both titles were chosen keeping in mind the bewildering predicament that lockdown can be for children. Previous editions of the 'One Day, One Story' required participants to visit an NGO or a common area and read aloud to children there. In the current scenario, participants are encouraged to choose one or both books, record themselves reading out loud to children or do a live reading session and upload it on to their own social media sites. Saif Ali Khan, Madhuri Dixit Nene, Bipasha Basu, Athiya Shetty and Mithila Palkar are a few of the many celebrities who have lent their voices to the campaign.

'The One Day, One Story' campaign will run till the end of September.

POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



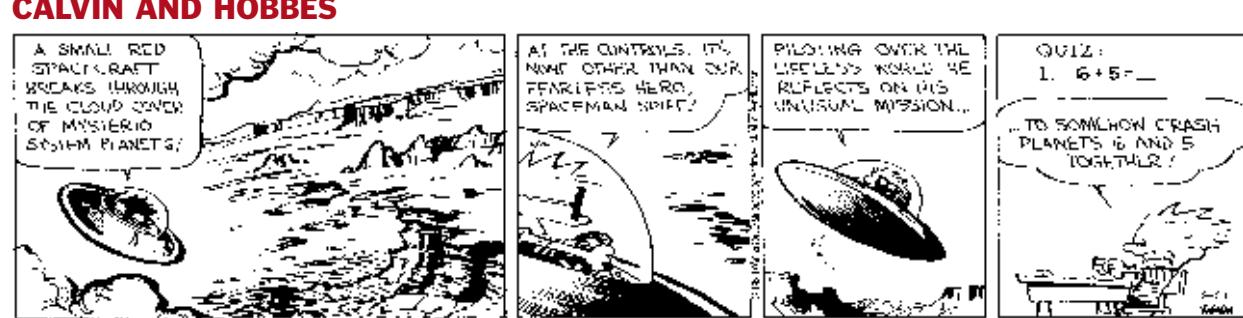
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



The need to open up A still from the short film; Anita Peter

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The road to recovery

Dancer Anita Peter's short films aim to break the stigma around mental health

NEERAJA MURTHY

Anita Peter is not just a Mohiniyattam dancer, biker and actor. She is also a flag bearer for people suffering from mental health issues. "Because I have lived it and been through it," she says.

Overcoming fear

The four-minute third film depicts the trauma a man goes through after ending his life; he assumes his death does not make any difference to his parents, but gets a chance to rethink. Urging people to be courageous and sensible, Anita says, "The films show a ray of hope and the need to stay alive."

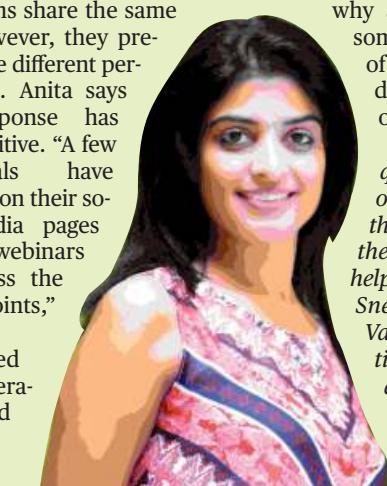
Besides Anita, the actors include her daughter Neha Peter and theatre actor Sumit Keshri.

With a background in theatre and films, Anita says "I wanted these stories to reach people in a visual form so that the images create a spark and food for thought. Men and women who suffer in silence will identify with the stories. It is normal to have these feelings but the choice – to continue to suffer or come out of it, lies with us," she says.

Anita began writing the book in her recovery period. During her visits to the doctor, she says she saw patients accompanied by their parents, who were hesitant to talk about their challenges.

"Some fear the side-effects of anti-depressants and some even stop medication mid-way because they feel everything is fine. Why this phobia for medicines prescribed by a doctor and why associate stigma to something that is part of us," she asks, adding "Seek help and open up."

(Those who require assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts may contact the suicide prevention helpline of NGOs such as Sneha 044-24640050; Vandrevala Foundation 18602662345; and Roshni 040-66202000)



SC nominee will be a woman: Trump

President had earlier released a list with two conservative women he backed as potential nominees

REUTERS
FAYETTEVILLE

President Donald Trump said on Saturday he will nominate a woman to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court, a move that would tip the court further to the right following the death of liberal Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

"I will be putting forth a nominee next week. It will be a woman," Mr. Trump said at a campaign rally in Fayetteville, North Carolina. "I think it should be a woman because I actually like women much more than men."

As Mr. Trump spoke, supporters chanted: "Fill that seat."

He praised Ginsburg as a "legal giant... Her landmark rulings, fierce devotion to justice and her courageous battle against cancer inspire all Americans."

Earlier, he praised two women as possible replacements: conservatives he elevated to federal appeals courts.

Mr. Trump named Amy Coney Barrett of the Chicago



Picking the right fit: President Donald Trump at a campaign rally in Fayetteville on Saturday. ■ AP

go-based 7th Circuit and Barbara Lagoa of the Atlanta-based 11th Circuit as possible nominees for a lifetime appointment to the highest U.S. court. It would be his third appointment during his first term.

Mr. Trump said it was his constitutional right to appoint a successor for Ginsburg, and he would do so, citing similar moves by Presidents dating back to George Washington. "We have plenty of time. You're talking about January 20," Mr. Trump said, referring to the

date of the next inauguration.

Ginsburg's death on Friday from cancer after 27 years on the court handed Mr. Trump, who is seeking re-election on November 3, the opportunity to expand its conservative majority to 6-3 at a time of a gaping political divide in America.

Senate majority
Any nomination would require approval by a simple majority in the Senate, where Mr. Trump's Republicans hold a 53-47 majority.

Not all Republican Senators supported the move: Maine's Susan Collins on Saturday said a nomination should wait.

"In fairness to the American people, who will either be re-electing the President or selecting a new one, the decision on a lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court should be made by the President who is elected on November 3rd," Ms. Collins, facing a tough re-election race herself, said.

Democrats are still seething over the Republican Senate's refusal in 2016 to act on Democratic President Barack Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland, to replace conservative Justice Antonin Scalia, who died 10 months before that election.

At the time, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said the Senate should not act on a nominee during an election year, but he and other top Republican Senators have reversed that stance.

Mr. McConnell, who has made confirmation of Mr.

Trump's federal judicial nominees a priority, said the chamber would vote on any Trump nominee. Democrats, with few tools to block passage of a nominee, plan to try to rally public opposition.

Even before Ginsburg's death, Mr. Trump had released a list of potential nominees.

Ms. Barrett has generated

perhaps the most interest in conservative circles. A devout Roman Catholic, she was a legal scholar at Notre Dame Law School in Indiana before Mr. Trump appointed her to the 7th Circuit in 2017.

Abortion-rights groups have pointed to Ms. Barrett's conservative religious views and said that as a judge, she would likely vote to overturn the landmark 1973 Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalised abortion nationwide.

Ms. Lagoa has served on the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for less than a year after Mr. Trump appointed her, and the Senate confirmed her in an 80-15 vote.

U.S. says UN sanctions on Iran back in force, others disagree

France, Britain and Germany say the move lacks legal basis

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

The U.S. unilaterally proclaimed on Saturday that UN sanctions against Iran were back in force and promised to punish those who violate them, in a move other major countries – including its allies – said lacked legal basis.

The so-called snapback – announced last month – also drew a sharp rebuke from Tehran, which called on the rest of the world to unite against U.S. "reckless actions."

"Today, the United States welcomes the return of virtually all previously terminated UN sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement.

He said the measures were back in effect from 0000 GMT on Sunday.

The U.S. administration also promised to "impose consequences" on any UN member state which does not comply with the

can activate the snapback option, which it announced on August 20.

Virtually every other member of the Security Council disputes Washington's ability to execute this legal piroquette, and the council has not taken the measure any further.

On Sunday, two permanent council members – France and Britain – issued a joint statement along with non-permanent member Germany saying Mr. Pompeo's "purported notification" was "incapable of having any legal effect." Russia's Foreign Ministry also said that Washington's statements lacked legal authority.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Sunday that Washington's "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran had thrown the U.S. into "maximum isolation", after major powers dismissed U.S. declarations that UN sanctions on Iran were back in force.

Thailand protesters challenge monarchy, seek PM's ouster

Students install plaque, stating country belongs to the people



Pro-democracy protesters lighting up their mobile phones in Bangkok. ■ REUTERS

Hong Kong's pro-democracy protests, remains largely leaderless. But this weekend's

protest was organised by students of Bangkok's Thammasat University – a group that has been among the most vocal about the royal family's role in Thailand.

Human rights lawyer Anon Numpa, who has

emerged as one of the key figures in the movement, took a stronger line on monarchial reform in a fiery speech late Saturday night.

"My knee will never kneel for dictatorship," he shouted.

His speech was met with cheers from the crowd.

Bangkok authorities estimated more than 18,000 at Saturday's demonstration, though organisers claimed a much higher turnout. AFP reporters on the ground estimated a crowd size closer to 30,000.

Activists also installed a commemorative "People's Plaque" in Sanam Luang field. The plaque states the date Sept 20, 2020, followed by the proclamation: "The people have expressed the intention that this country belongs to the people, and not the king."

Thousands stage march in Minsk

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MINSK

Tens of thousands of opposition supporters marched in the Belarusian capital of Minsk on Sunday despite authorities deploying a heavy police presence.

The protest came a day after officers detained hundreds of demonstrators at a women's march in the capital.

The opposition movement has kept up a wave of large-scale demonstrations every Sunday since President Alexander Lukashenko won a disputed victory in August 9 polls.

People gathered at the "March of Justice" that occupied the whole of a central avenue and walked towards the heavily guarded Palace of Independence, where Mr. Lukashenko has his offices. They held placards with slogans such as "Cowards beat up women" and "Get out!"

WHO clears protocol for COVID-19 herbal medicine trials

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRAZZAVILLE

The World Health Organization on Saturday endorsed a protocol for testing African herbal medicines as potential treatments for the coronavirus and other epidemics.

COVID-19 has raised the is-

sue of using traditional medicines to battle contemporary diseases, and the endorsement clearly encouraged testing with criteria similar to those used for molecules developed by labs in Asia, Europe or the Americas.

It came months after a bid

by the President of Madagascar to promote a drink based on artemisia, a plant with proven efficacy in malaria treatment, was met with widespread scorn.

On Saturday, WHO experts and colleagues from two other organisations endorsed a protocol for phase

III clinical trials of herbal medicine for COVID-19 as well as a charter and terms of reference for the establishment of a data and safety monitoring board for herbal medicine clinical trials," a statement said.

"Phase III clinical trials are pivotal in fully assessing

the safety and efficacy of a new medical product," it noted. "If a traditional medicine product is found to be safe, efficacious and quality-assured, WHO will recommend it for a fast-tracked, large-scale local manufacturing," Prosper Tumusiiime, a regional WHO director, said.



heeded the call to retire during the term of former President Barack Obama, whose party, the Democrats, controlled the Senate for a part of his term and could have confirmed a potential Supreme Court nominee, the 5-4 balance might have been preserved.

COMMENT

She had argued then that she would serve the Court for as long as she possibly could, yet days before her passing said to her family that her fervent wish was that she would not be replaced until a new President was installed post the election on November 3, 2020.

Now, in violation of the Thurmond Rule, a tradition whereby the Senate avoids confirming presidential nominations to the federal judiciary in an election year, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has already invited President Donald Trump to nominate her replacement.

the government based on men's supposedly greater familiarity with commercial matters.

Balanced approach

In diverse applications of law, including benefits rules for members of the U.S. military, Social Security regulations, and admissions policies for state-supported colleges, Justice Ginsburg's relentless fight for gender parity led to the redress of gender biases that appeared to be built into the system.

The depth and balance of her jurisprudential vision was such that through the years of these legal battles against sex-based discrimination she was as dogtightly supportive of men's rights to receive fair and equal treatment under law as she was of women's rights. This principle of hers, to the spirit of uncompromising equality before law, was manifested in *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld*, 1975, which overturned a Social Security practice that deprived widowers of survivor

benefits based on the assumption that wives were always secondary breadwinners with lower incomes.

This seminal legacy notwithstanding, it appears likely that the circumstances of her passing have generated considerable cause for concern among U.S. Democrats, specifically on what it means for the selection of her successor in the Supreme Court.

The Court already leans conservative by five justices to four. Had Justice Ginsburg

His move is replete with irony given that in 2016 it was Mr. McConnell who refused to countenance Mr. Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Merrick Garland, a highly regarded centrist candidate whom even Republicans had praised as an acceptable Democratic nominee.

Mr. Trump has already successfully nominated two justices to the Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh and Neil Gorsuch, tipping the Court rightward. That brings to four, including Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito, the number of Supreme Court justices nominated by presidents who did not win the popular vote in the election.

If Mr. Trump manages to nominate another candidate who wins Senate confirmation before this election, a genuine question will arise as to whether the Supreme Court and its future decisions are in line with the idea of justice that a majority of Americans believe in.

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The passing of the pre-eminent advocate for women's rights is a big loss for progressive movement in the U.S.

NARAYAN LAKSHMAN

The passing of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is tantamount to a major loss for the progressive movement in that country, as it leaves the highest court, already leaning conservative, firmly in the grasp of those who might rewrite the law on the issues such as reproductive rights, immigration, healthcare and more.

She leaves behind a legacy of courageous litigation campaigns and far-reaching jurisprudence that altered prejudices embedded deep within U.S. law, which would otherwise have denied women their rightful place as the equals of men in the sphere of civil liberties and economic rights. The landscape of U.S. law on administering estates, for example, today reflects the seminal contribution of Justice Ginsburg in the form of her early challenge to the practice of giving preference to men as administrators, defied by

ASK US



VIDYA BALA

Q. I am a 59-year-old retiree. I need your guidance on investing in NCDs that offer a higher interest compared with FDs.

S. VENKATESWARAN

A. If you have never invested in NCDs before, you need to do some due diligence and learning before entering the debt market.

NCDs offer higher rates than bank fixed deposits (FDs). But that is only because they are riskier instruments than bank FDs.

Here are some facts you need to know before you invest in one: NCDs do carry credit rating but as seen in the past two years, credit rating can become totally irrelevant suddenly when rating agencies are caught unaware in a brewing credit issue. Hence, it has become necessary for investors to read the offer document (for a primary issue) or know the financials of a company well before you choose NCDs.

An NCD need not always be secured by a collateral and even if it is, the charge on the collateral could be subordinate, which means your claim will be entertained only after other creditors'.

Put and call options

Some NCDs have put or call options. A call option allows the company to prematurely redeem the NCD and a put option similarly allows you to make an early exit from the bond. This may mean the time frame of the NCD is not the same as what is mentioned as 'tenure.' Many investors think that if NCDs are held in demat form, the interest is not taxable because there is no TDS.

This is not correct. They are taxable at your income tax slab rate. Generally, it is better not to go for long-tenure NCDs (over five years or sometimes even perpetual) as the ratings may change and a bond may turn out to be poorer in credit worthiness.

If such a bond has low liquidity in the secondary market, you may be stuck with it.

A final word on NCDs: when you buy them in the secondary market it is important to understand whether you are buying at the right price because only the market price at which you enter determines the yield. We are now in a low-interest scenario. That means bonds have already rallied quite a bit. Buying NCDs in the secondary market now, without knowing the interest rate risk, may result in capital losses for even a year or two if your price is unfavourable.

If all this seems too much for you, please stick to RBI Floating Rate Bonds, Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandhana Yojana.

Q. I am 57 years old. Until now, I have had no specific investments for retirement, except for a few fixed asset investments. I want to retire next year. So, please suggest ways to invest for regular, lifelong pension. Also, how much should I invest?

M. JAGADISH KUMAR

A. It may be hard for you to enter any wealth-building asset classes such as equities now, given that you don't have much time. It is best for you to reduce your exposure to fixed assets and liquidate them. Use the proceeds to invest in options such as Post Office Senior Citizens' Scheme (at the age of 60), RBI Floating Rate bonds and perhaps options such as LIC's Jeevan Akshay VII - which is an immediate annuity plan. The final settlement from your job may also be used to park in LIC's Vaya Vandhana Yojana (at 60), if the plan continues then.

Use bank deposits and savings accounts to park short-term emergency money. Your idea should be to build a portfolio of liquid investments that are safe and one that you can draw from, for emergencies, besides a high-quality secure portfolio that generates regular income for you.

(The author is co-founder, PrimeInvestor.in)

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

LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"Hello, yes? Er...no...no, I am not in need of a personal loan..."

Time to go beyond COVID-19 health cover

A rising number of people are buying health policies covering only the novel coronavirus, ignoring other serious ailments

AMIT CHHABRA

COVID-19 has spread to more than 213 countries, infecting over 30 million people in different parts of the world. The U.S. remains the worst-hit country by the pandemic with cases soaring up to 6.8 million and fatalities at 2.05 lakh followed by India with 5.2 million cases and 85,000 people who have lost their lives.

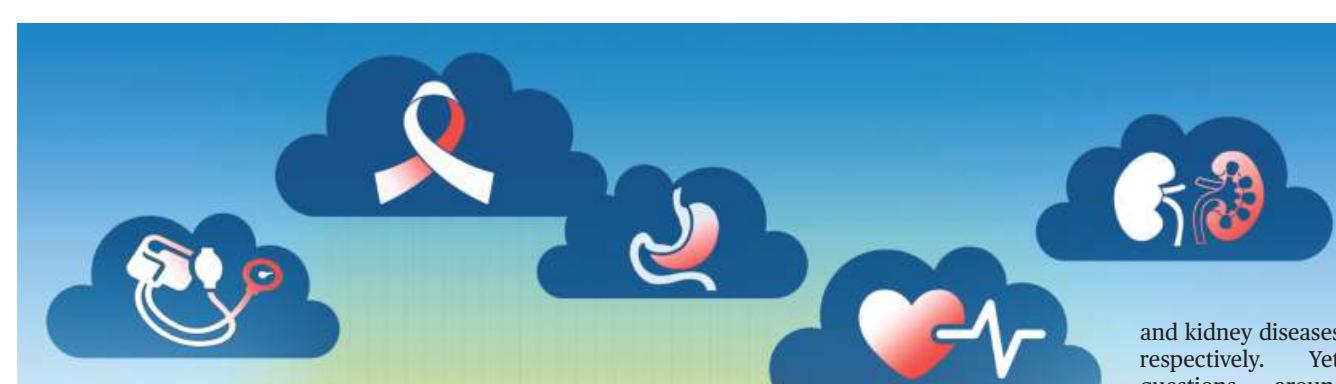
As per the World Health Organisation's latest epidemiological update, the novel coronavirus continues to spread.

The pandemic has changed the health insurance landscape in the country completely in numerous ways. People have now started to take health insurance more seriously; insurers believe that the new trends that have surfaced in the last couple of months will continue in the post-COVID-19 era as well.

Now, there's an urgency driven by the fear of contracting the virus. Numbers from the industry tell us that most general and specialised health insurers have witnessed an increase in demand for health insurance policies by almost 40% between April and August, from a year earlier.

The growth is quite enough to prove that India has successfully set a brilliant example of showcasing that having an insurance policy as a fixed part of financial planning is of utmost importance.

However, what we must not forget is while COVID-19 may be the latest nail in the coffin, it is certainly not the last. The pan-



demic is not the only thing eroding health and livelihood.

The numbers
While COVID-19 continues to take centrestage, all other severe ailments and conditions have been sidelined, causing immeasurable suffering.

No doubt, COVID-19 is a highly infectious disease but its mortality rate is quite low compared with other pandemics in the past, including ebola, smallpox and SARS. Till the time of writing this article – in a span of almost six months – COVID-19 has claimed about 85,000 lives in India, which has a population of almost 1.4 billion, with a mortality rate of less than 2%.

Also, of the total number of health insurance claims recorded from April till August, COVID-19-related claims account for merely 11% – as per data from Policybazaar.com, which accounts for about 10% of India's retail health insurance market. On the other hand, some major lifestyle diseases and conditions account

for many more deaths per year.

Each year, in India, more than 7.8 lakh people die due to different types of cancer, al-

most 3.7 lakh lives are lost following cardiovascular ailments, and three lakh and two lakh people die due to gastroenteritis

and kidney diseases, respectively.

and kidney diseases, respectively. Yet, questions around COVID-19 coverage remain among the most

frequently asked, by customers in a country where health insurance penetration is a measly 4%.

Now let's compare cost of treatment for various conditions. For a COVID-19 infection, on average, the cost of treatment without ventilators or other life-saving equipment is about ₹10,000 – ₹15,000 daily.

That makes for ₹1.5–₹2 lakh for 14 days in urban areas and ₹75,000–₹1 lakh in semi-urban and rural areas. However, the cost of treatment of cancer often crosses ₹20 lakh, including surgery and chemo sessions.

For treating kidney-related ailments, the cost is about ₹5–₹7 lakh, while for cardiovascular ailments one has to spend about ₹4 – ₹7 lakh.

Comprehensive plan

Hence, we can easily conclude that COVID-19 accounts for a very small fraction of deaths in our country. Also, the cost of treatment is lower than for other ailments. Yet, consumers are

giving COVID-19 a disproportionate amount of importance when buying a health insurance policy. It is observed that most consumers are buying policies specific to the treatment of COVID-19 and not other ailments. However, this approach may turn out to be costly. While COVID-19 may get over as soon as a vaccine is launched, lifestyle-related ailments and other serious conditions requiring hospitalisation are here to stay.

While buying health cover, you must consider the significant mortality and treatment cost of all major illnesses. In such a scenario, insurance is no longer a luxury that can be overlooked. Health insurance, has become a necessity and must hold its ground even in a conservative and minimalist savings and investment plan.

It is important to stay financially protected against a pandemic and other ailments that may strike at any age. In situations like these, the only way to stay financially protected is by buying a comprehensive health insurance policy. If one gets hospitalised for treating COVID-19 infection, the overall health insurance plan will help cover medical expenses for this condition as well.

Buying health insurance not just for yourself but for your entire family is important to make sure your hospital admission and treatment expenses are covered seamlessly.

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

INSURANCE: COMMON MISTAKES

Commit to a policy before buying it

Many take insurance cover for the wrong reasons, ignoring the underlying serious purpose

M.S.R.A.SRIHARI

With no social security scheme worth its name covering a majority of the citizens of our country, it has become imperative for everyone to opt for individual insurance schemes or policies.

While doing so, many commit some common mistakes, as a result of which those policies do not help meet the intended goals. The purpose of this article is to create awareness among those evaluating an insurance policy. Some of these erroneous approaches appear silly but happen all the time.

The usual missteps
‘The adviser is my brother-in-law or childhood friend or classmate. Hence, I have to take a policy otherwise he may feel bad.’ But, after taking the policy, it is you who will actually end up with bad feelings. So, initial refusal is always better than refusal at the final stage.

Second: ‘The adviser is virtually after me, pestering constantly to take a policy. I need to take one and get rid off him at the earliest.’

But once you take a policy, you might have succeeded in getting rid of the adviser but not the policy itself as it is meant for a lifetime.

Three: ‘I need a policy to avoid tax or avail myself of tax concessions under section 80C.’ There are a host of other products eligible for tax concession under section 80C such as PF (which is mandatory for every employee), APF etc.,

Four: ‘Just because every earning individual has a policy, I too should have one.’ Just like one has a table, sofa set or a chair, should you also buy an insurance policy just so that the policy bond may be displayed in the showcase?

Five: ‘For the fear of mortality.’ One wants to take a policy whenever one encounters such a situation concerning near and dear. An very small percentage of policyholders fall under this category.

Taking a policy is easy and simple but to continue the same after the initial euphoria subsides is critical. That is why it is important to continue the policy till the end of the term. Because discontinuation or lapsation of a policy is a loss both to the policyholder and the insurance company alike. For the policyholder, it will be like holding a torn umbrella which does not cover him or her come rain or shine. For the insurance



The right path: Avoid taking a policy merely because others have taken one or only to help save on tax. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

company, it will be like a single plant that is neither watered nor nurtured in an entire field, ultimately withering away.

Above all these lies the fact that one's commitment towards one's family viz. parents, spouse and children, which leads to the decision in taking

an insurance policy. These commitments are to be kept in mind while taking a policy. After all, an agent or a broker or an intermediary works to earn a commission on his sale. But the client needs to delve into all aspects of an insurance firm before taking a policy. Responsi-

bilities at every stage of life are to be articulated in advance and need to be planned in a fool-proof manner to absorb any unforeseen shocks or incidents.

Be it life, vehicles or medical insurance, one needs to be doubly cautious and careful while buying policies. The purpose for which they are being taken should be fulfilled in the first instance.

Enter young

The younger the age, the lower will be the premium. As age advances unnoticed, responsibilities increase, which require more caution and planning. Term insurance for a longer term taken at a younger age, commensurate with one's income, costs a lot less.

With no social security scheme to protect us, one should also plan for one's retirement expenses, starting from the time of joining employment. Due to its longer gestation period, this fund grows exponentially to meet one's post-retirement expenses.

ULIPS and SIPs are also to be considered at an early age because corrections in the markets can be neutralised over a longer term.

Once a person gets married

and has children and the need for vehicle and housing loans crop up, one should plan for different goals at different times. Medigain for the entire family and children's education or marriage needs decide the type of insurance protection one needs at this stage of life.

There are several schemes offered by insurers.

They are broadly traditional insurance policies that combine risk coverage and savings and where the returns at the end of the term are defined: term insurance policies (pure risk coverage with zero returns); ULIPS (which are exposed to stock market nuances and where returns are not at all defined); pension policies (longer gestation periods with defined returns that make them attractive) and health policies (which cover hospitalisation expenses in case of any illness).

An insurance policy serves a purpose in the same way an estate created in one's family's name does, if free from encumbrances. Hence, one must think twice before taking a policy, be it for a vehicle, a house, a person or his health.

(The author is Associate Member of the Insurance Institute of India)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure
SMALL FINANCE BANKS				
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.75	7.15	7.50
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	7.50	7.25	7.25	7.25
Jani Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.90	7.50	7.50
Fincare Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.95	7.25	6.50
Equitas Small Finance Bank	7.35	7.10	7.15	6.75
ESAF Small Finance Bank	7.00	7.00	6.50	6.00
AU Small Finance Bank	6.75	5.50	6.75	6.50
Capital Small Finance Bank	6.65	6.35	6.35	6.25
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	6.50	6.50	6.05	5.80
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS				
RBL Bank	7.15	6.85	7.15	6.50
IndusInd Bank	7.00	7.00	6.75	6.75
DCB Bank	6.95	6.50	6.95	6.95
Nainital Bank	6.50	5.40	5.50	5.50
Lakshmi Vilas Bank	6.25	6.00	6.00	6.00
IDFC First Bank	6.00	5.75	5.75	5.75
Bandhan Bank	6.00	5.75	5.75	5.75
Karur Vysya Bank	6.00	5.50	5.65	5.65
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	5.75	5.75	5.50	5.50
CSB Bank	5.75	5.25	5.75	5.75
City Union Bank	5.75	5.50	5.75	5.50
Karnataka Bank	5.70	5.40	5.65	5.65
Dhanalaxmi Bank	5.60	5.25	5.40	5.50
PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS				
South Indian Bank	5.50	5.40	5.50	5.50
Federal Bank	5.50			

Delhi Capitals pips Kings XI in Super Over finish

After Stoinis' whirlwind knock, Mayank's counterattack almost pulls it off for the Punjab side in a dramatic contest



Unstoppable: Man-of-the-Match Marcus Stoinis played a blinder for Delhi Capitals while Mayank Agarwal was in his element for Kings XI Punjab. ■ BCCI/IPL



IPL 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI

Marcus Stoinis' superb performance with bat and ball was complemented by Kagiso Rabada's brilliant Super Over as Delhi Capitals edged out Kings XI Punjab in a thriller on Sunday.

Stoinis blasted his way to a 21-ball 53, his late assault ensuring a total of 157 for eight for Capitals. As many as 57 came off the final three overs. The Australian smashed seven fours and three sixes.

In reply, the Delhi side was in control for 15 overs before Mayank Agarwal's 89 off 60 balls nearly won it for KXIP. Stoinis, with the ball this time, proved a game-

changer with the Punjab side needing one off three balls.

The first one was a dot ball followed by the wickets of Mayank and Chris Jordan, both falling to full tosses, as the match ended in a tie.

Rabada, a Super Over specialist, removed K.L. Rahul and Nicholas Pooran off successive balls to make it an easy three-run target off one over.

Rishabh Pant scored two after Mohammed Shami had bowled a wide off the second delivery.

Tinge of grass
Earlier, Rahul elected to bowl on a pitch that had a tinge of grass. The ball swung appreciably and pacer Shami relished the helpful track.

Shami's wicket-taking and run-choking spell seemed to have swung the contest in Kings XI's favour before Stoinis' outstanding hitting changed the complexion of the game towards the end of the Capitals' innings.

It was a pitch that required patience from the batsmen but Capitals began with reckless shots, with Prithvi Shaw (5) paying the price for his extravagance and Shimron Hetmyer (7) failing to check his shot.

Shikhar Dhawan (0) was run out to a horrible mix-up and the scoreboard was not a pleasant sight for the Delhi side at 13 for three.

However, skipper Shreyas Iyer (39) and Rishabh Pant (31) put together 73 stand for

the fourth wicket before Stoinis' knock towards the end gave Capitals the momentum.

Shreyas and Pant largely relied on singles to keep the scoreboard moving. Shreyas took Gowtham to the cleaners in the 13th over, creaming off 15 runs with two well-measured straight sixes.

Ashwin injured

R. Ashwin sent back Karun Nair (1) and Nicholas Pooran (0) in the space of five balls. It, however, did not end well for Ashwin, whose dive off the last ball to stop a single resulted in a shoulder injury.

Shreyas, however, said that Ashwin informed him that he will be ready for the next game.

SCOREBOARD

DELHI CAPITALS

Prithvi Shaw c Jordan b Shami 5 (9b, 1x4), Shikhar Dhawan run out 0 (2b), Shimron Hetmyer c Mayank b Shami 7 (13b, 1x4), Shreyas Iyer c Jordan b Shami 39 (32b, 3x6), Rishabh Pant b Bishnoi 31 (29b, 4x4), Marcus Stoinis run out 53 (21b, 7x4, 3x6), Axar Patel c Rahul b Cottrell 6 (9b), R. Ashwin c Shami b Cottrell 4 (6b), Kagiso Rabada (not out) 0 (0b), Anrich Nortje (not out) 3 (1b); Extras (w-1, w-6, nb-2); 9; Total (for eight wkt. in 20 overs): 157.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-6 (Dhawan, 1.4 overs), 2-9 (Shaw, 3.3), 3-13 (Hetmyer, 3.6), 4-86 (Pant, 13.6), 5-87 (Shreyas, 14.1), 6-96 (Axar, 16.1), 7-127 (Ashwin, 18.6), 8-154 (Stoinis, 19.5).

KINGS XI PUNJAB BOWLING

Cottrell 4-0-24-2, Shami 4-0-15-3, Jordan 4-0-56-0, Gowtham 4-0-39-0, Bishnoi 4-0-22-1.

KINGS XI PUNJAB

K.L. Rahul b Mohit 21 (19b, 2x4, 1x6), Mayank Agarwal c Hetmyer b Stoinis 89 (60b, 7x4, 4x6), Karun Nair c Shaw b Ashwin 1 (3b), Nicholas Pooran b Ashwin 0 (3b), Glenn Maxwell c Shreyas b Rabada 1 (4b), Sarfaraz Khan c Shaw b Axal 12 (2b, 2x4), K. Gowtham c Pant b Rabada 20 (14b, 1x4, 1x6), Chris Jordan c Rabada b Stoinis 5 (6b), Mohammed Shami (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (lb-6, w-1, nb-1); 8; Total (for eight wkt. in 20 overs): 157.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-30 (Rahul, 4.3), 2-33 (Karun, 5.1), 3-34 (Pooran, 5.5), 4-35 (Maxwell, 6.3), 5-55 (Sarfaraz, 9.6), 6-101 (Gowtham, 15.3), 7-157 (Mayank, 19.5), 8-157 (Jordan, 19.6).

DELHI CAPITALS BOWLING

Nortje 4-0-33-0, Mohit 4-0-45-1, Rabada 4-0-28-2, Ashwin 1-0-2-2, Axar 4-0-14-1, Stoinis 3-0-29-2.

Toss: Kings XI Punjab.

Underachieving RCB looks for a flying start

Kohli's team takes on Warner's SRH



Influential: de Villiers and Williamson will look to pull their weight for their teams. ■ TWITTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI

Virat Kohli will begin his quest for an elusive IPL title when perennial under-achiever Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) takes on David Warner's low-profile but consistent Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL here on Monday.

Both teams possess dangerous batsmen who can single-handedly take the game away from the opposition.

With presence of the top T20 bowler, Afghanistan leggie Rashid Khan, and No. 1 all-rounder in the format Mohammad Nabi, Sunrisers has one of the best spin bowling attacks in the tournament.

TODAY'S MATCH



DUBAI, 7.30 p.m. IST

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 14

SRH 8 | RCB 6

In 2019

Played 2 | SRH 1 | RCB 1

STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD)

Buttler to miss Royals' opener against CSK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI

Jos Buttler will miss Rajasthan Royals' opening game against CSK on Tuesday as he is in the middle of his mandatory quarantine period, having arrived here with his family.

"I'm unfortunately going to miss the first match for Rajasthan because I'm going to be doing my quarantine period because I'm here with my family," he said in an Instagram live.



Jos Buttler.
■ TWITTER/JOSBUTTLE

Experience proved crucial: Dhoni

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI

Chennai Super Kings skipper M.S. Dhoni has said his team's tremendous "experience" proved to be a crucial factor in its five-wicket victory over defending champions Mumbai Indians in the IPL opener.

Need a good mix
"The experience pays off, everyone talks about it. You get it only after you play a lot of games. 300 ODIs is a dream for anybody to play and when you put an XI on the field, you need a good mix of youngsters and experienced players," Dhoni said.

Meanwhile, CSK head coach Stephen Fleming has confirmed that the team's star all-rounder Dwayne Bravo will miss another couple of matches owing to a niggle.

MI skipper Rohit Sharma was upset that none of his batsmen could carry on the initial momentum that they gained, in the opener.

"None of our batsmen



Partners in success: Ambati Rayudu and Faf du Plessis' association proved fruitful for CSK against MI. ■ BCCI/IPL

carried on for us, like du Plessis and Rayudu did for CSK. I think we were 85 in

the first 10 overs. Credit to the CSK bowlers. Something for us to learn," Rohit said.

Rashid primed to deliver for SRH

Feels that RCB's stars will demand the best from bowlers

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

"You have to bowl the best ball to get rid of world-class players like Virat Kohli, A.B. de Villiers and Aaron Finch," said Sunrisers Hyderabad leg-spinner Rashid Khan as his team gears up to take on Royal Challengers Bangalore in Dubai on Monday.

"There are no excuses for bowling bad balls. You have to keep things simple and enjoy the challenges," Rashid, who turned 22 on Sunday, said at a virtual media interaction.

The challenges
Rashid said the wind and dew factors would challenge slow bowlers, especially in the second half of the tournament.

"Irrespective of the nature of the wickets, which are expected to become spin-friendly as the League progresses, one has to adjust, bowl a consistent line



Rashid Khan.
■ TWITTER/SUNRISERS

and length and attack the batsmen's weak zones," Rashid said.

"I tried out quite a few variations during the last few months. Five different grips, using the shoulder and a quicker action should help me bowl faster and get more turn," he said.

"I never think of only be-

ing a wicket-taker. My job is also to bowl as many dot balls as possible to force the batsmen to take risks," he said.

"There will be no crowds. But, the idea of ensuring some cheering through a sound system at the ground is good, for it gives extra energy," Rashid said. "Those who enjoy the bio-bubble the most and remain mentally fresh will be the most successful cricketers here," he said.

Playing it smart

"We have quite a few batters in the middle-order who can rise to the occasion. Again, it is not all about hitting big sixes but playing smart cricket the way Faf du Plessis did against Mumbai Indians in the opener," Rashid said.

"This is a different IPL since there are no home or away games. The quicker you adjust, the better you perform," he said.

Dhoni is a genius: Curran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI

Sam Curran says he was "surprised" by M.S. Dhoni's move to promote him in the batting order against MI.

"To be honest, I was very surprised that I went in. He (Dhoni) is a genius and obviously thought something."

"We targeted that over (18th) and I went in with a six or out mentality," said Curran.



Sam Curran. ■ BCCI/IPL

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13046

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

S	T	A	D	I	A	L	E	A	V	E	S
O	N	M	S	N	I	T					
S	P	I	E	T	O	N	E	R			
W	A	L	I	E	T	O	N	E	R		
W	A	L	I	E	T	O	N	E	R		
W	A	L	I	E	T	O	N	E	R		
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S	T	A	D	I	A	L	E	A	V	E	S

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Record-breaker: Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, who will turn 22 on Monday, has become the youngest to win the Tour de France since Henri Cornet in 1904. ■ REUTERS

Wolff in lead

DeChambeau, Oosthuizen not too far behind

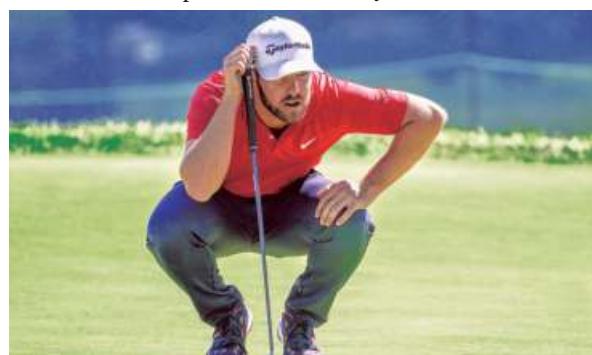
US OPEN GOLF

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

Matthew Wolff, a 21-year-old American making only his second Major start, fired a five-under 65 to seize a two-stroke lead after Saturday's third round of the US Open. The 2019 US college champion, who shared fourth at last month's PGA Championship, was five-under 205.

World No. 36 Wolff found only two of 14 fairways but blasted from the deep grass onto 12 greens in regulation and made six birdies against a lone bogey.

American Bryson DeChambeau was second on 207 after shooting 70. South Africa's Louis Oosthuizen, the 2010 British Open champion,



Making his mark: Matthew Wolff showed he belongs in the elite circles with a fine third round. ■ AP

pion, fired a 68 to stand third on 209.

Matching the best

Wolff matched Winged Foot's lowest US Open round ever, Justin Thomas' opening 65, after starting the day four adrift of leader Patrick Reed, who stumbled to a 77 with eight bogeys and a double bogey to stand on 213.

Four-time Major winner Rory McIlroy was seventh on 211 after a 68, six back but liking his chances of a first Major win since the 2014 PGA.

Top scores: **205:** Matthew Wolff (66, 74, 65); **207:** Bryson DeChambeau (69, 68, 70); **209:** Louis Oosthuizen (067, 74, 68); **210:** Hideki Matsuyama (71, 69, 70), Xander Schauffele (68, 72, 70), Harris English (68, 70, 72); **211:** Rory McIlroy (67, 76, 68).

Boston Celtics hit back on Saturday, leading wire-to-wire in a 117-106 victory over Miami Heat that cut the gap in the NBA Eastern Conference finals to 2-1. Jaylen

Brown scored 26 points for the Celtics.

The result: **EC finals:** Boston Celtics 117 (Brown 26, Tatum 25) bt Miami Heat 106 (Adenayao 27, Herro 22) **Heat 2-1.**

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