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Mithali says she will work with coach Powar to build a strong team
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NEARBY



BBMP ready with new queue system

BENGALURU
Allocation of beds under the civic body's Central Hospital Bed Management System will soon follow an automated 'queue system' based on calls made to the call centre or war rooms by patients.

BENGALURU ▶ PAGE 2

Now, new discharge policy in Karnataka

BENGALURU
In the wake of an alarming rise in black fungus cases, the State government has tweaked its discharge policy. At discharge, recovered COVID-19 patients will be tested for fungal infection and will also be subjected to an MRI scan if necessary.

KARNATAKA ▶ PAGE 3

Leadership change talk haunts BSY again

BENGALURU
The speculation of leadership change has again surfaced in BJP in Karnataka with some party MLAs expressing displeasure over the functioning style of Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa. Many are demanding that the CM immediately convene a meeting of the legislature party to discuss the issues related to governance.

SOUTH ▶ PAGE 5

Cyclone Yaas makes landfall in Balasore, triggers heavy damage

4 killed in Odisha, 1 in Bengal; many areas inundated

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
SHIV SAHAY SINGH
BHUBANESWAR / KOLKATA

The 'Very Severe Cyclonic Storm' Yaas that made landfall south of Balasore in Odisha on Wednesday tore into the border regions of West Bengal and Odisha and weakened into a cyclonic storm, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake on the eastern coast.

Five persons were killed – four in Odisha and one in West Bengal.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said one crore people had been affected, and about 15 lakh people had been evacuated.

National Disaster Response Force and Army personnel joined the rescue and relief operations.

In Odisha, 128 villages in Balasore and Bhadrak districts were inundated following seawater ingress. The cyclone caused extensive damage to power transmission lines in coastal areas. Hundreds of thatched houses were ravaged.

Yaas battered the tree cover while passing through Balasore and Mayurbhanj districts. Thousands of big trees



Rushing in: Sea water entering through the boundaries of a house as Cyclone Yaas made landfall in Chandipur area of Balasore, Odisha, on Wednesday. ▶ PTI

were uprooted.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the storm crossed the north Odisha coast about 20 km south of Balasore between 10.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. with estimated wind speeds of 130-140 kmph. The cyclone hit the coast with far less intensity than what was predicted.

By afternoon, the cyclonic storm had moved away from Balasore and had entered Mayurbhanj district, triggering heavy rain. The system is expected to enter Jharkhand as a cyclone.

6.5 lakh evacuated

In Odisha, the coastal districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur and northern Mayurbhanj district were affected. The State had evacuated about 6.5 lakh people, including 1.52 lakh in Balasore, 1.2 lakh in Bhadrak and 1 lakh in Mayurbhanj district.

Special Relief Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena said the damage was being assessed. Collectors of Balasore and Keonjhar had confirmed two deaths, he said.

As predicted by the IMD, tidal surge was observed above 4 m in Balasore and Bhadrak.

"Inundation was reported in the Dhamra area of Bhadrak district and Bahanaga, Remuna, Balipal and Balasore town of Balasore district. People had cut roads at several places to discharge water. The embankments would be repaired soon," said Mr. Jena.

CM ANNOUNCES RELIEF ▶ PAGE 9

Major lapse in giving vaccines in U.P. village

20 persons given wrong second dose

OMAR RASHID
JACOB KOSHY
LUCKNOW/NEW DELHI

In a major lapse, 20 villagers in Siddharthnagar district of eastern Uttar Pradesh were administered the Covishield vaccine in their first dose but given Covaxin in the second shot.

The incident took place during the vaccination drive at a primary health centre in Barhni block.

Ramnur Varun, a resident of Audahi Kala village, said he received Covishield on April 1. However, he was given a shot of Covaxin on May 14 during his second dose. "They did not check anything. The ASHA [worker] was standing elsewhere," he told reporters. Mr. Varun said he is now afraid of possible side-effects.

While 18 persons were from his village, two others were from another.

Radhe Shyam Shukla, 61, another villager administered the two vaccines, said though he did not face any side-effects, he was anxious for many days. "It is an act of negligence. It should not have happened. But now many days have passed [since May 14], nothing adverse has happened. We appear to be healthy," he told *The Hindu* when asked if he would want the administration to monitor him.

A probe is being carried out. Chief Medical Officer, Siddharthnagar, Sandeep Chaudhary said a clarification was being sought from officials on the ground and action would be taken accordingly. "It is a lapse because there is no guideline by the Government of India that a cocktail [of vaccines] be administered," he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

No going back



Determined lot: Farmers observing a 'Black Day' as they complete six months of their protest against the new farm laws at Singhu border in Delhi on Wednesday. ▶ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Centenarian freedom fighter H.S. Doreswamy passes away

He was a noted voice for freedom of expression

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

H.S. Doreswamy, freedom fighter, citizen activist and Karnataka's noted voice for freedom of expression, passed away on Wednesday in Bengaluru. He was 103.

He breathed his last at Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research after he suffered a cardiac arrest. He had recently beaten COVID-19 but was readmitted due to post-COVID-19 complications.

"While the primary cause of his death was his heart condition, the precipitating cause was COVID-19," said Dr. C. N. Manjunath, Director, Jayadeva Institute.

Born on April 10, 1918, in Harohalli on the outskirts of



Bengaluru, he joined the freedom struggle at a young age and was jailed during the Quit India Movement. He came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and remained a committed Gandhian till the end.

Post independence, he

disassociated from Indian National Congress and was part of almost all major national and social movements. He was also jailed during the Emergency.

He edited a magazine called *Poura Vani* with nationalist aspirations in pre-independence times. He continued to work as a journalist through his life, writing his last column two weeks before he died for the magazine *Nyaya Patha*. He was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for Rammath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award in 2019. He was awarded Basava Puraskara by the Karnataka government in 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 4

Panel to probe removal of shrouds from graves

Bodies were buried on banks of Ganga

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The Prayagraj district administration has ordered a probe into the removal of shrouds from the bodies buried in the sand on the banks of the Ganga, days after it was reported that the bodies could be of suspected COVID-19 victims.

A two-member committee of ADM (administration) and ASP (Gangapur) Prayagraj would probe the matter.

In a joint statement, DM Bhamra Chandra Goswami and Prayagraj DIG Sarvashresth Tripathi said the matter was "extremely serious and sensitive".

The panel has been asked to probe all angles, including which "elements" were involved in the act of removing the shrouds from the



graves and what was their intention. The panel has also been asked to take appropriate legal action against those found guilty.

Visuals widely shared on social media had shown cleaners, allegedly deployed by the administration, removing the shrouds.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Country reports 2,02,570 new COVID-19 cases, 3,577 deaths

T.N. reports 33,764 infections, followed by Kerala with 28,798

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

India recorded 2,02,570 new COVID-19 cases and 3,577 deaths till 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday. The country has so far reported a total of 2,73,59,230 cases and 3,14,999 deaths.

Tamil Nadu reported 33,764 new infections, followed by Kerala (28,798) and Karnataka (26,811). Maharashtra recorded 992 casualties on the day, followed by Karnataka (530) and Tamil Nadu (475). Maharashtra's fatalities include backlog deaths which were missed in the previous reports.

The figures do not include Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Ladakh. The data is sourced from the States' health bulletins.

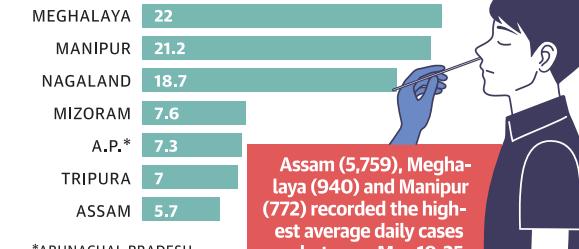
As many as 22,17,320 samples were tested in the coun-

Varying levels

Among the northeastern States, Sikkim had the highest average daily COVID-19 test positivity rate (TPR) of 31.5%.

Three others had average daily TPR more than 10%

AVERAGE DAILY TPR (%)



NOTE: DATA UNTIL MAY 25 | SOURCE: COVID19INDIA.ORG



try on Tuesday (the results for which were made available on Wednesday).

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

A BG-BGE

Timings

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| BENGALURU | |
| THURSDAY, MAY. 27 | |
| RISE 05:53 SET 18:41 | |
| RISE 19:50 SET 06:28 | |
| FRIDAY, MAY. 28 | |
| RISE 05:53 SET 18:41 | |
| RISE 20:56 SET 07:30 | |
| SATURDAY, MAY. 29 | |
| RISE 05:53 SET 18:42 | |
| RISE 21:58 SET 08:33 | |

Bengaluru Weather

max min

Tumakuru 32 24

Mysuru 32 22

Bengaluru 30 20

Bengaluru Today

32°C The day will be warm and humid. Night will be pleasant. Spell of rain and thundershower is likely.

Bengaluru Tomorrow

33°C Slight rise in temperature. The weather will be warm and humid. Night will be pleasant.

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BBMP ready with new queue system

Critically ill patients will be in a priority queue that will be handled manually

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU



Once the system is stabilised in Bengaluru, the same will be extended to rest of Karnataka. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Allocation of beds under the civic body's Central Hospital Bed Management System (CHBMS) will soon follow an automated 'queue system' based on calls made to the call centre or war rooms by patients. This new system of bed allotment is likely to be implemented in a couple of days, said Arvind Limbavali, Minister for Forests, Karnataka and Culture, who is also the nodal minister for war room and call centre management.

The

Minister held a meeting with COVID-19 war room officials to hammer out the details. In a press release, he stated that under the new system, when a request for a bed is logged into the system, the patient will be given a number automatically. Citizens will be informed of their position in the queue.

This is an attempt to stop people from jumping the queue and bring in transparency to the bed allocation system. Once the system is stabilised in Bengaluru, the

same will be extended to other parts of Karnataka, the release stated.

According to senior BBMP officials, with the COVID-19 cases coming down in Bengaluru, the availability of general, general-oxygenated, and HDU beds have improved. The queue is valid only when there is a waiting list. However, with beds now available, allocation can happen immediately.

When the plan had been mooted by Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya, it had been criticised by public health officials and even within the civic body for its

failure to account for critically ill patients. At the time, doctors told *The Hindu* that allocation had to also be done after they assess how critical a patient is and not just on the basis of a token.

For patients in need of critical care, a priority/emergency queue system will be in place. After tele-triaging or physical triaging at the Physical Triage Centres, such cases will be pushed by the zones to the 'superuser' (central COVID-19 war room) or IO8. These patients will be attended to on priority out of the queue system.

"While the queue system

is automated, the priority queue will be handled manually. The entire system is being tested and will be rolled out in a couple of days," an official stated.

Four-hour windowMr. Limbavali added that several changes have been incorporated in the bed allotment system. Reminder SMSes will be sent to patients, who have been allotted beds, if they do not reach the hospital within four hours of the allotment. The information will be shared with the nodal officer in hospitals. However, the allocation of a time slot had also been criticised, as beds are often occupied after five-six hours, civic officials had told *The Hindu* in the past.

He said that the State war room and the BBMP war rooms will be brought under one umbrella. In preparation of the third wave that experts state would affect children more than others, special wards in government and private hospitals would be established.

The State war room and the BBMP war rooms will be brought under one umbrella. In preparation of the third wave that experts state would affect children more than others, special wards in government and private hospitals would be established.

No more sealing of houses

Instructions were issued on Wednesday to stop the practice

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU



A poster on a house with COVID-19 patients in home isolation at B.T.M. Layout, on Wednesday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

der Quarantine From Date..

BBMP Chief Commissioner Gaurav Gupta clarified that the civic body had neither sealed nor barricaded any house like it did last year during the first wave.

He said that during a recent meeting, the Chief Secretary had directed the BBMP to put distinguishing marks on houses with COVID-19 positive residents.

During a recent interaction with various residents' welfare associations, Mr.

Gupta had stated that stamping a seal on the hands of citizens who test positive was being done in some places. "In some cases, the BBMP can put ribbons to identify houses with COVID-19 positive cases. Several initiatives of this nature can be taken up," he had said.

Despite several attempts, there was no response from BBMP Special Commissioner (Finance) Tulasi Madineni, who is in charge of the South zone.

Locals supplying bulk of oxygen

Of the State's allocation of 1,200 MT, it had received 959 MT

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

While the Central government has formalised an allotment of 1,200 MT of oxygen to Karnataka, a bulk of it will come from local manufacturers.

Around 830 MT will be produced by manufacturers in Karnataka, while 310 MT will come from other States. The remaining 60 MT will come from MSME Air Separation Units.

On Tuesday, the State's allocation was 1,200 MT.

However, it had received



An Oxygen Express

hra Pradesh, and Odisha. For the second day in a row, two Oxygen Express trains arrived at the Inland Container Depot in Whitefield.

The first train came from Jamnagar in Gujarat carrying 112.16 tonnes of liquid medical oxygen. The second train brought 120 tonnes of oxygen from Tatnagar, Jharkhand.

As of Wednesday, the State has received 1,652 tonnes of liquid medical oxygen in 14 Oxygen Express trains.

only 959 MT so far.

Health Commissioner K.V. Trilok Chandra said that they were getting oxygen from manufacturers in Karnataka, Maharashtra, And-

Maintain status quo at Hesarghatta'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

on January 19, 2021 to reject the proposal to declare He-sarghatta Grasslands comprising of 5,010 acres as 'Greater Hesarghatta Grasslands Conserve Reserve'.

The petitioner has pointed out that the Chief Minister, who is chairperson of the KSBWL, had dropped the proposal to declare Hesarghatta Grasslands as 'Greater Hesarghatta Grasslands Conservation Reserve' without considering the opinions and recommendations of other members of the KSBWL, who were experts on the subject.

The petitioner had decided to drop the proposal

after S.R. Vishwanath, MLA of Yelahanka constituency, who was a special invitee to the meeting, opposed the proposal for declaration of 'Greater Hesarghatta Grasslands Conservation Reserve' while pointing out that it would come in the way of development works in the area as already there is shortage of government land.

The petitioner has contended that KSBWL's Chairperson failed to appreciate the report filed by the Chief Conservator of Forest highlighting that Hesarghatta lakebed and grasslands are an important reservoir of biodiversity.

Pharmacy employees held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

line. The police transferred the money after which Sanjeev Kumar sent Abhijith to hand over two vials to Yerriswamy at a pre-arranged spot on Thimmia Road, Mahaganapathi Nagar on Monday.

The police recovered 25 vials from Sanjeev Kumar, 32, Pratheek, 27, and Abhijith, 20.

After being alerted, Inspector Yerriswamy contacted Sanjeev Kumar posing as a customer.

The accused agreed to sell two vials of the antiviral drug for ₹10,000 each, and told him to transfer part of the money in advance on

They work in a pharmacy and sourced Remdesivir from their contact in Kerala. The trio have been taken into custody for further investigation," said a police officer.

+ COVID-19 relief for drivers: 3 lakh applications expected

Drivers can apply on Seva Sindhu portal from today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

The Transport Department announced that it will accept online applications from drivers seeking COVID-19 relief funds on the Seva Sindhu portal from Thursday.

Auto, taxi and maxi cab drivers are eligible for financial assistance of ₹3,000, which was announced by the Chief Minister.

The department is expecting around 3 lakh drivers to apply online. Deputy Chief Minister and Transport Minister Laxman Sadvadi, in a statement, said that the department will directly deposit the money into bank accounts of eligible drivers once they receive the application on Seva Sindhu.

Drivers with DLs issued till April 24, 2021, are eligible to apply. The 'one driver, one vehicle' policy will be adopted while allocating compensation.

Transport Commissioner

jected had either not submitted the required documents or met the criteria.

Unions unhappy

According to K. Somashekar of Namma Chalakara Trade Union, last year, the government had announced that 7.5 lakh drivers would benefit from the financial aid. "But in the end, not even half received the money due to the various conditions. Drivers who have their own vehicles may benefit, but there are thousands who do not own the vehicle they drive

K. SOMASHEKAR,
Namma Chalakara Trade Union

He also pointed out that if two drivers use a single taxi or auto, they would not be eligible.

The government should have simplified the rules by providing compensation to all those who have valid DLs and badges to drive auto, taxi and maxi cabs," said Mr. Somashekar.

He also pointed out that if two drivers use a single taxi or auto, they would not be eligible.

The government should have simplified the rules by providing compensation to all those who have valid DLs and badges to drive auto, taxi and maxi cabs," he added.

Chhatrapati Shahuji Rashtra Nirvaran Aayog

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क्रमांक एफ-14-17/की.सी.एस.सी.रा/रायपुर/2021/एफ/1089 नवा रायपुर, दिनांक 25/05/2021

// प्रियदिवा आवंगण सूचना //

छत्रपति शाहजी राष्ट्र निर्वाचन आयोग कार्यालय के नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में निर्वाचन भवन पर लगाई गई अनुमति निर्माण/प्रबन्धकारी से ई-निर्वाचन के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन निर्वाचन आवंगण की जाती है। प्रदायक नियमों वाले सामग्री का विवरण निम्नसारथ है:-

| S.No. | Particulars |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Video Conferencing System (Point to Point upgradable, Resolution : 1080p, 60fps & above, Minimum Bandwidth required : 4096 kbps & above, Ready for future upgradation) |
| 2 | Interactive Display Unit (Screen Size - 86", LED Backlit with IPS interactive touch panel display, 4K UHD Resolution with latest Connectivity, Smart Functions & Interactive Softwares) |
| 3 | Hardware & Software/OPS (Processor : i5 8th gen, RAM : 8 GB, Storage : 1 TB HDD with 128 GB SSD, OS : Latest Windows/Android with licence, Antivirus & 4K Graphic Card) |
| 4 | Camera (Full HD PTZ Camera with 12x Optical zoom or higher, Automatic Camera Control, Minimum Resolution : 1080p, 60fps, Enhanced Sensors) |
| 5 | Microphone (Omni directional Wireless Microphone with enhanced Noise and Echo cancellation features, Streaming/Recording features) |
| 6 | All Products comes with Standard (CE/CB/BIS, FCC, UL & RoHS) Certifications |
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| 8 | Warranty : 01 year or more should be included |

अनानंदाईन निविदाएँ दो दोस्ती प्रणाली (Two Bid System) भाग - 1 तकानीकी एवं भाग - 2 वित्तीय बिल के आधार पर आमंत्रित कर खाली जागी तथा अनुमति प्रदान की जाती है अनुमति दर पर सारांशी प्रदायक की के लिए बंदरगाही से होती है इसकी निर्माण/प्रदान कर्तवी द्वारा निवाच https://eproc.csate.gov.in वेबसाईट पर भर्ती जा सकती है निवाच से संबंधित अन्य आवश्यक जानकारियां, विस्तृत Technical Specification एवं निर्वाचन उत्तरांक विवरण पर उत्तरांक है।

निवाच रुपय 1000/- (ऑनलाइन देव होमा)

- 27.05.2021, 11:30 बजे से प्रारम्भ

निवाच भरने तथा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय

- 16.06.2021, अपराह्न 02:00 बजे तक

निवाच जातने की तिथि

- राष्ट्रीय चुनाव भवन, सेक्टर - 19, नाथ लॉक्स, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर (

Slow start to shifting vaccination sites to schools and colleges

It has been over 10 days since government announcement

TANU KULKARNI
BENGALURU

Although it has been over 10 days since the State government announced that vaccination drives will move out of government hospitals and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and instead be held on the premises of schools and colleges, only a few hospitals have done so to date.

At the time of announcing the decision, Deputy Chief Minister C. N. Ashwath Narayan had underscored the need to separate people due to their shot from patients visiting the hospital for treatment or testing. A few hospitals, like K.C. General Hospital, have shifted the vaccination site to a nearby school, but a majority have yet to make the transition. Health Commissioner K.V. Thiruk Chandra said that the process has begun. "We are in the processing of figuring the logistics and finding vaccination sites outside health care centres," he said.

Citizens as well as healthcare workers are worried about the risk of cross-infection, which has been re-



The vaccination centre that was shifted to the Government Primary school at Malleshwaram from the K.C. General Hospital in Bengaluru. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

ported at vaccination sites in hospitals. Many who are due for their second shot are waiting for more vaccine sites to be set up outside government hospitals and PHC.

Namrata K., a private company employee said, "I need to get my second shot soon, but my family is asking me to wait as the number of cases are high and they do not want me to enter a hospital right now."

Staff at government hospitals, too, are hoping that the government will not delay this shift. "Our hospital also has COVID-19 patients, but a large part of our time and energy is spent on the

vaccination process. People who are not able to get vaccinated create a lot of chaos and there are clashes at the hospital. If the vaccination drive is moved out of the hospital, we will be able to treat COVID-19 patients better," he said.

When contacted, officials with the Department of Health and Family Welfare said "We will ask hospitals to contact schools and colleges in their vicinity and conduct vaccination camps there. This will also ensure that nurses and other staff do not have to commute long distances and vaccines can be transported safely from the hospital."

High Court dismisses plea to stop vaccination

It says petition was 'not in public interest'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday dismissed, with ₹50,000 cost, a PIL petition seeking direction to government to stop COVID-19 vaccination on the ground that both the vaccines were allowed for mass vaccination in violation of the rules and guidelines.

The court said that petition was "not in public interest" as the vaccination programme commenced back in January this year and the petition was filed on May 24 making a claim that vaccines were rolled out without proper clinical trials.

A Special Division Bench, comprising Chief Justice Ab-

hay Shreenivas Oka and Justice Aravind Kumar, passed the order on the petition filed by 82-year-old Mathew Thomas, an ex-serviceman, Sriram M.S., and Niswarth Kochar, all residents of Bengaluru.

However, the Bench exempted Mr. Thomas from paying the cost considering that he is ex-serviceman.

Earlier, the Bench gave an option to the counsel to seek instruction from the petitioners whether they want to pursue such a 'frivolous' plea, the counsel said the petitioners insist consideration of the plea.

Following this the Bench dismissed the petition with the cost.

Positivity rate falls below 20%

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Around 26,811 people in Karnataka were diagnosed with COVID-19 on Wednesday bringing the total number of cases to 24,99 lakh. Of the new cases, 6,433 cases were reported in Bengaluru Urban. According to the media bulletin issued by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, the positivity rate for the day stood at

19.48%. Of the total cases, 4.09 lakh are active cases in the State. The case fatality rate stood at 1.97%. While cases have dropped, 530 people succumbed to COVID-19. The total number of deaths stands at 26,929.

As many as 40,741 patients were discharged on Wednesday. Around 1.27 lakh people were vaccinated.

Body of Nigerian found

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Ramamurthy Nagar police are investigating the death of a Nigerian, whose body was found in a canal near Kalkere lake on Tuesday afternoon. The deceased, identified as Peter Ofor, 38, was a resident of Banjara Layout and sold readymade garments, said the police.

According to a complaint filed by the association of Nigerians, Ofor was last seen moving on his bike near a playground in the area on Tuesday morning. Witnesses told the police that they saw some people chasing him. His body was discovered later in the afternoon.

"The initial probe revealed that there were no external injuries on the body. We are waiting for the post mortem report to ascertain the cause of death," said a police officer, adding that they have taken up a case of unnatural death.

Notice Inviting Tender

Reliance Industries Limited ("RIL") and BP Exploration (Alpha) Limited, (collectively as the "Sellers", and individually the "Seller") have entered into a Production Sharing Contract for the Block KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6) dated 12 April 2000 entered with Government of India. Sellers intend to sell Crude Oil produced from the Block.

On behalf of the Sellers, RIL invites bids from eligible bidders having the necessary capability and requisite statutory & regulatory clearances, for purchase at Sellers' option of approximately 30,000 to 40,000 barrels initially followed by approximately 11,000 barrels per month. The Crude Oil will be available Ex-Works/FCAs at KG-D6 Onshore Terminal (OT), Gadioguda, Tallarevu Mandal, East Godavari District, State of Andhra Pradesh or at such other point as agreed between the Parties in writing (the "Delivery Point") during the period 25th June 2021 – 24th June 2022.

Prospective bidders are requested to visit www.ril.com/eB2B/RIL-KGD6-Crude.aspx and download the detailed Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) Document, which includes instruction to bidders and Draft Crude Oil Sale Agreement (COSA). Prospective bidders are requested to follow instructions as detailed in the NIT Document to participate in the process.

Inviting bids does not constitute any commitment to supply KG-D6 Crude Oil. Please also note that absolute right to award rests with the Sellers and the NIT Document does not impose or create any legally binding obligation whatsoever on the Sellers.

The bids should be submitted / sent only at e-mail mentioned in NIT by 15:00 hrs IST on 10-June-21 ("Bid Due Date") and the same will be opened at 16:00 hrs IST on 10-June-21.

Head FC&A – E&P Domestic Business,
Reliance Industries Limited
Reliance Corporate Park, Bldg. No. 10, A-Wing, 2nd Floor,
Thane-Belapur Road, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai - 400 701



Growth is Life

New discharge policy in Karnataka

COVID-19 patients who have recovered will be tested for any fungal infection during discharge

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

In the wake of an alarming rise in mucormycosis or black fungus cases, the State government has tweaked its discharge policy for early detection and treatment.

At the time of discharge, COVID-19 patients who have recovered will be tested for

any fungal infection and will also be subjected to an MRI scan if necessary. Health and Family Welfare and Medical Education Minister K. Sudhakar said the decision was taken after a meeting with medical experts on Wednesday. "All district hospitals have been instructed to have a dedicated post CO-

VID-19 ward. After one week of discharge, recovered patients should get themselves tested at the hospital or can also opt for tele-consultation. If symptoms are found they will be called to hospitals for further diagnosis," he said.

As per the preliminary report, Dr. Sudhakar said that

the infection is reported in small hospitals, taluk hospitals, and those under home isolation in some cases.

The Health Minister also said that it has been found that administering steroids in the first week of treatment of COVID-19 is one of the main causes of black fungus infection. Steroids

should be prescribed only from the second week. "There are about 95 cases of black fungus which are being treated at Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute. Of these, 75 patients either uncontrolled diabetes or have been administered steroids during CO-

VID-19 treatment," he said.



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THE IMPACT
RANKINGS

AMRITA UNIVERSITY RANKED AMONGST THE TOP 100 IN THE WORLD, AND NO. 1 IN INDIA.

THE Impact Rankings – the only global indicators to assess universities' progress towards the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), has ranked Amrita, 1st in India and 81st in the world. It's an acknowledgement of the University's commitment to remain an exemplary institution that creates Global Impact on society through

Compassion-driven Research and Education for Life. It's an education that harmonises both, scientific knowledge and spiritual learning, to create a sustainable tomorrow for all. We thank our students, faculty, staff, alumni and partners who are influencing change, both nationally and globally, as we build for the future.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS' RANKING:

World Rank 5



32 Lac Learners
12,000+ Schools
54,000 Teachers Trained
4,500 Colleges

World Rank 8



Over 3,00,000 Women Empowered
6,300+ Vocationally Trained

World Rank 37



₹630 Crores for Charitable Medical Care
47 Lac Patients Received Free Treatment

World Rank 52



₹100 Crores in Funding
5,000 Villages
10 Lac Targetted Beneficiaries

World's Top 200



184 Start-ups Incubated
100+ Patents Awarded / Published
₹ 350 Crores in Research Income

World's Top 200



3,25,000 Beneficiaries
10,00,000+ Field Hours
50+ International Partners

"

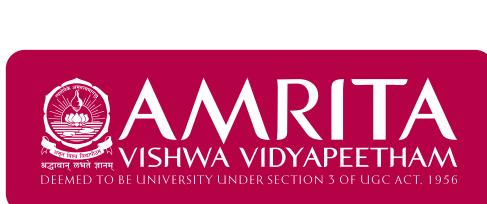
"Today, universities are ranked mainly based on funding, the number of papers they publish, and their intellectual calibre. But we should also consider how much their research can serve the lowest and most vulnerable strata of society. Only by strengthening the base of the society, does the entire edifice grow healthy and strong."

- Chancellor Amma at United Nations Academic Impact

"



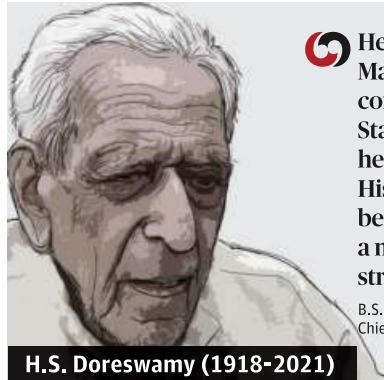
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C He was our last link to Mahatma Gandhi and the conscience keeper of the State. As a follower of Gandhi, he lived by his principles. His long life spanned from being a freedom fighter to a man who led many social struggles.

B.S. YEDIYURAPPA
Chief Minister

H.S. Doreswamy (1918-2021)

C The State has lost a great freedom fighter in the death of H.S. Doreswamy. Despite being a centenarian, his fighting spirit and social commitment was huge. He remained an inspiration and a guide to all of us.

H.D. KUMARASWAMY
Former Chief Minister

C The centenarian freedom fighter, who lived through two centuries, was a guide, warning us of wrong and appreciating good work. From freedom struggle to the latest fight against land grabbing, he remained a model.

SIDDARAMAIAH
Former Chief Minister

C H.S. Doreswamy can only be described as the conscience of our State. I first befriended him in the 1980s during the environmental movement in the city, when I was in my 20s, and he continued to lead citizen movements till his last days. He took every government irrespective of the party to task. He was a man of great compassion, dignity, and great moral courage. He is absolutely irreplaceable.

RAMACHANDRA GUHA
Historian

C I spoke to him for more than two hours on Wednesday. He spoke about the state of affairs in the country with great concern. He emphatically said he had not wasted his time on earth. We should not mourn his passing, but we need to celebrate his life and works. His undying spirit for a good democratic fight and his belief in non-violent Gandhian way of life will guide us.

RAVI KRISHNA REDDY
President, Karnataka Rashtra Samiti

Doreswamy: A fighter till the very end

A man who never rested on his laurels, he continued to see a role for himself in public life

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU

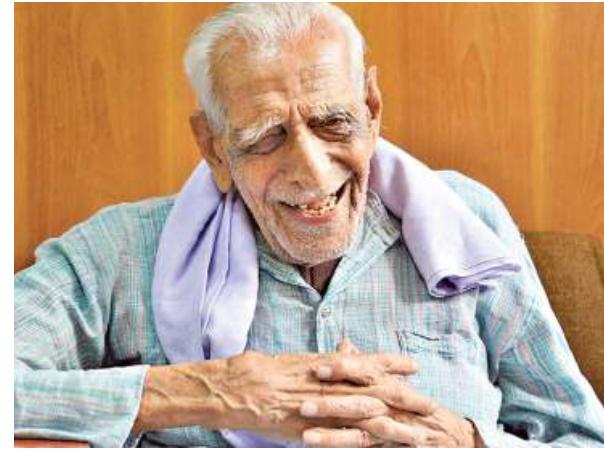
Two weeks before he passed away, H.S. Doreswamy had sent in his hand-written weekly column *Noorara Nata*, to *Nyaya Patha*, a Kannada weekly. It was a sharp analysis of the results of the five States Assembly polls.

That sums up how Mr. Doreswamy, the Gandhian freedom fighter, worked till the very end. A man who never rested on his laurels, he continued to see a role for himself in public life and fought for "freedom", as he continuously redefined it. He saw it in his fight for civil liberties, land rights, environmental justice, freedom of expression or against corruption and communalism.

He never contested elections or held posts, but remained a citizen-activist till the last. "Gandhi wanted the Congress to abjure political power and remain a social movement, convert itself into a permanent opposition party against misrule by any party or government," he wrote in his column in April 2018. Mr. Doreswamy followed that path. He spared none and was critical of all governments about what he saw as "anti-people policies". He was one of the most vocal public intellectuals of the State, whom historian Ramachandra Guha describes as "conscience of the State".

In recent years, he was a trenchant critique of the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He took the lead in the recent anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests and farmers' agitation against farm laws, drawing the ire of the ruling regime. In March 2020, BJP legislator Basanagouda Patil Yatnal questioned his credentials as a freedom fighter, dubbed him "anti-national" and a "Pakistani agent". But the centenarian did not flinch or change his stance. He often called the mass movement against the incumbent regime a "second freedom struggle".

Mr. Doreswamy was particularly active in the State's pu-



(Clockwise from top left) Freedom fighter H.S. Doreswamy at *The Hindu* office in Bengaluru; with former Minister B.T. Lalith Nayak at a protest against BBMP for dumping garbage at Mandur; with social activist Teesta Setalvad and journalist Ravish Kumar at the Gauri Lankesh Memorial National Journalism Award in Bengaluru; at a protest demanding ban on liquor; and with writers and activists collecting funds for an event. ■ BHAGYA PRAKASH K., SAMPATH KUMAR G.P., V. SREENIVASA MURTHY, & K. MURALI KUMAR

blic life over the last one decade, starting with the satyagraha he held to stop dumping Bengaluru's garbage in Mandur in 2013. He later led the State government's initiative to mainstream left-wing extremists, where he worked with the late editor-activist Gauri Lankesh, who often described Mr. Doreswamy as "rockstar taata".

Sirimane Nagaraj, one of those who joined the mainstream through this initiative in 2014, said after their release from prison, he tasked

them to take up a struggle that affected the poor and when they chose land rights and housing, Mr. Doreswamy led the struggle from the front for several years.

The murder of Gauri Lankesh in 2017 hit Mr. Doreswamy hard. He was a rallying point for the State's civil society in demanding that the culprits be brought to book.

He chaired the Gauri Memorial Trust and worked to revive her weekly tabloid, in which he was a columnist till he died. "We appear to be

moving into the age of Nathuram Godse, where writers and activists are assassinated for their views," he told *The Hindu* in 2019, advocating a rediscovery of Mahatma Gandhi. The Mahatma, he said, was all the more relevant today, in an age of post-truth, unprecedented violence and suppression of dissent.

Never one to lose hope, he always retained optimism and belief in democratic protests and struggle on the street. "Anyone in Karnataka

fighting for people and their rights knew that the door of his house in Jayanagar was always open for them. The big man would walk with you in the hot sun and to any place to inspire the movement," said activist Srinivasa Alavilli.

At an online event to mark his 103rd birthday on April 10, Mr. Doreswamy, speaking after a host of well-wishers

praised him, said he did not have all those qualities but would try to inculcate them in his life ahead, with a mischievous smile.

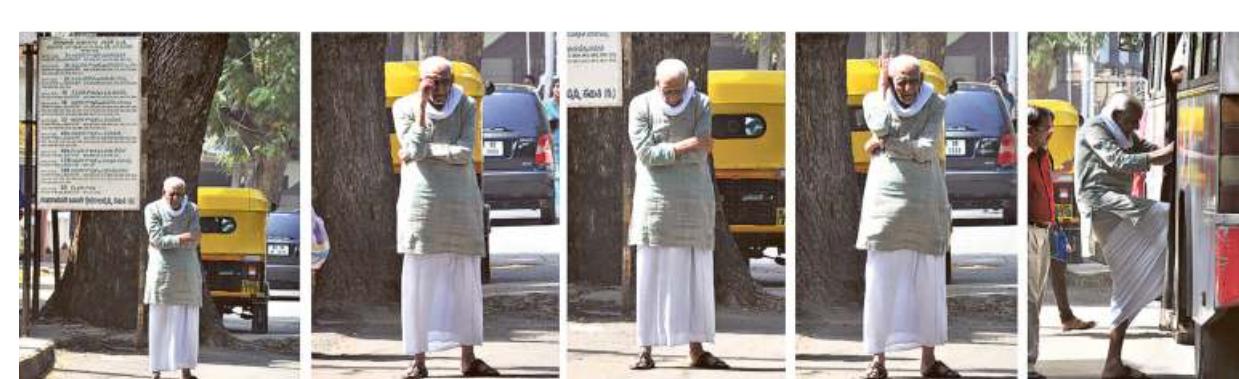
FROM PAGE ONE

H.S. Doreswamy passes away

Mr. Doreswamy remained a committed activist till the end and a vociferous voice against any effort to suppress freedom of expression. He was consistently against communalisation of politics and one of his last campaigns was against Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.

Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa condoled the death of Mr. Doreswamy and described him as "a man who lived his life like the conscience of Karnataka". Leader of Opposition Siddaramaiah tweeted that Mr. Doreswamy was an inspiration to millions for his truth and honesty. "He never hesitated to hit the streets to protest against anything he felt was wrong. His absence will be felt," he said.

Those close to him recalled that during the last few days, Mr. Doreswamy had insisted that his bed be given to a youth. "I have not wasted my time on earth, so I have no regrets going, nor am I scared," he told several of his well-wishers over the last few days, and reportedly also to the doctors as he was wheeled into the ICU on Wednesday. He was cremated with State honours in the city Wednesday evening.



A file photo of H.S. Doreswamy waiting for a bus in Jayanagar, Bengaluru. ■ BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

When he insisted his bed be given to a youngster

He told doctors he had lived a full life'

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Doctors and nurses treating 103-year-old H.S. Doreswamy saw him as a fighter. But for the last 10 days, he refused medicine and food, they said.

C.N. Manjunath, director of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, where Mr. Doreswamy was admitted said he had turned very philosophical.

"He kept telling us that he had lived a full life and insisted that his bed be given to a young person.. He questioned why he should get such good treatment. I tried to convince him and tell him we have no shortage of beds," he said.

According to Dr. Manjunath, the freedom fighter had a chronic obstructive lung disease and a valvular heart disease for the last decade.

Mandur residents mourn the man who fought for them

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Hundreds of residents in Mandur, a village in Bengaluru's backyard that bore the brunt of the city's poor solid waste management for several years, mourned the death of H.S. Doreswamy.

Mr. Doreswamy was hospitalised on May 6 after he tested positive for COVID-19. He was discharged on May 12 as his condition improved.

But, he was brought to the hospital again on May 14 after he faced breathing difficulty. Doctors said his oxygen saturation levels were always normal.

According to Dr. Manjunath, the freedom fighter had a chronic obstructive lung disease and a valvular heart disease for the last decade.

chanced upon Mandur. I went into the village and realised the city has been dumping garbage in this village for many years and life there had turned terrible. As a Bengalurean, I felt guilty, responsible, and a need to atone for my sin. I sat on a fast and ensured that the dumping of garbage in the village was stopped."

After news of his passing reached the village, a few residents placed his photo at the main circle and offered floral tributes.

"We owe our life to him," said Mr. Byresh M.J., who was part of the struggle then and is now a member of the Mandur Gram Panchayat.

In an interview with *The Hindu* in June 2020, Mr. Doreswamy had said: "In 2013, I tried to convince him and tell him we have no shortage of beds," he said.

"We couldn't do much due to COVID-19 restrictions," said Mr. Byresh M.J., who was part of the struggle then and is now a member of the Mandur Gram Panchayat.

"She passed away in Chennai on 25 May 2021 after a brief illness. Mourned by family and friends

I spoke to him for more than two hours on Wednesday. He spoke about the state of affairs in the country with great concern. He emphatically said he had not wasted his time on earth. We should not mourn his passing, but we need to celebrate his life and works. His undying spirit for a good democratic fight and his belief in non-violent Gandhian way of life will guide us.

RAVI KRISHNA REDDY
President, Karnataka Rashtra Samiti

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU

Gandhian H.S. Doreswamy, till the very end, insisted that democratic protests have to adopt non-violent means. But, he also had a brush with radical politics for a few years during the Quit India Movement.

The freedom fighter, who passed away on Wednesday, recalls in his memoir *Nenapina Suruli Teredaga* his association with the Quit India Movement, when he helped organise a strike by all major cloth mills in the city - Binny Mills, Minerva Mills and Raja Mills - especially since they were stitching parachute cloth, used by the British in the Air Force during the war. "We used to hurl time bombs into government record rooms and other British targets to hit their war effort. But no one was hurt," he wrote.

He often recounted how his brush with violence made him realise the futility of violence and he remained a Gandhian all his life.

His initiation to the fervour of freedom struggle, however, came much earlier when he was an intermediate student in the city. "Then Bombay Mayor and Congress leader K.F. Nariman was arrested on stage and students who had gathered to hear his speech were caned, including me. A student was killed in police firing. This kindled the nationalist spirit in me," Mr. Doreswamy wrote in his memoir. The only time he met



■ FILE PHOTO

Gandhi in person was in 1936, when he came to rest in Nandi Hills.

Though Mr. Doreswamy later went on to finish graduation in science and began working as a high school teacher, he quit his job and joined the Quit India Movement in 1942, as a 24-year-old. He was jailed for 17 months between December 1942 and May 1944.

Post his release from jail, he ran a bookshop in Mysuru and was a key leader in the "Mysore Chalo Movement" demanding formation of a democratic and responsible government post Independence. He also became editor of *Pura Vani*, a newspaper that was banned by the Mysore government for

its forthright editorials during the movement, pushing him to publish and distribute it underground.

Interestingly, he published a report on January 17, 1948, that Nathuram Godse had come as a guest for a State-level RSS meet and was staying at an RSS leader's house in the city. Though the RSS continues to dispute this report, Mr. Doreswamy stood by the report he published.

Post-Independence, though initially identified with a splinter group within the Indian National Congress, he gradually disassociated himself from the party and in the later years, remained a civic activist identifying himself with all major national and regional social movements.

He was also part of movements against his former party Congress, including Jayaprakash Narayan's Samaporna Kranti movement in the 1970s and the more recent India Against Corruption in 2010. He was also jailed during the Emergency.

"During the Emergency, I wrote a letter to Indira Gandhi saying the British were more magnanimous than her in dealing with political prisoners. I was arrested, but the court let me off, saying as a citizen I was free to write a letter to my Prime Minister, however critical it was," he recounted to *The Hindu* in March 2020, lamenting on the incumbent regime's "suppression of dissent".

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

N MURUGAN (60), Retired Assistant Engineer - Printing, The Hindu, Coimbatore passed away on 26-05-2021. Address: B-45, Brindavan Nagar Civil Aerodrome Post, SITRA, Coimbatore - 641014. Mobile No: 9620900378

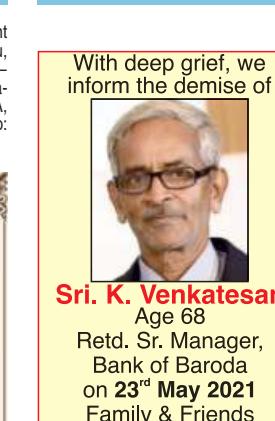


Smt. Chandra Mani
DoB: 23-10-1930 | DoD: 18-5-2021
LEGENDARY SOUL RESTING IN PEACE

It is with sadness to announce the demise of our Mother, Grandmother & Great Grandmother.

Family members:
C.Ramesh & Fly
C.Venkatesh & Fly
(LATE) C. Mahesh & Fly
R.Ganesh & Fly
Anusha & Fly
And all near and dear

DEATH



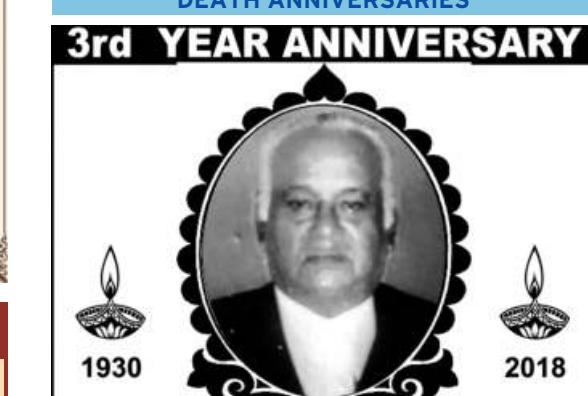
With deep grief, we inform the demise of
Sri. K. Venkatesan
Age 68
Retd. Sr. Manager,
Bank of Baroda
on 23rd May 2021
Family & Friends

DEATH



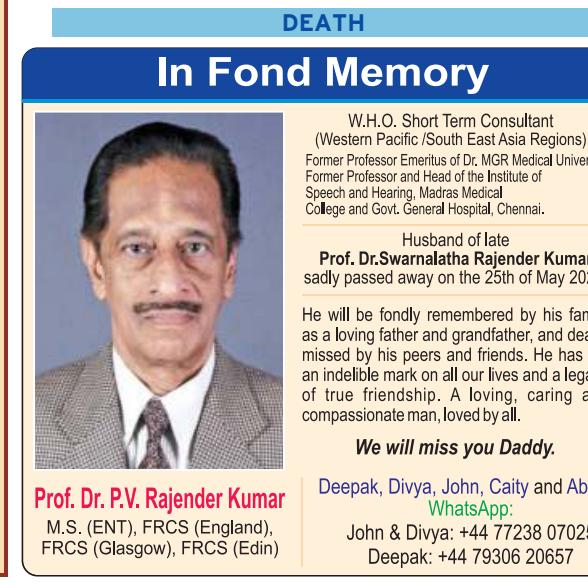
Sri. A.C. GOVINDA RAJ
Retd. Research Officer APERL
DOB: 06-08-1921 | DOD: 23-05-2021
With profound grief we inform you of the sudden demise of our beloved Father
"May His Soul Rest In Peace"
Fondly Remembered by:
Sons, Daughters-in-law & Grand Children

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES



3rd YEAR ANNIVERSARY
Thiru. A.A. NATHAN Advocate
Years have passed (27-05-2018) since you left us.
However you are still living within us and we will be inspired by you forever. You are irreplacable.
Forever with love :
Daughters, Grand Children & Great Grand Children

DEATH



In Fond Memory
W.H.O. Short Term Consultant (Western Pacific South East Asia Regions)
Former Professor Emeritus of Dr. MGR Medical University
Speech and Hearing, Madras Medical College and Govt. General Hospital, Chennai.
Husband of late Prof. Dr. Swarnalatha Rajender Kumar sadly passed away on the 25th of May 2021.
He will be fondly remembered by his family as a loving father and grandfather, and dearly missed by his peers and friends. He has left an indelible mark on all our lives and a legacy of true friendship. A loving, caring and compassionate man, loved by all.
We will miss you Daddy.
Deepak, Divya, John, Caity and Abby WhatsApp:
John & Divya: +91 77238 07025
Deepak: +91 93062 20657

IN BRIEF



Vairamuthu chosen for O.N.V. literary award

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Tamil poet Vairamuthu has been chosen for the fifth O.N.V. literary award instituted by the O.N.V. Cultural Academy in Kerala. The award comprises a cash prize of ₹3,00,000, a citation and plaque.

3 children orphaned in pandemic get ₹10 lakh

KAKINADA
East Godavari Collector D. Muralidhar Reddy on Wednesday gave away ex gratia of ₹10 lakh each to three children whose parents died of COVID-19, as per an earlier announcement made by the A.P. government. "It has been deposited in banks. They can withdraw it when they turn 25," an official said.

Retaining IT youth in rural areas, a new strategy to revive rural economy

B.S. SATISH KUMAR
BENGALURU

Retaining farm youth in rural areas was the theme of debate among experts for reviving rural economy so far. The focus is now also on retaining youth working in IT sector from rural areas, presently working online from their native villages, even after life normalises post-pandemic.

This, coupled with other initiatives like linking farmers with a co-operative digital marketing platform and setting up farm processing units at village level would go a long way in reviving rural economy, feel experts.

These are some of the issues that are part of the agenda of a group of reputed pro-

Speculation of leadership change haunts Karnataka CM again

Some BJP MLAs seek a legislature party meeting in the presence of Central observers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The speculation of leadership change has again surfaced in BJP in Karnataka with a section of party MLAs expressing displeasure over the functioning style of Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa.



which the government has handled the COVID-19 situation. The government's slack response to the pandemic hit people is showing the party and its legislators also in poor light," an MLA from the BJP told *The Hindu*.

The other issue that has ruffled feathers is the government's decision to sell 3,677 acres of government land to Jindal company. The third issue, according to them, is the interference of Chief Minister's son B.Y. Vijayendra in administration.

Meanwhile, the BJP leaders who are camping in Delhi have claimed that their visit has nothing to do with leadership change. But the circumstances under which

tended by party central observers. Party insiders feel that the demand for holding a legislature party meeting could be set the stage ready for leadership change.

"We mainly have three issues. First is that we are not happy with the manner in

which the government has

they have made their visit to the national capital has earned the wrath of the Chief Minister's camp.

Some of the prominent leaders, who have not identified themselves with dissidents group, too maintain that leadership change may be "inevitable" now considering the age of Mr. Yediyurappa, who is 78-year-old.

Senior Minister R. Ashok, while replying to a query by mediapersons in Bengaluru on Wednesday, confirmed that a few leaders including ministers were making efforts to effect a leadership change. However, he clarified that his priorities were different, indicating that he was focusing on COVID-19.

Telangana doctors to get 15% hike in stipend

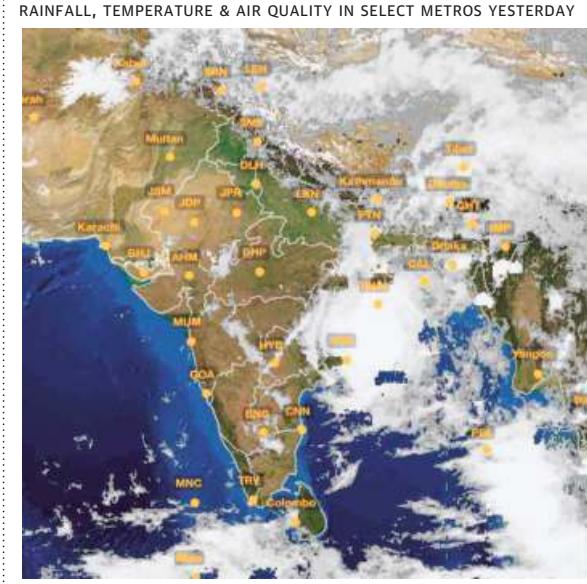
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has conceded the long-pending demand for a 15% hike in the stipend of junior doctors and asked them to resume duties immediately.

The Telangana Junior Doctors' Association (TJUDA) had earlier said it would boycott services from May 26 demanding fulfilment of demands, including hike in stipend. A representative of the association said they boycotted elective services except emergency and ICU duties.

During a COVID-19 review meeting on Wednesday, Mr. Rao said it was not right on their part to go on strike at this critical time of pandemic as the government was ready to resolve their legitimate demands.

WEATHER WATCH



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over east Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, north interior Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over east Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Karaikal and Lakshadweep

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|-------------|------------|---------|------|--------------------|------------|---------|------|
| Agartala | 25... | 32.0... | 25.1 | Kozhikode | 41... | 31.2... | 24.1 |
| Ahmedabad | ...37.8... | 26... | 27.7 | Kurnool | ...38.7... | 26.6 | |
| Aizawl | ...28.5... | 18.9 | | Lucknow | ...37.3... | 26.3 | |
| Altahabad | ...36.2... | 26.3 | | Madurai | ...35.6... | 26.0 | |
| Bengaluru | ...30.1... | 20.4 | | Mangaluru | ...32.2... | 22.4 | |
| Bhopal | ...40.8... | 27.0 | | Mumbai | ...33.4... | 28.1 | |
| Bhubaneswar | 40... | 27.4... | 22.7 | Mysuru | ...32.0... | 21.6 | |
| Chandigarh | ...41.4... | 22.6 | | New Delhi | ...39.5... | 22.6 | |
| Chennai | ...40.3... | 28.2 | | Patna | ...30.8... | 25.0 | |
| Coimbatore | ...31.7... | 23.2 | | Port Blair | 15... | 30.5... | 24.2 |
| Dehradun | ...36.0... | 19.5 | | Puducherry | 40.4... | 35.3... | 21.3 |
| Gangtok | 6... | 21.5... | 16.1 | Pune | 16.2... | 35.3... | 23.4 |
| Goa | 2... | 32.8... | 26.7 | Raipur | ...39.6... | 28.4 | |
| Guwahati | 10... | 35.0... | 26.2 | Ranchi | 24... | 23.6... | 21.6 |
| Hubballi | ...31.0... | 22.7 | | Shillong | 0.5... | 26.2... | 18.0 |
| Hyderabad | ...39.8... | 27.0 | | Shimla | ...30.5... | 18.6 | |
| Imphal | 14... | 27.5... | 20.7 | Srinagar | ...26.6... | 10.5 | |
| Jaipur | 10... | 40.9... | 28.2 | Thiruvananthapuram | 165... | 27.1... | 22.9 |
| Kochi | 40... | 28.2... | 24.0 | Tiruchi | ...36.3... | 26.9 | |
| Kohima | 3... | 27.6... | 16.6 | Vijayawada | ...41.4... | 25.4 | |
| Kolkata | 15... | 29.0... | 25.2 | Visakhapatnam | ...42.2... | 27.8 | |

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

| CITIES | SO ₂ | NO _x | CO | PM _{2.5} | PM ₁₀ | CODE |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----|-------------------|------------------|-------|
| Ahmedabad | 20 | 47 | 26 | 57 | 59 | ■■■ |
| Bengaluru | .5 | 37 | 49 | .46 | .59 | ■■■ |
| Chennai | .6 | 15 | 51 | .28 | .59 | ■■■ |
| Delhi | 23 | 61 | 24 | 170 | 170 | ■■■■■ |
| Hyderabad | 29 | 42 | 30 | 84 | .140 | ■■■■■ |
| Kolkata | 3... | 18 | 19 | .33 | .37 | ■■■ |
| Lucknow | 16 | 73 | 55 | .42 | .73 | ■■■■■ |
| Mumbai | ... | 114 | 64 | .65 | .80 | ■■■■■ |
| Pune | ... | 76 | 106 | .112 | .112 | ■■■■■ |
| Visakhapatnam | 17 | 61 | 35 | .56 | .130 | ■■■■■ |

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bhawali, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 400, which is considered unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 12.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■■ Moderate ■■■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Water Resources Department (Minor Irrigation)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division, Shimogga.

IFT No. 55/2020-21 Date: 19.05.2021

SECTION 1: SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(E-procurement) - KW - 3&4

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water Development Division, Shimogga invites tenders in Standard Bid Document KW- 3&4 through e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka, viz., <http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> from eligible contractors for 02 works coming under Shikarpura sub-division amounting from Rs. 89.02 lakhs to Rs. 142.13 lakhs. Period of downloading tender documents from e-procurement portal from 24.05.2021 to 01.06.2021 upto 17.00hrs. Tender opening date at 17.15 hrs on 02.06.2021. Any other details may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours on all working days. Details published on the e-procurement website @ <http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> are final.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Office of Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division, Shivamogga

North coastal Andhra spared

STAFF REPORTER
SRIKAKULAM / VIZIANAGARAM

People of north coastal Andhra Pradesh heaved a sigh of relief on Wednesday as cyclone Yaas weakened.

Itchapuram, on the A.P.-Odisha border, witnessed cloudy weather on Wednesday. The Uddanam region, which had been badly affected by the previous cyclones, also saw pleasant weather.

Srikakulam District Collector J. Nivas directed the

officials to be alert for a couple of days since rains were likely to occur under the influence of the cyclone.

“People are already reeling under the impact of COVID-19. Fortunately, the cyclone has weakened.

Otherwise, the Uddanam region, which has many cashew industries, would have suffered badly,” said Malla Srinivasa Rao, president of the Palasa Cashew Manufacturing Units’ Association.

Digital classes to continue

R.K. ROSHINI
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Digital classes will continue, at least at the beginning of the school academic year, as the second wave of COVID-19 transmission has put paid to hopes of in-person learning for the time being, Kerala Minister for General Education V. Sivankutty has said.

Praveshanotsavam, the formal ceremony of receiving children at schools, would be held on June 1 in compliance with COVID-19 protocols, he told *The Hindu*. A mass campaign would be taken up to attract students to the State public education sector in the new academic year.

Mr. Sivankutty, who will have to grapple with the challenges of online education such as lack of access, meaningful assessment, and lack of connect with students, said any decision on school education would have to take into account the intensity of COVID-19 transmission as there was the possibility of a third wave.

The Minister expressed concern over the mental and physical well-being of students.

“It has come to our notice that children are anxious and moody. Many are not playing or studying; they have not met their friends or interacted with their teachers for a long time. We will hold discussions on how to address these issues.”

| 1 | Annual Maintenance of High Court Bench, Dharwad for the year 2021-22 (Includes Civil works such as Housekeeping, repairs to water supply & sanitary systems, Fire & Emergency works, maintenance and repairs to building and internal roads wherever required, Providing Technical & Non-Technical staff to AEE, Spl. Sub dvn. High Court office, and Electrical Works such as repairs to all electrical equipments & fixtures associated to High Court Bench Dharwad) | 133.00 | 10-06-2021 | 11-06-2021 | 14-06-2021 |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------|------------|------------|
| 2 | Annual Maintenance of Residential Buildings in the High Court Premises of Dharwad Bench, Dharwad. (Includes Civil works like House keeping, repairs to water supply & sanitary systems, repairs to building and internal roads wherever required, Electrical works such as maintenance and repairs to all electrical equipments & fixtures associated to Residential Buildings in the High Court Premises of Dharwad Bench) | 110.00 | 10-06-2021 | 11-06-2021 | 14-06-2021 |
| 3 | Restoration / Protection to RE Wall for ROB near Shirur on Mangasuli-Lakshmeshwar SH-73 in Kundagol Taluk of Dharwad District. | 499.00 | 10-06-2021 | 11-06-2021 | 14-06-2021 |
| | संग्रहालयावाचक अवलोकन | | | | |



Naturally, selection

Prioritising the vulnerable in COVID-19 vaccination for 18-plus group is essential

When supply is finite, it is a no-brainer that a burgeoning demand will not be met. Tailoring supply for optimal effect would then be the prudent way ahead, a strategy that the Centre would do well to employ in its COVID-19 vaccination programme. Though the ideal, distant at this stage, is to achieve vaccination of the entire population or enough to create herd immunity, supply considerations will necessarily mean prioritisation of groups for vaccination. While the vaccines have been shown to be effective in preventing death or severe disease by and large, the vaccine's effect on interrupting or reducing transmission is also an important consideration in deployment. Studies have shown an inverse correlation between vaccinations and infections; a study in Tamil Nadu showed that the percentage of people over 60 years infected in the second wave had come down by 7%, even as the numbers in other age groups rose. This age segment was among the early priority groups for vaccination. With the government opening up vaccinations for all adults, it is imperative that some line list of priority be readied, on the basis of vulnerability and societal role.

Primary among them are people in the services sector – those whose jobs mandate interactions with multiple people. This would include those in banks, delivery agents, transportation staff, store workers, vendors, lawyers and journalists. As States begin free vaccinations for the 18-plus age group, it will be prudent to draw up a priority list even in the 18-44 age category, as Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have done, for instance. While Kerala seeks to prioritise those with comorbidities, disabilities and 43 categories of field staff of various departments, Karnataka has included 18 categories of people in its priority list for the 18-plus age group – including bank workers, forest department staff and construction workers. Tamil Nadu has determined a broad list of categories including the disabled, vendors, e-commerce staff, pharmacy and grocery store staff, those in the transportation sector, and school and college teachers, besides mediapersons. The Centre, which has assumed a *sutradhar's* role in this entire pandemic, must draw up a list of priority categories that each State can then adapt to its local requirements. While lockdowns, in force in most States, will slow down the pace of transmission and give health-care resources a much-needed break, the way ahead is certainly vaccination – and prioritised vaccination. Once vaccine supply picks up, a more expansive first-come, first-served basis, as in the private sector now, can be adopted. Until then, it is the government's bounden duty to ensure an equitable coverage among vulnerable groups of people who are most at risk, and carry a higher risk of transmission, because of the sheer number of people they interact with daily.

Imperious missteps

The Centre should recall the Lakshadweep Administrator and drop his ill-conceived plans

Lakshadweep, an archipelago of 36 islands totalling 32 square kilometres in the Arabian Sea, has had an idyllic existence as a Union Territory. But no longer, it seems, as the long arm of Delhi is rummaging around the islands these days. Praful K. Patel, a BJP politician from Gujarat, who arrived as Administrator in December, appears determined to upend the landscape and recast the lives of the islanders, around 70,000 of them, all according to his authoritarian imagination. The draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation 2021 gives sweeping powers to the Administrator to take over land and forcibly relocate people, and proposes harsh punishment to those who resist. In other measures, proposed or implemented, the consumption or sale of beef, a part of the food habits of many, could be an offence punishable by seven years in prison; those who have more than two children cannot contest panchayat elections. Anyone could be held in prison without reason up to a year, under a new Goonda Act, in a place that has a very low crime rate. The traditional livelihood of fishing communities has been impeded by mindless regulations that deny them access to coastlines. Their sheds on the coastal areas have been demolished, saying they violated the Coast Guard Act. Dairy farms run by the administration have been shut.

Development, as it is coming, is not a promise, but a serious threat to the people of Lakshadweep and the fragile ecosystem. Mr. Patel is no stranger to controversies. In March, the Mumbai police named him as an accused in a case related to the death by suicide of seven-time Dadra and Nagar Haveli MP Mohan Delkar. Mr. Patel was named in the suicide note. He is the first politician to become the Administrator. In the last five months, he has demonstrated a unique disregard for the people's concerns and priorities. In the absence of any administrative rationale or public good in these blatantly arbitrary measures, there are fears of other motivations. Commercial interests could be at play, and the land that inhabitants are forced to part with could be transferred to buyers from outside. There could also be ill-advised political plans to change the demography of the islands. People have risen in protest, but far from listening to them, the Administrator seems insistent on his plans. Rajya Sabha Members from Kerala, K.C. Venugopal of the Congress and Elamaram Kareem of the CPI (M) have in separate letters urged the President to recall the Administrator. The rationale for carving out Union Territories as an administrative unit is to protect the unique cultural and historical situations of their inhabitants. The Centre is inverting its responsibility to protect into a licence to interfere. It must recall the Administrator and reassure the islanders.

The long shadow of political turmoil in Nepal

With uncertainty set to continue, India needs to remain actively engaged with all the political actors



RAKESH SOOD

Politics in Nepal entered another phase of uncertainty last week. The country's President, Bidya Devi Bhandari, dissolved the House of Representatives (lower house) late night on Friday, at the suggestion of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli (*picture*), in a partisan move that disregarded the Constitution. Fresh elections were announced for between November 12 and 18. Announcing elections was just to ensure that Mr. Oli continues in office and controlling the state machinery, even as Nepal battles a second and deadlier COVID-19 wave.

Oli's opportunistic politics

Mr. Oli came to power after the 2017 elections, the first undertaken in the federal republic of Nepal, established under the 2015 Constitution. He led his party, the CPN(UML), to an impressive tally of 121 seats and together with the Maoist Centre's 53 seats, enjoyed a near absolute majority in the 275-strong House. In May 2018, the two allies merged to cement their alliance and created the Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

Relations with India saw positive movement. New Delhi was willing to overcome its reservations about Mr. Oli's anti-Indian nationalist tirades. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Nepal in May 2018, shortly after Mr. Oli's victory.

However, Mr. Oli's autocratic tendencies soon began to surface. The power sharing arrangement worked out with former Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' started fraying. The original idea that both would take turns at being Prime Minister and run

the NCP as co-chairs became irksome for Mr. Oli. While he weaned away the Maoist cabinet members, senior disgruntled UML leaders led by former Prime Ministers, Madhav Kumar Nepal and Jhala Nath Khanal, gravitated towards Prachanda. Differences emerged in the open and a growing demand surfaced for honouring the 'one person one post' policy. Prachanda was willing to let Mr. Oli continue the full term as Prime Minister, provided he gave up his role as co-chair of the party. Mr. Oli decided otherwise.

Mr. Oli needed a distraction and by end 2019, found one in the Kalapani boundary issue. India issued new maps showing the division of the State of Jammu and Kashmir into Union Territories, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. While 98% of the India-Nepal boundary was demarcated, two areas, Susta and Kalapani, had remained pending.

Though the new Indian map did not affect the India-Nepal boundary in any material way, it was an opportunity for Mr. Oli to don his nationalist mantle. He expanded the Kalapani area dispute from one covering approximately 60 square kilometres on Nepal's northwest tip with Uttarakhand and China by raising the demand for restoring an additional 335 sq. km. The boundaries were fixed in 1816 by the British, and India inherited the areas over which the British had exercised territorial control in 1947.

Domestic politics takes over

Caught up in the first COVID-19 wave, India kept deferring bilateral talks, perhaps not realising the domestic political pressures on Mr. Oli. In May 2020 when Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the 75 km road through Kalapani that linked to the Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage route, Mr. Oli tipped the ante by whipping up nationalist sentiment, getting a



new map of Nepal endorsed by the House and adopting a constitutional amendment to sanctify Nepal's new territory. While this did not alter the situation on the ground, it cramped the prospects of any dialogue with India. It was a short respite and Mr. Oli's political troubles soon returned to haunt him.

President Bhandari has been Mr. Oli's close comrade since she entered active politics after the untimely demise of her husband Madan Bhandari, a charismatic UML leader, in a car accident in 1993.

Mr. Oli was her political mentor and backed her elevation as President. She reciprocated by ignoring constitutional propriety and approving dubious ordinances including amending the Constitutional Council Act that enabled Mr. Oli to pack constitutional positions with his loyalists.

Amid rumours that Prachanda and Mr. Nepal were planning to move a no-confidence-motion against him after he had studiously ignored the meetings and decisions of party's Secretariat and the Standing Committee, Mr. Oli got President Bhandari to approve dissolution of the House on December 20, paving the way for elections in April-May. The President's decision was uniformly criticised as unconstitutional as the NCP enjoyed a near-absolute majority.

India decided to steer clear of the mess, calling it an 'internal matter' while the Chinese Ambas-

sador continued to actively push for a rapprochement between the NCP factions. A five-judge constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court unanimously called for a restoration of the House on February 23 strengthening the Prachanda-Nepal faction but on March 7, delivered a bombshell by overturning the UML-Maoist merger of May 2018, against which an appeal had been pending for two years.

Mr. Oli took over the reins of the old CPN(UML), reviving prior structures but now excluding Mr. Nepal and his supporters. Some were served suspension notices. The NCP faction was reduced to a minority; under the law, a split in the party requires a 40% of both the parliamentary party and the central committee. Prachanda, heading the Maoist Centre with 49 members since four had joined hands with Mr. Oli, needed new allies to wage his battles.

Though Mr. Oli had lost majority in the House as Maoist Centre was no longer supporting him, he challenged the Opposition to file a no-confidence-motion, certain that the Maoists, Nepali Congress (NC) and the Janata Samajbadi Party (JSP) would fail to reach an agreement on a new Prime Minister. He was proven right but overtaken by hubris, he took another gamble. He called for a trust vote on May 10 that he lost as 28 UML dissident members were absent and half the JSP voted against him while the other half abstained.

Presidential improprieties

The Opposition again failed to present an alternative. In a questionable decision, Mr. Oli was sworn in by President Bhandari on May 14 as Prime Minister under Article 76 (3) that permits the leader of the largest party to be sworn in and given 30 days to demonstrate majority. Within a week, Mr. Oli announced that he would not seek another vote of confidence. Without resigning, however, he advised

the President to explore other options. Within a day, as rumours gained ground that NC leader Sher Bahadur Deuba had managed to gather support from 149 members, including 49 Maoists, 26 UML dissidents and 12 from the JSP, Mr. Oli rushed to the President and gave her a list of 153 supporters that included all 121 UML and 32 JSP members, including UML dissidents and JSP members who voted against him on May 10. Without bothering to verify, President Bhandari dissolved the House and announced fresh elections, justifying that the rival claims exceeded the strength of the House.

Since 2008 when a new Constituent Assembly was elected to prepare a constitution for a federal republic, Nepal has seen three NC Prime Ministers (G.P. Koirala, Sushil Koirala and Deuba), two Maoist Prime Ministers (Prachanda twice and Baburam Bhattarai), three UML Prime Ministers (Nepal, Khanal and Oli sworn in thrice) and a Chief Justice as caretaker Prime Minister in 2013. None has damaged the Constitution and the political fabric of Nepal as much as Mr. Oli, together with an obliging Ms. Bhandari. Opposition leaders have challenged the House dissolution in the Supreme Court but its outcome is uncertain. Meanwhile a raging COVID-19 puts a question mark on the election. In case an election is held, Mr. Oli will campaign on a nationalist anti-Indian platform.

It is clear that political uncertainty will continue. India has traditionally supported constitutionalism and multi-party democracy in Nepal. At this juncture, it needs to remain actively engaged with all the political actors, and equally importantly, avoid being perceived as partisans.

Rakesh Sood, a former diplomat who served as Ambassador to Nepal, is currently Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation

The varying power of Hindutva beyond the heartland

Provincial politics resists Hindutva more strongly than Hindi belt caste politics, but there is nothing inevitable about it



VARGHESE K. GEORGE

The second victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Assam must be juxtaposed with its failure to win power in West Bengal in the recent Assembly elections to understand the varying potency of Hindutva in States beyond its heartland in the north and the west of India. In Assam, the BJP managed to subsume all identity politics, including Bodo and other tribal variants, and Assamese nationalism, under a Hindutva umbrella; in West Bengal, a surge of Bengali nationalism countered Hindutva paratroopers, cornering them as invading aliens.

Opportunistic engagement

Hindutva's engagement with regional politics has been opportunistic, historically. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's politics in Gujarat had a strong dose of provincialism, situated adversarial to what he used to call 'Delhi Sultanate'. The administrative state at the Centre was portrayed as alien to the nation by Hindutva then; now, its control taken over by Hindutva, the same apparatus is venerated as the sole custodian of the national interest.

The Hindu right has allied with all kinds of regional forces to weaken the Congress. This, despite the former Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief M.S. Golwalkar's vision of "one country, one legislature, one executive Centre running the administration throughout the country – an expression of one homogeneous so-

lid nation in Bharat". State autonomists had it good during the National Democratic Alliance regime led by A.B. Vajpayee – the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), the Telugu Desam Party, the National Conference, and Trinamool Congress (TMC) sat well with it at various points. A committee appointed by the Vajpayee government to review the working of the Constitution said strong States and a strong Centre could coexist. The Vajpayee government added more languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution; and oversaw the birth of the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam.

Assembly election outcomes

In 2014, many observers wondered whether the Hindutva model in Gujarat could be replicated where caste, class and subnational politics were influential. Unlike many other parts of the country, in Gujarat, only one out of 10 people were Muslims; and caste and tribal grievances were overrun by a sedative mix of religious and provincial resentment and supremacism. As it turned out, the BJP under Mr. Modi swept the Hindi belt in 2014 and 2019. The party got more than 230 Lok Sabha seats from the northern and western States, against the halfway mark of 272. This is excluding the seats won by Shiv Sena, then a BJP ally.

Hindutva's success in articulating the bonding and grievances of the collective in terms of religion rather than caste, language, tribe, class or gender appears successful in the Hindi belt. The absence of linguistic sub-nationalism has been an enabling factor. But Hindutva faces a more rigorous test elsewhere as the recent Assembly

election outcomes among Assamese, Bengali, Tamil and Malayalam speakers who make up a third of India's population suggest. It is not that these areas are impenetrable. In 2016, the BJP won Assam; and in 2018, Tripura. In 2019, the BJP crossed the 40% vote share in West Bengal. In 2021, it has become the principal Opposition in Bengal.

Turning point

When the BJP began to use its parliamentary majority won largely from the heartland States, to undermine State autonomy elsewhere, provincial elites sensed danger. The dismemberment of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 caught many regional parties by surprise though many of them supported the move in Parliament. The TMC and DMK opposed. Within months, however, the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra parted ways with the BJP. Provincialism could break the bonding of Hindutva. The Shiv Sena and the BJP had a long ideological partnership. Those who visualise Indian politics as a duel of secularism against Hindutva may not grasp this dynamic of Maharashtra's ruling coalition, which is held together by two platforms of regional assertion, the Sena and the Nationalist Congress Party.

In West Bengal, the anti-incum-

bency against the two-term TMC government was unmistakable, this year. But, a considerable segment of those voters who said the TMC was corrupt and inefficient voted for it nevertheless because they loathed the BJP. As the BJP raised the pitch, more Bengalis turned against it, and late deciding voters largely turned in favour of the TMC. In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the BJP was a factor, despite not being a contender for power. In Kerala, the United Democratic Front and the Left Democratic Front competed to convince the electorate on who fights the BJP better. Among other factors, the winning LDF scored better on this count. In Tamil Nadu, the AIADMK, which supported the BJP's Kashmir policy, allied with it and paid a price for doing so.

The cultural elites of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal resist Hindutva, though Assam might be a different story. In its present form, Hindutva is incapable of negotiating with the claims of exceptionalism of these States. Friendly gestures of BJP leaders such as speaking in their languages and references to their myths and folklore, have often been counterproductive. In West Bengal, elite mobilisation against the BJP contributed to its defeat. In Assam and Bengal, the Muslims consolidated against the BJP. The determinant factor was Hindu consolidation in Assam, which did not happen in Bengal.

Slide of the Congress

The BJP's growth in non-Hindi areas is happening at the cost of the Congress, Odisha and Telangana being examples. In West Bengal, it has replaced the Congress and the Left. Pan-Indian politics of other types are being replaced by Hindutva, while provincial politics

remain strong. In fact, while the slide of the Congress continues, regional leaders who seceded from the mothership are thriving – Sharad Pawar in Maharashtra, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in Andhra Pradesh, and now Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal. Even K. Chandrashekhar Rao in Telangana can be counted as an ex-Congressman. Here again, Assam is an outlier – Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma decamped from the Congress to join the BJP rather than trying to build any regional politics.

Provincialism within the Congress cannot have the same potency as autonomous outfits. In Assam, the Congress tried to appropriate Assamese sentiments but failed. In Karnataka, former Congress Chief Minister Siddaramaiah sought to add Kannada pride as a component of the party's politics. Tolerance of sub-nationalisms within an overarching Indian nationalism has been the familiar strategy of Congress politics for long. The BJP has appropriated that framework, with additional Hindutva characteristics. What makes Hindutva more effective is its conception of a pan-India unionism alongside a pan-India unifier, both defined in terms of religion.

If the West Bengal results, alongside the experiment of the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi, is proof that provincialism is a bulwark against Hindutva, the Assam result is proof that there is nothing inevitable about it. The BJP customised itself for Assam, carried out local recruitment and built a politics that has endured for two Lok Sabha and two Assembly elections. The BJP's capacity to adapt to regional particularities, however, remains limited.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Palestine and peace

There is no doubt that everyone yearns for durable peace in West Asia. The fact is that wherever colonial powers set foot, they have almost always left the place behind in doldrums. History is standing proof of this. Peace has to be given its due chance and Palestinians deserve this. World leaders need to play a catalytic role in enabling Israel and Palestine in

reaching an accord that should be formidable and promotes harmony.

R. RAMANATHAN,
Coimbatore

Biomedical waste
The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is posing numerous challenges before India on multiple fronts – health care, the economy and the environment. In the last category, the main issue is the exponentially

increasing volume of biomedical waste. Data suggest that the average generation of COVID-19 related biomedical waste during May has been 203 tonnes per day. While there are guidelines to handle medical waste with utmost care, the addition of biomedical waste due to the pandemic and the lack of general awareness on safe disposal has made the task difficult. COVID waste is not only being generated in

hospitals but also at home. Essentially, biomedical waste is being dumped with normal municipal waste. One only hopes that the 'Biomedical Waste Management Rules' are being followed. One also wonders whether new disposal technologies such as plasma torch technology in handling waste are being introduced. Contamination of water bodies is a concern. District administrations across

India need to raise awareness. The ultimate goal should be to reduce environmental damage.

SIDDHARTH DESAI,
Mumbai

<b

The end of the road for India's GST?

The fundamental problem is the erosion of 'trust' and 'trustworthiness' between the States and the Centre



PRAVEEN CHAKRAVARTY

The 43rd meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council is to be held on May 28. Representatives of 31 States and Union Territories are expected to attend. They belong to 16 different political parties. Of the 31 representatives, 17 members are from the ruling BJP or its alliance partners. Ideally, this nugget about political affiliations should not matter in a Council set up to decide indirect taxes. But in today's India, 'the economic is political', to paraphrase the American saying.

States are dependent on GST collections for nearly half of their tax revenues. The GST Council was mandated to meet at least once every quarter, but it had not met for two quarters, ostensibly due to the pandemic. Several of the 14 members of the non-BJP group implored the Finance Minister to convene the GST meeting to help them manage their finances but none of the 17 members of the ruling group deemed it necessary. Even the need for a meeting to determine tax revenues for States is evidently a political decision.

Spirit of cooperative federalism
The representative from West Bengal will attend the meeting against the backdrop of the Centre using investigative agencies to selectively target and incarcerate some of the State's ministers, soon after their election victory. The Kerala representative will attend the meeting in the knowledge that his predecessor complained bitterly about the Centre renegeing on its promise to pay guaranteed GST compensation to the States. The Chhattisgarh representative will attend this meeting aware of how the Centre imposed sudden and stringent policy conditions to grant approval to States for extra borrowing in the middle of the pandemic last year. The Maharashtra minister will attend the meeting with a feeling of betrayal over how the States have been forced to pay a much higher price for COVID-19 vaccines than the Centre. The Punjab Finance Minister will be cognisant of how the Centre legislated new farm laws unilaterally



ISTOCK PHOTO

that affected Punjab's farmers deeply. The Rajasthan representative will be aware of how a sudden lockdown imposed by the Centre with no consultations with the States threw millions of Rajasthani migrant workers in disarray. The Tamil Nadu representative will be wary of the Centre's duplicity in levying cesses that garner significant revenues for the Centre without sharing them with the States. The Delhi representative will be suspicious of the Centre's motives after it stealthily passed legislation to strip the elected Delhi government of its governance powers. The list is endless. These are not acts in the spirit of 'cooperative federalism'.

The catchy phrase 'cooperative federalism' was introduced into India's political lexicon to justify the transition to GST in 2017. Sadly, like other catchy phrases such as 'Minimum government, maximum governance' and 'Make in India', this too has turned out to be hollow. Cooperative federalism has a larger meaning beyond just fiscal federalism. It also entails cooperative political, administrative and governance federalism between the States and the Centre.

The Trust Game

The GST Council is not an inanimate economic body. It is a compact of trust between the States and the Centre, set in the larger context of India's polity. Behavioural economists, such as the Nobel Laureate, Daniel Kahneman, have articulated the critical role of the twin attributes of 'trust' and 'trustworthiness' among heterogeneous participants in an economy. Using a tool called 'The Trust Game', they have demonstrated that the motive of 'altruism' leads to the most optimal economic outcome for everyone in the group while a motive of 'spite' leads to the worst outcome for all. The tragedy of

the GST Council is that it is afflicted with spite and forced to function under the prevailing cloud of vendetta politics.

The 17 members of the ruling dispensation and the 14 members of the non-BJP dispensation in the GST Council represent exactly one half of India's population each. However, the non-BJP group contributes a higher share of 60% of overall GST revenues and accounts for 63% of the country's GDP. With elections to another seven States due next year, these numbers could change dramatically again. If the functioning of the GST Council is subject to the vagaries of elections and consequent vendetta politics, GST will continue to be just a caricature of its initial promise.

The 15th Finance Commission report formally acknowledges that GST has been an economic failure that did not deliver on its early promises.

GST, as postulated by technocrats, was supposed to be the panacea for India's throttled economy to deliver enormous economic efficiency gains, improve tax buoyancy and collections, boost GDP growth and usher in greater formalisation of the economy. Three years after its launch and even before COVID-19, GST had failed on all those promises.

Problems underpinning GST

Economists and commentators point to the multiple rates structure, high tax slabs and the complexity of tax filings as the problems underpinning India's GST. These were indeed the initial problems in the way GST was implemented, leading to some of its current woes. But now, GST has a more fundamental problem – the erosion of 'trust' and 'trustworthiness' between the States and the Centre. Technical fixes such as simplification of GST rates and tax filing systems to restore GST to its initial

promise is akin to applying a pain balm to an injury that needs surgery.

The States paid a huge price for GST in terms of loss of fiscal autonomy. The promised economic gains are invisible, and India's federalism has been ruptured. GST in today's politically acerbic, hate-ridden and divided India is an unviable and unworkable proposition.

GST has endured so far primarily because the States were guaranteed a 14% growth in their tax revenues every year, which minimised their risks of this new experiment and compensated for their loss of fiscal sovereignty. This revenue guarantee ends in July 2022. This can lead to a crumbling of the precarious edifice on which GST stands today.

In a situation where the States have no taxation powers, their GST revenues are uncertain, the supposed economic benefits seem phantom, and the hypocrisy of 'cooperative federalism' looms large, what is the incentive for States to continue in a GST regime? When the Prime Minister can impose a draconian lockdown in a ham-fisted manner without consultation or play favourites with critical oxygen supplies during an emergency, there seems very little motivation for the States to cooperate in a chase for an elusive economic goal by sacrificing their significant economic powers of taxation.

Technocratic cheerleaders of GST failed to factor in India's unique political economy and its ramifications. Striking a balance among diverse interests of India's numerous parties in a larger political climate of spite and suspicion to arrive at a uniform tax policy for the nation is a near impossibility. Tamil Nadu's new Finance Minister P.T.R. Thiagarajan and I had warned of these exact issues in an article in 2017 in this newspaper.

The tapestry of India's GST was stitched on a fabric of implicit trust and painted with vibrant economic colours. The fabric is now torn and the colours have faded. The loose thread of guaranteed revenues that holds this together is about to snap. The end of India's grand GST experiment seems inevitable unless there is a radical shift in the tone and tenor of India's federal politics, backed by an extension of revenue guarantee for the States for another five years.

Praveen Chakravarty is a political economist and Chairman of the Data Analytics department of the Congress party

Losing the way with a map

A cultural mapping project proposed in 2015 is now all but dead



VAISHNA ROY

around a declining crafts village. When the European Capitals of Culture programme picked Glasgow, the city was rife with crime and poverty. The programme built and renovated its cultural facilities, created a garden festival, and constructed a museum. Today, Glasgow has among the highest per capita culture budgets in Britain.

The mission document

The possibilities are endless. But what do we find when we study this project's mission document? After a lot of platitudinous rambling, it finally states that it will identify, collect and record cultural assets and resources. It correlates this to planning and strategising. It mentions a portal and a database listing organisations, spaces, facilities, festivals and events. It also states that this database can be used to preserve culture and provide or ameliorate livelihoods.

But beyond this, it descends into la-la land. From a childish SWOT analysis to expecting arts to curb anti-social elements to roping artists into the Swachh Bharat and Namami Ganga schemes, the plan loses its way inside a jungle of homilies and acronyms. There's a Hamari Sanskriti Hamari Paanch Abhiyan for "cultural awareness", which suggests an ideological slant. There is a project with an indecipherable title – 'Design for Desire and Dream'. There is hollow jargon such as "Create holistic thinking in artists to make them job creators rather than job seekers". From pontification, it hops on to talent hunts, to digital literacy, to training online teachers. Why should a mapping exercise organise competitions or train teachers? Its job is merely to record and collate.

This might still be meaningless twaddle, but it becomes harmful when it proceeds to talk of using art to "preserve family values"; of quizzes and contests to "revive tribal traditions"; of a "grading process" for artists in which apparatchiks decide which artist is "good" or "not so good". And, as always, this government displays its obsession with surveillance and control, proposing yet another Unique Identification Code for every artist/institution, ostensibly to facilitate schemes.

Where does hand-holding stop and meddling begin? That's the question the MoC must answer. A cultural map could be a vital tool in the bedlam that reigns the space, and the idea cannot be abandoned because many bureaucrats and ministers don't understand its meaning or scope. Even this blueprint can help unravel the MoC's budgetary challenges, provided its irrelevancies, absurdities and overreach are removed, and the focus kept on a deeper survey and understanding of the diversity of the cultural base, without caste, communal and regional hierarchies. To be a cultural leader, official India must look at its own face in a clearer mirror.

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The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 27, 1971

English terms: Compromise formula

The compromise formula of using both the English and Hindi expressions for designations of Central Ministers has been put into effect although the leader of the D.M.K. Party in Parliament, Mr. K. Manoharan, continued to maintain that his party has not agreed to this. The Lok Sabha Secretariat has amended its earlier order through a "corrigendum" under which the English expression will be used for the Minister's designations with their Hindi equivalents in Roman script within brackets. The D.M.K. leaders had expressed their reservations on this at the Opposition leaders' conference yesterday but a fresh effort was made to-day [New Delhi, May 26] to make them agree to it. The Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. Om Mehta, called on the D.M.K. leader, Mr. K. Manoharan at the latter's residence this morning for this purpose. He took with him the C.P.I. leader, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, who had made the proposal for simultaneous use of both the English and Hindi expressions at the Opposition leaders' conference. M. Manoharan, however, expressed his inability to accept the compromise formula without consulting the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. He sent a letter to Mr. Karunanidhi through Mr. G. Viswanathan, M.P., who left for Madras this morning seeking his advice on the stand the party should take. The compromise formula, it is stated, also envisages the use of English version in Devanagiri script within brackets along with the Hindi version in the Hindi records of proceedings.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 27, 1921

Japanese crown prince

London, May 24: Prince Hirohito's visit to Scotland concluded with the height of Highland hospitality. At a farewell banquet at Blair Athol Castle toasts to the King, Emperor of Japan and Prince Hirohito were drunk with Highland honours, the guests standing with one foot on the table. This so impressed the Japanese that the latter also stood on chairs and sang and banzai. Subsequently a Highland dance was held in the ball-room, the Duke and Duchess of Athol participating. The ball was terminated by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and "Will Ye Na Come Back Again". It was after midnight when Hirohito's party arrived at the station where further cordial farewells took place. Prince Hirohito told the Duke, "I will never forget my stay with you."

Tackling rural economic distress

There is an urgent need to strengthen the public distribution system and the MGNREGS

DEBMALYA NANDY

Several States are under lockdown again. This will have severe implications for the livelihoods of those in the informal sector. There is adequate evidence that migrant workers and the rural poor have been facing great distress over the past one year and the crisis for food and work is only going to intensify further.

Hunger and distress

A few months ago, the Right to Food campaign and the Centre for Equity Studies published a 'Hunger Watch' report which compared the pre-lockdown situation last year to the situation in October 2020 to assess the impact of the nationwide lockdown. The survey involving 4,000 respondents across 11 States exposed the life and livelihood uncertainties of people belonging to low-income categories in the informal sector. In October 2020, 27% of the respondents said that they had no income; 40% respondents said that the nutritional quality of food had become "much worse"; and 46% of the respondents said they had to skip one meal at least once in the day in October 2020.

The migrants have again become vulnerable due to the lockdown in different cities. While many have once again headed to their villages, a large population has got stranded in different parts of the country without work. The Stranded Workers Action Network, a group of individuals helping distressed migrant workers since last year, has been reaching out to workers for providing essential help. According to them, 81% of the people whom they reached out to said that work had mostly stopped since April 15, 2021 and 76% of the workers said they are short of food and cash and require immediate support.

In this context, there is an urgent need to strengthen the public distribution system (PDS) and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). The government announced 5 kg free foodgrains for individuals enlisted under the National Food Security Act (NFS), for May and June 2021. The government

should expand PDS coverage immediately and include all eligible households under the schemes. According to an independent study, about 100 million people are excluded from the ration distribution system owing to a dated database based on the 2011 Census.

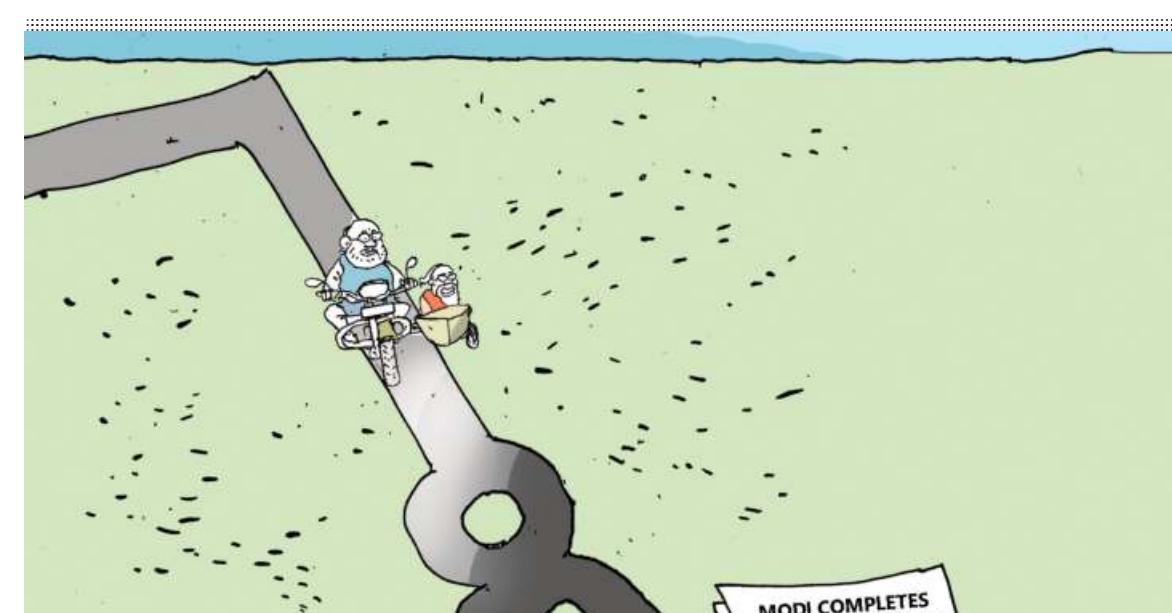
The Centre should also extend the free foodgrains programme to a year instead of limiting it to two months. The economic crisis is likely to last for a long time. It is being reported that India procured record amounts of rice and wheat last year through mandis. The total procurement is way more than the current requirement for PDS. It is thus quite possible to expand the safety net of the NFS.

Inadequate provisions

The Centre had allocated ₹73,000 crore for 2021-22 for MGNREGS and notified an annual increment of about 4% in wages. Both these provisions are inadequate to match the requirements on the ground. The central allocation for MGNREGS is about ₹38,500 crore less than last year's revised estimate. Of the 7.56 crore households which worked in MGNREGS in 2020-21, even if 1 crore households opt out of the scheme this year, the Centre should still budget for 75-80 days of employment in the year for 6.5 crore families given the current scale of economic distress. By this rationale, at the current rate of ₹268/day/person, at least ₹1.3 lakh crore will have to be budgeted. The government should also re-consider its decision of a mere 4% increase in MGNREGS wages and hike it by at least 10%. This will mean another ₹10,000 crore. Therefore, at least ₹1.4 lakh crore will be required to ensure uninterrupted implementation during the year.

A large population is facing hunger and a cash crunch. The situation is only becoming more dire as the pandemic continues to rage on. Therefore, the Union government should prioritise food and work for all and start making policy reforms right away.

Debmalya Nandy is member of NREGA Sangharsh Morcha



DATA POINT

Storm over the archipelago

A series of controversial orders issued by Lakshadweep's administrator Praful Khoda Patel has sparked widespread criticism. Regulations that have been introduced are perceived to be a threat to the cultural identity of the inhabitants and the sensitive ecology of the region. The draft notification for the creation of the Lakshadweep Development Authority, which makes provision for acquisition and development of land for planning, is widely opposed by the islanders, 94.8% of whom are Scheduled Tribes, given that 97% of the Union Territory's land is under forest/tree cover. A draft regulation that penalises selling or buying beef products has come under heavy criticism given that 64.8% of the population consume beef.

By Vignesh Radhakrishnan & Sumant Sen

HOW TO READ THE GRAPHS

Each circle corresponds to a State/UT, with Lakshadweep highlighted in a darker shade. The data are sourced from the Census, Niti Aayog, NSO 68th round, NFHS-4, NCRB, and the RBI

1 SHARE OF TRIBAL POPULATION (2011)

Lakshadweep has the highest ST population (94.8%)

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

% OF LAND UNDER FOREST/TREE COVER (2017)

97% land is covered by forest or trees, the highest in India

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

SHARE OF MUSLIMS (2011)

Over 96.5% of the population is Muslim, the highest in India

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



OTHER PROPOSALS

A draft law called Prevention of Anti-Social Activities has raised eyebrows, given that the archipelago has the lowest crime rate among States. The move to lift the restriction on use of alcohol was also decried given that Lakshadweep has the lowest alcohol use in India

BEEF CONSUMPTION (2011-12)

65% inhabitants consume beef, the second highest in India

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

REPORTED MURDERS PER 1 LAKH POPULATION

Zero murders were recorded in 2017

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4 4.5 5 5.5 6

ALCOHOL PREVALENCE AMONG MEN (2014-15)

Only about 7% of men consume alcohol, the lowest in India

5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60

BPL POPULATION (2011-12)

About 3% lives below the national poverty line, the second lowest in India

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40

FROM PAGE ONE

WhatsApp approaches Delhi High Court

The High Court has sought a response from the Centre on the pleas.

WhatsApp, in its plea, has contended that the new IT Rules violate the fundamental right to privacy guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. It highlighted the landmark judgment of the Supreme Court in the K.S. Puttaswamy case, where it held that the right to privacy is a fundamental right guaranteed under the Constitution. More recently, the Supreme Court affirmed that the right to privacy included the right to anonymity, it argued.

"Requiring intermediaries 'to enable the identification of the first originator of the information' in India on end-to-end encrypted messaging services constitutes a dangerous invasion of privacy," WhatsApp said.

"This would require Petitioner [WhatsApp] to build the ability to identify the first originator of every communication sent in India on its platform, as there is no way to predict which mes-

sage will be the subject of such an order seeking first originator information," it said.

This eliminates the right of the hundreds of millions of Indian citizens using WhatsApp to maintain the privacy of their messages, which is antithetical to end-to-end encryption and the core privacy principles underlying it, the plea argued.

It further said enabling the identification of the first originator of information in India results in significant harm, including "breaking end-to-end encryption and chilling lawful speech".

The new IT Rules also violate the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression. WhatsApp argued as "privacy is inextricably intertwined with the right to freedom of speech and expression because it protects people from retaliation for expressing unpopular, but lawful, views".

"With end-to-end encryption, users feel safe to communicate freely," WhatsApp said.

Major lapse in giving vaccines in U.P. village

While he said the 20 people administered the wrong vaccine shots did not face any problems, he was monitoring them.

"They are healthy," he said.

Scientists at the Oxford Vaccine Group, United Kingdom, have been studying if mixing the Pfizer and AstraZeneca doses could confer longer-lasting immunity, better protection against emerging variants or allow hospitals to switch jabs if stocks were scarce.

Though the study is ongoing since February, the BBC this month reported preliminary findings that said of one in 10 volunteers given two AstraZeneca jabs four weeks apart reported feverishness – but if they received one AstraZeneca jab and one Pfizer, in any order, the proportion rose to about 34%. The Oxford group, which developed the AstraZeneca vaccine, is also testing combinations of the Moderna and Novavax vaccines.

The AstraZeneca vaccine, sold as Covishield, and Covaxin are made differently. The former contains a piece of the coronavirus DNA wrapped in a kind of virus, that's known to trigger an infection in chimpanzees but not in people. Covaxin is an inactivated whole virion

vaccine. However, their purpose is the same, which is to stimulate the immune system into producing a targeted response that will protect against disease from a future coronavirus infection.

The AstraZeneca vaccine has been reported to trigger rare cases of blood clot and lowering of blood platelets in some people, but similar specific associations haven't been reported in the case of Covaxin, though the number of Covaxin doses administered in India are about 10% of the Covishield jabs.

Both vaccines are known to trigger mild side effects in the days immediately following vaccination.

During phase-3 trials of the AstraZeneca vaccine in the United Kingdom, some participants were accidentally given half the intended dose due to a manufacturing error. This led to differing interpretations of the vaccine's efficacy, with the subset of those getting differing doses actually appearing to be better protected than those who got two full doses.

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said the case was an abominable example of negligence by the BJP government and demanded that the affected persons be monitored by doctors.

Panel to probe removal of shrouds from graves

Many of the shroud bore the name of Lord Ram, and the wooden stubs from the mounds of sand at Shringverpur Ghat. A senior official, however, claimed that only shrouds that were scattered on the ghat were being removed while those on mounds of sand where the

bodies were buried were not touched.

"We are only cleaning the dirty clothes and shrouds that people leave behind or abandon on the side of the ghats," Soraon Sub-Divisional Magistrate Anil Kumar Chaturvedi told *The Hindu* on Tuesday.

Country reports 2,02,570 new COVID-19 cases

This is the first instance when the daily tests have crossed the 22-lakh mark. India's average daily test positivity rate (positive cases identified for every 100 tests) continues to decline. It was 11.4% on May 25 compared to 16.9% recorded a week before.

About 20.39 lakh vaccine doses were administered in the country in the 24 hours ending 7 a.m. on Wednesday, which is 4.48 lakh doses fewer than what was recorded in the previous 24 hours. However, it is 7.27 lakh more doses than what

Yediyurappa calls for meeting today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa will hold a meeting on Thursday to decide the future legal action in the wake of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), Southern Zone, appointing a joint committee to look into allegations of unauthorised construction activity taking place in Mekedatu, where the Karnataka government had proposed to construct a dam across the Cauvery River.

Acting *suo motu* based on a media report, the NGT has directed the panel to submit a report on or before July 5.

"If the project is to be implemented without conducting any environmental impact assessment study and without obtaining necessary clearance, if any required, then it will be an unauthorised act affecting the environment," the NGT said, adding that it would get the

Panel to investigate charges of illegal construction in Mekedatu

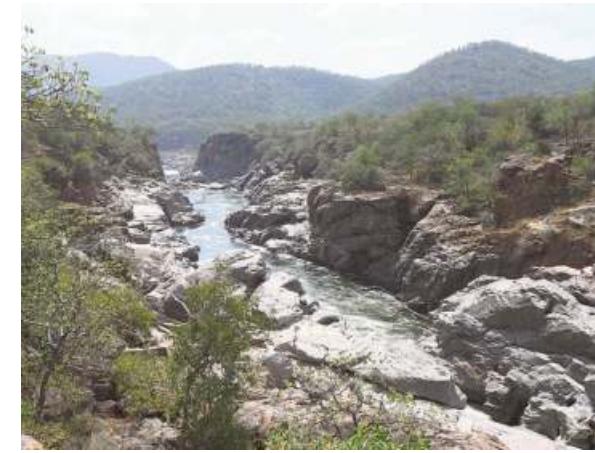
NGT appoints joint committee, directs it to submit a report on or before July 5

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT), Southern Zone, has appointed a joint committee to look into allegations of unauthorised construction activity taking place in Mekedatu, where the Karnataka government had proposed to construct a dam across the Cauvery River.

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Matter of concern: The NGT directed the panel to assess the damage caused to the environment. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

jurisdiction of intervening on the issue.

Considering the allegations made in the news report, it said, "We are satisfied that there arises a

substantial question of environment, which requires the interference of this Tribunal."

The NGT also directed the joint committee to assess the

Won't allow a dam across Cauvery: T.N.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government will never allow Karnataka's proposed project to construct a dam at Mekedatu across the Cauvery river. Minister for Water Resources Duraimurugan said on Wednesday.

In a statement, Mr. Duraimurugan said: "The Tamil Nadu government will consult legal experts and take appropriate action."

The Minister's statement comes in the wake of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) appointing a joint committee to look into allegations of unauthorised construction activity taking place in Mekedatu.

Mr. Duraimurugan also recalled the efforts being taken by the Tamil Nadu government through legal channels in the Supreme Court against the construction of the proposed dam.

Subodh Kumar Jaiswal takes charge as CBI chief

He brings in a unique mix of experience

DEVESHK. PANDEY
NEW DELHI



Subodh Kumar Jaiswal

and posting of police officers. He had also warned police officers against lobbying for desirable postings. The IPS officer then sought a "no objection" from the State government to secure a Central deputation, which was immediately approved.

He took over as the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) chief on January 8, 2021, following which he was empanelled as one of the candidates for selection as Director, CBI.

Earlier stints

During his earlier stints with the Maharashtra Police, Mr. Jaiswal was a part of the probe into the infamous Telgi stamp paper scam case, which was later transferred to the CBI. He also worked with the State's Anti-Terrorism Squad during the investigation into the 2006 Malegaon blasts case.

Mr. Jaiswal has been awarded the President Police Medal for Distinguished Services in 2009, Indian Police Medal for Meritorious Services in 2001 and the Internal Security Medal (Central government).

NCLT orders liquidation of Devas

Incorporation of company itself was with a fraudulent motive, tribunal says

KRISHNAPRASAD
BENGALURU

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has ordered the liquidation of Devas Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. while declaring that the company was not only incorporated in a fraudulent manner to carry out unlawful purposes but also its management continued to resort to fraudulent activities in relation to its 2005 controversial contract to get bandwidth from Antrix Corporation, the Indian Space Research Organisation's commercial arm.

The NCLT has directed the Official Liquidator (OL) to take expeditious steps to liquidate the company in order to prevent it from perpetuating its fraudulent activities and abusing the process of law in enforcing the award passed in 2015 by the arbitration tribunal of the International Chamber

Game over | The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has ordered the liquidation of Devas Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. Following is a timeline of events that led to the order:

December 17, 2004: Devas incorporated

January 28, 2004: Devas and Antrix sign agreement

February 12, 2011: Antrix terminates agreement with Devas

June 29, 2011: Devas invokes arbitration against Antrix as per International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) rules

September 14, 2015: ICC arbitration awards \$1.2 billion in favour of Devas

2015-2017: Probe against



Devas by CBI and ED; Antrix questions arbitration award in Bengaluru court

November 4, 2020: Supreme Court keeps arbitral award in abeyance, transfers Antrix plea to Delhi HC from Bengaluru court

January 18-19, 2021: Centre grants sanction for Antrix to seek winding up of Devas; plea filed in NCLT; provisional liquidator appointed

May 25, 2021: NCLT, Bengaluru Bench, orders winding up of Devas

of Commerce (ICC), and submit a report by July 7.

"The incorporation of Devas itself was with fraudulent motive and unlawful object

to collude and connive with the then officials of Antrix and to misuse/abuse process of law, to bring money to India and divert it under du-

bious methods to foreign countries," the Bengaluru Bench of the NCLT said in its verdict delivered on May 25.

A Bench comprising Rakeshwar Rao Vittanala (Member-Judicial) and Ashutosh Chandra (Member-Technical) delivered the verdict while allowing a company petition filed by Antrix on January 19, 2021, after obtaining sanction from the Central government to liquidate Devas.

The NCLT found that "Devas failed to show any cogent reason as why it should not be wound up and to keep its name on the Registrar of Companies (RoC), Karnataka. The only reason apparent on record, by perusal of various pleading raised in the instant petition is that it wants to prosecute enforcement of award in question, in the name of the company in the courts."

Dissolution an internal issue of Nepal: govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The dissolution of the House of Representatives of the Nepal Parliament was an "internal" issue of Nepal, the External Affairs Ministry said on Wednesday. This is the first remark from India after Nepal's

President Bidhya Devi Bhandari dissolved the House on Saturday night.

Choksi captured in Dominica

The diamantaire recently fled from Antigua and Barbuda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Fugitive diamantaire Mehul Choksi, who had recently fled from Antigua and Barbuda, was captured in neighbouring Dominica after an Interpol Yellow Notice was issued against him, the local media reported on Wednesday.

The police in Dominica captured Choksi on Tuesday night (local time) after an In-

terpol Yellow Notice was issued by Antigua and Barbuda.

Choksi had been living in Antigua and Barbuda since 2018 after taking the citizenship, Antigua News Room reported.

The Yellow Notice is issued by the Interpol to track missing persons.

Efforts are on to hand him over to the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbu-

da, the local media reported stated.

Choksi, who is wanted in a ₹13,500-crore loan fraud in Punjab National Bank, was last seen going for dinner in his car in Antigua and Barbuda on Sunday.

His staff had reported him missing after his car was found. His lawyer Vijay Agarwal had confirmed that Choksi had been missing since Sunday.

isom & Mass Communication Faculty of Science & Humanities, SRMIST; and G. Jagadeesh Kannan, Founder & CEO, Vaayusatra Aerospace will speak as a part of the webinar.

The webinar series has been organised by the SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) in association with The Hindu Group.

The series spotlights science, engineering and technology courses and their relevance to the 2020s workplace.

Various speakers

Dr. Maneesha V. Ramesh, Director, Amrita Center for Wireless Networks & Applications (AmritaWNA); Dr. D. John Thiruvadigal, Professor & Chairperson, School of Applied Sciences, College of Engineering & Technology, SRMIST; Dr. Sridhar Krishnaswami, Deputy Dean & Professor of Journal-

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Q&A session

The discussion will be moderated by R. Sujatha, Deputy Editor (Reporting), *The Hindu*, and will conclude with a Q&A session with the speakers. To register for the free webinar, visit [SRMTHE10](http://bit.ly/SRMTHE10) or scan the QR code.



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Odisha CM announces seven days' relief

Three lakh houses damaged in cyclone in Bengal, agriculture hit, says Mamata

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
SHIV SAHAY SINGH
BHUJANESWAR / KOLKATA

As Cyclone Yaas made landfall in Odisha on Wednesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced seven days of relief for all families of 128 marooned villages and directed restoration of all major roads and 80% restoration of electricity supply in affected districts in 24 hours.

Special Relief Commissioner, Pradeep Kumar Jena, said 295 roads out of 305 belonging to the Public Works Department and 200 out of 300 roads of the Rural Development department were restored by evening.

As per the IMD, heavy to very heavy rainfall has been predicted at a few places over Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Dhenkanal, with isolated, extremely heavy fall likely over Jajpur, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Dhenkanal on Thursday.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said three lakh houses had been damaged. Large parts of Digha, Tajpur and Haldia town in Purba Medinipur district (district bordering Odisha) along with several



Swinging into action: NDRF personnel removing an electric pole in the Bahana panchayat in Balasore district. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

areas in the Sunderbans were inundated. Experts and the Chief Minister said the combined effects of the full moon tide and the cyclone led to breaching of embankments in South 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur districts. Ms. Banerjee said there were reports of breach of embankments at 134 places in the State. "There has been extensive damage to agriculture due to ingress of saline water. Allied sectors such as fisheries, horticulture have suffered damage, but we will be able to estimate the complete situation

in 72 hours," she said.

Several villages in the coastal areas of West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district lay submerged. At Sagar Island, seawater reached the Kapil Muni temple, a few hundred metres away from the coast. The rural areas of Purba Medinipur district in Nandigram and Contai were waterlogged.

In Howrah, several villages were submerged. While the damage was less in Kolkata and the city was largely spared, roofs of resorts were blown off, trees were uprooted, and massive waves swept

over the coastal areas. One death was reported in Purba Medinipur due to accidental drowning. According to the State government, people were housed at 4,000 flood centres.

During the day, along with the State administration, over 35 teams of the National Disaster Response Force helped in rescuing people stranded in waterlogged areas of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas. Seventeen columns of the Army, deployed in 10 districts of the State, also lent a hand in rescue work.

No loss of life or property at sea, says CG

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

No loss of life or property at sea was reported due to the extensive pre-emptive measures undertaken on the Eastern seaboard and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, commencing as early as May 19, the Coast Guard said.

Almost 700 people were rescued from flooded areas in East Midnapore in West Bengal by the Army, while about 100 people at Nayachara were rescued by the Coast Guard air cushion vehicle. "It may be recalled that as part of the cyclone preventive measures, Coast Guard had already ensured safe return of 265 fishing boats which were out at sea. Further, as advised, ships at anchorage off Odisha and West Bengal coast had taken safe shelter and single point mooring operations were suspended," the Coast Guard said. "Nil reports of any damage or loss has been received from any merchant ships," it stated.

Amid second wave, Modi completes 7 years as PM

The pandemic poses new questions for the BJP and the govt.



Turning point: Supporters of the BJP during an election campaign rally in Kolkata in March. ■ AP

"promises to become a referendum on the BJP".

"The pandemic has exposed the widening gaps between the government and the party, denting the party's reputation as a social service organisation and carrier of social capital. In short, the government needs to unveil an Indian variant of national reconstruction – a people-centric Marshall plan to modernise, upgrade well-being infrastructure in the various States, revamp the architecture of federal governance and extend the arch of individual liberties in times of existential crisis. And most important, perhaps urgently, the nation needs a healing touch, reaching out to grieving families and individuals, no matter how poor or rich, how isolated or well-connected they are. This is where the future of the national BJP government resides, at least in the immediate future," he said.

NEWS ANALYSIS

According to political scientist Ashwani Kumar of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the pandemic is no less than a "tsunami", disrupting existing models of governance and living, centred on health resources.

"Though I hesitate to predict, the future of the ruling BJP government hinges on how quickly and effectively it addresses the issue of mass vaccination of people, especially [those] belonging to marginalised and poorer sections of society.

The pandemic has threatened to test the march of the BJP from an ideological movement, then party and now the government," he said, speaking to *The Hindu*.

The Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh in February-March next year, he added,

Modi's previous appeal on governance issues should be pivoted on healthcare rather than roads and flyovers now.

"This pandemic is a kind of a stop sign for the development politics that was engendered by neo-liberalism of the 1990s onwards of both the Congress and the BJP. Now, to live, to access healthcare is more important than a road or a flyover, people are looking at healthcare in situ, rather than other things," he pointed out. He also pointed to the nature of the disease and how it had affected everyday interactions in society, the need for social distancing, the way palliative care had been taken out of the hands of relatives, to even how we grieve a death together, leading to a massive amount of "social fragmentation". "The conceptual framework of what it means for a government to be with the people has changed and this has to reflect in the way governments react," he stated.

Focus on healthcare

Badrinarayan, the author of a biography of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) founder Kanshi Ram (*Kanshi Ram: Leader of the Dalits*) and a new book on the RSS titled

Republic of Hindutva: How the Sangh is Reshaping Indian Democracy, said Mr. Prakash, being in March when Uttar Pradesh will go to the polls.

Centre seeks compliance report from intermediaries

They were given three months' time

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has written to all significant social media intermediaries who have over 50 lakh registered users in the country, requesting details of compliance with the new guidelines that came into effect on Wednesday, despite several requests for extension from the industry.

The Government reserves the right to seek any additional information, as may be permitted within these Rules and the IT Act. Please confirm and share your response ASAP and preferably today itself," the letter stated.

Over the past two months, various industry bodies have written to the government seeking up to a one-year compliance window in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. They stated that transition to the new rules required extensive capacity building, new operational models, product redesign, and personnel on-boarding.

WhatsApp, however, has

'Bid by WhatsApp to stop new norms from coming into effect'

No fundamental right is absolute, says the Central govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

WhatsApp's last-moment challenge to the new intermediary guidelines was an "unfortunate attempt" to prevent them from coming into effect, the Centre said on Wednesday.

The established judicial dictum is that no fundamental right, including the Right to Privacy, is absolute and is subject to reasonable restrictions, it said.

"The requirements in the Intermediary Guidelines pertaining to the first originator of information are an example of such a reasonable restriction," said the govt reacting to a legal complaint filed by WhatsApp against the new IT rules. It, however, stressed that it respected the right to privacy and had no intention of violating it while seeking details of originators of certain messages.

IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said that while the government was committed to ensuring the right to pri-



WhatsApp had challenged the new intermediary guidelines.

said a government that chooses to mandate traceability is effectively mandating a new form of mass surveillance. "To comply, messaging services would have to keep giant databases of every message you send, or add a permanent identity stamp – like a fingerprint – to private messages with friends, family, colleagues, doctors, and businesses."

"In order to trace even one message, services would have to trace every message," it said in an FAQ.

vacy of all citizens, it was also responsible for maintaining law and order and ensuring national security. "None of the measures proposed by India will impact the normal functioning of WhatsApp in any manner whatsoever, and for the common users, there will be no impact," he added.

'Breaking guarantees' WhatsApp has said that traceability requires private messaging services like WhatsApp to keep track of who-said-what and who-shared-what for billions of messages sent every day. It requires messaging services to store information that can be used to ascertain the content of people's messages, thereby breaking the very guarantees that end-to-end encryption provides.

"In order to trace even one message, services would have to trace every message," it said in an FAQ.

Modi govt. first to create social media police'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The new IT rules are draconian, the Congress said. "The Modi government is the first to create a social media police and make the committee and the IT Ministry the principal police station for social media platforms," said party leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi at a press conference.

IN BRIEF



Modi gov't. has delivered only misgovernance: CPI

NEW DELHI

The Modi government started out with the promise of "minimum government and maximum governance" but has only delivered "misgovernance", CPI general secretary D. Raja said on the seventh anniversary of the BJP government. Referring to the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, he said, "When thousands of farmers were committing suicide they ran the "Indian Shining" campaign. They got a fitting reply in the elections. The Narendra Modi government is doing just the same."

CJI Ramana notifies Vacation Benches

NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana nominated the Vacation Benches for the second part of the summer holidays. They will sit from May 26 to June 2. The first Bench will comprise Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose. The second Bench will have Justices B.R. Gavai and Surya Kant. Justice Gavai would sit in combination with Justice Krishna Murari for the third Bench. Further Benches, to function from June 3 to 10, would be notified later.

Tejpal case: court says some facts create doubt

It questions the victim's truthfulness

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

While recently acquitting former *Tehelka* editor Tarun Tejpal in a 2013 sexual harassment and rape case filed by a junior colleague, the Mapusa District and Sessions Court in Goa said, "There are many facts that have come on record, which create a doubt on the truthfulness of the victim."

Special judge Kshama Joshi said, "The allegations made by the prosecutrix also shows improvement, material contradictions, omissions and change of versions, which does not inspire confidence. Hence, the prosecutrix has failed to discharge the burden of proving guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt and thus [the accused] is acquitted."

Pointing out several lapses by the investigating officer (IO), the court said, "A duty is cast on the IO to conduct a fair investigation in the matter to bring out the truth. The IO has collected the CCTV footage of the ground, first and second floor but the footage of the first floor cannot be found for the perusal of the court, which is a material lapse by the IO. The IO has committed omissions and commissions while conducting the investigation in the case and has done no investigation on crucial and vital aspects of the present case."

Mr. Tejpal was accused of raping his colleague in an elevator of a five-star hotel. He was arrested on November 30, 2013, by the Goa Crime Branch and granted bail on July 1, 2014, by the Supreme Court.

The judgment reads, "Upon considering the entire evidence on record, the benefit of doubt is given to the accused as there is no corroborative evidence supporting the allegations

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PHED NCR REGION ALWAR | |
| Manu Marg ALWAR(RAJ.) E-Mail- ace.alw.phed@rajasthan.gov.in | |
| Date- 19/05/2021 | |
| NOTICE INVITING BID (Nit No. 08-14/2021-22) | |
| Bids for Work of construction of Sources, rising main pipelines, CWRs, Pump houses, ESRs, internal village distribution pipeline and FHTC including one year Defect Liability period of Various Villages under Subdivision Unrain / Kotkasim / Kharial / Mundawar / Tijara / Tehsil Thanagazi / Tehsil Narayanpur under JJM in the jurisdiction of PHED Rural Division NCR 1 st / NCR 2 nd / Bhawali NCR Alwar are invited from interested bidders upto 05:00 PM on Date 24.06.2021. Other particulars of the Bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in , http://sppr.raj.nic.in) of the state and https://phedwater.rajasthan.gov.in departmental website. | |
| UBN- PHE2122WLO UBN- PHE2122WLO UBN- PHE2122WLO UBN- PHE2122WLO UBN- PHE2122WLO | |
| UBN- BO2355 UBN- BO2356 UBN- BO2357 UBN- BO2351 UBN- BO2352 UBN- BO2353 | |
| DIPR/C/4937 Aditya Sharma Additional Chief Engineer | |

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited | | |
| In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-II, Bhubaneswar-751001 | | |
| Tel.: (0674) 2380660; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in ; Email: logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in | | |
| NOTICE INVITING BID | | |
| Bid Reference No.:OSMCL/2021-22/SHORT-PREDNISOLINE/20 | | |
| Online Bids through e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in) are invited from eligible bidders for Supply of D05023 - Inj. Methylprednisolone 40 mg as per the particulars mentioned below: | | |
| Sl. No. | Particulars | Date and time |
| 1. | Date & time of release of bid | 25/05/2021, 5 PM |
| 2. | Date & time of Online bid submission | Start Date & Time End Date & Time 26/05/2021, 11 AM 02/06/2021, 11 AM |
| 3. | Date & time of Online Technical bid Opening | 02/06/2021, 11:30 AM |
| 4. | Date of opening of Price Bid | To be informed to the qualified bidders |

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: www.osmcl.nic.in and <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. OSMCL reserves the right to reject or modify any conditions of the tender or cancel the tender or cancel the issued purchase order at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

SD/- Managing Director, OSMC Ltd., Odisha OPR-101211/0015/2122

CAD-337

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| HLL Lifecare Limited | |
| (A Government of India Enterprise) | |
| CIN: U25193 KL 1966 GOI 002621 | |
| KANAGALA, BELGAUM DIST., PIN-591225, KARNATAKA, INDIA | |
| PH. 9449057244, email: purchasekfb@lifecarell.com | |
| DT: 27.05.2021 | |
| TENDER NOTICE | |
| HLL LIFECARE LIMITED, a 'Mini Ratra' PSU under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India, invites Bids from competitive suppliers for: | |
| 1. Supply of Fluff Pulp, Glue, Perfumed Poly Pouches & Nonwoven sheet | |
| 2. Supply of Lactose IP, AL, foil & PVC for Tablets | |
| 3. EOI for manufacturing of Hormonal injectable contraceptives & Non Hormonal antiretroviral injectable on lease basis. | |
| 4. Providing Housekeeping Services | |
| Please refer our website www.lifecarell.com for further details of Tender documents & related amendments. | |
| GM (Operations) & Unit Chief | |
| संस्कृतीकरण के लिए बनाये गए Innovating for Healthy Generations | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| BERHAMPUR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, GANJAM | |
| INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) | |
| Letter No. 6308 / Invitation for Bids Date :17/05/2021 | |
| COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT | |
| Bid Identification No.BMC (BAM) 239 / 2020-21 | |
| 1. The Municipal Commissioner, Berhampur, invites percentage rate bids in ONLINE MODE only, as per annexure "A". | |
| 2. Nature of Work Civil Works | |
| 3. No. of work 100 Nos. | |
| 4. Bid Cost The bidders shall remit online the cost of bid document for amount through the process as mentioned in the DTCN as per Annexure "A" | |
| | |

U.S. peddling conspiracies, says China

It is 'disrespectful' to WHO probe to revive the theory that coronavirus emerged from Wuhan lab: Beijing

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China on Wednesday accused the U.S. of "spreading conspiracy theories and disinformation" as the theory resurfaced that the coronavirus emerged from a Wuhan laboratory, while urging Washington to open its virology facilities to scrutiny.

Led by the U.S., pressure is mounting for a new probe into the origins of COVID-19 after a World Health Organization (WHO) mission to China, beset by delays and dogged by political baggage, returned inconclusive findings.

The Wuhan Institute of Virology has returned to the spotlight after a report in *The Wall Street Journal*, citing U.S. intelligence, said three



Under suspicion: Security personnel keeping watch outside the Wuhan Institute of Virology. ■ REUTERS

laboratory workers there were hospitalised in November 2019 with coronavirus-like symptoms, a month before the pandemic's first declared case.

The newspaper also said researchers had collected

jian, spokesman for China's foreign ministry, accused the U.S. of "spreading conspiracy theories and disinformation such as a laboratory leak".

The theory that the killer virus leaked from a Chinese laboratory was originally fuelled by, among others, the administration of former U.S. President Donald Trump.

Mr. Zhao said it was "disrespectful" to the WHO probe to revive the theory, and risked an "undermining of global solidarity to fight the virus".

Since infecting its first victims in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019, the pathogen has struck almost every country in the world, killing more than 3.4

million people and eviscerating national economies.

"If the U.S. really wants full transparency then it should, like China did, invite WHO experts to visit the U.S. and investigate," Zhao added.

"Open up Fort Detrick military base as early as possible, and all the bio labs the U.S. has around the world," he said, referring to a U.S. research facility in Maryland.

The long-delayed report, by the team of international experts sent to Wuhan and their Chinese counterparts, drew no firm conclusions on the origins of the pandemic.

Instead, the WHO-led team said the virus most likely jumped from bats to humans via an intermediate animal.

More scrutiny of Israel rights record sought

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GENEVA

'the group of four' (Quad) advocates so-called democratic alliance, and targets certain specific country in an attempt for containment."

He said China's experiences in poverty reduction, particularly its rural revitalisation strategy, offered lessons for India, with the government last year announcing the eradication of absolute poverty. Poverty eradication was premised on the idea that "China does not simply 'transfuse blood' to the poor, but to encourage them to work hard and 'make blood' themselves".

He also slammed the West for hindering China's development and said "under the pretext of the so-called democracy and human rights issues, they disrupt the agriculture industry of developing countries". For instance, the West has been fabricating the so-called "cotton human rights" issue in Xinjiang, China," he said referring to allegations of forced labour and human rights abuses in the cotton industry.

"In fact, India's cotton-spinning and agriculture also suffered likewise," he said. "They are actually trying to create racial divisions politically and stifle the foundation of national rejuvenation economically, so that China and India will remain poor and weak forever."



Tang Guocai

criticised India's recent moves to not include its telecom firms in 5G trials and to place more stringent curbs on FDI coming in from countries that share a border with India, seen widely as being aimed at Beijing.

RCEP deal
On calls to accelerate decoupling from China, Mr. Tang said "Western 'hawkish strategy' and 'wolf pack tactics' will eventually shoot themselves in the foot", as he drew a contrast between the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade deal, which India withdrew from, and the Quad, describing RCEP as bringing in "a new wave of multilateralism and free trade".

"The integration and development of East Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia are unstoppable," he said. "RCEP has always opened its door to India," he said. "On the other hand,

China's government has

Don't allow U.S. bases, Taliban tells neighbours

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

Sissi and other top officials. Meeting with American diplomatic staff afterwards, he described Egypt as a "real and effective partner" that helped end the Gaza war and is helping "build something positive."

Mr. Blinken has vowed to "rally international support" to rebuild Gaza while promising to make sure that none of the aid reaches Hamas. He is instead trying to bolster the internationally recognised Palestinian Authority.

Washington is in the final stages of withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan, and a flurry of diplomatic calls between the U.S. and Pakistan in recent days has fuelled speculation the Pen-

tagon is scouting for new bases to use against the Taliban. "We urge neighbouring countries not to allow anyone to do so," the Taliban said in a statement. "If such a step is taken again, it will be a great and historic mistake and disgrace." It would "not remain silent in the face of such heinous and provocative acts", the statement added.

Pakistan on Tuesday dismissed local media reports that it had struck a new deal with Washington.

Blinken turns to Egypt to calm West Asia

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CAIRO

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken jetted to Egypt on Wednesday as he pressed ahead with a diplomatic mission aimed at shoring up a ceasefire that ended an 11-day war between Israel and the Gaza Strip's ruling Hamas militant group.

Mr. Blinken landed in Cairo a day after holding talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. In Egypt, he met President Abdel Fattah el-

Sissi and other top officials. Meeting with American diplomatic staff afterwards, he described Egypt as a "real and effective partner" that helped end the Gaza war and is helping "build something positive."

Mr. Blinken has vowed to "rally international support" to rebuild Gaza while promising to make sure that none of the aid reaches Hamas. He is instead trying to bolster the internationally recognised Palestinian Authority.

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Dhaka clears currency swap for Lanka

Gotabaya's request to Modi for a \$1.1 billion currency swap is pending since 2020

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

Bangladesh on Tuesday cleared a \$200 million currency swap facility for Sri Lanka, becoming the first South Asian country to extend crucial financial assistance to the island nation this year.

Dhaka-based *The Daily Star* newspaper reported on Wednesday that Bangladesh was extending "a lifeline of sorts to the beleaguered Sri Lankan economy", offering to top up its depleting foreign reserves. "The board of the Bangladesh Bank has decided in principle to lend \$200-250 million from Bangladesh's reserves to Sri Lan-

ka for three months," Mohammad Sirajul Islam, a spokesman for the Bangladesh Bank, the country's central bank, told AFP in Dhaka.

With Sri Lanka's main foreign exchange-earning sectors – tourism, export of garments and tea – badly hit due to the pandemic, the country has been struggling to maintain its reserves in the face of a daunting debt repayment schedule.

Foreign reserves
In April 2021, Sri Lanka's foreign reserves stood at \$4.5 billion, about the same amount that the country is due to settle this year in ex-

ternal loan repayments.

So far this year, Colombo has obtained financial assistance from China, through a \$1.5 billion currency swap arrangement, and a \$500 million loan, in addition to the \$500 million extended last year. Sri Lanka also inked a \$500 million loan-agreement with the EXIM Bank of Korea a fortnight ago. India, which extended a \$400 million currency swap facility from the Reserve Bank of India – it was settled in February 2021 after an extension – is yet to respond to Sri Lanka's year-old request for an additional \$1.1 billion currency swap facility.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa made the request during a telephone conversation with PM Narendra Modi in May 2020. New Delhi is also yet to approve Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's request for a debt moratorium, which he sought before the pandemic hit the region.

Meanwhile, Dhaka clearing the request – discussed during PM Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to the capital in March – brings some relief to Colombo, senior officials said, although the decision is yet to be formalised in a bilateral agreement. Despite the pandemic, Bangladesh's foreign reserves hit a record high in April, crossing the \$45 billion mark.

Defiant Lukashenko defends plane diversion, blasts critics

I acted lawfully to protect our people, says Belarus President

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MINSK

A defiant President Alexander Lukashenko on Wednesday defended Belarus' diversion of a European flight and arrest of a dissident on board, lashing out at critics at home and abroad.

"Open up Fort Detrick military base as early as possible, and all the bio labs the U.S. has around the world," he said, referring to a U.S. research facility in Maryland.

The long-delayed report, by the team of international experts sent to Wuhan and their Chinese counterparts, drew no firm conclusions on the origins of the pandemic.

Instead, the WHO-led team said the virus most likely jumped from bats to humans via an intermediate animal.



Alexander Lukashenko

now accusing authorities in Minsk of essentially hijacking the passenger flight, and they agreed this week to cut air links with Belarus and told airliners to avoid the country's airspace.

The Belarusian Opposition has called for further and stronger measures, and the UN Security Council was set to meet behind closed doors later on Wednesday.

The Athens-to-Vilnius flight was diverted over a supposed bomb scare, with Mr. Lukashenko scrambling a MiG-29 fighter jet to accompany the aircraft.

Belarus has released a transcript of communications between Minsk air traffic control and the Ryanair flight, in which the crew was told "you have a bomb on board" and urged to land in Minsk. Mr. Lukashenko denied that the fighter jet had forced the airliner to land, calling such claims an "absolute lie".

Los Angeles Mayor may be next U.S. Ambassador to India: report

SIRRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden is reportedly preparing to name Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti as the next Ambassador to India. Mr. Garcetti is a long-time political ally of the President. News of his imminent nomination was reported by Axios, which had, earlier in May, reported that Mr. Garcetti was being considered for the New Delhi job.

Mr. Garcetti, a co-chair for the Biden campaign, was

considered for a Cabinet post, according to Axios, but did not make it due to sexual harassment allegations against his former aide Rick Jacobs came to light.

Two-term Mayor

Mr. Garcetti is now approaching the end (December 2022) of his second term as Mayor of the country's second largest city, a post he has held since 2013.

Mr. Biden is expected to send the Senate a number of Ambassadorial nominations next week.

trade, defence and the COVID-19 response growing across the Trump and Biden administrations. The two countries have also had to navigate their relationship in the context of growing Chinese assertiveness and aggression. The next U.S. Ambassador to India will inherit these issues as well as having to work with India in other forums – such as the Quad.

Mr. Biden is expected to send the Senate a number of Ambassadorial nominations next week.

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : SE/PHC/MMP/5 to 7/2021-22. JJM - providing FHTCs to Muthuvallur, Pallikkal and Palamathone Panchayats and allied works. EMD : Rs. 20000 to 50000. Tender fee : Rs. 11800 to 17000. Last Date for submitting Tender : 17-06-2021 03:00 pm.

Phone : 0483-2734871 Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in

Superintending Engineer PH Circle Malappuram

KWA-JB-GL-6-133-2021-22

NMDC Limited OPEN TENDER ENQUIRY

NMDC Iron & Steel Plant, Nagarnar, invites sealed tenders in two bid system with last date & time for submission of offers as 25.06.2021 by 02.30 PM for the following:

1) Name of Work: Supply of Fittings for HP Steam Line from CDCP to PBS for Packages-20A at NMDC Iron & Steel Plant, Nagarnar, Jagdalpur Chhattisgarh 494001. Tender No & Date: No. NISP/MM-SP26/FITTINGS/5370 DL. 27.05.2021

2) Name of Supply: Supply of Valves AND Steam Traps for HP Steam Line from CDCP to PBS for Packages-20A at NMDC Iron & Steel Plant, Nagarnar, Jagdalpur Chhattisgarh 494001. Tender No & Date: No. NISP/MM-SP427/VALVES & STEAM TRAPS/5371 DL. 27.05.2021

Tender documents can be obtained from office of the HOD (M&C), NMDC Iron Steel Plant Nagarnar or can be downloaded from websites www.nmdc.co.in or www.eprocure.gov.in in tender section.

GM(Materials & Contracts)

MADHYA PRADESH PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.

Tilhan Sangh Bhavan, 01, Arera Hills, Bhopal URL : www.mpphscl.in, Phone : 0755-2578915 Publishing Date : 26.05.2021

GLOBAL NOTICE INVITING OFFER FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS FOR COVID-19 MANAGEMENT

In view of the recent cases of *Mucormycosis* in COVID-19 patients in the state of Madhya Pradesh there is an urgent demand for Antifungal drugs. Therefore, Madhya Pradesh Public Health Services Corporation on behalf of the Government of Madhya Pradesh invites quotations from Manufacturers/suppliers of below mentioned drugs:-

| S. No. | Generic name of the drug | Potency | Tentative quantity required |
|--------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Injection Amphotericin B (Lipoosomal) | 50 mg/vial | 30,000 (Thirty Thousand) |
| 2. | Tab. Posaconazole | 200 mg | 50,000 (Fifty Thousand) |
| 3. | Injection Posaconazole | 200 mg/vial | 10,000 (Ten Thousand) |

Offer should include following information along with supporting documents:

1. Company Detail which includes Name, address, Telephone No., Email.
2. Authorization letter nominating a responsible person with contact detail.
3. Documentary evidence for the constitution of the company/Firm.
4. Manufacturing location along with valid manufacturing license.
5. Production permission from DCGI or FDA of the country of origin with a valid import license.
6. Bidder's Average Annual turnover in the last three financial years i.e. 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.
7. GST registration certificate (Clearly showing GST no).
8. Valid WHO-GMP Plant certificate.
9. Bank mandate along with cancelled Cheque.
10. Proposed Quantity for Supply within 7 days.
11. Offered Rate with applicable Tax detail (CGST, SGST or IGST whichever applicable), however, all offers should be made including all logistics and import duty charges, as the case may be.
12. All offers including that from international supplies should only be quoted in INR (Indian Rupees)

The Offer should be submitted within 3 days from the publication of this notice to the office of "Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh Public Health Services Corporation Ltd." with self attested copies of supporting documents via email only to drug-mpphscl@mp.gov.in

Competent Authority reserves right to accept or reject any or all received offer if not found satisfactory or cancel this notice without giving any reason thereof.

M.P. Madhyam/100805/2021 CGM (Technical) MPPHSCL, Bhopal

CORRIGENDUM

DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD PRODUCTION, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR

EXTENSION OF DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF BID FOR EOI PUBLISHED ON DATED 11/05/2021

For Engagement of Agencies for Comprehensive Action Plan from Production to Marketing of Crops under Crop Diversification Programme.

Due to prevailing COVID-

MARKET WATCH

| | 26-05-2021 | % CHANGE |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Sensex | 51,018 | 0.75 |
| Gold | 48,589 | 1.17 |
| Brent oil | 68.87 | 0.26 |

NIFTY 50

| | PRICE | CHANGE |
|-----------------------------|----------|--------|
| Adani Ports | 758.30 | -5.70 |
| Asian Paints | 2941.60 | 27.20 |
| Axis Bank | 735.10 | 3.55 |
| Bajaj Auto | 4166.30 | 16.20 |
| Bajaj Finserv | 11906.40 | 530.55 |
| Bajaj Finance | 5771.15 | 152.50 |
| Bharti Airtel | 525.75 | -0.35 |
| BPCL | 472.20 | -2.20 |
| Britannia Ind | 3416.00 | -23.50 |
| Cipla | 945.15 | 9.55 |
| Coal India | 145.70 | -1.75 |
| Divis Lab | 4098.60 | 0.75 |
| Dr Reddys Lab | 5285.20 | -26.00 |
| Eicher Motors | 2633.50 | 8.45 |
| Grasim Ind | 1409.40 | 34.50 |
| HCL Tech | 945.80 | 5.20 |
| HDFC | 2567.55 | 37.05 |
| HDFC Bank | 1477.05 | -1.90 |
| HDFC Life | 658.50 | -0.65 |
| Hero MotoCorp | 2964.70 | 35.00 |
| Hindalco | 381.00 | -10.20 |
| Hind Unilever | 2354.00 | 9.95 |
| ICICI Bank | 652.50 | 2.20 |
| IndusInd Bank | 998.45 | 4.55 |
| Infosys | 1397.25 | 35.65 |
| Indian Oil Corp. | 112.00 | 1.70 |
| ITC | 210.60 | -0.30 |
| JSW Steel | 682.20 | -18.60 |
| Kotak Bank | 1740.65 | -9.85 |
| L&T | 1472.90 | 21.95 |
| M&M | 821.20 | 9.95 |
| Maruti Suzuki | 7034.30 | 122.50 |
| Nestle India Ltd. | 17541.30 | 25.20 |
| NTPC | 111.10 | -2.20 |
| ONGC | 113.35 | -1.25 |
| PowerGrid Corp. | 225.60 | -7.30 |
| Reliance Ind | 1970.05 | 6.90 |
| SBI Life | 971.75 | 6.45 |
| State Bank | 413.55 | 1.20 |
| Shree Cement | 27077.40 | 35.95 |
| Sun Pharma | 703.80 | 7.70 |
| Tata Consumer Products Ltd. | 641.90 | -8.05 |
| Tata Motors | 315.50 | -0.25 |
| Tata Steel | 1082.15 | -23.05 |
| TCS | 3158.50 | 44.50 |
| Tech Mahindra | 1007.80 | 15.15 |
| Titan | 1582.95 | 13.80 |
| UltraTech Cement | 6580.90 | 24.30 |
| UPL | 812.60 | 15.95 |
| Wipro | 527.25 | 9.70 |

IN BRIEF



Infosys CEO pay package rises to ₹49.68 crore

NEW DELHI
Infosys CEO Salil Parekh saw his annual pay package jump to ₹49.68 crore in 2020-21, with more than half of the total amount coming from the exercise of stock options. Mr. Parekh's compensation was at ₹34.27 crore in 2019-20. Rajesh Gopinathan, CEO and MD, TCS drew a pay package of ₹20.36 crore in 2020-21. PTI

Garware Polyester is now Garware Hi-Tech

MUMBAI
Garware Polyester Ltd. has changed its corporate brand name to Garware Hi-Tech Films Ltd. The name change has been updated on the BSE, it said in a statement. "The new identity and name is a reflection of our commitment and focus to grow in different product categories and geographies," said CMD S.B. Garware.

Hinduja Global to hire 250 staff in Canada

BENGALURU
Hinduja Global Solutions (HGS) said it would hire 250 remote customer service representatives in Montreal and Quebec City to support the ongoing growth of its Canadian entity. In addition to these frontline workers, the business process management (BPM) firm was looking to fill management positions, the company said in a statement.

Second wave threatens start-ups, MSMEs: survey

'59% of firms may shut shop or sell off'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Hit hard by the second wave of the pandemic, about 59% of start-ups and MSMEs are likely to either scale down operations, sell off, or completely shut in the next six months, according to a survey by LocalCircles.

The survey saw participation from more than 6,000 start-ups and MSMEs located in 171 districts of India. When asked where they saw their business future in the next six months given the impact of the second wave of COVID-19, 37% said they would scale down their operation, while 14% said they might shut down, and 8% said they would sell off their business. "Only 22% of start-ups and MSMEs see growth

Amazon to gain Bond films via \$8.45 bn deal to acquire MGM

This is the e-tailer's largest acquisition after \$14-bn deal for Whole Foods in 2017

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK

Online shopping giant Amazon is buying MGM, the movie and TV studio behind James Bond, "Legally Blonde" and "Shark Tank," with the hopes of filling its video-streaming service with more stuff to watch.

Amazon is paying \$8.45 billion for MGM, making it the company's second-largest acquisition after it bought grocer Whole Foods for almost \$14 billion in 2017.

The deal is the latest in the media industry that's aimed at boosting streaming services to compete against Netflix and Disney+. AT&T and Discovery announced on May 17 that they would combine media companies, creating a



Viewer interest: The acquisition will enable Amazon to compete better against Netflix and Disney+.

powerhouse that includes HGTV, CNN and HBO.

Prime membership

Amazon doesn't say how many people watch its Prime Video service. But more than 200 million have access to it because they're signed up

for its Prime membership, which gives them faster shipping and other perks. Besides Prime Video, Amazon also has a free streaming service called IMDb TV, where Amazon makes money by playing ads during movies and shows.

GST levy on COVID-19 relief imports challenged

Delhi HC to hear plea against tax on supplies from abroad

VIKAS DHOOT

NEW DELHI

An NCR-based firm that imported oxygen cylinders and regulators and donated them to the Delhi government has challenged the Centre's exclusion of such imports from the 'ad hoc' GST exemption for COVID-19 relief material received from abroad.

The Delhi High Court is expected to hear the writ petition against the Finance Ministry, the GST Council and the Delhi government's Finance Department on Thursday. Oxygen regulators imported for personal use is 'unconstitutional'. The Finance Ministry had told the



carrying the regulators for them are liable to 18% IGST.

Last week, a bench of the HC had held that the 12% Integrated GST (IGST) levied on oxygen concentrators imported for personal use is 'unconstitutional'. The Finance Ministry had told the

Court that the issue would be placed before the GST Council that meets on Friday.

On May 3, the Ministry had exempted imported COVID relief material from IGST levies, provided it was received free and donated to State-approved entities for free distribution.

"Several Indian corporations and other entities are pitching to help with pandemic relief by importing critical supplies not available locally, at their own cost, are not eligible for this GST relief," Abhishek A Rastogi, partner at Khaitan & Co. said.

dend of ₹35 per share.

"We witnessed a V-shape recovery in the second half of the financial year resulting in a robust growth in fuel sales," said N. Vijayagopal, director (finance). "In an unprecedented year that began with a lockdown across the country and subdued business activities, the fourth quarter was a stand-out quarter that helped the company to report its highest ever growth in bottom-line," he added.

Young workers can drive extra \$1.9 tn profits'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Young workers can drive an extra \$1.9 trillion in corporate profits if given support to adapt to new realities of work, shows a study titled 'The Born Digital Effect' conducted by Citrix Systems.

Comprising millennial (born between 1981 and 1996) and Generation Z (born after 1997) workers, Born Digital is the first generation to grow up in an entirely digital world and now account for most of the global workforce.

"To shore up their future business success, companies must understand their values, career aspirations and working styles and invest in their development," said Donna Kimmel, executive vice president and chief people officer, Citrix.



Raise turnover threshold to ₹5 cr: CIA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

The Consortium of Indian Associations (CIA) has urged the Centre to increase the turnover threshold limit for micro enterprises to facilitate their exemption from the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

The second wave has wiped out more than 40% of MSMEs involved in various sectors, said CIA convenor K.E. Raghunathan, adding that the need of the hour was to save micro enterprises from the hassle and help them to survive the present crisis by increasing the turnover threshold limit to ₹5 cr for FY22.

Secondly, COVID-related materials such as hand sanitizers, masks, medicines,

oxygen cylinders, medical treatments and PPE kits must be exempted from all forms of GST, both for input and output, till March 2022, Mr. Raghunathan said.

"If the above two requests are not considered, it would amount to killing the goose that lays golden eggs in one stroke," the CIA convenor added.

in their business during this period," the survey said.

Exempt micro enterprises from GST

Raise turnover threshold to ₹5 cr: CIA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

Scan the QR code

Buying MGM would give Amazon access to more films, shows and famous characters, including Rocky and Pink Panther. Amazon will also get a cable channel: Epix, which MGM owns.

Known for its roaring lion logo, MGM is one of the oldest Hollywood studios, founded in 1924 when films were silent. It has a long list of classics in its library, including 'Singin' in the Rain.'

More recent productions include reality TV staples 'Shark Tank' and 'The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills,' as well as the upcoming James Bond movie 'No Time to Die.'

Amazon already has its own studio but has had mixed results.

Bank NPAs likely dropped in FY21: Care

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The quantum of gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) may have declined by end March compared with FY20, following write-offs, lower slippages, restructuring plans, ECLGS support for MSMEs and resilience in the economy, Care Ratings said.

However, with the Supreme Court allowing the recognition of NPAs, FY21-end numbers may be either similar to or slightly above December-end numbers, it said. PSBs' GNPs are expected to be about ₹6 lakh crore at March end compared with ₹6.8 lakh crore a year earlier.

INTERVIEW | UDAY KOTAK

July-Sept. period will be key'

CII chief says lot will hinge on States' approach to reopening

SURESH SESHAJRI

After recommending stringent curbs on economic activity to contain the 'suffering' from the pandemic, CII president Uday Kotak earlier this month urged companies to take 'voluntary measures' to break the COVID transmission chain by minimising all in-person work. Mr. Kotak, who completes his term at CII's helm on May 31, said the coming months would require careful calibration to revive the economy. Excerpts:

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With the SCB

months... July, August, September. And those are the calls we need to take carefully for two reasons. If we do the calibration well, we will have a much lower risk of 3.0 [third wave].

Two, we would have vaccinated a lot more people. And we will also have some clarity, how effective the vaccines are at the various levels.

What can the CII do to get a uniform vaccine policy?

Frankly, if there is a

IN BRIEF



Lille's title-winning coach Galtier to step down

LILLE
Christophe Galtier has informed Lille that he'll step down as coach, less than two days after he led the club to its first French league title in 10 years. Galtier has one year left on his contract but his departure was widely anticipated amid strong interest for his services from Nice, Lyon and possibly Napoli. AP

Riya beats Akgul

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU
LIEPAJA (LATVIA)

Sixth seed Riya Bhatia beat former World No. 50 Akgul Amanmuradova of Uzbekistan 6-4, 6-4 in the first round of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament here on Wednesday.

The 23-year-old Riya converted four of 10 break-points that she forced to get past the 36-year-old Akgul.

In the \$15,000 ITF men's event in Heraklion, Greece, Rishab Agarwal lost to Thailand's Wishaya Trongcharoenchaikul 6-4, 7-6(5) in the first round.

Woods pops up on young girl's Instagram post



Woods and Perrone.

■ TWITTER

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LOS ANGELES

Tiger Woods popped up on Instagram on Monday as a Florida girl who is fighting cancer posted a photo of herself with the golf superstar after meeting him at a soccer park. Woods, who suffered severe leg injuries in a car crash in California in February, was on crutches with a compression stocking but no walking boot on his right leg.

The photo was posted by 10-year-old Luna Perrone, who calls herself in her Instagram profile "One tough girl battling Ewing's Sarcoma (rare bone cancer)" and a "soccer legend."

"I got to have a quick chat with @tigerwoods this weekend when I bumped into him at the soccer fields!" Perrone wrote.

"He told me to 'stay strong' which has always been my goal! Stay strong physically and mentally and inspire others to do the same!"

Former Mumbai player Ranjita passes away

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Former Mumbai player and scorer Ranjita Rane died here on Wednesday after battling cancer. She was in her mid 40s.

An all-rounder, who bowled medium pace, Ranjita played 44 First Class matches for Mumbai from 1995 to 2003.

Meanwhile, another cricketer Prabhuhai Parmar, who had represented Saurashtra in domestic cricket, died due to COVID-19 on Tuesday. The 76-year-old had played four Ranji Trophy matches for Saurashtra in 1968-69.

"But then, it should never

UEFA reads the riot act to rebels

Opens disciplinary cases against Super League backers Real, Barca and Juve

FOOTBALL

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GENEVA

UEFA has opened disciplinary cases against Super League rebels Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus that could lead to bans from the Champions League.

Proceedings are now active for "a potential violation of UEFA's legal framework," UEFA said on Tuesday.

The European soccer body's statutes include a section on "prohibited groupings" of clubs or leagues forming without UEFA's permission or outside its control.

The three clubs now being prosecuted by UEFA are the remaining holdouts among 12 founders of the failed Super League project who refused to renounce it.

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin warned the clubs last month that "if they say



Stern statement: UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin had warned clubs last month that if they say 'we are a Super League', then they won't play Champions League. ■ AP

we are a Super League, then they don't play Champions League, of course."

No timetable

UEFA gave no timetable for the expected disciplinary cases against the three which have all qualified on merit for the Champions League next season.

Any bans for the clubs –

and elevation of other Spanish and Italian teams to replace them – would likely lead to appeals at the Court of Arbitration for Sport and pressure to resolve the cases before next season's European competitions.

The Champions League group-stage draw is on August 26 and matches start on September 14.

The nine clubs who settled with UEFA are: AC Milan, Inter Milan, Atletico Madrid, Arsenal, Liverpool, Manchester United, and Tottenham, plus Champions League finalists Chelsea and Manchester City.

Those clubs agreed to UEFA's terms to forfeit 5% of their prize money from European competitions in the 2022-23 season and pay a combined €15 million as a "gesture of goodwill" to benefit children, youth and grassroots football.

For a storied club, a successful season in the Champions League currently earns around €100 million in UEFA prize money.

The agreement also saw the nine clubs consent to be fined €100 million if they seek again to play in an unauthorised competition or €50 million if they breach any other commitments to UEFA as part of the settlement.

It's a dream to be in the CL final: Berrada

CFOO of City Football Group says City's journey began with FA Cup win in 2011

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
CHENNAI



Omar Berrada.

dia on Wednesday.

"We have worked so hard to get here that I believe we will continue to be in the knockout stages in the years to come because the groundwork has been done to put us in that position. Winning the Champions League will give us prestige, but it's the long-term effort that has been put in that will ensure we stay successful," he added.

Berrada stressed on City's long-term vision, which has seen it evolve into a heavyweight and win five of the last 10 Premier League titles.

"It's a result of a vision that the ownership had 12 years ago – to develop a strong academy, to develop a specific way of playing football and to bring the right manager for that type of football. We also needed to bring in the right players for that.

"It has always been about finding the right squad balance between young players, players who are at their peak and players who can bring more experience. It's not been about investing in superstars, we like to find the right players and with time they become superstars because of the team's success. It's about ensuring we

find players who can adapt to our style of play, believe in our culture and buy into it. We love making investments in players at different age levels, see them blossom and reach their highest potential," said Berrada.

About the Messi move

He remained non-committal about the possibility of Lionel Messi, whose contract with Barcelona runs out soon, moving to City.

"If you look at our performance this year, it's not like we need to make significant investments. We might look at signing a striker since (Sergio) Aguero leaves, but right now we are very focused on our squad. When the season ends on Saturday evening, we will look at what we want to do in the transfer window."

Harris hit seven of 10 3-point tries to tie the fran-

Europeans best Indians in mixed events

SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU
OSIJEK (CROATIA)

The Indian shooters had a taste of Europe's might in the mixed team competition in air rifle and air pistol, as they came behind Norway and Russia in the preliminary stage of the European championship here on Wednesday.

In mixed pistol, Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary shot 580. Manu shot 286 out of 300, while Saurabh hit 294 with a series of 99, 98 and 97.

But they were pushed to the second place by Russia's

Vitalina Batsarashkina and Artem Chernousov who shot 583 to top the first stage. With the medal qualification set in the second stage, India was ineligible to compete.

Yashaswini Singh Deswal (287) and Abhishek Verma (288) placed ninth, with 575, among 43 pairs.

In mixed air rifle, Elavenil Varalakshmi (315.8) and Divyansh Singh Panwar (314.8) placed second behind Norway for which Jeanette Hogg Duestad and Henrik Larsen put up an European record of 632.0.

Anjum Moudgil (310.1) and Deepak Kumar (312.1) placed 38th among 51 pairs.

Tough time awaits fans of Euro 2020

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ROME

Fans travelling across borders to attend European Championship matches face a complicated array of entry requirements amid the coronavirus pandemic.

But – and the situation is still developing on a day-to-day basis – UEFA maintains that the 11 host cities spread around the continent are all accepting visiting fans.

"None of the countries has put any prohibition on foreign fans," UEFA spokesman Thomas Giordano said.

British Open hopeful of having 75% capacity

However, it depends on clearance from the government

GOLF

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KIAWAH ISLAND

Along with the coastal views at Kiawah Island for the PGA Championship, it was the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic that a Major actually sounded like one.

A larger gathering could happen on the other side of the Atlantic.

The R&A, one of the governing bodies of golf worldwide alongside the United States Golf Association, said on Tuesday it was optimistic that Royal St. George's could have as much as 75% capacity for the British Open from

July 15 to 21. Martin Slumbers, the CEO, also said the capacity for golf's oldest championship could be as low as 25%.

So much depends on government regulations, and that won't be determined until a month before the Open.

Big uncertainty

"The big uncertainty for us is clarity from the government and health authorities around social distancing, and that will determine what the atmosphere will be like at the Open," Slumbers said.

"We are building the infrastructure as we would

normally build, so there's the big grandstands going around the 18th and around the first, and we're building them in a way that we can adapt for social distancing depending on what the rules are going to be.

"I'm keen to get as many spectators in as possible because I do think that's what creates the atmosphere, and I think actually it's what makes the players play just a little bit better," he added.

Watching the PGA Championship from the home of golf, Slumbers said it was clear there was a gap between the U.S. and the UK in terms of restrictions.

What he wants to avoid is

the chaos that erupted on the 18th hole at Kiawah when Phil Mickelson was swallowed up by the crowd and had to fight his way through to the green.

Typical scene
That's a typical scene, though far more orderly, at the British Open. Crowds often follow the final group down the fairway toward the green, but at some distance.

"We're very careful on how we move the crowds around, so we will continue to keep the crowds on the side of the 18th until it's all over and then allow them to move closer to the green," Slumbers said.

Swiatek serene as questions linger over French Open rivals

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Iga Swiatek heads into the French Open trying to become the first player since Serena Williams at Wimbledon in 2016 to successfully defend a women's Grand Slam singles title, with injuries and poor clay form clouding the hopes of several of her chief rivals.

More expectation

Following her victory in Rome, culminating in a ruthless 46-minute takedown of Karolina Pliskova, Poland's first Grand Slam singles champion returns to Roland Garros just seven months on with a far greater weight of expectation.

"Professor (Luka Radman, fitness coach) has always insisted on building muscle power and strength and I was working relentlessly in the gym."

"But then the second wave struck and I was confined to my home for the last two weeks."

"From that time onward, I worked mostly on the individual programmes which were sent to me."

has cited the consistency of Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer as a goal for which she can strive.

Proud

"I'm really proud of myself that I'm actually starting to be more consistent, because that was my goal from the beginning," said Swiatek.

"I feel right now that I am doing huge progress in that matter. But it was actually a bit frustrating after the French Open, because sometimes you can't see the result of your work."

Obviously winning a Grand Slam is great, but after that comes rankings, and this year it was different.

"I'm really proud that I'm gonna have in my resume that I'm top 10, because I always wanted that. I also want to be consistent. So right now our goal is to keep me in that place and go further."

She entered the top 10 for the first time last week, and



Iga Swiatek. ■ REUTERS

national May-June slot last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like Jelena Ostapenko in 2017, it was her first title at tour level. Unlike the Latvian, who has struggled to reproduce her best tennis regularly, Swiatek appears better equipped to stay at the top.

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FOOTBALL

ASSOCIATED PRESS
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WEIGHTLIFTING

SPORTS BUREAU

TASHKENT

Sets three new National records enroute to his first big medal



Achinta Sheuli.

championships, Pyongyang and 313kg in total (old: 310kg, Ajith, 2020, National championships, Kolkata).

Sheuli created new National records of 141kg in snatch (old: 140kg, N. Ajith, 2020, National championships, Kolkata), 172kg in clean and jerk (old: 170kg, Sheuli, 2019, Asian junior

with 137kg in snatch, failed to lift 141kg in his second attempt before doing it in his third. In clean and jerk, he lifted 166kg, 169kg and 172kg in three successful attempts to finish second.

Rizki Juniansyah of Indonesia totalled 349kg to win gold.