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IN BRIEF



Air quality in Delhi drops to seasonal low

NEW DELHI
A day before Deepavali, air quality has dipped to a seasonal low of 320 – or the “very poor” category in the National Capital Region. Despite a spike in instances of farm fires from Punjab and Haryana this week, they aren’t a contributor to the poor air quality, according to meteorological analysts.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8



THE HINDU
greets its readers
on the occasion of
Deepavali

There will be no issue of
THE HINDU dated November 5,
2021 as our office will remain
closed for the festival.

Readers can access the online edition at
www.thehindu.com

Excise duty on petrol cut by ₹5, diesel by ₹10

After Centre’s move, most BJP-ruled States slash fuel taxes

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday finally bit the bullet on runaway fuel prices and slashed excise duties on petrol and diesel by ₹5 and ₹10 per litre respectively, citing the need to help farmers for the rabi crop, ease inflation and give the economy a consumption boost.

Following the Centre’s excise duty cuts, most BJP-ruled States followed suit by cutting their fuel taxes, ostensibly with an eye on bringing fuel rates below ₹100 a litre. Gujarat, Karnataka, Assam and Tripura, among others, promised a ₹7 per litre cut in State levies for both diesel and petrol, while Uttar Pradesh announced a tax cut of ₹7 per litre on petrol and ₹2 per litre on diesel. Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said the prices of petrol and diesel would be reduced by ₹2 and ₹17 per litre respectively.

While pump level prices are expected to cool off effective Thursday, they are likely to remain close to or

Cheaper fuel

The table lists the retail price buildup of petrol and diesel in Delhi as of Nov. 1. The Centre has reduced ₹5 and ₹10 from the excise duties of petrol and diesel respectively

figures in ₹/litre	Petrol	Diesel
Base price	47.28	49.36
Freight	0.3	0.28
Excise duty	32.9 (-5)*	31.8 (-10)*
Dealer rate	3.9	2.61
VAT	25.31	14.37
Retail price	109.69	98.42

* to be effective from Thursday above the ₹100 a litre mark for petrol in most places. The Centre has urged the States to ‘commensurately reduce’ the Value Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel to give relief to consumers.

Even if the States don’t act, the actual amount of VAT levied by them on fuels is expected to reduce immediately because they levy varying tax rates on an ad-valorem basis, or simply put, as a percentage of the fuel price after central excise duties are levied.

Oil industry officials said the estimated price for petrol would reduce from ₹110.04 to ₹103.97 a litre in the capital from Thursday, from ₹115.85 a litre to ₹109.98 in Mumbai, from ₹106.66 to ₹101.40 per litre in Chennai and from ₹104.49 to ₹104.67 in Kolkata. Similarly, diesel prices are likely to soften between ₹11 and ₹12.50 a litre in the four metropolitan cities.

The Centre had been levying excise duties and cess of ₹32.90 per litre on petrol and ₹31.80 per litre on diesel. For context, the central excise duty on diesel was ₹3.56 per litre in 2014.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

PM calls for door-to-door vaccination

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday held a review meeting with senior officials of districts with low COVID-19 vaccination coverage. He urged officials to plan micro-strategies to improve coverage.

He called on health workers to carry out door-to-door vaccination drive.

The meeting included districts with less than 50% coverage of the first dose and low coverage of the second. The Prime Minister interacted with the District Magistrates of over 40 districts in Jharkhand, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya and other States.

Urging the health workers to reach every house with the passion of “Har Ghar Tika, Ghar Ghar Ti-ka” (vaccine at every doorstep), Mr. Modi asked them to go in the spirit of “Har Ghar Dastak” (knocking on every doorstep). “Now we are preparing to take the campaign to each household,” he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Covaxin gets WHO’s emergency use nod

Relief for those wishing to fly abroad

Long wait ends

The WHO’s emergency use licence for Covaxin has come after over 12 crore doses were administered in the first 11 months of its use in India. A lowdown:

- Efficacy results were published in July showing the vaccine was about 93% effective in preventing severe COVID-19 and roughly 65% effective against infection with the delta variant
- Covaxin was developed by Bharat Biotech in partnership with ICMR
- Covaxin shots were sent to Myanmar, Paraguay and Zimbabwe as grants, apart from Mauritius and Iran



SOURCE: AFP

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

India’s first indigenous COVID-19 vaccine, Bharat Biotech’s Covaxin, was granted Emergency Use Listing (EUL) by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday.

Covaxin is a whole virion-inactivated vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, developed in partnership with the Indian Council of Medical Research and the National Institute of Virology, Pune. It has been granted EUL for use in persons 18 years and above, over two doses spaced four weeks apart.

However, no recommendation has been made for

use in children, and available data for use on pregnant women is insufficient to assess safety or efficacy, the WHO said.

The EUL is a prerequisite for the COVAX initiative in vaccine supply, and allows countries to expedite their own regulatory approval to import and administer COVID-19 vaccines.

The move is expected to ease international travel for Indians who have opted for the vaccine but experts say that this would be subjected to countries clearing Covax in through their regulatory processes.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Central teams rush to States hit by dengue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry has rushed high-level teams to nine States and Union Territories – Haryana, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir – reporting a high caseload of dengue to support them in control and management of the disease.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya held a review meeting on the dengue situation in Delhi on November 1.

He directed that the Health Ministry should extend help to all the States and U.T.s having a high incidence of dengue cases. A total of 1,16,991 cases had been reported by the States and U.T.s across the country, said a release issued by the Ministry.

He added that a significantly higher number of cases were reported in some States in October as compared with the corresponding period the previous year.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Celebration of lights



Surreal streaks: A laser show on the banks of the Sarayu river in Ayodhya during Deepotsav, when nine lakh earthen lamps were lit, on the eve of Deepavali, on Wednesday. ■PTI (SEE ALSO PAGE 9)

Despite bail, long road out of jail

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI

While Shah Rukh Khan’s son Aryan Khan is finally out of jail after paperwork delayed his release on bail, not everyone is that lucky.

A number of undertrials have to spend weeks or even over a month in jail despite securing bail as they either cannot pay the surety amount or are stuck in procedural matters such as address verification, or simply due to minor errors in documentation. This is in spite of courts repeatedly stating that once a bail order is given, the release should be quick.

Lawyers say the delay in release of undertrials is an attack on their constitutional liberties.

DETAILS ▶ PAGE 8

Annaatthe to hit 1,200 screens worldwide

It is Rajinikanth’s first film after he decided not to take the political plunge

STAFF REPORTER
CHENNAI

After the COVID-19 lockdowns, ‘Superstar’ Rajinikanth’s *Annaatthe* will release on Deepavali day in about 1,200 screens globally, besides those in India. This is the first Tamil film after March 2020 to have such a massive release worldwide.

However, *Annaatthe* is different from a usual Rajini film. For starters, he has closed the chapter on his political career. The question on every exhibitor’s mind is if his huge fanbase will throng theatres despite his disappointment with his decision not to enter politics. In a long while, this is the actor’s first film to come out unaccompanied by rumours of a possible announcement about his political entry.

Second, the evolving



Sun Pictures has roped in Qube Cinema to assist it in finding theatres abroad.

in at least 1,100 screens, including 572 in the U.S and 135 across Europe. It will also release in more than 100 screens in UAE and 17 in New Zealand.

According to Sun

Pictures, the film will release

the box office will decide whether Rajinikanth can continue his solo act as the number one of Tamil cinema, drawing an astronomical salary of close to ₹100 crore, or follow Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan and play roles that suit his age.

Theatres fully booked
A leading producer said, “We will know tomorrow if he can continue to act as a young man opposite Nayanthara. There is huge pressure on his shoulders, that to his ₹100-crore salary, and if this film fails, he may have to change his approach. On the contrary, if the film is a huge hit, he will once again have proved that he is the undisputed king of the box office. So far, all shows on the first day are fully booked, but second day tickets are available.”

The film’s performance at

DUSU challenges university’s decision in HC

‘Move to consider only Class XII marks for Kerala board students arbitrary, unfair’

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi University Students’ Union (DUSU) has moved the High Court against the university’s decision to consider only Class XII marks for the admission of students from Kerala State Board, which determines the grades by combining marks of Classes XI and XII.

In its plea, DUSU said it was approaching the Delhi High Court against the “arbitrary, irrational and unfair conduct” of the university authorities, who have “violated” the fundamental and legal rights of innumerable students.

It said that in terms of consistent policy, certain State boards, including the Directorate of General Education (Higher Secondary Wing), Government of Kerala, give combined marks of Classes XI and XII on the marksheets.

The petition said Delhi University has, for several years, correspondingly incorporated provisions in its admission bulletin stating that in cases where State boards publish marks of both Classes XI and XII, the merit of students shall be determined on the basis of the consolidated marksheets. However, in the admission process for 2021-2022, colleges raised and conveyed objections with regard to marksheets containing scores of both Classes XI and XII, the plea stated.

The plea added that initially, the university directed that such cases be kept on hold; however, within a few hours, the admissions office circulated an email to colleges asserting that the Admission Advisory Committee has decided that only marks of Class XII shall be considered. The High Court will hear the petition by DUSU on November 10.

The admission process at DU began on October 1 with some colleges asking for perfect scores for courses. Students from Kerala State Board managed to grab most seats with 100% marks. This led to protests by students’ groups against DU’s admission policy.

The university released its four cut-off lists on October 31 but most of the popular courses are already closed for admissions.

DU has “unilaterally and arbitrarily” decided that students would only be required to fill marks of Class XII, the plea said.

Colleges objected

“When the admissions began for the sessions 2021-2022, colleges raised and conveyed objections with regard to marksheets containing scores of both Classes XI and XII for admissions.

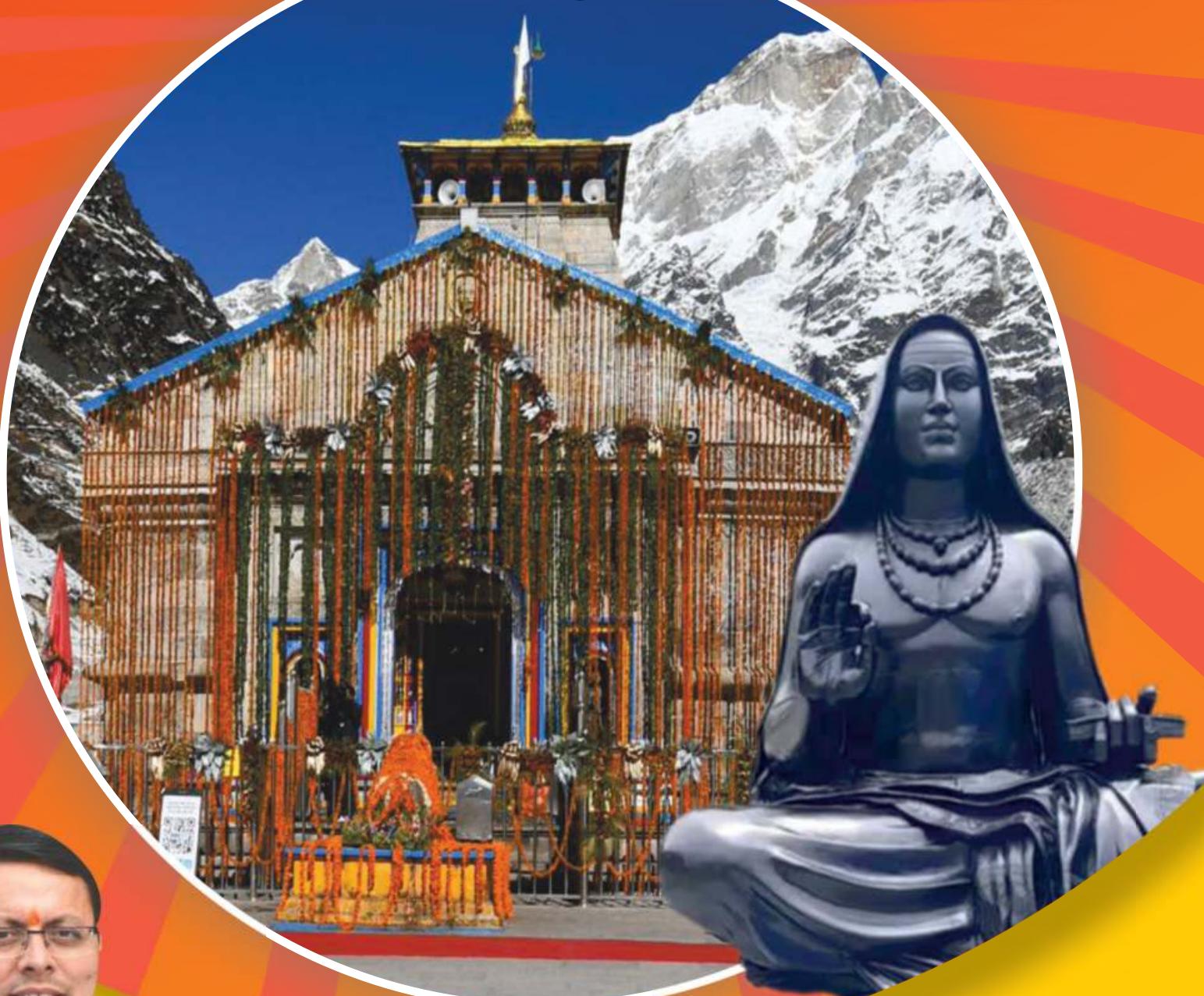
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Flood control by load-bearing wall at the bank of river Mandakini
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- **Administration Office and Hospital Building**
Help will be provided to pilgrims for information, complaint & assistance and dedicated medical services will also be accessible in the hospital
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Pilgrims will get complete information of the history of Kedarnath
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by
Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

In the August presence of

Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Gurmeet Singh
Governor, Uttarakhand

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

Satpal Maharaj
Tourism & Culture Minister, Uttarakhand

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RISE 05:41 SET 17:20
FRIDAY, NOV. 05
RISE 06:36 SET 17:34
RISE 06:50 SET 18:02
SATURDAY, NOV. 06
RISE 06:37 SET 17:33
RISE 08:02 SET 18:49

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Safdarjung 30 16
Palam 29 18

Delhi Paliam Today 29°C A dry weather to prevail. The misty morning turns slight warm day with mainly clear sky. Night will be cool and hazy.

Delhi Paliam Tomorrow 28°C The weather will be dry and comfortable with mainly clear sky. Night remains cool and hazy. Pollution level will be moderate.

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THE HINDU
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Hindu Sangharsh Samiti says namaz row resolved

Muslim community denies consent, calls internal meet today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM



A press conference of Hindu and Muslim leaders after the joint meeting in Gurugram. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Leaders of the Sanyukt Hindu Sangharsh Samiti on Wednesday said the district administration officials in a meeting with the representatives of the two communities had conceded that public places could not be used for religious activities and no such places were ever designated in Gurugram for offering of Friday prayers.

Accusing the administration of acting under pressure from right-wing groups, the Muslim community called for an internal meeting on Thursday to choose representatives to engage with the administration. Gurgaon Nagarik Ekta Manch co-founder Altaf Ahmad, present at the joint meeting, said the discussion at the Deputy Commissioner's office was sabotaged by right-wing group representatives and Muslim Rashtriya Manch (RSS' wing) representative Khurshid Ra-

jak, who were driving their one-point agenda of suppressing Muslims. He added that the Muslim community was shocked to know that the Gurugram administration had cancelled eight of the 37 spots of Jumma Namaz agreed upon in 2018.

'No designated places'

"The Samiti president, Mahavir Bhardwaj, and the Muslim Ekta Manch chairman, Shehzad Khan, in a joint statement to the media after the meeting agreed that offering of namaz could not be allowed at public places, but

they added that the prayers could not be stopped immediately and more time be allowed. The number of places for offering namaz this Friday would be mutually decided upon after a meeting between the two groups. The Samiti's president said the administration rejecting the existence of the list of 37 designated places for namaz had paved the way for amicable resolution to the matter," said a press statement issued by the Samiti.

Deputy Commissioner Yash Garg did not respond to repeated calls.

Shoppers to go on virtual walkthroughs of Delhi's markets.

"The Delhi Government has taken up an initiative that is going to bring prosperity to the ventures of Delhi's traders and businesspersons," Mr. Kejriwal said in a digital briefing.

"One will be able to showcase all their products and

Pollution from crackers can make air quality severe post-Deepavali'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality is expected to deteriorate to "severe" level on Friday and Saturday if pollution from firecrackers is 50% of what was seen in 2019, said authorities.

"However, if we consider 50% of firecracker load of 2019, then AQI is predicted to enter severe category during November 4 to 6. It is predicted to improve slightly on November 6 evening onwards but will fluctuate between high-end of very poor and severe range," SAFAR said in a statement.

But if there is no additional pollution from firecrackers, the air quality is expected to remain in the "very poor" range, which has been continuing since Tuesday.

The city's air quality on Wednesday worsened slightly (314) from Tuesday (303) but continued in the

Woman found murdered in rented house

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 28-year-old woman was found murdered at her residence in south Delhi's Mehrauli on Wednesday, the police said.

DCP (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said the police received a PCR call at 2.45 a.m. from the victim's husband. Avdesh Kumar, a worker at a sweet shop, found his wife lying unconscious with a head injury at their rented accommodation when he returned from work. It appeared that she had been brutally beaten up by someone, the husband told the police.

When the police reached the spot, the victim had already been shifted to a hospital where doctors declared her brought dead.

A case under Section 302 (murder) of the IPC was registered and the crime scene was inspected.

The couple had shifted to the house along with their two children two days ago, the police said.

Govt. announces e-market for city traders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday announced 'Dilli Bazaar', an e-marketplace, where every small and big entrepreneur from the Capital will have their own e-commerce store.

He said the portal would give a global online identity to entrepreneurs and enable

shoppers to go on virtual walkthroughs of Delhi's markets.

"The Delhi Government has taken up an initiative that is going to bring prosperity to the ventures of Delhi's traders and businesspersons," Mr. Kejriwal said in a digital briefing.

"One will be able to showcase all their products and

Case registered in multilevel parking collapse

AAP demands probe; inquiry revealed technical malfunction, says SDMC official

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A day after part of an automated multilevel parking facility at Green Park collapsed, damaging a few cars, Delhi Police on Wednesday took suo motu cognisance of the incident and registered a case at Hauz Khas police station. No injuries were reported and the parking area was subsequently closed.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) alleged corruption in

the construction of the facility, which was built by the BJP-ruled South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), and sought a probe into the matter.

"Yesterday (on Tuesday), the automated stack parking unit at Green Park completely collapsed. And it's important to note that this was such a renowned parking system that it was inaugurated twice by two Union Ministers," AAP chief spokesperson

Saurabh Bharadwaj said. AAP leader Atishi said the facility built by the corporation collapsed within a year and it was a clear proof of corruption by the BJP. "It's necessary to investigate which contractor and officer were given the responsibility of the construction. Their links with BJP leaders should also be looked into," she said.

SDMC standing committee chairman B.K. Oberoi, however, said investigation revealed that the electrically operated floor plates (which are used to shift cars) had "collapsed due to a technical malfunction".

"There were no irregularities in the construction. The floor plates got dismantled and fell inside the facility. The parking system had indicated an error on multiple occasions and the supervisor should have checked it," Mr. Oberoi said.

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FAMILY JUDGE AT RANGALORE

M.C. NO. 892 / 2020

BETWEEN: SMT. RAJESHWARI SRIDHAR,

W/o Srikrishnanathan aged about 55

years, R/t No.4, Nandamban Enclave Flat 203,

1st Main, 3rd B Cross, Gururaj Layout,

Behind Manasa Sarovara Apartment,

Doddanakundlu, Bangalore-560048.

Petitioner

AND: SRI. V. SRIDHAR, S/o Vishwanathan,

aged about 58 years, R/t No.54, Samachar

Apartment, Mayur Vihar, Phase I Extension

New Delhi-110091 ...Respondent

NOTICE

Whereas the above Petitioner have applied

for Divorce U/sec. 13(1)-(a) of the Hindu

Marriage Act, 1955.

The above Petitioner is hereby

warned to appear in the Court in person or by

a pleader duly instructed on 06/11/2021 at

11:00 AM forenoon to show cause against

petition, failing wherein the matter will be

heard and determined Ex-parte.

Given under my hand and seal of this Court

on this 25.10.2021

BY ORDER OF THE COURT,

Sheristadar Family Court, Bangalore

K. KESHAVA & K. SREERAM, Advocate

No.509, 1st Main, 1st Cross

Geetanjali Layout, Bangalore-560075.

EDUCATIONAL

FACULTY REQUIRED for UPSC GS, Option all subjects & Maths (CSAT). Experience will be given preference. Email Resume @ Ignitecivilservices@hotmail.com. Call/Wapp 9362991296

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Director Town & Country Planning Haryana Chandigarh has granted licence no. 49 of 2017 dated 21.07.17 in favour of M/s RRD Developers for setting up of a Deen Dayal Jan Awas Yojna colony on an area measuring 7,01875 acres in sector-03, Farukhnagar, Gurugram. In compliance with the DTCP memo no. LC-3259/JE(S)/2021/27889 Dated: 29.10.2021. The general public is hereby informed that, the Director Town & Country Planning Haryana Chandigarh has vide aforesaid memo accorded in principle approval for change of developer (COD) of the licence no. 49 of 2017 dated 21.07.2017 in favour of M/s SHF SQUARE LLP. Any person or organisation having any objection to this approval may complain in the following offices:

I. Senior Town Planner, Huda Complex, Sec-14, Gurugram-122001.

II. RRD Developers, Ravinder Yadav, Village Tikri, Sector-48, Sohna Road, South City-ii, Opp. Universal Trade Towers, Gurugram-122018.

III. SHF SQUARE LLP, 2nd floor, 856, Sector-14, Gurugram-122001.

within 30 days of publication

of this notice.

(RAVINDER YADAV) Partner For M/s RRD Developers Gurugram November 04.2021

Gautam Bhalla, Secretary, Tatyasaheb Patel Marg, New Delhi-110001.

Government of Tamil Nadu

Commissionerate of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business

Tamil Nadu Supply Chain Management Project

CIPET Road, Thiru.Vi.Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600032.

Reference Number : TNSCM/1503/2019, dated 02.11.2021

On behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, the Commissioner of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business now invites the Tender for Technical Qualification and Price Bid (Two cover system) from Joint Venture Entity or Registered Business Partnership formed by Private Entity with Farmer Producer Organisations or Private entity as 'Sole Applicant' to be as Market Integration Partner for operationalising 9 Primary Processing Centres in 6 Districts viz., 3 Primary Processing Centres at Pavoorchathram, Sankarankoil & Kadayanallur in Tenkasi District, 1 Primary Processing Centre at Pochankalai in Krishnagiri District, 2 Primary Processing Centres at M.Puthur & Mannachanallur - II in Tiruchirappalli District, 1 Primary Processing Centre at Harur in Dharmapuri District, 1 Primary Processing Centre at Vilathikulam in Thoothukudi District and 1 Primary Processing Centre at Chikkadapalayam in Coimbatore District under Tamil Nadu Supply Chain Management Project for Fruits, Vegetables and Other Perishables in Tamil Nadu.

SI. No.

Description

1 To identify Market Integration Partners for Operating 9 Primary Processing Centres for Fruits, Vegetables and Other Perishables under Tamil Nadu Supply Chain Management Project.

Interested Joint Venture Entity or Registered Business Partnership formed by Private Entity with Farmer Producer Organisations or Private entity as 'Sole Applicant' shall submit their Technical Qualification and Price Bid (Two cover system) in the manner and form as detailed in the Technical and Price Bid documents provided in the websites www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tn.gov.in and www.tnagm.net.tn.gov.in. The tender document can be downloaded free of cost.

The tender documents can also be obtained on payment, in person or by courier or post from the office of the Commissioner of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business, CIPET Road, Thiru.Vi.Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-32 from 10.00 A.M. to 05.45 P.M. on all working days up to 06.12.2021 after remitting the cost of the document in the form of Demand Draft drawn in favour of the "Commissioner of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business" payable at Chennai.

The filled tender document should be submitted only as Hard Copy (by Registered post / Courier / in person) upto 03.00 P.M. on 07.12.2021 and the tenders received after the due date and time will be summarily rejected. Any revision of dates / Updates will be intimated through website only.

Commissioner,

Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business

"Gautam Bhalla, Secretary, Tatyasaheb Patel Marg, New Delhi-110001."

आरखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग
सर्कुलर रोड, रॉयॉ-834001

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति

आरखण्ड संयुक्त असेनिक सेवा प्रतियोगिता परीक्षा-2021

(विज्ञापन संख्या-01 / 2021) के संबंध में आवश्यक सूचना

आरखण्ड संयुक्त असेनिक सेवा मुख्य प्रतियोगिता परीक्षा-2021 (विज्ञापन संख्या-01 / 2021) का आयोजन माह जनवरी, 2022 में होगा। इस संबंध में विस्तृत कार्यक्रम बाद में प्रकाशित किया जाएगा।

यह प्रेस विज्ञप्ति आयोग के वेबसाइट www.jpsc.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। ₹०/- साथिया।

PR 256456 (Jharkhand Public Service Commission)21-22*D

जारखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग, रॉयॉ

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति

आरखण्ड संयुक्त असेनिक सेवा प्रतियोगिता परीक्षा-2021

(विज्ञापन संख्या-01 / 2021) के संबंध में आवश्यक सूचना

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PR 256456 (Jharkhand Public Service Commission)21-22*D

जारखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग, रॉयॉ

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति

IN BRIEF



Video of BJP leader slapping police goes viral

KALABURAGI
Enraged after being prevented from burning Congress leader Siddaramiah in effigy during a protest, Karnataka BJP leader A. Papareddy slapped a police constable in plainclothes in Raichur. A video clip of Mr. Papareddy slapping him went viral.

3 hurt in blast at illegal cracker unit in A.P.

SRIKAKULAM
Three youth received serious burns following a blast at an illegal cracker unit in Tekkali, Andhra Pradesh, on Wednesday. The victims were identified as Vakada Hari, Saigopal and Murthy. A few others received minor injuries in the blast that occurred while they were preparing crackers at a house in Kaccheri Veedhi.

Heated discussion at Cong. meeting over Huzurabad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

The Political Affairs Committee (PAC) meeting of the Telangana Congress held on Wednesday after the Huzurabad loss saw a heated exchange of words.

While the meeting was supposed to draw a plan for the agitational programmes against Government policies, serious questions were raised on the Huzurabad candidate's selection.

Senior leader V. Hanmantha Rao asked why a BC or an SC leader was not given the ticket but a novice like Venkat Balmoor.

Former Deputy Chief Mi-

A dangerous proposition: Kerala HC

Observation comes on plea to remove PM's photo from vaccination certificate

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCCHI

The Kerala High Court has adjourned to November 23 the hearing on a writ petition seeking a directive to the Centre to remove the photograph of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the COVID-19 vaccination certificate given to paid vaccine recipients.

When the petition came up for hearing recently, Justice N. Nagashree orally observed that the plea was 'a very dangerous proposition.'

If tomorrow someone could come here and protest that they did not like Mahatma Gandhi and seek removal of his image from our currencies saying it was their blood and sweat and they did not want to see his face on it, what would happen then, the court asked.

Counsel for the petitioner submitted that the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi was



The affixing of a photograph of the Prime Minister on the certificate had no relevance as could be seen from such certificates issued by other countries

PETITION

printed on currency as per Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulations, while the Prime Minister's photograph was affixed not based on any statutory provision.

'No relevance'

According to the petition, the photograph of the Prime Minister on the COVID-19 vaccination certificate did not have any utility. It was a certificate issued merely to confirm the status of vaccination of a person.

The petitioner also contended that he had already paid for his vaccination. As a

result, he had not obtained any subsidy or largesse from the Government on his vaccination. In fact, it was the shortage of free vaccine slots that forced the petitioner to opt for the paid vaccination.

The State had no right to claim the credit by inserting a photograph of the Prime Minister in the certificate issued to a paid vaccine recipient. It was a certificate issued merely to confirm the status of vaccination of a person.

The present COVID-19 campaign appears to be designed to garner a political advantage by projecting a positive image of the Prime Minister. This Government-sponsored campaign affected both the personal decision-making process and the decision taken by the petitioner as a voter, he said.

The Union Government counsel sought more time to file a statement.

'SC/ST Act cannot be allowed to be misused'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

An offence under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, cannot be presumed to be committed in every crime where the victim happens to be an SC or ST, the High Court of Karnataka has said.

The court also pointed out that if the motive for crime is not caste-based attack or hatred towards that caste, the accused can only be charged with any of the offences under the Indian Penal Code that can be appropriately invoked in the background of the incident of crime or under other laws

that can be applied as the facts and circumstances indicate.

'Decide wisely'

Though the Act is essentially meant for protecting members of the SC and ST communities from atrocity or oppression, it cannot be allowed to be misused; and therefore, the court said, there is a greater responsibility on the investigating officer to take the decision wisely before filing the chargesheet.

Justice Sreenivas Harish Kumar passed the order while quashing the criminal proceedings initiated against one Lokanath, a resident of the city.

Father, imam held for Kerala girl's death

STAFF REPORTER
KANNUR

Following the death of an 11-year-old girl here a few days ago, the Kannur City police on Wednesday arrested her father and an imam for denying her timely medical treatment for an illness.

The police said the girl's father, Abdul Sattar, a resident of Naluvayal, and imam Muhammad Uwais, a native of Kunjipalli, were arrested on a complaint filed by a relative of the child.

The relative had complained that Fathima, who had high fever, lost her life as she was denied proper treatment due to superstitious beliefs held by the elders in her family.

'Holy water'

The girl was allegedly given only 'holy water' by Uwais, imam of a local mosque, when she was taken to him for curing her.

Police said Uwais allegedly practised witchcraft.

Kannur City Police Commissioner R. Ilango said they were arrested in a case registered for denial of medical treatment.

The relative has sought an investigation against the imam for the mysterious death of five more persons who were allegedly subjected to superstitious practice and dissuaded from seeking medical treatment when they approached him after contracting various diseases, they said.

Police said Fathima, staying in the seventh standard, had fever for three days and died on Sunday.

She was taken to a private hospital when the fever did not subside. According to hospital sources, the girl was brought dead.

(With inputs from PTI)

Gehlot emerges stronger after sweep in bypolls

Cabinet reshuffle on his own terms



Ashok Gehlot

responsible for the defeat.

While the rift in the BJP may intensify with the blame for the poor show being shifted on State president Satish Poonia, the Congress high command has received a message in no uncertain terms that Mr. Gehlot's popularity remains intact. The bypolls campaign was entirely controlled by the Chief Minister, who addressed half-a-dozen rallies in the two constituencies, while his former deputy Sachin Pilot went to the region only once, on the day of filing of nominations.

As part of the electoral strategy, Mr. Gehlot selected MLA Gajendra Singh Shaktawat's wife Preeti Shaktawat as the party candidate in Vallabhnagar despite the deceased legislator having been a staunch loyalist of Mr. Pilot. Mr. Shaktawat was one of the 18 MLAs who had shifted outside the State along with Mr. Pilot during his rebellion last year.

As Ms. Shaktawat has won riding on the sympathy wave, Mr. Gehlot can be said to have got a "disgruntled MLA" in his favour. Moreover, the Congress has snatched the Dhariawad seat from the BJP, which had won there in the last two Assembly elections, and increased its tally to 108 in the 200-member House, further strengthening the position of Mr. Gehlot in the State politics.

ENTERPRISE CONNECT

Punjab & Sind Bank declares Financial Results

Today, Punjab & Sind Bank declared the reviewed financial results of the Bank for the quarter ended 30th Sept 2021. MD & CEO of the Bank Sh. S. Krishnan informed that the Bank has continued its' good performance by registering a Net Profit of Rs.218 Cr as at 30.09.2021 against a Net loss of Rs.401 Cr as at 30.09.2020. The Bank has registered a YoY growth of 15.89% in the Total Business, Retail, Agriculture and MSME (RAM) Credit has shown a growth of 7.29%. CASA Deposits has registered a growth of 13.09%. Priority Sector Advances & Agriculture Advances of the Bank stood at 47.37% and 19.43% respectively, exceeding the National target of 40% and 18% respectively. Sh. S. Krishnan, MD & CEO also informed that the Bank continued its' special focus on NPA Recovery. During Q2 of FY 2021-22, Bank has recovered Rs.893 Cr, including recovery of Rs.60 Cr in Technically Written-Off (TWO) accounts. The Bank has recently launched 'PSB UnIC' a unified digital platform, to provide a hassle-free banking experience to the customer and has also taken several IT initiatives. Bank has launched tailor made loan products, reduced retail loan interest rates at par with other peer Banks and has revamped some of the existing schemes to match with the best in the industry. Bank is embarking on a plan of rebalancing its portfolio as a result of which corporate advances has declined from 52% to 51% while RAM advances has grown from 44% to 46% on QoQ basis.

PNB holds Mega credit Outreach Programme in Delhi

In a bid to reach out to customers and address their credit needs, a Mega Customer Credit Outreach Programme was organized by the lead Bank - Punjab National Bank at Wazirpur Industrial Area, Delhi. The credit outreach programme was inaugurated by Chief Guest Ms. Cheshta Yadav - District Magistrate (North-West District) Delhi. The program was attended by Shri Ashish Kumar - SDM (HQ) North-West Delhi, Shri K. Meenakshisundram - General Manager of PNB Delhi Zone, Shri Shyam Sunder Narang - Chief Regional Manager of IOB, Shri Anil Ahluwalia - Dy Circle Head North Delhi, Shri Rajinder Choudhary - AGM SLBC Delhi, executives from Public Sector & Private Sector banks and a large number of customers. While recognizing the efforts of all the banks during the Covid-19 pandemic, Ms. Cheshta Yadav appreciated the step taken by the banks to reach out to customers for their credit needs as well. Shri Ashish Kumar emphasized that Banks should give top priority to financial benefits for the poor under various Government sponsored schemes, with particular focus on the recently launched Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME). Shri K. Meenakshisundram said that in a bid to boost the credit off-take during

NBCC & its subsidiary HSCL pays final dividend

NBCC and its subsidiary Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited (HSCL) under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), paid Dividend of INR 52.24 and 4.36 crore, respectively (including interim dividend) to the Govt. of India for the year FY 2020-21. The final cheque(s) were presented to Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon'ble Minister for MoHUA and MoPNG by Shri PK Gupta, CMD, NBCC & Chairman, HSCL and Shri TLN Reddy, Managing Director, HSCL in August presence of Shri Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, MoHUA; Shri Kamran Rizvi, Government Nominee Director & Additional Secretary, MoHUA; Smt. BK Sokhey, Director (Finance) NBCC; Shri Shyam Awasthi, Director (Finance), HSCL along with Company Secretary of NBCC & HSCL and senior officials from the Ministry.

Powergrid Observes Vigilance Awareness Week

Vigilance Awareness Week, 2021 was observed in POWERGRID, Northern Region-I from 26 Oct to 01 Nov, 2021 at RHQ, Faridabad. During this ceremony, distinguished Chief Guest, Dr. N.S. Saxena, Chairman, Jammu and Kashmir Power Transmission Limited (Former ED, POWERGRID) graced the occasion. Sh. A.K. Mishra, ED (NR-I) welcomed the Chief Guest by presenting a Book and Planter. Sh. Manoj Kumar, Sr.GM [Vigilance] NR-I briefed the significance of celebration of Vigilance Awareness Week every year. The theme of this year's Vigilance Awareness Week was "Independent India @ 75: Self-Reliance with Integrity". ED, NR-I briefed about POWERGRID i.e. its inception, its geographical coverage/challenges, its business model, its progress over the years and its overall position in India and World as well. Sh. Dr. N.S. Saxena, Chairman, Jammu and Kashmir Power Transmission Limited, Chief Guest, was the Chief Guest in the Valediction Ceremony at RHQ, Faridabad. During his speech, he focused on ethics, discipline, integrity and transparency which are the key components for the progress of a Company and a nation as well and quite relevant to the theme "Independent India @ 75: Self-Reliance with Integrity". Sh. Dr. N.S. Saxena, Chairman, Jammu and Kashmir Power Transmission Limited, Chief Guest distributed prizes to the winners of various competitions [Online Quiz competition and Online Essay Competition] held during the week, 2021. At last, Sh. Manoj Kumar, Sr GM [Vigilance], NRTS-I gave vote of thanks for all making this celebration a grand success.

Vigilance Awareness Week observed by BHEL

Dr. Nalin Shinghal, CMD, BHEL administered the Integrity Pledge to employees across the company through Video Conferencing in the presence of the functional Directors and the Chief Vigilance Officer on the inaugural day of the Vigilance Awareness Week 2021. Messages of the Hon'ble President of India, the Hon'ble Vice President of India, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and the Central Vigilance Commission were also read out on the occasion.

A Business Initiative

A Business Initiative



DELHI POLICE

SHANTI SEWA NYAYA

CELEBRATION CAN'T BE AT THE COST OF LIFE

Life-Threatening Barium Salt Firecrackers are Prohibited


Use of barium salt in firecrackers, manufacturing, and joint selling is banned as per the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Direction.

• Toxic chemicals, barium salts firecrackers are life-threatening and can cause serious injury.

• Any willful and deliberate disobedience will be dealt very seriously.

Delhi Police Wishes Citizens to Celebrate a Clean & Pollution-free Diwali

E-mail to CP, Delhi at: cp.rakeshasthana@delhipolice.gov.in | Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

For Immediate Police Help Call 112

For Helpline Services Call 1090



Mixed bag

Bypoll results hold lessons for the centralising politics of the BJP and the Congress

The results of bypolls in three Lok Sabha seats and 29 Assembly seats across 13 States and one Union Territory are a mixed bag for the BJP and the Congress. The ruling party in West Bengal, the TMC, got a resounding endorsement as it won huge victories in four Assembly seats, while the TRS, despite using all levers of power in Telangana, faced a defeat in the lone Assembly seat. The BJP took a considerable beating in Himachal Pradesh, where it rules, as it lost a Lok Sabha seat and three Assembly seats to the Congress; but it made gains in Madhya Pradesh, where it displaced the Congress in two Assembly seats while retaining a Lok Sabha seat and an Assembly seat. In Assam, it won all five Assembly seats along with a regional ally, displacing the Congress in one. The victory in the Huzurabad Assembly segment in Telangana may be the most encouraging for the BJP, as it defeated the ruling TRS that had left no stone unturned to retain the seat. The Congress defeat in the seat was so decisive that the outcome might point to a definitive turn in State politics. In Karnataka, the BJP faced a setback in the home district of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

Reading too much into bypoll results is fraught with risks, but some broad points are noteworthy. Taken together, the results show that the Opposition is alive and kicking, but still devoid of a national narrative, programme or leadership. This set of byelections may not signal any consequential change in the national mood – H.P., which gave a drubbing to the BJP, has only four Lok Sabha seats, while in Bihar, BJP ally, the JD(U), retained both Assembly seats. The polls show that leadership at the State-level matters, and this may be bad news for the BJP that has increasingly centralised power and sought to undermine strong regional leaders. In Karnataka, B.S. Yediyurappa's removal as CM appears to have come with a cost; in Assam, and other north-eastern States, the imprint of Himanta Biswa Sarma is unmistakable in the impressive performance of the BJP; in Madhya Pradesh the credit for the party's victories goes to CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan; and in Rajasthan the extent of its defeat can be attributed to the lack of regional leadership. The massive scale of the TMC's performance in West Bengal and the corresponding rout of the BJP prove the former's complete grip over the State, and the latter's continuing struggle to understand it. The party was tamed in the Assembly election earlier this year, and its agenda and approach continue to be distant from the thinking of the Bengali. As for the Congress, what matter more are the defeats in M.P. and Telangana, and not the victories in H.P. and Rajasthan.

The recovery toolkit

The economic recovery remains fragile; rebooting tax policy may help

The latest string of official numbers, including almost-record GST collections, healthy direct tax inflows, strong manufacturing and exports, provide some confidence that the economy has lurched back from the danger zone for the second time in less than a year owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. But the healing is still too uneven. GST revenues in October, for transactions done in September, crossed ₹1.3-lakh crore. The Finance Ministry believes this kitty would have been higher if sales of cars and products dependent on chips were not afflicted by shortages. If September's activity reflects pre-festive stocking, the actual festive spending (October-November) may keep GST numbers propped up, but it would be critical to wait for the post-celebration trajectory. October has offered mixed signals so far – manufacturing has seen a surge in output and new orders, domestic and global, but continues to shed jobs, as per the IHS Markit Purchasing Managers' Index. Moreover, manufacturing rivals Vietnam and Indonesia have seen a sharper rise. Diesel consumption, a better indicator of commercial throughput, has been lower than October 2020, while credit growth, rail passenger revenues and traffic congestion have been insipid. India's exports have held strong, but the import bill is rising too as coal, fuel and edible oil prices shoot up.

A hovering fertilizer crisis could yet dampen rabi crop and hit farm sector growth. While that could trip rural demand, rising oil prices pose a persistent threat to growth. One understands a resource-starved Government's preference for certain non-discretionary revenue flows such as those arising from 'fuel consumption' over the less certain 'discretionary consumption' revenues based on households' aspirations and confidence levels about the immediate future. But the longer-term impact of the former constricting the latter would be worse as it also puts paid to hopes of a sustainable investment pick-up. Growth engines will remain throttled rather than go full throttle towards the Centre's five trillion-dollar goal for the economy, unless consumption and investment bounce back. With Wednesday's token tax cuts on petrol and diesel, the Government is clearly changing tack from narratives about the high fuel taxes funding free vaccines and welfare schemes that can only hold legs for some distance. Whether this is prompted by recent electoral setbacks or in anticipation of the bigger State polls ahead, it may need to follow up with more tax cuts as global prices are expected to firm up further. The urban poor have been hit the hardest by the high inflation prevailing since the pandemic's onset in 2020. They, along with the much-celebrated Indian middle class, have the highest propensity for upward spending on consumer durables, homes, two-wheelers, and so on. Beyond a point, people would also like to be self-reliant just as the nation aspires to be, and that would trigger a virtuous cycle for the economy.

Batting for 'One South Asia' makes more sense

When it comes to climate change, India's ideas would pack more punch if they have a clear road map for the region



SUHASINI HAIDER

Over the course of four days, at the G-20 in Rome and COP26 (the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference) in Glasgow, Scotland, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke at nearly a dozen events, expanding on India's plans to counter climate change. India's record since the 2015 Paris Accord and initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), as a part of which Mr. Modi (along with other leaders) launched the 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS)' at the World Leaders Summit at COP26 were widely welcomed. The announcement of India's new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the "Panchamrit" or five goals for the future elicited applause from across the audience. Missing however, was any reference to India's own region, the subcontinent, South Asia, without which India's multiple forays on fighting climate change could well prove fruitless.

South Asia's feeble voice
The absence of a South Asian initiative on climate change led by India, accrues to number of obvious reasons: India-Pakistan tensions that have led to the degradation of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) process, especially since 2014, when the last SAARC summit was held; events in Afghanistan and

the Taliban takeover which will bring it closer to its Central Asian rather than South Asian neighbours; the differences over pollution issues within the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) grouping that has held up its initiatives like the common Motor Vehicle Agreement (due mainly to Bhutan's opposition); and slow movement amongst the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries along the Bay of Bengal that have yet to bring about a common charter at the global level despite adding climate change as an area of cooperation a decade ago.

Impact of climate change

Why does this matter?

To begin with, regardless of relations between any of the countries in South Asia (India-Pakistan being the only notable rivalry), there is no question that this is a cohesive geographical unit that is sheltered by the Himalayas to the north, fed by its many glaciers in an intricate network of rivers that fall into the ocean, and buffeted by the same climate and monsoon conditions. Second, South Asia is slowly becoming the world's biggest area of concern when it comes to climate change. According to this year's Global Climate Risk Index, India and Afghanistan are among the top 10 countries worldwide in terms of vulnerability, but South Asia classifies for the overall lowest values (<https://bit.ly/3bEuMcW>). By one estimate, 20 out of 23 major cyclone disasters in the world in the past have occurred around the Bay of Bengal region, and global warming, coastal degradation and soil salinity as well as water scarcities cause the deaths of thousands in South Asia



each year. The Asian Development Bank now predicts a decrease of 11% in South Asian GDPs by 2100 if "Business-As-Usual (BAU) Emissions" are maintained. With global warming and sea levels rising, other estimates predict there will be nearly 63 million climate migrants in South Asia by 2050 ("Costs of Climate Inaction: Displacement and Distress Migration"; <https://bit.ly/3mERLuG>).

Second, all these grim figures build a logic for a combined push for global reparations and assistance for the entire region. As a part of the developing world, the Indian subcontinent is not responsible for the massive damage done to the environment already wrought by the developed world, and according to 2019 figures, no single regional bloc has lower per capita emissions than South Asia does (<https://bit.ly/3EkwZjL>).

Green potential

When New Delhi speaks of the need for climate justice, global funding and climate adaptation technology transfer, India's voice would only be strengthened multiple times if it speaks for South Asia as a whole. According to the World Bank's newly launched South Asia road map, climate-smart investment opportunities in South Asia total a whopping \$3.4 trillion, with "energy-efficient green buildings"

alone representing an investment potential of more than \$1.5 trillion. Green transport connectivity and infrastructure, electric vehicles could represent another \$950 billion in investment opportunities by 2030. This does not include the vast sums of funding available for cross-regional solar grids, wind farms and run-of-river energy projects (<https://bit.ly/3ECxF5V>).

Other drawbacks, China

However, while India and other countries in the region access global banks, including the BRICS-led New Development Bank (NDB), the Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and Asian Development Bank for projects individually, there is no single South Asian entity the banks could work with for a more targeted focus and more concessional financing for the problem that faces the region.

Third, growing carbon footprints as well as post-COVID-19 economic compulsions are driving countries into closer regional coalitions, looking for solutions closer home, than those provided by globalisation and long-distance supply chains. South Asia has remained an exception, persistently showing lower inter-regional trade and connectivity, and lower levels of cooperation on migrant labour issues, inter-state tourism and cross-border employment than other regions.

Finally, New Delhi has often warned of the pernicious influence of 'Chinese solutions' to problems in the subcontinent, ranging from unsustainable infrastructure financing to environmentally harmful projects as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but it has been unable to proffer a viable alternative, with or without its Quad partners.

On certain issues, where India has failed, South Asian neighbours have learned to seek help from other international partners or even each other: when India stopped COVID-19 vaccine exports this year for example, Bhutan, which received vaccines from Denmark and a number of other countries including the United States and China after a desperate global appeal, in turn helped Nepal with stocks of AstraZeneca. When New Delhi failed to respond to Sri Lanka's request for assistance with its currency and debt crisis last year, the Rajapaksa government turned to Bangladesh for a currency swap arrangement. The problems between India and Pakistan that have multiplied manifold in the past few years are no doubt a major obstacle, but not one that cannot be surmounted in the face of a common challenge, as the special SAARC conference on COVID-19 in March 2020 showed.

New Delhi can show the way

When it comes to climate change, there is a chance to turn this trend, and for India, the largest country in the region sharing the most boundaries with other South Asian neighbours, to lead the way to find holistic solutions: accessing funding, tapping the latest climate adaptation technology, and finding cross-border markets for renewable energy networks. Mr. Modi's "One Sun One World One Grid" and "Panchamrit" plans would clearly pack more punch if they contain a clear road map for the region, and strive for a common South Asian taskforce to tackle the enormous challenge that lies ahead for India and its neighbourhood this century.

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India's 5G leap is about powering tomorrow

The revolution that 4G technology ushered in can be enhanced but the nation cannot gloss over the digital divide



SURJITH KARTHIKEYAN &
PRAVAKAR SAHOO

The fifth generation mobile network, or 5G, is the next level of mobile network that will shape the Fourth Industrial Revolution, or Industrial 4.0, quality of service delivery, innovation, etc, by facilitating smarter and developing societies. Commercial 5G networks began to be deployed in 2020 and are expected to reach 12% of world mobile connections (1.1 billion) and generate revenues up to U.S.\$1.3 trillion by 2025 for operators. The technology that 5G uses will improve data transfer speed at unexpected higher levels – almost 100 times more – and reduce latency times helping mission-critical services. Thus, 5G is essential but are we ready for it?

Some roadblocks

India's telecom sector, which has revolutionised the digital space and facilitated services-led growth and quality of life, has been estimated to be one of the top performers globally for several years; but it has also been in doldrums for the last few years. Moreover, the Supreme Court of India's ruling on the dues being sought by the Department of Telecommunications (estimated to be more than ₹90,000 crore) has further exacerbated the financial condition of telecom companies. It is no wonder

that the number of telecom operators has come down to a handful from around 15 a few years back. In this scenario, the huge investment required for 5G may add to their worries. The trial run of 5G in developed countries such as Japan and the United States reveals that the investment is very high, ranging from \$6 million per small city to \$60 million per large or densely populated

then that the number of telecom operators has come down to a handful from around 15 a few years back. In this scenario, the huge investment required for 5G may add to their worries. The trial run of 5G in developed countries such as Japan and the United States reveals that the investment is very high, ranging from \$6 million per small city to \$60 million per large or densely populated

Much potential

The new generation mobile network has the transformative potential to provide a wide range of benefits to the Indian economy, which when enhanced with artificial intelligence provides a new dimension to connected and autonomous systems. Its use is a chance for Indian policy-makers to educate and empower citizens and businesses, and transform existing cities into smart and innovative cities. This may allow citizens and communities to get socio-economic benefits and comforts delivered by a well-advanced, more data-intensive, digital economy.

Broadly speaking, the uses of 5G in India may encompass enhanced outdoor and indoor broadband, the Internet of things, smart cities, smart agriculture, energy monitoring, remote monitoring, smart grids, telehealth, industrial automation, remote patient monitoring and industrial automation to name some of the areas. There is great potential for India to move to an advanced digital revolution.

However, it is imperative to undertake an independent economic assessment, city wise, beginning



with the metro cities, to assess the commercial viability for 5G deployment in India. Till this happens we may continue enhancing the existing quality of 4G networks. Singapore had planned four 5G networks – two comprehensive 5G networks and two others with smaller and limited coverage, the reason being the high cost in deployment of fibre cables and the scarcity of 5G airwaves.

What needs to be done

The immediate priority for India will be in identifying end users and population to be covered, analysis of the existing network and operators, identification of cities for the 5G roll out, working out an investment model, and minimisation of the digital risk and pricing based on the externalities and usage of various sectors. The deployment of 5G in India needs to be carefully planned after a cost benefit analysis by independent experts which will create a level-playing field through market mechanism such as facilitating, simulating, auctioning, functioning, ensuring competition, etc.

Once a case is made for 5G, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) may consider preparing a foolproof spectrum road map with a predictable renewal

process which will compensate the huge investment required for deployment and ensure coverage. A level-playing field should be created for all telecom companies with more focus on companies which have the experience of ensuring telecom networks to remote areas and the potential to provide affordable coverage. Global trials show that the key areas for 5G deployment are harmonisation of 5G spectrum bands, pricing and sharing of the spectrum. Sharing of available spectrum to maximise its efficient use especially in rural areas, and spectrum allocation procedures that favour investment, need to be considered.

Essential sector-friendly steps

As the deployment of 5G network is expensive, both the Central and State governments may need to consider measures which stimulate fibre investment, attract investment through public private partnerships (PPPs) and facilitate investment funds on a nominal interest basis. Fortunately, the big telecom package along with reforms announced by the Government in the middle of September bring relief and create an enabling environment for investment in the sector. Steps such as a moratorium on dues, redefining adjusted gross revenue, and reducing spectrum charges will help all telecom companies, more so Airtel and Vodafone Idea who face precarious financial situations. Further, removing the tax burden for deploying fibre networks reduces associated costs, thereby promoting investment as was done by Singapore government, could help in the smooth deployment of fibre in India.

As India has already witnessed digital revolution even in its remotest areas due to cost-effective 4G technology, the use of 5G can play a vital role in enhancing this sector and also facilitating India's goal to emerge as a manufacturing and innovation hub. The negative implication of 5G is furthering the 'digital divide'. Therefore, Government policies should also focus on affordable coverage through synchronisation of bandwidth.

Surjith Karthikeyan is Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Pravakar Sahoo is Professor, Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi. The views expressed are personal

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.

Bypoll battle

The by-election results have thrown up a mixed bag for the BJP and the Congress (Page 1, November 3). The sheen of the BJP could be fading a bit which could be attributed to contemporary events and issues. It could be a reminder to the party to make course corrections.

A. JAINULABDEEN,
Chennai

■ The results are an amber light for the ruling BJP. The ailing Congress may have spotted a green light and needs to act with confidence.

D. V. G. SANKARARAO,
Nellore, Andhra Pradesh

■ Mamata Banerjee has again proven that she is invincible in West Bengal and could now have the potential

to achieve success outside West Bengal. The by-elections show that however formidable the election machinery and the resources of the BJP may be, it can be beaten.

H. N. RAMAKRISHNA,
Bengaluru

■ The road from Glasgow
The green commitments that India made at COP26 are bold (Page 1, November 3). The Indian "assurances" look ambitious as they require many structural adjustments in the management of the economy. The launching of a project to develop infrastructure for small island nations (IRIS) is also a significant gesture to handhold vulnerable countries. Arguably, in the

context of resilient climate change adaptation, the developing nations should be adequately supported in green technology transmission and climate financing. *The Lancet* has also recently described climate change as the defining narrative of human health. Let us hope COP 26 makes a difference.

G. RAMASUBRAMANYAM,
Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

■ Shifting from fossil to non-fossil energy by the developing nations requires the very latest technology, apart from funding. Unless the developed countries undertake to transfer technology, all the efforts of the developing world will come to naught. In addition, defining concrete and

productive action to be taken by the world during the current decade and achieving the emissions targets being committed by nations for 2030 are crucial.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,
Hyderabad

■ The Prime Minister of India finally pledged India to set a net zero emissions goal and date is a wake-up call for the rest of the world. Having said that, steps to slash carbon emissions by a very large percentage ought to start from this very moment.

A. NAYA SINGHAL,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

■ The prime aim of advertisements should be to create awareness/interest about the products, in a manner that is best understood. Even peppy advertisements can only boost the sale of products to some extent. The majority of sales have to happen based on the 'merits' of the products.

V. S. JAYARAMAN,
Chennai

Internal reservation

The judgment of the Madras High Court on reservation is in the right direction. Constitutional reservation is available to those who are socially and economically backward. But for a reservation within a reservation – as here, where 10.5% was earmarked for the Vanniyars within the 20% quota for the OBCs – calls for compelling data to show that they are so exceptionally backward that they deserve such internal reservation. Since such data was lacking, the court struck it down as otherwise caste reservation would lapse into casteism which should be avoided.

N. G. R. PRASAD,
Chennai

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On dealing with false criminal cases

Investigating officers should ensure that no innocent individuals have to suffer the rigours of the law



R.K. VIJ

It is often alleged that false cases of cruelty are registered by the police at the behest of the estranged wife under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and many innocent relatives of the husband are roped in overzealously. This Section, along with Section 304B on dowry deaths, was brought in to check the menace of increasing dowry deaths and the cruelty meted out to married women by their in-laws in 1983. But its misuse has outraged many since then. Similarly, allegations are levelled sometimes for the misuse of certain provisions of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. This special law was enacted to remove the discrimination faced by the SC and ST communities, who remain vulnerable and are sometimes denied their civil rights. But it is alleged that, at times, cases are registered to settle personal scores.

Judgment modified

Realising the misuse of Section 498A, the Supreme Court in *Rajesh Sharma vs State of Uttar Pradesh* (2017) issued certain guidelines, including the formation of district Family Welfare Committees (FWCs), restraint on arrest till the complaint was examined by the committee, the disposal of the proceedings by a senior judicial officer in case of a settlement between the parties, etc. However, in 2018, the Supreme Court in *Social Action Forum for Manav Adhikar vs Union of India* modified the same judgment, stating that most of the directions had the potential to enter into the legislative field, which was not permissible. It was held that the constitution of the extrajudicial FWCS was contrary to the procedure prescribed under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Similarly, the Supreme Court in *Subhash Kashinath Mahajan vs State of Maharashtra* (2018), taking cognizance of the abuse of the process of the courts with regard to certain provisions of the SCs and STs (Preven-



tion of Atrocities) Act, issued certain guidelines, including the holding of a mandatory preliminary inquiry to avoid false implication of an innocent individual, the approval of the appointing authority before the arrest of a public servant, etc.

However, in 2019, the Supreme Court in *Union of India vs State of Maharashtra and Ors.*, overruled the above judgment and held that the guidelines were opposed to the protective discrimination given to members of SC and ST communities as envisaged under the Constitution.

Lodging a false report, the court said, "is due to the human failing and not due to the caste factor".

Genuineness of allegations

These judgments indicate that the courts cannot lay additional guidelines when the existing law is unambiguous and only legislature can modify such law in its wisdom. This also means that the onus is on the police to ensure that once the law is set into action, no undue advantage of the special law is taken by the complainant. The investigating officer must not jump to conclusions as soon as a First Information Report (FIR) is registered. Some investigation must be done to confirm the genuineness of a complaint before an arrest takes place. It is a settled law that no arrest can be made in a routine manner on a mere allegation. The arrest must be necessary and justified. Mere authority to arrest is not sufficient.

The Supreme Court, in its land-

mark judgment in *Arness Kumar vs State of Bihar* (2014), asked the police to satisfy themselves on the necessity of an arrest under the parameters laid down in Section 41 of the CrPC. Police officers, in fact, are duty-bound to ensure that the principles set by the Supreme Court in its various judgments are implemented by the investigating officers. Further, the judicial magistrate is also required to peruse the report furnished by the police officer and satisfy themselves before authorising further detention.

Though there are legal remedies available against those lodging false reports, the general perception, however, is that the remedial measures are not only insufficient but also ineffective. The first remedial measure is to initiate criminal action against the person who gives false information to the police or levels specific criminal charges against a person. The police, after completing the investigation, may initiate action under Section 182 or 211 of the IPC respectively. However, both these offences are non-cognisable and a magistrate's nod is necessary for initiating further legal action. The court, on its own, in certain cases directs the police to take action under these Sections if, on the completion of the trial, it is found that the allegations were completely false.

Second, the complaint may be filed before a judicial magistrate having jurisdiction, who, after an inquiry, can take appropriate action against a person who filed a false

case with the police. Third, the complainant may approach a High Court for anticipatory bail and for quashing the FIR. The Supreme Court recently held that even in non-compoundable cases that are not so serious or private in nature, the High Court, using its inherent powers under Section 482 of the CrPC, may quash the judicial proceedings even after a conviction, in case a genuine compromise is reached between the warring parties. The Law Commission, in its 243rd report in 2012, had suggested making Section 498A compoundable with the permission of the court, but it was not accepted by the Government. Fourth, in addition to the above, damages may be claimed under the law of tort for malicious prosecution and causing injuries.

What data show

As per data compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) in the report *Crime in India 2020*, about 5% of the cases under Section 498A were found to be false. About 9.4% were either non-cognisable or civil in nature or with insufficient evidence in the end. Similarly, about 12% of the cases under the SCs and STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act were found to be false by the police, and about 7% were either non-cognisable or civil in nature or with insufficient evidence in the end.

Further, out of the 17,765 cases under Section 498A decided by the courts, 3,425 cases ended with a conviction. Out of the 8,138 cases under the SCs and STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act decided by the courts, 3,588 cases ended with a conviction. Although there are varied reasons for acquittal, including a delay in lodging the FIR, witnesses turning hostile, compromise between the parties, lack of proper presentation by the prosecution and an appreciation of the evidence by the court, etc., the problem arises when a court concludes that a case is false.

Since the onus of arriving at the truthfulness of a case lies primarily with the investigating officer, it is their duty to investigate the case thoroughly and collect all the facts and circumstances fearlessly. This would ensure that false cases are closed in time and no innocent individuals have to suffer the rigours of the law.

R.K. Vij is a senior IPS officer in Chhattisgarh

A court order for the ages

Pegasus verdict provides an answer to question of privacy



BINOJ VISWAM

In a democracy, how far should the Government be allowed to peep into a citizen's privacy? The Government of India has always maintained that there is no limit to this, as long as the act is carried out in the interest of national security. The current Government has handled all Pegasus-related issues on the basis of this premise. The Supreme Court's recent decision provides a definitive answer to this question.

The top court said national security was not a pass for the Government to spy on its own citizens. The expert committee instituted by it is mandated by stringent terms of reference. It is worth noting that the court refused to accept the Government's suggestion for a Government-sponsored commission to investigate the matter. As a result, "we the people" would like to call it a landmark decision. The ruling was made in accordance with the fundamental right to privacy.

Aadhaar case

The Supreme Court had on an earlier occasion interpreted the Constitution and its emphasis on the primacy of privacy. In the Aadhaar case, which I was also a party to, the court determined privacy to be a fundamental right. The current Government has always had a different perspective on this crucial issue. There were allegations that the Government was tapping citizens' phones utilising numerous agencies.

The advent of the Pegasus malware brought the issue to a more dangerous level. The disclosure by the Pegasus Project, a media consortium, was so alarming that it shook the entire world. According to their analysis, Pegasus was utilised in India as well as over 45 other nations. The list included journalists, politicians, judges and activists. Even Ministers in the Union Cabinet were not spared. Initially, the Government bolstered its argument by issuing a blanket denial of the report. When it failed, their strategists worked around the clock to save themselves from a catch-22 predicament.

Parliament's monsoon session arrived in the midst of this controversy. The Government's main objective was to prevent any discussion on Pegasus. The Opposition, on the other hand, was eager to hold the Government accountable. But the MPs' customary avenues for airing their concerns were systematically diluted.

Strictly following the procedures, I gave a notice for the following questions: "The number of memorandum of understandings [MoUs] the Government has entered into with foreign companies and the details sector-wise; whether any of these MoUs with foreign companies has been in order to curb terror activities through cybersecurity and the details of the same; and whether the Government has entered into an MoU with NSO Group in order to curb terror activities through cybersecurity across the nation and, if so, provide details thereof."

The Rajya Sabha Secretariat set a date for them to be included during the Question Hour. But these questions were never brought before Parliament. Moreover, the rights of the MPs were suppressed by the authoritarian arrogance of the Government. The monsoon session was marred by unpleasant incidents. An MP may be compelled to question the relevance of Parliament when it is not permitted to examine vital topics, including the Pegasus issue, the farmers' struggle and price rise. When Opposition members tried to talk about Pegasus, their microphones were turned off.

We have heard Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterating that Parliament is an avenue to debate national concerns. These assurances are like lines drawn on water. Under the cover of national security, they built a fortress to prevent any discussion on Pegasus. Even the spyware's country of origin, Israel, has launched an investigation into it. However, the Government of India was adamant to ensure that no mention of Pegasus was made in the House. An "atmanirbhar" (self-reliant) Government is preaching the ideology of hyper-nationalism and then handing over the key of national security to a spyware controlled by a foreign country.

As far as national security and a citizen's fundamental rights are concerned, the Supreme Court's terms of reference were clear. The state cannot be an adversary in the defence of basic rights. The Government defends its operations by using the term "lawful interception" to justify its acts under the guise of national security. If that argument is permitted to do its rounds indefinitely, the country will devolve into a police state. The significance of the top court's historic decision is that it underlines that restrictions on the right to privacy must pass constitutional scrutiny. Citizens will definitely look up to this verdict as a protective measure in defence of their civil liberties. But they are anxious to know how the Government will cooperate with the fact-finding voyage of the expert committee.

Binoj Viswam is an MP and Secretary of the CPI National Council

STATE OF PLAY

Cong. sweep an alarm for BJP

Bypoll results in Himachal have shocked the party

HARISH K. THAKUR

The results of the byelections in Himachal Pradesh have its own story to tell as the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) grip over the situation has slid, which goes against the belief that the ruling clique has leverage to capitalise on. The State went to the polls on October 30 for the Arki, Kotkhai and Fatehpur Assembly seats and the Mandi Lok Sabha seat. The results have shocked the BJP.

Although the Mandi and Arki seats were expected to be under the BJP's influence, the contest at Fatehpur and Kotkhai had weakened its prospects. However, the Congress's sweep of all four seats went against popular expectations. What was more alarming was that the Congress had increased its vote share to 48.9% in the three Assembly seats against a meagre 28.1% of the BJP. Pratibha Singh, wife of former Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh, won by a margin of 8,766 votes against Brigadier Khushal Thakur for the BJP at Mandi. Rohit Thakur of the Congress defeated Independent Chetan Braga by 6,293 votes, Bhawani Singh defeated the BJP's Baldev Thakur by 5,634 votes and Sanjay Awasiya defeated the BJP's Rattan Pal by 3,277 votes.

It has been a characteristic of the State for decades now that after a certain Government completes three to four years, an anti-incumbency factor comes to the fore and a formal changeover takes place. Factors like an anti-incumbency mood, failure to meet promises, ineffective leadership and the economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant role in the current development. Rising oil prices and the consequent inflation acted as the final nail in the coffin for the BJP. Moreover, the loss of stalwarts significantly influenced the results, though the controversial allocation of tickets by both the BJP and Congress also worked adversely for the two.

The BJP paid for the poor allocation of tickets to controversial candidates. In Kotkhai, it gave a ticket to



Neelam Sarai against Mr. Bragta, son of former Minister Narinder Bragta; in Fatehpur to Mr. Baldev against former candidate Kripal Parmar and in Arki to Mr. Pal against two-time winner Govind Sharma. This did not go down well with party workers and led to infighting. The Congress also denied a ticket to Rajender Kumar in Arki, Virbhadra's staunch follower. The BJP was also harsh to the rebels who worked against the party, since the official candidate could secure only around 3,000 votes in Kotkhai. The triangular contest due to intra-party factionalism, which saw a cross-party transfer of votes, seriously damaged the BJP's position in the elections. Although at Arki, the Congress also saw a rebel in Mr. Kumar, the victory of Mr. Awasthi signified the presence of an anti-incumbency mood.

The results are also a warning to the central leadership since BJP national president J.P. Nadda and Union Minister Anurag Thakur hail from the State. The active presence of the duo during the campaign also received a jolt and may lead to a leadership shuffle in the State on the same lines as done in Uttarakhand this year. The real shock came from the Mandi seat, home of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur. It must be an unnerving moment for Mr. Thakur as before the elections, there had been voices in the air about a repeat of Uttarakhand in Himachal.

These elections are a precursor to the Assembly election in 2022. It shows the testing times for the incumbent Government. Rising prices have been at the root of these losses according to several pre-election surveys. Unemployment and ineffective leadership also overthrew the Government's achievements of having attained 100% (first dose) vaccination during the pandemic. In between lies the riddle of politics, games of aspirations and intra-constituency dynamics that surely affect such elections.

Harish K. Thakur is Professor and Chairman of the Department of Political Science, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla

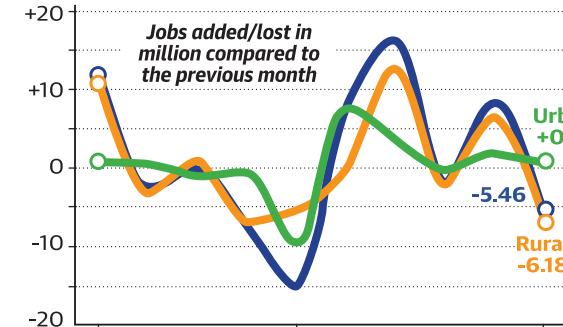
DATA POINT

Jobs lost and found in October 2021

The CMIE's* employment data for October 2021 show that the rural sector recorded a net loss of 6 million (mn) jobs in the month. The loss in employment was mostly observed in the rural construction and manufacturing sectors, which together recorded a net loss of 12 million jobs. Notably, these two sectors had absorbed around 12 million workers in September, which points to sustainability issues in these sectors in rural areas. The rural services sector and the urban manufacturing sector were able to give employment to a significant number of those who lost their jobs in October. By Jasmin Nihalani and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

1. OVERALL NUMBERS

The chart depicts the month-wise number of new jobs added/lost in 2021 across rural (—), urban (—), and across India (—). About 6.18 mn jobs were lost in rural India in October, while urban India added 0.71 mn. Rural India had added 6.52 million jobs in September, the third-highest for any month this year. However, the jobs were not sustainable, so the gains made during September were wiped out in October.



3. RURAL INDIA: BREAK-UP OF SERVICES SECTOR

Of the 8.30 million jobs created in October in the services sector in rural India, the majority were in the "personal and non-professional services" category, which include house helps, cooks, beauticians, masseurs, gym trainers, barbers, plumbers, gardeners and security guards. As many States opened schools for younger children in November, the rural education sector freshly employed 1.6 million people in October, the highest for any month in 2021. In addition, about 1.19 million and 1.51 million found employment in retail trade and tourism respectively. The table shows new jobs gained and lost in rural areas across select service sectors

Month	Retail trade	Travel and tourism	Education	Personal non-professional services
Jan '21	0.80	-3.53	0.17	-1.85
Feb '21	0.70	1.38	0.74	-0.24
Mar '21	-6.04	-0.30	-0.70	1.33
Apr '21	6.01	0.07	-0.13	-1.76
May '21	-6.21	-1.94	-0.25	0.36
Jun '21	7.53	-0.30	0.70	-3.43
Jul '21	-4.38	1.27	-0.47	0.73
Aug '21	5.52	0.98	-0.27	3.56
Sep '21	-4.20	-1.46	-0.25	-2.19
Oct '21	1.19	1.51	1.58	3.19

4. URBAN INDIA: INDUSTRY TYPE-WISE

Urban India's real estate & construction sector and the agriculture sector saw only marginal increases in jobs in October. On the other hand, the urban services sector shed nearly 3 million jobs, the first such loss for the sector in the past five months. Manufacturing, which was shedding jobs for the past three months, absorbed the majority of workers. About 3.73 million workers were added to the sector in October.

Month	Agri	Manufacturing	Construction	Services
Jan '21	-1.13	-0.10	0.27	0.50
Feb '				

FROM PAGE ONE

Excise duty on petrol cut by ₹5, diesel by ₹10

The RBI has been mooting fuel tax cuts since February to cool down persistently high inflation. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had defended the high taxation saying there is no assurance that the States would cut duties if the Centre did so and called for a coordinated approach.

On Wednesday, the Finance Ministry said the reduction in excise duty on petrol and diesel "on the eve of Deepavali" would boost consumption and keep the inflation low.

The Government had recently blamed the need to service oil bonds issued by the UPA Government to rein in high prices during its tenure. In the past few weeks, it has also argued that the petroleum taxes are helping fund COVID-19 vaccination and other welfare measures.

'Too little, too late'
The Opposition criticised the move as being too little, too late and being nudged by electoral pressures. Derek O'Brien of the Trinamool Congress termed it a "stunt".

"Happy Deepavali for Government of India. Last year, excise duty on petrol increased by 65% but now decreased by 15%. Between April and September, Government's collection from

excise on petrol rose 33% compared to last year. Collection of excise is 79% more than pre-Covid levels," he said in a tweet.

In 2021, price of petrol was hiked by ₹28 & Diesel by ₹26/litre. After losing 14 by-elections & two Lok Sabha seats, reducing Petrol-Diesel price by ₹5 & ₹10 is tom-tommed as 'Deepavali Gift' of Modi ji!", tweeted Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala.

In a statement, the Finance Ministry said, "In recent months, crude prices have witnessed a global upsurge. Consequently, domestic prices of petrol and diesel had increased in recent weeks exerting inflationary pressure. The world has also seen shortages and increased prices of all forms of energy."

At the last GST Council meeting in September, the Government had taken note of a Kerala High Court order asking for the inclusion of petroleum products under the GST net to be considered. However, the Council had reached a consensus that this was not the appropriate time to do so.

Emphasising that the excise duty on diesel had been lowered by twice the amount as petrol, the Ministry said this would particularly help farmers in the upcoming rabi season.

Prime Minister calls for door-to-door vaccination

He also suggested that raising awareness on the benefits of vaccination was the only solution and asked the officials to take help from religious leaders to encourage people to get their doses soon.

The Prime Minister noted that religious leaders are very enthusiastic about the vaccination campaign and urged for a special emphasis on taking their message to the public.

The Prime Minister cautioned that equal attention need to be paid to second-dose vaccination because

whenever the cases of infection start decreasing, sometimes the feeling of urgency decreases.

"You will have to contact those people who have not taken the second dose despite the stipulated time on a priority basis... ignoring this has created problems for many countries," he said.

He emphasised that under the free vaccine for all campaign, India created a record of administering about 2.5 crore doses in a day which bears testimony to its capabilities.

Covaxin gets WHO's emergency use nod



According to information released by the WHO, Covaxin was found to have 78% efficacy against COVID-19 of any severity, 14 or more days after the second dose, and is extremely suitable for low- and middle-income countries due to its easy storage requirements.

Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, welcoming the announcement, said, "This is a proud moment for the entire country."

The WHO in its tweets on Wednesday said that the Technical Advisory Group, convened by the WHO and made up of regulatory experts from around the

world, has determined that the Covaxin vaccine meets the WHO's standards for protection against COVID-19; that the benefit of the vaccine far outweighs risks; and that the vaccine can be used.

It added that Covaxin vaccine was also reviewed by the WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE).

Central teams rush to States hit by dengue

"A total of 15 States/UTs are reporting their maximum cases this year; these States contribute 86% of the country's total dengue cases till October 31," the release noted. The Central teams are tasked with assisting and supporting the States/UTs to mount an effective public health response.

The teams have been asked to report on the status of availability of kits and medicines, early detection, availability and use of insecticides, status of anti-larval and anti-adult vector control measures.

They will also brief the State health authorities on their observations.

Palestinian PM calls for Indian support

In meeting with Modi, Mohammad Shtayyeh says New Delhi can play a stabilising role in West Asia

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI



Need of the hour: State of Palestine's Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh speaks at COP26. ■REUTERS

capital," Mr. Shtayyeh said.

He said India's role in multilateral organisations required "strenuous efforts in cooperation with all related parties to achieve security and stability in the Middle East and West Asia".

The meeting, though on the sidelines of the global summit on environment and climate change, is of significance as it comes soon after the four-day visit to Israel by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. The visit was commented upon widely as

it excluded a trip to the Palestinian territory.

The Palestinian leader pointed out that India had an important role to play in international affairs due to its growing profile.

"We are ready for all forms of cooperation with India which is serving as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for 2021-22 and was re-elected to the Human Rights Council for the 2022-24."

The comments can be interpreted as subtle messages

for support on multilateral platforms.

In recent years, India has broken the tradition of supporting Palestine at the U.N. In 2019, India voted in favour of Israel at the ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) to deny observer status to a Palestinian organisation named Shahed. In June, India abstained during the voting on a resolution calling for investigation into Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip at the Human Rights Council which drew strong protest from Foreign Minister Riyad Al Malki who wrote a letter critical of India's abstention.

Mr. Shtayyeh, who attended the COP26 summit earlier, made headlines for saying Israeli occupation threatens the Palestinian environment.

Threat to environment

"We are here to tell the world that the Israeli occupation is the most critical long-term threat to the Pales-

tinian environment," Mr. Shtayyeh said while reading his comments as the leader of the Palestinian delegation on Monday.

Mr. Modi also met his Israeli counterpart Naftali Bennett on Tuesday before leaving for New Delhi and invited him to India to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic ties.

Technical backing
Mr. Shtayyeh appreciated India's financial and technical support.

"This support must be parallel and complementary with the political support of the Palestinian cause and in a manner that guarantees the implementation of international legitimacy resolutions."

The meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Shtayyeh is the first between them since February 2018 when PM Modi visited Palestine months after he paid a visit to Israel.

IN BRIEF



Sonia accepts Amarinder Singh's resignation

NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi accepted the resignation of former Punjab Chief Minister Captain (Retd) Amarinder Singh on Wednesday. Party general secretary K.C. Venugopal said, "Hon'ble Congress President has accepted the resignation of Captain Amarinder Singh from the primary membership of Indian National Congress". Mr. Singh had sent his resignation letter to Ms. Gandhi on Tuesday. He made it clear that his party would tie up with the BJP in the Assembly elections.

No properties attached by I-T Dept.: Ajit Pawar

PUNE

A day after the I-T Dept provisionally attached assets allegedly linked to Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, his office on November 3 said no properties linked to him had been seized and that the agency had not sent any notice on this count. His lawyer Prashant Patil said media reports on the alleged seizure of the properties linked to Mr. Pawar had "no basis in fact".

DRDO, IAF jointly test anti-airfield weapon

NEW DELHI

The Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Air Force have jointly carried out two flight tests of the indigenously-developed smart anti-airfield weapon. The weapon was launched by an IAF aircraft from the Chandan ranges at Jaisalmer, Rajasthan on October 28 and November 3, a Defence Ministry statement said. "In both the tests, the intended target was hit with high accuracy," it said.

No more proof against Deshmukh: Param Bir

MUMBAI

Former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh has told a commission set up to investigate corruption allegations against former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh that he does not have any further evidence on the matter. The affidavit was filed before the committee appointed to probe the letter written by Mr. Singh alleging that Mr. Deshmukh had directed Vaze to collect ₹100 crore.

A day before Deepavali, air quality in Delhi drops to seasonal low

It is likely to improve after Nov. 6 from rise in windspeeds

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

A day before Deepavali, air quality has dipped to a seasonal low of 320 – or the "very poor" category in the Delhi National Capital Region.

Despite a spike in instances of farm fires from Punjab and Haryana this week, they aren't a contributor to the quality, according to meteorological analysts.

National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah said, "Very unfortunate. Pakistan did the same with an Air India Express flight from Srinagar to Dubai in 2009-10. I had hoped that Go First airways being permitted to flying over Pak airspace was indicative of a thaw in relations but that wasn't to be."

Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti said it was puzzling that the Government of India did not even bother securing permission from Pakistan to use its airspace for international flights from Srinagar.

(With inputs from Jagriti Chandra)



Grim day: Delhi's skies wore a grey appearance on the eve of Deepavali on Wednesday. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

There were close to 2,700 instances of stubble burning on Wednesday and on Tuesday, 3,000 instances were recorded from Punjab, 203 from Haryana and 87 from Uttar Pradesh. "The contribution of biomass burning in PM2.5 concentration is likely to be less than 5% as winds are not favourable for transportation of pollutants," according to an analysis from the Air Quality Early Warning System of the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

The air quality over Delhi is likely to remain poor, at least until November 6 and then improve from an anticipated rise in windspeeds.

Moisture and the lack of adequate winds also lower the mixing height that then retards the natural dispersion of pollutants. A mixing height less than 6,000 m with average wind speed less than 10 kmph is unfavourable for dispersion of pollutants. Currently the mixing depths are around 1,700 m and windspeeds less than 10 kmph. A note on Wednesday from the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) said instances of stubble burning and farm fires from Punjab and Haryana were down by 50% from

last year. The active paddy residue burning events in Punjab, Haryana, NCR districts of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan and the NCR of Delhi have come down from 43,918 in 2020 to 21,364 in 2021 during September 15-November 2, thus registering an overall reduction in the fire counts by 22,554.

The hotspots of paddy residue burning in Punjab are Tarn Taran, Amritsar, Firozpur, Patiala, Ludhiana and Kapurthala. Similarly, the hotspots in Haryana are Kaithal, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Fatehabad, Ambala and Jind.

Despite bail, it's a long road out of jail for many

The delay in release of undertrials who have been granted bail by courts is an attack on their constitutional liberties

ARNABIT SUR
NEW DELHI

Faizan, 19, arrested on May 31 in a case of robbery, was granted bail by a Delhi court on September 24, but was eventually released on October 16 after tackling a series of legal hurdles.

Similarly, Javed*, an accused in an arson case in connection with the Delhi riots, was granted bail on June 10 last year, but it took a 20-day ordeal for him to be released from the Mandoli jail, where he was languishing since March last year.

Almost a week has passed after Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan was released from the Arthur Road Jail a day after being granted bail by the Bombay High Court due to delay in paperwork following which they missed the deadline to provide the jail with physical copies of the release orders.

This shines a light on a number of undertrials who have to spend several weeks to more than a month in jail after being granted bail as they either cannot pay the surety amount or are stuck in unnecessary delays like address verification or simply due to minor errors in documentation.

In Faizan's case, the court had imposed a bail bond of ₹50,000 on the teenager, who works at a small private company while his father is a contract labourer. Since he could not arrange the same, an application was moved by



Red tape: Aryan Khan had to wait a few days for his release after getting bail. Several others endure the same. ■ FILE PHOTO

in the accused's name on the release warrant but jail authorities can always check the FIR where the case details are already mentioned," he added.

After an accused is granted bail, a bail bond is imposed where a local surety, a relative or a friend of the undertrial, arranges the amount, be it in the form of property documents, vehicle papers, or through a fixed deposit receipt.

If the accused violates the bail conditions, the submitted amount or collateral will be deducted or seized respectively.

A local surety is generally combined with submission of a personal bond, where an undertrial signs an affidavit of a particular amount, which needs to be deposited if he or she breaches bail.

He added that while proper legal representation speeds up the process, those who cannot afford such assistance continue to languish in

conditions.

Advocate Chandan Goswami pointed out that often, getting a certified bail order copy becomes a cumbersome process. "Unless you ask for a *dasti* copy, the court doesn't upload the order copy which further scuttles the process," he said.

On the insistence on local sureties, Mr. Goswami said "The Supreme Court and several High Courts have repeatedly clarified that a surety can be local or from any other state but the law dictates that you have to accept it nonetheless and let the person go."

Senior advocate Colin Gonsalves said that courts have repeatedly said that once a bail order is given, the release should be quick.

Meanwhile, senior advocate Rebecca John argued "Even if the court is concerned about the accused breaching bail conditions, merely imposing a heavy surety will not prevent that from happening because there have been cases where undertrials have jumped bail despite a high surety."

She added that once a bail

order is passed, "any unnecessary delay in release is a violation of constitutional protections". "For verification, trial courts should follow a strict timeline so that people don't have to spend more time in custody."

Earlier this year, the release of student activists Devangana Kalita, Natasha Narwal and Asif Iqbal Tanha in a Delhi riots case was delayed by two days over verification of their addresses and sureties, following which the Delhi High Court ordered their immediate release.

Supreme Court judge Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, while speaking at an online event on Wednesday, called the delay in communicating bail orders to jail a "very serious deficiency" which needs to be addressed on a "war-footing" as it "touches upon the human liberty" of the prisoner.

This comes after the Supreme Court in July had taken *suo motu* cognisance of the delay in the release of 13 prisoners from the Agra Central Jail despite being granted bail.

The apex court, in September, gave the go-ahead to implement a system called FASTER (Fast and Secured Transmission of Electronic Records) which would allow transmission of e-copies or court orders through an electronic channel to jail authorities.

*Name changed on request

Private jets fly out of COVID turbulence

Demand exceeds supply forcing frequent fliers to consider buying their own luxury aircraft

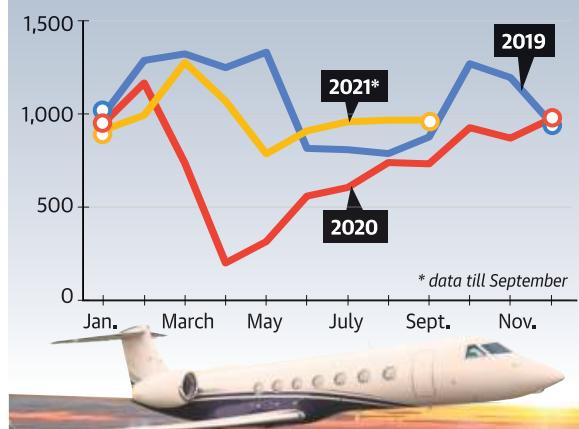
JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Luxury travel on private jets has surpassed pre-COVID levels, according to two of the biggest airports in the country. There are now more first-time users and international trips, and demand has outstripped supply of planes to such an extent that many frequent fliers unable to get aircraft at the time and place of their choice are considering buying their own jets.

The number of chartered flights at the Delhi and Hyderabad airports has been showing a steady increase every month since June 2021, when the second wave of COVID-19 started to wane. The Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, which has a dedicated terminal for business jets, saw between 910 and 980 departures and arrivals per month between June and September, indicating an increase of 10% to 22% from the figures for the calendar year 2019.

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad recorded between 74 and 110 departures and arrivals per month during these four months, which is an increase of 10% to 54% from

Taking flight | The number of chartered flights which departed from the Delhi airport increased substantially from June 2021. In June, July, August and September the number of departures crossed the levels seen in the corresponding months of 2019



those in the corresponding months in 2019.

Leisure travel

"Leisure travel is essentially the driver for the increase in chartered flights contributing to more than 50% of the trips. This is followed by corporate and election-related flying," says a spokesperson for Bird Group, which oversees operations at the business jet terminal in Delhi along with its Swiss partner,

ple willing to splurge on air travel. "There is a whole new customer segment that has been introduced during the pandemic and this includes those who could afford to but didn't fly private because it was considered a wasteful means of luxury," Ms. Tekriwal says. She says they are here to stay.

International trips

In a fillip to the sector, there are many more international trips than before because of restrictions on commercial passenger airlines. These rake in four to 10 times the money a domestic flight would earn – a return flight from Delhi to Mumbai on an eight-seater plane costs ₹10 lakh, a Delhi-Dubai return flight on a 13-seater ₹40 lakh and a 12-seater for London up to ₹1 crore.

And, there is no let-up in demand. "With offices reopening, many who were until now opting for staycations every month are looking at two-week-long holidays at the end of the year. We are getting a lot of interest for the U.K., the Netherlands, France," says Sachit Wadhwa, co-founder at BookMyCharters, a private jet aggre-

gator. "Demand has exceeded the supply as leisure travel is being planned well in advance for December and January," he says.

The demand has been so robust that Mr. Wadhwa's company is expecting to clock in four times the revenue it saw pre-COVID. "These are from actual bookings, but enquiries are 12-15 times the number of calls we received pre-COVID. This is the reason why we are also adding to our pool of available planes."

But Mr. Wadhwa and Ms. Tekriwal aren't the only ones planning to add to their fleet. "Individual customers and corporates who are frequent flyers are looking at purchasing their own machines because of availability issues. They may not get the aircraft of their choice when they need it, so it may give them an upgrade or a downgrade. So, they are exploring the option of purchasing planes," says Mr. Wadhwa.

"Two or three business houses have approached us and we are helping them with financial structuring," says Vishok Mansingh, CEO, Viman Aviation Services. "Young people have every reason to be angry and frus-

At COP26, T.N. teenager tells leaders that youth are angry

Vinisha expresses frustration with empty promises

D. MADHAVAN
TIRUVANNAMALAI

As a child, Vinisha Umashankar, a Class 10 student, used to walk with her mother and a bag full of washed and dried clothes to get them ironed from a couple who ran a mobile ironing cart in her street in Tiruvannamalai town in northern Tamil Nadu. She saw how her clothes were ironed with charcoal-filled cast-iron boxes by the couple, sweating as they worked in the heat. She returned, not just with her ironed clothes, but with an intent to make their lives better.

Years later, as she grew up, Vinisha, now 15, found her answers in sunlight. A solar-powered ironing cart, which would replace the conventional charcoal ironing box, would power a steam ironing box to do its job. Her innovation brought her laurels from around the world, including the prestigious Children's Climate Prize in November 2021. The prize given by the Sweden-based Children's Climate Foundation is one of the



Vinisha Umashankar

most significant climate-related awards for young innovators.

On Tuesday, Ms. Umashankar, one of the finalists for the Earthshot Prize, was asked by Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, to speak her mind on clean energy at a meeting that discussed clean technology and innovation as part of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow.

Ms. Umashankar's mobile ironing cart has solar panels with a roof connected to a 100 Ah battery. It takes five hours of bright sunshine to fully charge the battery, which in turn powers the steam ironing box for six hours.

trated at leaders who have made empty promises and failed to deliver. None of what we discuss today is practical for me. We need actions rather than promises to live in a habitable world," she said at the meeting on Tuesday. Her speech received a standing ovation.

Her parents, S. Umashankar, a business consultant, and U. Sangeetha, a schoolteacher, watched their only child's speech on the world stage at close quarters as they travelled with her to Glasgow. "She (Vinisha) is class topper and her time management between studies and extracurricular activities is excellent. Her mother teaches science in our school," S. Prathiba Shyam, Principal, S.K.P. Vaithi International School, Tiruvannamalai, said.

Among her audience were world leaders, including British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, U.S. President Joe Biden, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Young people have every reason to be angry and frus-

Judge arrested in sexual assault case

Rajasthan police have questioned him

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR

The police on Wednesday arrested a judge, who was recently suspended on charges of sexually assaulting a minor boy, after his interrogation in the case in accordance with the procedure laid down for judicial officers.

The accused, Jitendra Singh, was taken after his arrest from Jaipur to Bharatpur, where he was earlier posted as the Special Judge, Anti-Corruption Cases.

'Boy was drugged' The boy's mother alleged that Mr. Singh and the two other accused had been sexually assaulting her son for the last one month after intoxicating him with a narcotic substance.

The judge as well as the other accused had threatened the boy of implicating his family in false cases if he spoke about the assault to anyone, according to the complaint.

Mr. Singh had allegedly befriended the boy at the District Club in Bharatpur, where he used to go to play tennis.

However, Mr. Singh has lodged a counter-complaint against the boy's mother and her family, accusing them of blackmail and extortion.

Officials in the East Kameng district said the earth-

quake on October 13 happened in the vicinity of the source of the river at an elevation of about 6,300 metres above Mean Sea Level. Kameng is not a trans-boundary river.

The landslips dumped several tonnes of mud and rock into the river, substantially reducing the flow of water. The river turned blackish due to very high turbidity resulting in low dissolved oxygen that killed the fish.

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Acting on an October 28 complaint by Trinamool Congress spokesperson Saket Gokhale, the NHRC on Tuesday directed its registry to send a copy of the com-

plaint to the Tripura chief secretary and Director-General of Police, asking for action-taken reports within four weeks.

"The complainant...has highlighted issues regarding rising incidents of political violence and violence against persons from religious minority community in the State of Tripura. It is alleged that workers of ruling party of the State had attacked leaders of All India

Centre flags rise in number of COVID-19 cases

Health Ministry writes to Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Wednesday asked Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir to undertake a review of the rising COVID-19 case numbers and weekly positivity rates, and enhance testing.

In letters to the Himachal Pradesh Health Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Principal Secretary of Health and the Jammu and Kashmir Additional Chief Secretary of Health, Arti Ahuja, Additional Secretary of the Union Health Ministry, highlighted the increase in number of

weekly new COVID-19 cases since last week and early signs of rise in positivity rates last month.

Ms. Ahuja stressed strict enforcement of COVID-appropriate behaviour, especially during festival celebrations. Previously on October 30, Ms. Ahuja had written to West Bengal and Assam, expressing concerns over the increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the two States.

Early indication

In her letter to Himachal Pradesh, Ms. Ahuja said that there has been a nearly 22% increase in weekly new cases



State governments continue COVID-19 surveillance through random testing.

since last week and that there were early signs of increase in positivity: 2.7% in the week of October 4-10 to 3.3% in the week of October 25-31.

The State has also witnessed a decline in tests conducted from 2,82,959 in the week of October 04-10 to 2,41,838 in the week of October 25-31, she stated.

She said J&K needed to increase testing.

"It is reassuring to note that the State has witnessed a gradual increase in the tests conducted from 38,726 in the week of October 4-10 to 44,549 in the week of October 25-31 as against 843 cases in the week of October 18-24," Ms. Ahuja said.

Andhra Pradesh, she said, has shown a high quantum of weekly new cases over the past four weeks, and although the weekly positivity is less than 1%, there has been a 67% increase in positivity in the last two weeks – from 0.3% in the week of October 18-24 to 0.5% in the week of October 25-31. Kathua has been identified as a district of concern due to high quantum of cases and positivity over 2.5%.

With regard to Jammu and Kashmir, Ms. Ahuja said that the Union Territory has shown an approximately 61% increase in weekly new cases – 1,354 in the week of October 25-31 as against 843 cases in the week of October 18-24.

Although the weekly positivity is less than 1%, there has been a 67% increase in positivity in the last two weeks – from 0.3% in the week of October 18-24 to 0.5% in the week of October 25-31. Kathua has been identified as a district of concern due to high quantum of cases and positivity over 2.5%.

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Quake linked to mass fish kill in Arunachal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

Landslips caused by an earthquake of 3.4 magnitude close to the border with China led to mass fish death in the Karmeng river in Arunachal Pradesh, it is feared.

The interval between the earthquake and the discovery of thousands of dead fish floating in the river was more than a fortnight.

However, Mr. Singh has lodged a counter-complaint against the boy's mother and her family, accusing them of blackmail and extortion.

quake on October 13 happened in the vicinity of the source of the river at an elevation of about 6,300 metres above Mean Sea Level. Kameng is not a trans-boundary river.

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Acting on an October 28 complaint by Trinamool Congress spokesperson Saket Gokhale, the NHRC on Tuesday directed its registry to send a copy of the com-

plaint to the Tripura chief secretary and Director-General of Police, asking for action-taken reports within four weeks.

"The complainant...has highlighted issues regarding rising incidents of political violence and violence against persons from religious minority community in the State of Tripura. It is alleged that workers of ruling party of the State had attacked leaders of All India

Felicitation

Trinamool Congress while they were campaigning in the State," the NHRC said.

The commission said the complainant had also alleged that an MP and other Trinamool workers had been attacked, referring to Rajya Sabha MP Sushmita Dev. The complaint also cited the incidents following a Vishwa Hindu Parishad rally in north Tripura, where a mosque and some shops were vandalised.

"Let us celebrate this festival together in a clean and safe manner and resolve to contribute towards conserving and protecting the environment," the President said.

Celebrate in a safe and clean way: President

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday urged citizens to celebrate Deepavali in a clean and safe manner and contribute towards conserving and protecting the environment.

Greeting people on the eve of Deepavali, Mr. Kovind said, "Deepavali symbolises the victory of good over evil and light over darkness. This festival is largely celebrated by people following different beliefs across various sections of our society. The auspicious occasion of Deepavali gives the message of mutual affection, fraternity and brotherhood".

"Let us celebrate this festival together in a clean and safe manner and resolve to contribute to the conservation and protection of environment," the President said.

NHRC asks Tripura government to submit report on violence

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked the Tripura government for a report on the recent instances of political and communal violence in the State.

Acting on an October 28

complaint by Trinamool Congress spokesperson Saket Gokhale, the NHRC on Tuesday directed its registry to send a copy of the com-

plaint to the Tripura chief secretary and Director-General of Police, asking for action-taken reports within four weeks.

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"Let us celebrate this festival together in a clean and safe manner and resolve to contribute towards conserving and protecting the environment," the President said.

So, a total of 30 people learnt the Saiva Agamas, which emanated from Lord Siva. Not all of them learnt all the Agamas. The first 10 Agamas are Kamika, Yogaja, Cintya, Kaarana, Ajitha, Dipta, Sukshma, Sahasra, Amusman and Suprabheda. Ten divine persons learnt these, each one learning one of the 10. The names of these 10 are: Pranava, Sudhaakya, Sudipta, Kaarana, Susiva, Eesa, Sukshma, Kaala, Amsu and Dasesa. Each of them taught two devotees. So 20 more people learnt the first 10 Agamas. These 20 include Trikala, Hara, Bhrama, Vibhu, Gopati, Ambika

U.S. puts Israeli maker of Pegasus spyware on 'black list'

Biden Govt. wants 'to stem the proliferation of digital tools used for repression'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WASHINGTON

U.S. authorities on Wednesday put the Israeli maker of the Pegasus spyware on a list of restricted companies, taking aim at software central to a scandal over surveillance of journalists and officials.

The company, NSO, was engulfed in controversy over reports that tens of thousands of human rights activists, journalists, politicians and business executives worldwide were listed as potential targets of its Pegasus software. Smartphones infected with Pegasus are essentially turned into pocket spying devices, allowing the user to read the target's messages, look through their photos, track their location and even turn on their camera without them knowing.

"These tools have also enabled foreign governments to conduct transnational repression, which is the practice of authoritarian governments targeting dissidents, journalists and activists outside of their sovereign borders to silence dissent," the U.S. Commerce Department said in a statement.



Under lens: An NSO office near the Israeli town of Sapia. ■ AP

NSO fired back at the decision, saying its "technologies support U.S. national security interests and policies by preventing terrorism and crime".

"We will advocate for this decision to be reversed," a NSO spokesperson said, adding that its compliance controls have resulted in "multiple terminations of contacts with government agencies that misused our products".

Washington also targeted Israeli company Candiru, Singapore-based Computer Security Initiative Consultancy PTE (COSEINC) and Russian firm Positive Technologies.

The companies' addition

to the so-called "entity list" means exports to them from U.S. organisations are restricted. For example, it is now far harder for American researchers to sell them information or technology.

Critics say the widespread availability of software such as Pegasus now allows even cash-strapped authoritarian governments to effectively purchase their own answer to the United States' National Security Agency, with highly invasive surveillance powers. While companies offering such technology have sprung up around the world, several have been founded in Israel.

"Today's action is a part of

the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to put human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy, including by working to stem the proliferation of digital tools used for repression," the Commerce statement said.

Zero click

Following the initial concern over Pegasus, a subsequent wave of worries emerged when iPhone maker Apple released a fix in September for a weakness that can let the spyware infect devices without users even clicking on a malicious message or link.

The so-called "zero click" is able to silently corrupt the targeted device, and was identified by researchers at Citizen Lab, a cybersecurity watchdog organisation in Canada.

Israel's defence establishment has set up a committee to review NSO's business, including the process through which export licenses are granted. NSO has insisted its software is intended for use only in fighting terrorism and other crimes and says it exports to 45 countries.

Fed to begin slowing economic aid

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

The Federal Reserve will begin dialling back the extraordinary economic aid it has provided since the pandemic erupted last year, a response to high inflation that now looks likely to persist longer than it did just a few months ago.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Fed said it will start reducing its \$120 billion in monthly bond purchases in the coming weeks, by \$15 billion a month, though it reserved the right to change that pace. Those purchases have been intended to hold down long-term interest rates to encourage borrowing and spending. With the U.S. economy recovering, that is no longer needed.

The Fed will slow its \$80 billion in Treasury purchases by \$10 billion a month and its \$40 billion in mortgage-backed securities by \$5 billion in November and December and said similar reductions "will likely be appropriate" in the following months. That suggests that the central bank might decide to accelerate its pullback in bond buying if inflation worsens.

If the pace is maintained, the bond purchases would end altogether in June. At that point, the Fed could decide to raise its benchmark short-term interest rate, which affects many consumer and business loans. That would be much earlier than Fed officials had envisioned last summer, when they forecast that the first rate hike would not happen until late 2023.

tions maintain and engender racial disparities – became a Republican talking point in the race, though it is not taught in Virginia schools. Mr. Youngkin also rejected mask mandates in schools and said parents' rights to "decide what's best for their children", must be respected. He also ran on a campaign to support school choice, funding for law enforcement and cut State taxes.

Mr. McAuliffe called Mr. Youngkin's campaign against Critical Race Theory a "racist dog whistle".

He also committed to raising teacher salaries above the national average and making historically large investments in education. On the economy, like his opponent, Mr. McAuliffe pledged to increase jobs, backed an increase in the minimum wage and said he would introduce mandated paid sick and family leave across the State.

Other races

In other races on Election Day, Boston elected city council member Michelle Wu as Mayor, the first woman Mayor and person from an ethnic minority group to "decide what's best for their children", must be respected. He also ran on a campaign to support school choice, funding for law enforcement and cut State taxes.

The outcome of Tuesday night, however, suggested that Democrats' strategy – at least in the State – of rallying voters against Mr. Trump did not work. Mr. McAuliffe, who was the Governor from 2014 to 2018, tried, but without enough success, to portray his opponent as a version of Mr. Trump (even referring to him as 'Glenn Trumpkin').

Central issues

Central issues in the campaign were education and the economy. Critical Race Theory – which analyses how systems and institutions

maintain and engender racial disparities – became a Republican talking point in the race, though it is not taught in Virginia schools.

Mr. Youngkin also rejected mask mandates in schools and said parents' rights to "decide what's best for their children", must be respected. He also ran on a campaign to support school choice, funding for law enforcement and cut State taxes.

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Other races

In other races on Election Day, Boston elected city council member Michelle Wu as Mayor, the first woman Mayor and person from an ethnic minority group to "decide what's best for their children", must be respected. He also ran on a campaign to support school choice, funding for law enforcement and cut State taxes.

The outcome of Tuesday night, however, suggested that Democrats' strategy – at least in the State – of rallying voters against Mr. Trump did not work. Mr. McAuliffe, who was the Governor from 2014 to 2018, tried, but without enough success, to portray his opponent as a version of Mr. Trump (even referring to him as 'Glenn Trumpkin').

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MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	59,772	-0.43
US Dollar	74.46	0.29
Gold	46,411	-0.93
Brent oil	82.26	-2.57

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	709.20	6.85
Asian Paints	3170.65	67.30
Axistel	750.60	-5.25
Bajaj Auto	3698.40	-43.45
Bajaj Finance	17509.45	-33.15
Bajaj Finance	7516.25	60.90
Bharti Airtel	699.10	-14.85
BPCL	414.90	-1.25
Britannia Ind	3629.55	-53.05
Cipla	912.65	9.25
Coal India	169.75	0.55
Divis Lab	5140.15	-65.25
Dr Reddys Lab	4771.65	25.55
Eicher Motors	2521.85	-20.60
Grasim Ind	1785.55	41.50
HCL Tech	1176.35	5.70
HDPC	2895.90	-4.15
HDFC Bank	1581.45	-25.30
HDFC Life	692.30	-0.35
Hero MotoCorp	2641.45	-42.85
Hindalco	478.30	9.90
Hind Unilever	2411.15	-7.55
ICICI Bank	785.95	-15.00
IndusInd Bank	1177.95	-34.60
Infosys	1702.50	4.60
Indian Oil Corp	132.55	1.75
ITC	222.45	-3.15
JSW Steel	680.25	7.40
Kotak Bank	2037.55	-39.10
L&T	1889.50	73.85
M&M	849.05	-12.50
Maruti Suzuki	7734.25	-57.50
Nestle India Ltd.	18737.15	-36.80
NTPC	136.75	0.10
ONGC	152.00	-0.95
PowerGrid Corp	183.95	-1.55
Reliance Ind	2483.60	-17.20
SBI Life	1178.80	12.75
State Bank	527.65	5.95
Shree Cement	28980.55	112.40
Sun Pharma	787.95	27.45
Tata Consumer	826.90	-6.90
Products Ltd.	848.40	-2.95
Tata Motors	1326.05	12.40
TCS	3492.25	8.05
Tech Mahindra	1498.55	7.95
Titan	2417.95	-36.00
UltraTech Cement	7887.85	174.50
UPL	737.05	16.75
Wipro	652.50	-1.30

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.26	74.58
Euro	86.03	86.43
British Pound	101.15	101.59
Japanese Yen (100)	65.21	65.49
Chinese Yuan	11.61	11.66
Swiss Franc	81.46	81.86
Singapore Dollar	55.01	55.27
Canadian Dollar	59.80	60.06
Malaysian Ringgit	17.86	17.96

Source: Indian Bank

Centre releases GST dues of ₹17,000 cr. to States

NEW DELHI
The Centre released GST compensation dues of ₹17,000 crore to States on Wednesday, taking the total compensation paid out from GST cess collections so far this year to ₹60,000 crore.

October services output grows at decade high, PMI shows

'Confidence still subdued as cost pressures build up, export orders remain weak'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India's services sector recorded its strongest output growth in ten-and-a-half years in October, as reflected by the survey-based IHS Markit Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), which accelerated to 58.4 from 55.2 in September. A reading of 50 indicates no change from the previous month's economic activity levels.

The pace of job creation based on the survey of 400 firms remained moderate but quickened from September to the fastest since February 2020.

"The recovery of the services sector entered its third straight month, with firms



Price to pay: Service providers are worried as pricier inputs may deter future growth, De Lima says. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

scaling up activity at the fastest pace in ten-and-a-half years and creating more jobs," said Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit. Services businesses also faced the sixteenth successive monthly

confidence remained subdued due to growing concerns around price pressures. With input costs again rising sharply, companies raised their fees in October at the fastest pace in close to four-and-a-half years.

"A substantial rise in prices charged for the provision of services in India had no detrimental impact on demand," Ms. De Lima said.

"That said, service providers were concerned that persistent inflationary pressures could deter growth in the coming year," she added.

"New export business decreased in October, a trend that has been recorded since the COVID-19 outbreak," the firm said in a statement.

MSME margins badly hit by commodity price surge'

RBI role key to stability: PHDCCI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The seminal reforms announced by the government for the telecom sector will help preserve cash flows and enable the industry to drive investments, Bharti Airtel CEO Gopal Vittal said on Wednesday.

Speaking at Bharti Airtel's Q2 earnings call, he said while over the next 3-4 years, 5G will be present on an ubiquitous basis in most key cities, in the immediate short term much will depend on the pace of the regulator's consultation and the actual timing of the auction.

"The government announced seminal reforms that will help preserve cash flows and enable the industry to drive investments, especially MSMEs... RBI's



role becomes crucial to balance inflation... and maintain currency stability while attaining high growth," PHDCCI suggested.

These include attaining and sustaining a high growth trajectory to become a \$5-trillion economy. "Skyrocketing commodity prices are severely impacting margins of businesses, especially MSMEs... RBI's

Canada funds to pick up 50% in NHAI InvIT

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan will be the anchor investors for the Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) with each picking up 25% stake.

Besides, NHAI would retain a minimum of 15% equity and the rest would be offered to domestic institutional investors.

The InvIT will initially have a portfolio of five operating toll roads with an aggregate length of 390 km, with more roads planned to be added later.

The total enterprise value of the five roads was pegged at ₹8,011.52 crore.

Cairn to begin process to end tax dispute

REUTERS

Cairn Energy has entered into certain undertakings with India which would allow for the refund of taxes under a billion-dollar dispute.

The news comes after the oil and gas producer said in September it was considering undertakings with the Indian government after changes were made to a retrospective tax law at the heart of the row.

Cairn said it would start filing the necessary documents to expedite the refund of about ₹1.06 billion.

"Cairn will commence the filing of the necessary documentation... intimating the withdrawal, termination and/or discontinuance of various enforcement actions," the firm said in a statement.

SBI Q2 net rises 67% on asset quality, provisions 'Collections improve as curbs ease'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

State Bank of India's (SBI) second quarter net profit surged 66.7% to ₹7,627 crore due to improvement in asset quality and lower provisions for bad loans.

In a filing, India's largest lender said it had recorded its highest quarterly net profit. "The outcome in asset quality... has been quite encouraging," said chairman Dinesh Khara. "The first quarter saw elevated levels of fresh slippages as collections were severely impacted due to COVID-related travel restrictions," he said.

"Now there is no major concern relating to asset quality because underwriting has improved significantly," he added, saying the bank expected its loan



book to rise 10% in FY22. Operating profit rose 9.84% to ₹18,079 crore. The lender has fully provided ₹7,418 crore due to the change in family pension rules.

Net interest income climbed 10.7% to ₹31,184 crore. Loan-loss provisions slid 52% to ₹2,699 crore.

Net non-performing asset (NPA) ratio dipped 7 basis points (bps) to 1.52%, while the gross NPA ratio declined 38 bps to 4.9%. Provision Coverage Ratio stood at 87.68%.

Govt. picks 42 white goods firms for PLI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The government said it has 'provisionally selected' 42 air-conditioner and LED manufacturers with committed investment of ₹4,614 crore as beneficiaries under Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for white goods.

"The approved investments of ₹4,614 crore are likely to generate net incremental production of around ₹81,254 crore and direct employment for about 44,000 people," the Minister of Commerce and Industry said. Those selected include 26 for air-conditioner manufacturing with committed investments of ₹3,898 crore and 16 for LED Lights with committed investments of ₹716 crore.

SPORT

Ronaldo bails out United yet again

Juventus and Bayern advance; Barcelona stays in the hunt



Rescue act: Cristiano Ronaldo lets rip Manchester United's second goal to salvage a draw against Atalanta. ■ GETTY IMAGES

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS

Cristiano Ronaldo scored another late goal to rescue Manchester United in the Champions League on Tuesday, as his former club Juventus and Bayern Munich both secured qualification for the last 16 with two group matches to spare.

Ronaldo fired in from the edge of the box a minute into injury time to snatch United a 2-2 draw with Atalanta in Italy and keep it on course to qualify from Group F.

He had earlier cancelled out Josip Ilicic's opener to equalise at the end of a slick team move in first-half stoppage time.

However, having lost Raphael Varane to injury before that, United went behind again in the 56th minute when Duvan Zapata ran through, evading Harry Maguire before slotting in. The goal was initially dis-

allowed for offside before being given after a VAR review, but Ronaldo thwarted the hosts again with his ninth goal in 11 appearances since returning to Old Trafford and his record-extending 139th goal in the competition.

Ole Gunnar Solskjær's side are level on seven points atop the group with Villarreal.

Captain Paulo Dybala's brace helped Juventus to a 4-2 win over Zenit Saint Petersburg in Turin as it kept up its 100 percent record in Group H to secure a last-16 place.

The results: **Group E:** Dynamo Kyiv 0 lost to Barcelona 1 (Fati 70); Bayern Munich 5 (Lewandowski 26, 61, 84, Gnabry 32, Sane 49) bt Benfica 2 (Moura 38, Nunez 74).

Group F: Villarreal 2 (Capoue 36, Danjuma 89) bt Young Boys 0; Atalanta 2 (Ilicic 12, Zapata 56) drew with Manchester United 2 (Ronaldo 45+1, 90+1).

Group G: Sevilla 1 (Ocampos 15) lost to Lille 2 (David 43, pen, Ikone 51); Wolfsburg 2 (Baku 3, Nmecha 60) bt RB Salzburg 3 (Weber 30).

Group H: Malmo 0 lost to Chelsea 1 (Ziyech 56); Juventus 4 (Dybala 11, 58+pen, Chiesa 78, Morata 82) bt Zenit 2 (Bouni 26, Ogbonna 26, Azmoun 90+2).

In-form players

Several names who shone bright in the recent IPL will be seen in action here. Orange Cap holder Ruturaj Gaikwad (Chennai Super Kings) and dashing wicket-keeper-batsman Sanju Samson (Rajasthan Royals) lead

Perfect platform to catch the eye of IPL scouts

Rohit and Rahul pulverise Afghanistan

The two add 140 for the opening wicket as India piles up 210 and wins by a 66-run margin

ICC T20 WC

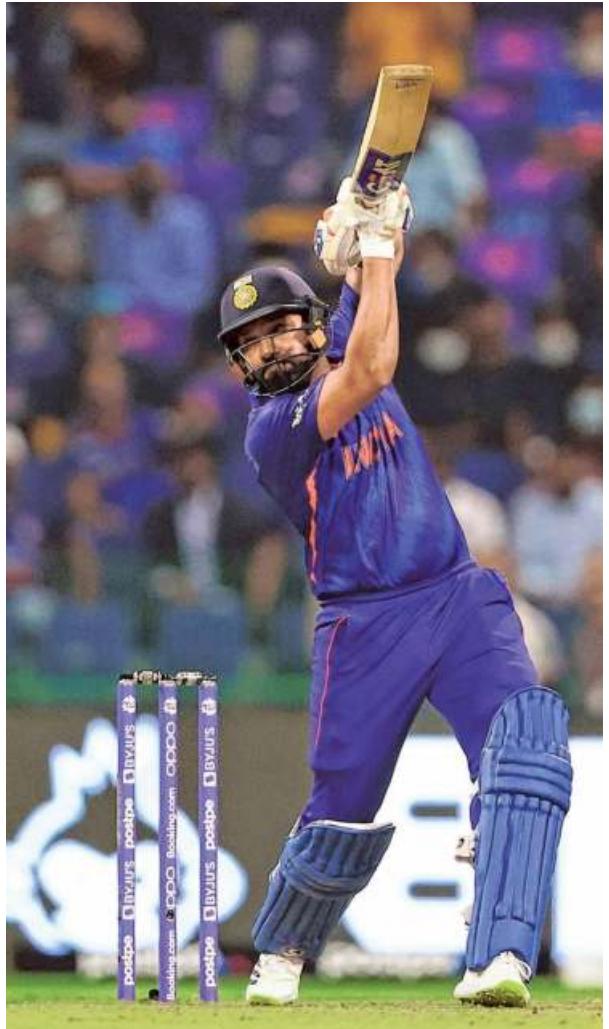
AMOL KARHADKAR
ABU DHABI

Virat Kohli lost the toss for the third straight time and India was asked to bat first yet again. However, those were the only similarities from the two previous games as the batters went ballistic and notched up the highest total of the edition – 210 – in the Group 2 Super 12 match against Afghanistan on Wednesday. In reply, the Afghans were restricted to 144 for seven, giving India its first win of the competition.

The change of venue – despite the long boundaries at the Zayed Cricket Stadium – seemed to have worked in India's favour as Rohit Sharma (74, 47b, 8x4, 3x6) and K.L. Rahul (69, 48b, 6x4, 2x6) bulldozed the Afghan attack. The reunion at the top worked wonders as the duo's 140-run stand set up the foundation for a massive total. Rishabh Pant and Hardik Pandya's lusty blows meant India crossed the 200-run mark.

Afghanistan was never in the chase. Skipper Mohammad Nabi (35) and Karim Janat (42 not out) were involved in a 57-run partnership for the sixth wicket. Mohammed Shami finished with three for 32 while R. Ashwin, playing in India blud colours after four years, spun a web around the Afghan batters to return excellent figures of 4-0-14-2.

Earlier, Suryakumar Yadav, who recovered from back spasm, replaced Ishan Kishan in the XI and paved the way for the first-choice opening combination of Rohit and Rahul to bat together again. With the team in a must-win situation in its remaining three games, and



Hitman on the prowl: Rohit provided India a blazing start in the company of Rahul. • GETTY IMAGES

that too by huge margins, it needed a blazing start.

In contrast to their approach in the first two games, Rohit and Rahul went after the Afghan bowlers right from the word go.

Rohit then took on Rashid Khan, arguably the best T20 bowler, toning the leggie for successive sixes in the 14th over. However, Rohit fell in the next over while Rahul followed soon after. Off the next 21 balls, Pant (27 no., 13b, 1x4, 3x6) and Hardik (35 no., 13b, 4x4, 2x6) showcased their big-hitting prowess, adding 63. The contest was sealed then and there.



SCOREBOARD

INDIA

K.L. Rahul b Naib 69 (48b, 6x4, 2x6), Rohit Sharma c Naib b Janat 74 (47b, 8x4, 3x6), Rishabh Pant (not out) 27 (13b, 1x4, 3x6), Hardik Pandya (not out) 35 (13b, 4x4, 2x6); Extras (b-2, lb-1, w-1, nb-1); Total (for two wkts. in 20 overs): 210.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-140 (Rohit, 14.4 overs), 2-147 (Rahul, 16.3).

AFGHANISTAN BOWLING

Nabi 1-0-7-0, Sharafuddin 2-25-0, Naveen 4-0-59-0, Hamid 4-0-34-0, Naib 4-0-39-1, Rashid 4-0-36-0, Janat 1-0-7-1.

AFGHANISTAN

Hazratullah Zazai c Shardul b Bumrah 13 (17b, 1x4, 1x6), Mohammad Shahzad c Ashwin b Shami 0 (4b), Rahamanullah Gurbaz c Hardik b Jadeja 19 (10b, 1x4, 2x6), Gulbadin Naib lbw b Ashwin 18 (20b, 3x4), Najibullah Zadran b Ashwin 11 (13b, 1x6), Mohammad Nabi c Jadeja b Shami 35 (32b, 2x4, 1x6), Karim Janat (not out) 42 (22b, 3x4, 2x6), Rashid Khan c Hardik b Shami 0 (1b), Sharafuddin Ashraf (not out) 2 (3b); Extras (w-4): 4; Total (for seven wkts in 20 overs): 144.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-21 (Shahzad, 2.6), 2-13 (Hazratullah, 3.1), 3-48 (Rahmanullah, 6.5), 4-59 (Naib, 9.3), 5-69 (Najibullah, 11.5), 6-126 (Nabi, 18.1), 7-127 (Rashid, 18.3).

INDIA BOWLING

Shami 4-0-32-3, Bumrah 4-0-25-1, Hardik 2-0-23-0, Jadeja 3-0-19-1, Ashwin 4-0-14-2, Shardul 3-0-31-0.

Toss:

Afghanistan.

MoM:

Rohit Sharma.

India won by 66 runs.

Next assignment

India: Nov. 5 vs Scotland, Dubai, 7.30 p.m. IST

Afghanistan: Nov. 7 vs New Zealand, Abu Dhabi, 3.30 p.m. IST

Innings scan

India	Afghanistan
28	Dots
19	Fours
10	Sixes
53/0	PP
10.50	RR

David appointed India Head Coach

His innings will begin with the home series against NZ

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Former India captain Rahul Dravid has been appointed as the Head Coach of the senior Indian men's cricket team, the BCCI announced on Wednesday. Dravid takes over from Ravi Shastri, whose term ends after the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup.

Dravid, among the finest batters India has produced, was unanimously appointed by the Cricket Advisory Committee comprising former international cricketers Sulakshana Naik and R.P. Singh.

Dravid's innings will commence with the home series against New Zealand later this month.



Ready to take strike: Dravid will be keen to propel Indian cricket to greater heights. • TWITTER/BCCI

C He (Dravid) is a stalwart of Indian cricket and it will be nice working with him in future

ROHIT SHARMA

dent Sourav Ganguly stated, "BCCI welcomes Rahul Dravid as the Head Coach of India's senior men team. Rahul has had an illustrious playing career and is one of the greats of the game."

"Having worked closely with most of the boys either at NCA, under-19 and India 'A' set up, I know they have the passion and desire to improve every day."

"There are some marquee multi-team events in the next two years, and I look forward to working with the players and the support staff to achieve our potential," a BCCI release quoted Dravid as saying.

Dravid's former India teammate and BCCI Presi-

Rathour (Batting Coach) on a successful tenure.

"Under Shastri, the Indian cricket team adopted a bold and fearless approach and performed creditably both in home and away conditions," the BCCI said, thanking the former India skipper. The two Test series wins in Australia – in 2018-19 and 2020-21 – count among the highlights of Shastri's tenure.

Earlier this year, Dravid donned the role of interim head coach for the Indian team's limited-overs tour of Sri Lanka. Shastri was with the Indian team on the Test tour of England, which was being held at the same time.

In the thick of it

Dravid has served as the NCA Director and as the coach for the India Under-19 and India-A sides. Under his guidance, India won the 2018 ICC Under-19 World Cup in New Zealand.

Australia needs a win to stay afloat

Bangladesh, out of the semifinal race, has only pride to play for

AYAN ACHARYA
ABU DHABI

Australia will take on Bangladesh in a must-win Group 1 Super 12 contest of the ICC T20 World Cup here on Thursday.

It needs to beat Bangladesh and then the West Indies on November 6 to keep its qualification hopes alive.

Even then its fate will hinge on England beating South Africa on Saturday. Bangladesh is at the bottom of the points table with four losses.

Australia exposed Glenn

TODAY'S MATCHES

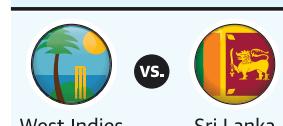


DUBAI, 3.30 P.M. IST

H2H IN T20IS

Played: 9

Australia 5 | Bangladesh 4



West Indies vs Sri Lanka

ABU DHABI, 7.30 P.M. IST

H2H IN T20IS

Played: 14

West Indies 7 | Sri Lanka 7

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

FRIDAY'S MATCHES



SHARJAH, 3.30 P.M. IST

H2H IN T20IS

FIRST MEETING



DUBAI, 7.30 P.M. IST

The only T20I between India and Scotland (2007 World Cup) was abandoned with a toss

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

Guptill runs hot as New Zealand holds off Scotland

Opener's blistering 93 pilots the team to 172 before the Kiwi bowlers keep their nerve



On the rampage: Guptill smashed seven sixes and six fours in his 56-ball knock. • GETTY IMAGES

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND

Martin Guptill hit 93 and became only the second man to pass 3,000 T20I runs as New Zealand defeated Scotland by 16 runs at the ICC T20 World Cup on Wednesday.

New Zealand made 172 for five before Scotland battled to score a respectable 156 for five in its 20 overs. It was the Kiwis' second win in three games.

The 35-year-old Guptill, who put on 105 for the fourth wicket with Glenn Phillips, made his runs off 56 balls

Innings scan

New Zealand	Scotland
46	Dots
8	Fours
8	Sixes
52/2	PP
8.60	RR

with six fours and seven sixes after New Zealand was asked to bat.

His first six off Alasdair Evans in the sixth over took him past the 3,000-mark in the format, second only to Vi-

Next assignment

New Zealand: Nov. 5 vs Namibia, Sharjah, 3.30 p.m. IST

Scotland: Nov. 5 vs India, Dubai, 7.30 p.m. IST

rat Kohli. Chasing a target of 173, the Scots were 76 for two in 10 overs.

Matthew Leask gave the team some hope with a brisk, undefeated 42 off 20 balls with three fours and three sixes. However, the experienced New Zealand attack held on.

(20b, 3x4, 3x6), Chris Greaves (not out) 8 (10b); Extras (lb-2, w-6); Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 156.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-21 (Coetzter, 2.4), 2-66 (Munsey, 7.5), 3-76 (Cross, 10.5), 4-102 (MacLeod, 14.5), 5-106 (Berrington, 15.4).

SCOTLAND BOWLING

Wheat 4-0-40-2, Sharif 4-0-28-2, Evans 4-0-48-0, Watt 4-0-13-1, Greaves 3-0-26-0, Leask 1-0-12-0.

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Boutl 4-0-29-2, Southee 4-0-24-1, Milne 4-1-36-0, Santner 4-0-23-0, Sodhi 4-0-42-2.

Toss: Scotland; **MoM:** Guptill.

New Zealand won by 16 runs.

After the India-Afghanistan match on Nov. 3

Q: Qualified

Djokovic shakes off the rustiness to progress

Injured Tsitsipas

TV PICKS

THURSDAY
Men's T20 World Cup: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.

Men's World Boxing Championships: Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m.

Europa League: Sony Ten 1, 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 11.30 p.m.; Sony Ten 1 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Friday)

Europa Conference League: Sony Ten 2 & Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Friday)

FRIDAY
Men's T20 World Cup: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.

Men's World Boxing Championships: Sony Six (SD & HD), 10.30 p.m.

Bundesliga: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 1 a.m. (Saturday)

IN BRIEF

Antetokounmpo helps Bucks end losing streak

Detroit
Giannis Antetokounmpo finished with 28 points, nine assists and eight rebounds as Milwaukee Bucks ended its three-game losing streak with a 117-89 road win over the Detroit Pistons.

The results: Milwaukee 117 bt Detroit 89, Miami 125 bt Dallas 110, Utah 119 bt Sacramento 113, Phoenix 112 bt New Orleans 100, LA Lakers 119 bt Houston 117. AFP

Sneha Rana guides Railways to victory

PUNE
Sneha Rana's unbeaten 61 enabled Railways to beat Tamil Nadu by eight wickets in a BCCI-Sr. women Elite-B round-3 on Wednesday.

The scores: TN 111 in 44.2 overs (M. D. Thirushkamini 38, D. Hemalatha 4/19, Meghna Singh 3/23) lost to Railways 117/2 in 21.5 overs (Sneha Rana 61 no.).

Amrit and Diya triumph

CHANDIGARH
Amrit Dhankar and Diya Chaudhary won the boys and girls titles respectively in the AITA Championship series junior tennis tournament at on Wednesday.

The results (finals):
Under-14 boys: Amrit Dhankar bt Parmarth Kaushik 3-6, 6-3. **Under-14 girls:** Diya Chaudhary bt Rhosy William 6-2, 6-2.

Manpreet also to get the Khel Ratna

President of India to honour the awardees on November 13

SPORTS AWARDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Olympic bronze-winning Indian men's hockey team captain Manpreet Singh has been added to the list of Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna awardees. All the awards, including the Arjuna and Dronacharya, will be given away by the President of India on November 13.

The awardees: Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna: Neeraj Chopra (athletics), Ravi Kumar (wrestling), Lovlina Borgohain (boxing), P.R. Sreejesh, Manpreet Singh (both hockey), Avani Lekhara, Manish Narwal (both para shooting), Sumit Antil (para athletics), Pramod Bhagat, Krishna Nagar (both para badminton), Mithali Raj (cricket) and Sunil Chhetri (football).

Arjuna: Arpinder Singh (athletics), Simranjit Kaur (boxing), Shikhar Dhawan (cricket), C.A.



Recognition: Indian hockey team skipper Manpreet, originally chosen for the Arjuna Award, will be given India's highest sporting honour • FILE PHOTO

Bhavani Devi (fencing), Sandeep Narwal (kabaddi), Himani Uttam Parab (mallakhamb), Abhishek Verma (shooting), Ankita Raina (tennis), Deepak Punia (wrestling), Monika, Vandana Katariya, Dilpreet Singh, Harman Preet Singh, Rupinder

Pal Singh, Surender Kumar, Amit Rohidas, Birendra Lakra, Sumit, Nilakanta Sharma, Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad,

Gurjant Singh, Mandeep Singh, Shamsher Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Varun Kumar, Simranjeet Singh (all hockey); Yogen Kathuriya, Nishad Kumar, Praveen Kumar, Sharad Kumar (all para athletics), Suhash Yathiraj (para badminton), Singhraj Adhana (para shooting), Bhavina Patel (para table tennis) and Harvinder Singh (para archery).

Dronacharya: Life-time: T.P. Ouseph (athletics), Sarkar Talwar (cricket), Sarpal Singh (hockey), Ashan Kumar (kabaddi), Tapan Kumar Panigrahi (swimming). Regular: P. Radhakrishnan Nair (athletics), Sandhya Gurung (boxing), Pritam Siwach (hockey), Jai Prakash Nautiyal (para shooting) and S. Raman (table tennis).

Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar: Manav Rachna Educational Institution and Indian Oil Corporation Limited for encouragement to sports through Corporate Social Responsibility.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy: Panjab University.

Honoured, says Neeraj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Selected for the prestigious Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award after winning a historic gold in the Tokyo Olympics, star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra said on Wednesday that he will continue to work hard and bring more laurels for the country.

"I am honoured to be awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna alongside some outstanding sportspersons."

"Aap sabhi ke sahayog aur support ke liye tahe dil se dhanyavad (thank you from the bottom of my heart for the support from all of you)," the 23-year old tweeted.

More success

"Koshish ye hi rahegi ki aise hi apne performances se desh ke liya aur success haasil kar paun! (I will continue to work to achieve more success for the country through my performances.)"



Neeraj Chopra. • FILE PHOTO

Nothing short of a dream, says Chhetri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI



Sunil Chhetri. • FILE PHOTO

The first footballer to be conferred with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, Indian maestro Sunil Chhetri on Wednesday said the 16-year journey has been nothing short of a dream.

Since his India debut on June 12, 2005 against Pakistan in Quetta, Chhetri has rewritten the country's football history many times and he has now added another feather in his cap by being named for the country's highest sporting award.

"I am really thankful and honoured. I have always said that it is a dream that I have gone through, and it would not have been possible without my family, team-

mates and coaches I have played under," Chhetri said.

"It has been amazing to play for the National team," said the 36-year-old.

Bumrah jumps to joint 24th

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

India's Rohit Sharma moved up a place to 23rd in the batting chart while pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah jumped 10 places to joint 24th in the ICC men's T20 rankings on Wednesday.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam's two successive half-centuries in the T20 World Cup have helped him overtake England's Dawid Malan and grab the No. 1 position for batters. Babar is at the top for the sixth time.

Sri Lanka leg-spinner Wa-

nindu Hasaranga has topped the bowling chart for the first time.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga has topped the bowling chart for the first time in his career after two successive three-wicket hauls.

ISL: Odisha FC announces squad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha FC on Wednesday announced its squad for the Hero Indian Super League 2021-22 season.

The Bhubaneswar-based team is gearing up for the opening match against Bengaluru FC on November 24 at Vasco, Goa.

The squad includes six foreigners – Mongil, Hector Rodas, Javi Hernandez, Ari-

dai Cabrera, Liridon Krasniqi (AFC) and Jonathas De Jesus – while seven youngsters – Lalhrezaula Sailung, Deven Sawhney, Victor Mongil, Hector Rodas. **Midfielders:** Thioiba Singh Moirangthem, Vinit Rai, Paul Ramfangzauva, Isaak Vanmalawarma, Isaak Vanlalruatfela, Liridon Krasniqi, Javi Hernandez, Jerry Mawihmingthanga, Nandhakumar Sekar, CVL Remtluanga, Nikhil Raj.

The squad: Goalkeepers: Kamaljit Singh, Arshdeep Singh, Ravi Kumar. **Defenders:** Gaurav Bora, Lalruthara, Sahil Pan-

war, Hendry Antonny, Lalhrezaula Sailung, Sebastian Thangmuangsang, Deven Sawhney, Victor Mongil, Hector Rodas. **Midfielders:** Thioiba Singh Moirangthem, Vinit Rai, Paul Ramfangzauva, Isaak Vanmalawarma, Isaak Vanlalruatfela, Liridon Krasniqi, Javi Hernandez, Jerry Mawihmingthanga, Nandhakumar Sekar, CVL Remtluanga, Nikhil Raj.

Forwards: Akshunna Tyagi, Daniel Lalhlimpuia, Aridai Cabreira, Jonathas Cristian De Jesus.

7-6(5), 3-6, [10-8].

INDIANS ABROAD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Ramkumar Ramanathan defeated Aldin Setkic of Bosnia and Herzegovina 7-6(7), 4-6, 6-3 in the first round of the €44,820 Challenger tennis tournament in Eckental, Germany on Wednesday.

Other results:

€44,820 Challenger, Bergamo, Italy: **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Radu Albot (Mda) & Artem Sitak (Nzl) bt Anirudh Chandrasekhar & Vijay Sundar Prashanth 6-2, 6-2.

€15,000 ITF women, Heraklion, Greece: **Singles (first round):** Karen Mathiens (Fra) bt Sowjanya Bavistetti 6-3, 6-2.

€15,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Radu Albot (Mda) & Artem Sitak (Nzl) bt Emira Stafford (US) & Jennifer Luikhama 7-6(3), 6-2.

€15,000 ITF women, Castellon, Spain: **Singles (first round):** Carlota Martinez Cirez (Esp) bt Sathwika Sama 6-0, 6-1.

Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Maria Josefa Zehnder (Arg) & Sathwika Sama w.o. Mihaela Djakovic (Srb) & Chantal Sauvant (Ger).

ADVERTISEMENT

MAIN CAUSES OF (PASC) LONG/POST COVID SYMPTOMS DISCOVERED

An international team of doctors and scientists have come a lot closer to identify the main causes for Long/Post Covid symptoms.

In a recent Webinar, Dr. Shankara Chetty from South Africa, Dr. Kamal Dua from the UTS University Sydney and the Indian biotech company Vedincials, presented some of their new findings on causes of Long/Post Covid conditions.

A growing number of former COVID-19 patients are experiencing many long lasting symptoms, including fatigue, shortness of breath, loss of smell and taste and a large number of up to 200 symptoms.

Somewhere between 15-40% of patients suffer from sometimes multiple Long Covid conditions.

It affects women more than men and can develop even after asymptomatic or mild to moderate Covid19 conditions. It is also reported in many younger patients.

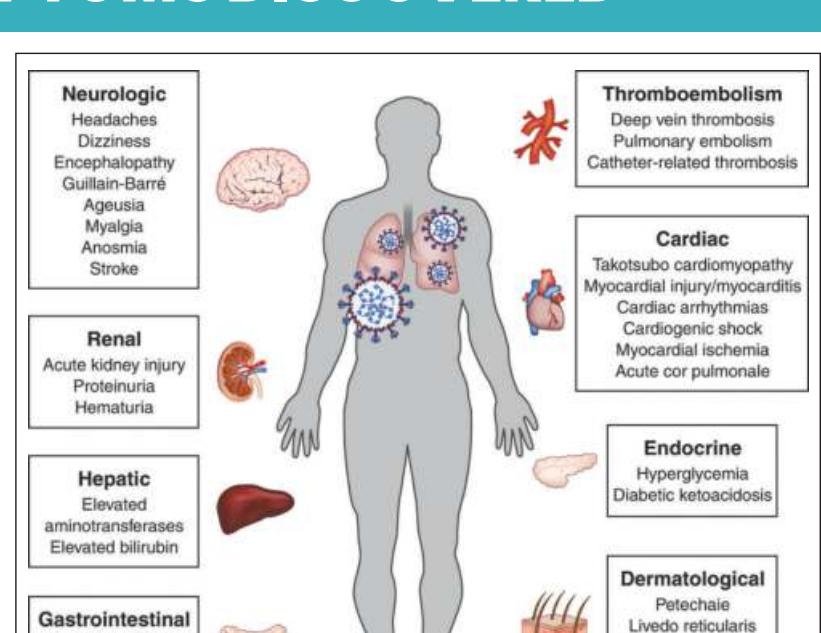
It can affect the ability to lead a normal life, to work or perform the most basic activities in many patients.

When does the Long Covid start?

In most cases it is simply a continuation of the acute Covid-19 conditions. In other cases, between the acute Covid19 conditions and the onset of Long-Covid Symptoms, there can be a "hidden" period.

How long does long Covid last?

Usually, Long Covid is diagnosed if the symptoms persist for more than 2



months after onset of acute Covid-19. Commonly it can take 5 to 12 month to resolve, and some patients show dysregulated biomarkers and symptoms even after more than one year. If not treated properly it can lead to chronic illnesses and even organ damage.

Many clinics and teams of doctors around the globe have started to specialize in the treatment of these so called Long Haulers, but the condition is relatively new and there is still a lack of understanding the true nature of the causes and what kind of therapy will really help.

Dr. Shankara Chetty from South Africa and his network of doctors have deciphered the most likely underlying causes and are very successful in treating patients accordingly.

Including the findings of various other specialists from the US and UK, the treatment protocols are getting more targeted and show faster recoveries.

As Long Covid is a multi systemic illness, developing in several stages, the choice of pharmaceutical drugs in combination with specially developed nutraceuticals is showing that this can now be targeted in a much more successful way.

Most important is the insight, that severe Covid19, as well as Long Covid conditions are for a big part an ALLERGIC reaction to the Spike protein which triggers the following INFLAMMATION and THROMBOSIS.

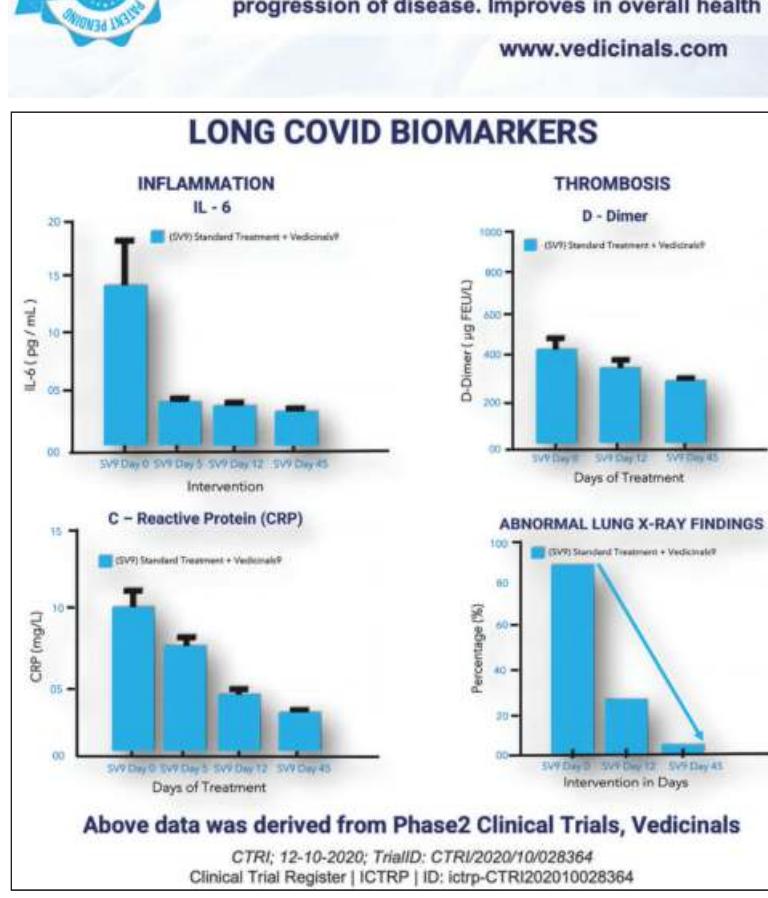
A WEBINAR ON

LONG TERM EFFECTS OF COVID-19 CAUSES, SYMPTOMS & REPORTED TREATMENT OPTIONS



www.healthcare-channel.com

LONG / POST COVID SYMPTOMS ?



[https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmicb](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmicb.2021.698169/full)