



COP26 president Alok Sharma announcing the Glasgow Climate Pact. Reuters

**COP ENDS WITH SMALL GAINS**

## India, China join hands to block coal phase-out plan in Glasgow pact

AMITABH SINHA  
GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 14

COUNTRIES AT the United Nations climate change summit adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact late on Saturday after India and China, in a dramatic last-minute intervention, forced through an amendment in the language calling for a phasing out of coal and fossil fuel subsidies.

The pact fell far short of the expectations of a bold and ambitious agreement, but countries still hailed it as an important step forward in the efforts to keep global temperatures from rising beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times.

"It is a very small step forward. The pace is extremely slow. We are moving in inches when we need to gallop in miles," said Harjeet Singh, a senior adviser with Climate Action Network International, a large network of environmental NGOs.

Hours after the final agreement was adopted, sharp

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Perceived to be punitive: Madras Bar protests the CJ's transfer

ARUN JANARDHANAN & APURVA VISHWANATH  
CHENNAI, NEW DELHI, NOV 14

THE MADRAS Bar Association on Sunday passed a resolution urging the Supreme Court collegium to reconsider its recommendation to transfer Madras High Court Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee, which it said was "perceived to be punitive".

"The association is deeply concerned with the opaqueness surrounding the transfers of Hon'ble Mr Justice T S Sivagnanam from Madras High Court to Calcutta and of Hon'ble Mr Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee to Meghalaya. The transfers are perceived to be in violation of Memorandum of Procedure for transfer. Such transfers are perceived to be punitive and does not augur well for the independence

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**NO MORE EXTENSIONS TO ED CHIEF, SC HAD SAID**

## Govt brings ordinance: CBI, ED Directors can hold office up to 5 yrs

ED Director Sanjay Mishra's tenure ends this week; could be beneficiary

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

DIRECTORS OF the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) may now continue in their jobs for up to five years if the government desires.

Two ordinances signed by President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday have virtually extended the tenures of the chiefs of the two agencies for up to five years. Both posts currently have a fixed tenure of two years.

The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act and The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) Act have been amended to give the government the power to keep the two chiefs in their posts for one

**EXPLAINED**  
**'Political' use of agencies**

THE ORDINANCES came at a time when both CBI and ED have been accused by the Opposition of selectively going after their leaders, and of being allies of the BJP. The changed law opens up space for manipulation, they say.

year after they have completed their two-year terms.

And this one-year extension, the amendment says, can continue to be given until the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Dictatorial, no role for House: Opp says SC should step in

MANOJ CG  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

THE OPPOSITION questioned the motive and intentions behind the government's "tearing hurry" to promulgate an ordinance to ensure that Directors of the ED and CBI could have longer tenures, given that Parliament is scheduled to meet later this month.

Congress Leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who is the opposition member in the committee that selects the CBI chief, said the ordinance was yet another "example" of the "dictatorial attitude of the government".

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**SPORTS****T20 WORLD CUP: AUSTRALIA BEAT NEW ZEALAND BY 8 WICKETS** PAGE 11

## Top Maoist Milind Teltumbde one of 26 killed in Gadchiroli: Police

VIVEK DESHPANDE  
NAGPUR, NOVEMBER 14

MILIND TELTUMBDE, a Central Committee member of the banned CPI (Maoist) organisation, was among the 26 Maoists killed in Saturday's encounter with security personnel in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, a senior police officer said.

Teltumbde, 58, was in charge of the Maoist outfit's Maharashtra-Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh (MMC) zone, police said. He was also the younger brother of former IIT professor, Dalit intellectual and writer, Anand Teltumbde, who has been jailed in connection with the



Police said he was 'involved in 42 encounters'

**UNION LEADER TO SENIOR MAOIST** P5

Elgar Parishad case.

According to police, two other key members of the outfit were also killed in the encounter. They have been identified as Mahesh alias Shivaji Raoji Gota, a resident of Renadigutta village of Etapalli tehsil of Gadchiroli and Lokesh alias Mangu Podyam, a

resident of Jagargunda village in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada.

Both were members of the Gadchiroli divisional committee of CPI (Maoist), police said. Gota belonged to the Kasansur dalam and carried a reward of Rs 16 lakh for his capture while Podyam was a company commander and carried a reward of Rs 20 lakh, police said.

However, a third senior operative, identified as Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) member Prabhakar, managed to escape even as his bodyguard was killed, police said. Two bodyguards of Teltumbde were also killed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Two journalists reporting on Tripura clashes detained

DEBRAJ DEB  
AGARTALA, NOVEMBER 14

TWO JOURNALISTS, who were reporting on the recent communal clashes in Tripura, were detained on Sunday by the Assam Police. At least two FIRs were filed against the Delhi-based journalists, who have been booked under IPC sections related to spreading communal disharmony and criminal conspiracy, among others.

The journalists, Samridhi K Sakunia and Swarna Jha, who were reporting for HW News Network, were detained at

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## India's air defence gets a big boost, Russia starts delivery of S-400 missiles

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

IN A big boost to India's air-defence capabilities, Russia has started delivery of the much awaited S-400 missile system for deployment on schedule this year, official sources have confirmed.

India had bought the system for over US\$ 5 billion in 2018, in a deal that became contentious amid a threat of sanctions from the US on countries engaging in defence deals with Russia.

"Russia has started delivering the S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems to India, the deliveries are going as planned," Sputnik, the Russian news

agency, reported.

"The supplies of the S-400 air defence system to India have started and are proceeding on schedule," the agency quoted Dmitry Shugaev, director of Russia's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation, as saying.

There was no official word from the Indian side. The delivery of the weapons system was expected to begin before the end of this year. The delivery of parts has already begun through sea and air routes, sources said.

India had bought five units of the system in 2018, and had made the first tranche of the payment, \$800 million, a year later.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**BUSINESS AS USUAL**

BY UNNNY



Oh no! How do we develop the soil to draft climate change resolutions?

## Behind Drona award, unwanted piece of land that became hockey hotspot

PAGE 1  
ANCHORMIHIR VASAVDA  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

IT WAS once grazing land. It is now a breeding ground for some of India's most talented hockey players.

The transformation began with a disagreement. In 2004, while travelling to Sonapat, former India captain Pritam Rani Siwach spotted a parcel of unkempt land large enough to play hockey. One of the mainstays of the national team, Siwach was entering the twilight of her career.

For a player who was rated



Former India captain Pritam Rani at her academy. Express

highly for her leadership qualities and game intelligence, coaching seemed to be a logical step. "So, I asked my husband if it

was a good idea to use that ground to train women players from the region," Siwach says.

Siwach's husband Kuldeep,

also a former hockey player, had been a rock of support for her, all through her career. But that day, he sounded dismissive. "He replied, 'Are you mad?' He ignored my idea completely," Siwach says. "I was very hurt. At that moment, I decided no matter what happens, even if I'll have to fight with my husband, I'll work in women's hockey. That's how it started."

On Saturday, 17 years later, Siwach, who had earlier won an Arjuna Award, received the prestigious Dronacharya Award, making her one of the few recipients of the National Sports Award as both a player and now a coach.

And her academy has become one of the key feeder grounds for the national team.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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# FROM PAGE ONE

## Dictatorial, no role for House: Opp says SC should step in

The three-member committee that picks the CBI Director is chaired by the PM.

“They do not have any respect for democracy. They do not consult anyone. What is happening? Do they want to create a police state? They do whatever they wish saying they have the mandate, the numbers. They will bring an ordinance and later get it passed in Parliament,” Chowdhury told *The Indian Express*.

“We will, of course, raise it in Parliament, but we can’t do much because the numbers are heavily stacked in favour of the government,” Chowdhury said. “The courts are the only refuge now. I appeal to the judiciary to take note of what is happening, intervene and rein in the government.”

Asked if the Congress would approach the court, Chowdhury said “civil society, I hope, will surely do”. “What I am saying is that they are insulting and ruining democracy, parliamentary democracy.”

“It seems the incumbents (in the posts of CBI and ED chiefs) suit them... *lagta hai inse kaam banega, unke man-mutabek kaam inse banega* (They feel these officers will do their bidding),” Chowdhury said.

“Tomorrow they will bring an ordinance or a bill to increase the tenure of Modi’ji for 10 years... This can also happen. By 2024, Modi’ji will say that I have learnt from Xi Jinping... I am increasing my tenure in the interest of the country and for its progress... they have become *bahumat ke bahubali* (bullies of the majority),” he said.

Congress Deputy Leader in Rajya Sabha Anand Sharma said, “The government has repeatedly transgressed parliamentary procedures and principles and ruled through ordinances. When the session is about to start, they could have waited. Such decisions and actions show the government’s disrespect not

only for the institution of Parliament but also for the Supreme Court. It is up to the apex court to take note of the government’s actions.”

CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury posted on Twitter: “Parliament session begins on 29th. To avoid its scrutiny, Centre on Sunday promulgates ordinances to extend the tenure of Directors of CBI and ED. This desperate hurry smacks of something fishy.”

Derek O’Brien of the Trinamool Congress tweeted: “Modi-Shah care two hoots about Parliament (session starting in two weeks) They promised India the ‘Gujarat Model’... boy, are we getting there. They give a whole new meaning to the abbreviation BS! BRAZEN SHAMELESS slaughter of democracy.”

The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs has recommended that the Winter Session should start from November 29. But the President is yet to formally convene Parliament.

RJD leader Manoj Kumar Jha said the government’s “modus operandi” should worry everyone.

“When the Parliament session is going to start in 15 days, they have taken this ordinance route. They are destroying all institutions and institutional framework. They have almost created a police state. Such moves bypassing Parliament shall not go down in history very kindly. It should have come in Parliament. Otherwise, what is the role of Parliament, what is the value of Parliament? You are making a new Parliament building for what...to ‘museumise’ the very idea of democracy and democratic functioning?” he said.

BSP MP Kunwar Danish Ali said: “This is unacceptable. They are signalling that officers who will be loyal to the establishment will get extension after extension... Already the impartiality of various institutions is under a cloud...”

## India, China join hands to block coal phase-out

# Ordinance on CBI and ED chiefs

officers complete five years as the chiefs of the agencies.

The CBI is governed by The DSPE Act; The CVC Act lays down the term of office of the Director of Enforcement.

The ordinance comes days before the extended tenure of ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra is scheduled to end. Mishra is supposed to step down on November 19 after three years in the post.

Mishra was appointed ED chief on November 19, 2018. Days before his fixed two-year tenure was to come to an end, the President, on November 13, 2020, modified his previous order and granted Mishra a tenure of three years. The ordinance now opens the door for a further extension of his tenure.

In September, the Supreme Court had held Mishra’s tenure

of three years to be legal, but had asked the government not to extend it any further.

In a petition challenging the extension of Mishra’s tenure, the court had declined to interfere with the government’s order, saying that the provision in The CVC Act, 2003 that chiefs of the ED shall hold office for “not less than two years”, could not be read to mean not more than two years.

The bench of Justices L.Nag-eswara Rao and B R Gavai had, however, said that “no further extension shall be granted” to Mishra beyond November 2021. “We should make it clear that extension of tenure granted to officers who have attained the age of superannuation should be done only in rare and exceptional cases,” the bench had said.

Mishra reached the age of

superannuation in May last year. Sources said the ordinance appears to have been brought to tide over the directive of the apex court. “It will also give the government room to decide how long a CBI or ED Director will continue beyond his fixed tenure,” a senior CBI officer said.

Sources said even while giving Mishra an extended tenure in 2020, the government had to go the extra mile legally, since The CVC Act is silent on extension of tenure. That is why the government, instead of extending Mishra’s tenure, had got the President to modify the appointment order itself, the sources said.

The incumbent CBI Director, Subodh Kumar Jaiswal, was appointed to the post on May 25 this year, and will complete his two-year term in May 2023.

The ordinance issued on Sunday said the following provisos shall be inserted in section 4B(1) of the DSPE Act, 1946:

“Provided that the period for which the Director holds the office on his initial appointment may, in public interest, on the recommendation of the Committee under sub-section (1) of section 4A (the committee led by the Prime Minister and leader of Opposition and CJI as members) and for the reasons to be recorded in writing, be extended up to one year at a time... Provided further that no such extension shall be granted after the completion of a period of five years in total including the period mentioned in the initial appointment.”

Section 4B(1) of the Act deals with the fixed two-year tenure of the CBI Director.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Padmanabh Baruah, SP, Karimganj, Assam, said they were acting on the “request” of the Tripura Police.

“We received an official request this morning that the two people concerned should be detained in connection to a case the Tripura Police have against them. Based on their request, we have detained them,” he said, adding that the Tripura Police would arrive in the evening to take the two journalists back to Tripura for further investigation.

“Assam Police has no case against them. We have not seized anything from them, we have just held their car back from travelling further to Silchar. They are currently in Nilambazar PS,” he said.

Earlier in the day, the Tripura Police filed two separate FIRs — one a *suo motu* case filed by the Investigating Officer of a communal clash case being probed by the Kakraban police station in Gomati district; and the other registered at Fatikroy police station in Unakoti district, where the complainant, Kanchan Das, a VHP activist, alleged that on Saturday, the journalists visited the homes of Muslims in Paul Bazaar area of Fatikroy and “delivered instigating speech against Hindu and Tripura Govt”.

Late Sunday, a release from the office of Tripura Police Director General VS Yadav said a police party from Dharmananagar women’s police station in Tripura was reaching Nilambazaar in Assam to bring the detained journalists to Agartala.

The statement said that in her social media posts, Sakunia posted a video of her visit on November 11 to a half-burned prayer hall damaged “by mischievous fire in the house of one Rahamat Ali of Hurijala, PS Kakraban... to claim that one holy Quran was burned in the incident” on the night of October 19. “This is contrary to the findings so far revealed in course of investigation as presence of no such damaged books/documents was brought to the notice of investigating officer and fire service staff who extinguished the fire,” the police statement said.

In the Fatikroy case, the journalists have been asked to appear on November 21.

One of the two journalists, Jha, told *The Indian Express* on phone, “I heard a second FIR was registered against us at Gomati district of Tripura. The local police here do not have further details. We don’t have much of an idea either. For more details, we are waiting for the Tripura Police to come here.”

A statement from HW News Network on social media said, “HW News Network Journalists Samridhii Sakunia and Swarna Jha have been detained by Assam Police on their way to Silchar. Assam Police has said that they don’t have any case against our journalists but Tripura Police asked them to detain them.”

In tweets and video messages posted online, Sakunia and Jha claimed they were in Tripura for a “ground report” on last month’s communal disturbances and had sought police permission as well as protection before they set off for their assignment.

In a video message Sakunia says, “I am Samridhii Sakunia and my colleague Swarna Jha is with me. We came to Tripura for our ground report... Mosques were being burnt, shops ransacked. We went to Unakoti district yesterday. We had to cover Palbazar and Chowmuhani Bazar areas there. We went to the police station earlier to seek security. We went to inform them that we came to do reporting. When we went to Pal Bazar mosque, police was there with us during the entire time we were reporting and at Chowmuhani Bazar mosque too.

WITH TORA AGARWALA

India’s air defence gets a big boost, Russia starts delivery of S-400 missiles

The S-400 is among the most advanced air-defence systems in the world, with a range of around 400 km. It is capable of protecting its air defence bubble against rockets, missiles, cruise missiles and even aircraft.

The system is already available with China, which has deployed it along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh amid the 18-month military standoff.

Speaking to reporters last

month, Chief of the Air Force, Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhary had said that the first S-400 unit would be inducted this year, as per the contract. The deal with Russia has been a thorn in the relationship between India and the US as several American officials have, in veiled messages, raised the spectre of sanctions if India goes ahead with the purchase. In January, the then outgoing US Ambassador to India Kenneth Juster had raised issues of “interoperability” in a veiled reference to the S-400 deal.

India’s External Affairs Ministry had stated that “India and the US have a comprehensive global strategic partnership” and that “India has a special and privileged strategic partnership with Russia”.

## Behind Drona award, unwanted piece of land that became hockey hotspot

Three players in India’s Tokyo Olympics squad — Neha Goyal, Nisha Warsi and Sharmila Devi — began their careers at the modest facility in Sonapat, just off the Grand Trunk Road. Siwach’s son Yashdeep, who too learnt the art from her mother, has been selected for the Junior World Cup, which will be held in Bhubaneswar from November 24 to December 5.

“I am getting goosebumps. It’s been an unbelievable year. First, it was the performance of the women’s team at the Olympics, then Yashdeep’s selection for the Junior World Cup team and now, the Dronacharya Award,” she says. “Too many good things are happening at one time, it would have been nice if it came in installments. But as my husband says, this is the reward for years of hard work.”

The long wait is ironic, given that most things happened “too early” for her. “I got the Arjuna Award when I was very young. I got married very early, at 23. I gave birth to my first child when I was 26. My first ‘retirement’ came early...” Siwach, 47, says.

The “first retirement” came in 2004, the year when Siwach and her husband had that disagreement over her idea to coach women players in Haryana. Kuldeep, Siwach admits, had a point. Sonapat at the time only had men’s hockey and a few from the region had gone on to play internationally.

Her feistiness, a trait that made her one of the best players of her generation, prevailed. But Kuldeep insisted that she get a coaching diploma from the National Institute of Sport, Patiala. “I didn’t see the need for it. I thought I had enough knowledge having played for so many years. But my husband said it would be beneficial in the long term, and he was right. Education is crucial for both players and coaches,” she says.

A year later, Siwach made a comeback into the national team but the work at her academy continued. Along with some of her trainees, she raised funds to build changing rooms and toilets, requested people in the village to sponsor a water cooler, put up a fence around the ground with the help of local authorities and turned the area into “something that would pass off as a hockey ground”.

But it wasn’t smooth sailing always. On most days, the players themselves had to cut the grass to level the field. And on the rare occasion when a nearby sports school that had an artificial surface allowed them to train, Siwach says they would not provide basic facilities like drinking water “to deter them from coming again”.

Then, there was the bickering with the district administration. In 2006, the authorities tried to convert the ground into a public park. “For years, no one cared about the place and after we worked hard to set up something meaningful there, they wanted to convert it into a park. We fought a lot and asked them, ‘where would the girls play if this ground was snatched away from them?’ Ultimately, they relented,” she says.

Help, though, poured in from several quarters — family, former teammates and coaches. “I was away most of the time and my in-laws took care of both the kids. My husband helped with all the off-the-field things required for the academy and (former coach) M K Kaushik sir often dropped in to give advice,” Siwach says.

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## plan in Glasgow pact

differences had come to the fore over a reference to the phasing out of subsidies on coal and fossil fuels. India, China, and several other developing countries including Iran, Venezuela and Cuba, objected to this provision that called upon countries to accelerate “efforts towards the phase-out of unabated coal power and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies”.

This was the first time that a phase-out of coal had been explicitly mentioned in any decision at climate change meetings, and it was seen as one of the progressive elements of the agreement, especially by civil society groups.

India’s Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav argued that developing countries must not be denied opportunity for development.

“The UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) refers to mitigation of GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions from all sources. UNFCCC is not directed at any particular source... Targeting any particular sector is uncalled for. Every country will arrive at net zero emissions as per its own national circumstances, its own strengths and weaknesses. Developing countries have a right to their fair share of the global carbon budget and are entitled to the responsible use of fossil fuels within this scope,” Yadav said at one of the final meetings in Glasgow on Saturday.

“In such a situation, how can anyone expect that developing countries can make promises about phasing out fossil fuel subsidies? Developing countries have still to deal with their development agendas and poverty eradication. Towards this end, subsidies provide much needed social security and support,” he said. Yadav gave the example of India’s subsidy on fossil fuels, which was helpful for both development and health.

“We are giving subsidies for use of LPG to low-income households. This subsidy has been a great help in eliminating biomass burning for cooking, and has improved health of women and in reducing indoor air pollution.”

Backed by China and many other developing countries, India moved a proposal to amend this provision to substitute the word “phase-out” with “phase-down” in the context of coal, and to include a recognition of the different national circumstances of some countries.

The Glasgow Climate Pact noted this failure “with deep regret”, and asked the developed countries to deliver on the promise urgently. It also initiated discussions on quantifying a new target for climate finance, upwards of US\$ 100 billion, to be mobilised every year from 2025.

Glasgow delivered some important successes as well. In response to the demands from the developing countries, and in keeping with the commitment of the Paris Agreement, a new process has been initiated to define a global goal on adaptation. The Paris Agreement has a global goal on mitigation, defined in terms of temperature targets. It seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in amounts sufficient to keep the rise in global temperatures to within 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times, while pursuing efforts to limit this under 1.5 degrees Celsius.

But a similar goal for adaptation has been missing, primarily because of difficulties in setting such a goal. Unlike mitigation efforts that bring global benefits, the benefits from adaptation are local or regional. There is no uniform global criteria against which adaptation targets can be set and measured.

## Top Maoist Milind Teltumbde one of 26 killed in Gadchiroli: Police

“Surrendered Naxalites have identified one of the bodies as that of Teltumbde,” Gadchiroli SP Ankit Goyal told *The Indian Express*. Goyal said about 100 Maoists were present at the site when the encounter took place, and that 300 C-60 commandos led by Additional SP Somen Munde carried out the operation. The four policemen injured in the encounter are in “stable” condition and “out of danger”, said Additional SP Sameer Sheikh.

Apart from arms and ammunition, “about 100 bags were recovered from the spot” in the Gyarapatti-Kotgul forest in north Gadchiroli, police sources said. “The encounter lasted over 10 hours and was one of the biggest and longest in Gadchiroli’s history,” the sources said.

Among the Maoists killed were six women. Four of them, and six of the men killed, have not yet been identified. “They are believed to be from Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh and hence couldn’t be identified by local Naxalites who had surrendered earlier,” sources said.

Apart from members of the *Korchi dalam*, the group also has members of Company 4, headed by Podyam, and those of *Kasansur dalam* and *Tipagad dalam*.

The Gadchiroli police were focusing on Company 4 for some time now because it had inflicted severe damage on their forces in 2009 and 2019. “In 2009, Company 4 killed 31 policemen in two ambushes in north Gadchiroli. In 2019, they killed 15 policemen in a land-mine blast. We were determined to break their back, which we were able to do on Saturday,” said DIG (Gadchiroli range) Sandip Patil.

“It was an intelligence-based operation. We had information about the gathering. Our men faced gunfire initially but retaliated successfully with minimal damage,” SP Goyal said.

The other slain Maoists who have been identified are: Bandu alias Daslu Gota, Pramod alias Dalpat Kachlami, Kosa alias Musakhi (Bastar, Chhattisgarh), Nero (Ajubhmad, Chhattisgarh), Chetan Pada (Bastar), Kishan alias Jaiman (Darbha, Chhattisgarh), Sannu alias Kowachi (Bastar), Prakash alias Sadhu Boga and Navluram alias Dilip Tulavi.

## Perceived to be punitive: Madras Bar protests the CJ's transfer

of the judiciary,” the resolution, passed in an emergency session of the association, said.

On November 9, the Supreme Court collegium headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana made public that it had recommended the transfer of Justice Banerjee at a meeting held on 16 September.

In that same meeting, the collegium had also recommended transfer of Justice Sivagnanam, the second senior-most judge of the Madras High Court, to the Calcutta High Court.

The government notified Justice Sivagnanam’s transfer on October 11. As and when Chief Justice Banerjee’s transfer to Meghalaya High Court is notified, Justice M N Bhandari, who is currently a judge of the Allahabad High Court but who has been recommended by the collegium for a transfer to Madras High Court, will become

the seniormost judge of the Madras HC. By convention, the seniormost judge in an HC takes over as Acting Chief Justice until an appointment is made.

Separately, at least 31 senior advocates of Madras HC including Arvind Datar, P S Raman, V Prakash, Nalini Chidambaram, and Satish Parasaran have written a letter requesting CJI Ramana and the collegium to reconsider the transfer of Justice Banerjee.

The letter says that Justice Banerjee has spent less than a year in his position, and has “discharged his functions both in administrative and judicial side to the best of his capabilities bringing honour to the office he held”.

He has been a “good administrator” who disposed of thousands of cases even during the Covid-19 pandemic, the senior counsel wrote in their letter. They were “unable to fathom the reasons for his sudden transfer to another court”, they said.

Justice Banerjee took charge as Chief Justice of Madras HC on January 4 this year. He is due to retire on November 1, 2023, as per Law Ministry records.

According to the letter, the SC has said in its judgments that such transfers were needed to protect and further the “public interest”, and for “better administration of justice”. However, they were unable to “identify any easily discernible reason that could lend credence to the justification that this transfer has been necessitated in public interest or for the better administration of justice”, the counsel said.

The senior advocates reminded the collegium that “these constant transfers and postings have left the Madras HC in a state of constant flux”.

“Such short-lived tenures at the apex of the court’s hierarchy in a state bodes ill for the health of the institution and the justice delivery system,” the letter said. “It is advisable that a CJ has a two year term in at least the larger HCs like Madras HC in order to enable them to make worthwhile contributions to the improvement and development of the institution,” it said.

As Chief Justice of Madras HC, Justice Banerjee stayed the provisions of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, on the ground that it could “rob the media, both print and electronic, of their independence and the democratic principles”.

In March, a bench led by Justice Banerjee took serious note of a plea alleging the Pudukerry unit of the BJP had accessed voters’ phone numbers linked to Aadhaar, and directed the Election Commission to file a report on the steps taken to prevent such acts.

Justice Banerjee had also come down heavily on the Election Commission during the second wave of the pandemic for not taking adequate precautions during the state polls.

His observation that Commission officials must be “booked for murder” made the poll panel move the SC. While the SC observed that HCs must be cautious in censuring officials, it refused to intervene in the matter.

## Two journalists reporting on Tripura clashes detained

Nilambazaar in Karimganj district of Assam, close to the Tripura-Assam boundary, while they were on their way from Agartala to Silchar by road.



# 3 WEST BENGAL

## Schools for all to reopen in phased manner: Minister

Classes 9 to 12 to start Tuesday, some schools opt for hybrid mode

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 14

Ahead of the partial reopening of schools in West Bengal from November, state Education Minister Bratya Basu on Sunday said that in-person classes for students of every standard will resume in a phased manner.

At present, students of IX, X, XI and XII will be allowed to attend in-person classes from Tuesday when schools reopen after a gap of almost two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Schools were shut for students since March-end last year following the pandemic and teaching was imparted on online mode. Physical classes had started for a brief period for senior school students in mid-February this year to shut down again in April due to the second wave.

Speaking to reporters, the minister said that depending on the Covid-19 situation in the state, the administration will allow the resumption of physical classes for students of all the standards.

"Our focus will definitely be on the resumption of the academic session. But our aim is to allow all our students to resume their academic activities. We will resume physical classes for all students in a phased manner... We are also reopening colleges and universities. We want to monitor the situation for the time being and then we will resume physical classes for all in a phased manner. Our intention is to open physical classes for everyone," said Basu.

Earlier, Basu had said that they will leave it for the guardians to take a call whether they will want their wards to attend in-person classes.



The School Education Dept has asked all institutions to adhere to Covid-19 protocols. File

The School Education Department has asked all institutions to adhere to the Covid-19 safety protocols.

On Saturday, the state recorded 872 new Covid-19 cases and 13 deaths.

The number of active cases stood at 8,031.

Five districts – Kolkata, North and South 24 Parganas, Hooghly and Howrah – remain areas of concern for the health department, an official said.

Meanwhile, some schools have decided to go for a hybrid mode of imparting education with a section of students allowed to attend classes physically, while the remaining half to take online lessons.

The Delhi Public School at Kolkata's Ruby Park will allow 50 per cent of the students to come to school on a given day, and the other half the next day. However, students who will not be able to go to school to attend the classes will be able to join the class online.

"Considering the feedback we have received, we have decided to organise classes in hybrid mode and in one shift. This will enable us to maintain the Covid-19 safety protocols and at the same time help us to bridge the learning gaps effectively," said Joyoti Chaudhuri, principal, DPS, Ruby Park.

South Point School of Kolkata has decided to allow students of classed IX and XI to attend practical classes, while tutorials would continue in the online mode for the next month when the situation will be reviewed.

GD Birla Centre for Education will hold offline classes for IX to XII students thrice a week.

"We have rescheduled the routine in such a way that there is no crowding in classrooms so that students can maintain a physical distance from each other and at the same time not compromise with the content of teaching," an official of the school said.

### COVID CASES UP BY 875, DEATHS BY 7

**Kolkata:** West Bengal reported 875 new Covid-19 cases and seven deaths attributed to the virus in the last 24 hours. According to the government bulletin issued on Sunday, the state has so far reported 19,314 deaths and 16,04,193 cases. With the discharge of 837 patients in the last 24 hours, the recovery rate fell to 98.29 per cent. A total of 15,76,817 patients have recovered so far. There are 8,062 active cases with the positivity rate at 2.13 per cent. Of the fresh cases, Kolkata recorded the highest cases at 238. Kolkata recorded two deaths and one each by North and South 24 Parganas, Howrah, Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur.

**ENS**

## BJP selling tickets for Rs 1 lakh, TMC alleges; Majumdar denies

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 14

THE TRINAMOL Congress on Sunday shared an audio clip on social media, alleging that state BJP president Sukanta Majumdar was providing party tickets to candidates in exchange of Rs 1 lakh for the upcoming civic polls.

Majumdar, however, said the allegation was intended to malign BJP's image.

In the recording of a phone call, an unidentified man is purportedly heard talking to a "local BJP worker", whose name flashes on the phone screen as Pritam Sarkar. "The BJP worker" purportedly tells the caller that he could become a party candidate in exchange of Rs 1 lakh.

He purportedly claims that the poll victory for some BJP candidates will be ensured in arrangement with the TMC.

The *Indian Express* could not verify the authenticity of the audio clip, posted by the TMC on its



**...One cannot decide the candidature of any person in the BJP. It is decided by our collective leadership. This is a planning of the TMC to malign our party's image by making up such an audio clip."**

— **SUKANTA MAJUMDAR**  
STATE BJP PRESIDENT

Twitter handle.

The TMC tweeted, "@BJP4Bengal is demanding one lakh for each candidate. @DrSukantaBJP, is this how you

collect funds for your propaganda? SHOCKING!"

TMC secretary general and state minister Partha Chatterjee also shared the video and said, "The total lack of credible faces in @BJP4Bengal is making them sell democracy in Bengal at the cost of ₹1 lakh per candidate. Utterly shameless for a group that has been outrightly rejected in Bengal and will be rejected time and again."

Speaking on the allegation, Majumdar said, "Has any party post holder of the BJP said such things? Will you believe it if some random person says that Sukanta Majumdar will ensure a job for me if I give him money. This is as foolish as it can get. And one cannot decide the candidature of any person in the BJP. It is decided by our collective leadership. This is a planning of the TMC to malign our party's image by making up such an audio clip. Even the person who is speaking as a BJP worker was earlier with the TMC."

## BJP man found dead, party says he was killed by TMC workers

**Kolkata:** After a BJP worker was found dead in the Bhagwanpur area of Purba Medinipur district, the party protested and blocked roads, alleging that he was abducted and beaten by ruling TMC supporters. The TMC has denied the charge, saying that the dead BJP worker was a "drunkard" and was found lying on the banks of a canal in an inebriated state and later pronounced dead.

The BJP claimed that Bhaskar Bera had gone to take part in idol immersion when he was "abducted" and later found dead.

A few days ago, another BJP leader, Chandan Maiti, was killed in Bhagwanpur.

Kanthi BJP leader Asim Mishra said: "BJP workers are being targeted in the area and killed. TMC is doing murder politics."

Local TMC leader Tarun Maiti refuted the BJP's charge. "Our party has got nothing to do with his death. He was a habitual drinker," Maiti said.

**ENS**

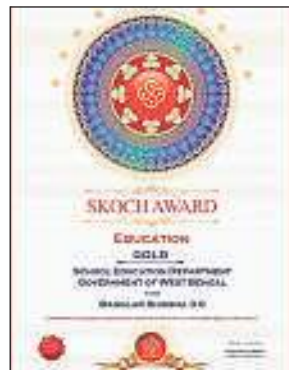
## CM lauds govt depts for bagging awards

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 14

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee on Sunday said the state school, higher education and tourism departments had secured gold at the Skoch Award and congratulated officials for their hard work and dedication.

Instituted in 2003, the award recognises "people, projects and institutions that go the extra mile to make India a better nation" across various categories, including digital, financial and social inclusion.

Leader of Opposition in the state assembly Suwendu Adhikari, however, claimed that "there are serious allegations re-



**A photo tweeted by CM Mamata Banerjee.**

garding the credibility of such awards".

"School Education Department and Higher Education Department of GoWB – both have won the prestigious SKOCH GOLD awards. Heartiest congratulations to all officials and members for this remarkable achievement," tweeted Banerjee. The Skoch Award covers the best of efforts in digital, financial and social inclusion.

"Happy to share that the Tourism Department of GoWB has received the esteemed SKOCH GOLD award for transformational performance during #COVID19! Congratulations to all officials and members for your hard work and dedication. Let us keep aiming higher," Banerjee added.

State Education minister Bratya Basu also expressed hap-

piness over the achievements and complimented all the stakeholders in the sector, including teachers, officials and students.

Adhikari alleged that spending more results in "bigger awards".

"Some WB Govt depts have won 'prestigious' Skoch Awards recently. There are serious allegations regarding the credibility of such awards. Seems like everyone who applies gets the award. In final stage one just has to buy expensive stalls for displaying themselves," the BJP leader said.

West Bengal Power Minister Aroop Biswas denied the allegations and said the Skoch gold award is an important honour for every recipient.

**WITH PTI INPUTS**

## Govt must admit failure: BJP on manhole deaths

**Kolkata:** State BJP president Sukanta Majumdar on Sunday visited the family of Ranjan Saha, who died after falling into a manhole in Dum Dum the previous day, and slammed "incompetent" people's representatives at the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC). He spoke to the family and extended his condolences.

"After I became the president of the state, I saw three lives being

lost due to the incompetence of the people's representatives of the municipality. Let the government admit its failure when they keep advertising their achievements. The government must stand in support of the family of this dead man," said Majumdar.

BJP leader Dilip Ghosh on Sunday highlighted the "inefficiency" of the civic administration in the state and blamed the TMC for the mismanagement.

**ENS**

### KILLED IN MANIPUR AMBUSH

## Only earner in family, rifleman remembered for friendly nature

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 14

HOURS AFTER the news of Shyamal Das's death in the militant ambush in Manipur reached his Kirtipur village in Murshidabad district, villagers queued up outside his house to console the family since Saturday.

Five Assam Rifles personnel were killed in the ambush on Saturday. A rifleman, Das was working as a driver for Commanding Officer of 46 Assam Rifles Colonel Viplav Tripathi, who was also killed in the attack.

Residents of Kirtipur village in Kharagram remembered him for his affable nature and how he would check on well being of everyone during his holiday return. People from nearby areas also visited the house to mourn the death.

The only earning member of his family, Das is survived by his wife and their eight-year-old daughter, who still believes that her father will soon return, and joined the Assam Rifles 11 years ago. The family was informed about the loss on Saturday. In his last call to his wife on Saturday, Das told her that he was going out and would call again upon return.

According to sources, the body reached Kharagram and the final last rites would be performed with full state honours in Kirtipur on Monday.

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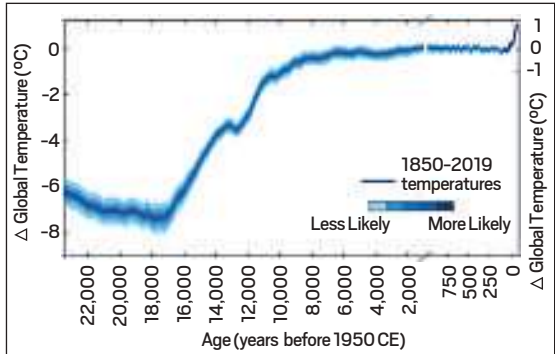


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### TELLING NUMBERS

## How the climate has warmed over the last 24,000 years



Above: Global average surface temperature at different periods going back 24,000 years; left: temperature since the last ice age. Matthew Osman via UArizona

SCIENTISTS HAVE reconstructed Earth's climate since the last ice age, about 24,000 years ago. The study, published in *Nature*, suggests that current temperatures are unprecedented in 24,000 years. It has three main findings, according to the University of Arizona:

- It verifies that the main drivers of climate change since the last ice age are rising greenhouse gas concentrations and the retreat of the ice sheets.
- It suggests a general warming trend over the last 10,000 years, settling a decade-long debate the paleoclimatology community about

whether this period trended warmer or cooler.

- The magnitude and rate warming over the last 150 years far surpasses the magnitude and rate of changes over the last 24,000 years. The team created maps of global temperature changes for every 200-year interval going back 24,000 years. They combined two independent datasets – temperature data from marine sediments and computer simulations of climate – to create a more complete picture of the past.

Source: University of Arizona

### THIS WORD MEANS

## KAMOÒ'ALEWA



An artist's impression of Kamo'oalewa near the Earth-Moon system. Addy Graham/University of Arizona

IN 2006, the PanSTARRS telescope in Hawaii spotted a quasi-satellite – a near-Earth object that orbits the Sun and yet remains close to the Earth. Scientists named it Kamo'oalewa, a word that is part of a Hawaiian chant, and alludes to an offspring that travels on its own. The asteroid is roughly the size of a Ferris wheel – between 150 and 190 feet in diameter – and gets as close as about 9 million miles from Earth.

Because of its small size (about 50 metres wide), this quasi-satellite has been difficult for scientists to study, and little was known about it so far. Now, a study in the journal *Communications Earth and Environment* offers insights into where this satellite could have come from.

One possibility is that Kamo'oalewa was a part of the Earth's Moon, the study suggests. It could have broken away from

the Moon due to a possible impact, and gone on to orbit the Sun rather than the Earth like its parent does.

When scientists compared its spectrum with a lunar sample that was brought back to Earth during the Apollo 14 mission, they found striking similarities between the two. A mission to collect Kamo'oalewa's samples has been scheduled for a launch in 2025.

Another possibility is that Kamo'oalewa was captured in its Earth-like orbit from the general population of Near Earth Objects. A third possibility could be that it originated from an as-yet undiscovered quasi-stable population of Earth's Trojan asteroids (Trojans are a group of asteroids that share an orbit with a larger planet.

Source: University of Hawaii, University of Arizona

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# What COP26 achieved, didn't

The Glasgow climate meeting has ended with a pact weaker than many had hoped for. Among its successes, a global pledge to reduce methane emissions, and resolution of the carbon market deadlock.

AMITABH SINHA  
GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 14

AFTER TWO weeks of negotiations, the annual climate meeting in Glasgow came to an end on Saturday night with the adoption of a weaker-than-expected agreement, the Glasgow Climate Pact.

While most countries insisted that the agreement was an important, though small, step in keeping alive hopes of achieving the 1.5°C goal, observers and civil society groups view it largely as a missed opportunity to enhance global climate action.

### The context

The Glasgow meeting was the 26th session of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP26 in short. These sessions delivered two international agreements, the Kyoto Protocol (1997) that expired last year, and the Paris Agreement (2015), which now forms the architecture for actions to be taken to tackle climate change.

The main task for COP26 was to finalise the rules and procedures for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Most of these rules had been finalised by 2018, but a few provisions, like the one relating to creation of new carbon markets, had remained unresolved. However, due to clear evidence of worsening of the climate crisis, the effort in Glasgow was to push for an agreement that could put the world on a 1.5°C pathway, rather than a 2°C trajectory that is the main objective of Paris Agreement.

Hence, more than 100 heads of states and governments were invited to the Glasgow meeting. Many of them announced new and enhanced climate actions. The final agreement, however, was a mixed bag.

### The deliveries

**MITIGATION:** The Glasgow agreement has emphasised that stronger action in the current decade was most critical to achieving the 1.5°C target. Accordingly, it has:

- Asked countries to strengthen their 2030 climate action plans, or NDCs (nationally-determined contributions), by next year
- Established a work programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation
- Decided to convene an annual meeting of ministers to raise ambitions of 2030 climate actions
- Called for an annual synthesis report



COP26 president Alok Sharma (seated) and other delegates in Glasgow on Saturday, when the meeting concluded. Reuters

on what countries were doing

- Requested the UN Secretary General to convene a meeting of world leaders in 2023 to scale up ambition of climate action
- Asked countries to make efforts to reduce use of coal as a source of fuel, and abolish “inefficient” subsidies on fossil fuels

**ADAPTATION:** Most countries, especially the smaller and poorer ones, require aid for their adaptation activities. The Glasgow Climate Pact has

- Asked the developed countries to at least double the money being provided for adaptation by 2025 from 2019 levels. In 2019, about \$15 billion was made available for adaptation, which was less than 20% of the total climate finance flows.
- Created a two-year work programme to define a global goal on adaptation. Unlike the 2°C goal on mitigation, a similar global goal on adaptation has been missing, primarily because of the difficulty in defining one: the benefits from adaptation are local or regional.

**FINANCE:** It is now estimated that trillions of dollars are required every year to fund the climate actions necessary. Developed countries are under an obligation, due to their historical responsibility in emitting greenhouse gases, to provide finance and technology to developing countries to help them deal with climate change. In 2009, developed countries had promised to mobilise at least \$100 billion every year from 2020; the Paris Agreement asked them to scale this up from 2025. The \$100 billion

promise has not yet been met; the developed countries have now said they will arrange this amount by 2023.

The Glasgow agreement has asked the developed countries to arrange the promised \$100 billion urgently, and every year till 2025. It has initiated discussions on setting the new target for climate finance, beyond US\$ 100 billion, for the post-2025 period.

**LOSS AND DAMAGE:** The worst affected by climate disasters are the poor and small countries, and the island states. There is no institutional mechanism to compensate them, or provide help in relief and rehabilitation. The loss and damage provision in the Paris Agreement seeks to address that. Introduced eight years ago in Warsaw, the provision hasn't received much attention at the COPs.

Thanks to a push from a very large number of countries, substantive discussions on loss and damage could take place in Glasgow. One of the earlier drafts included a provision for setting up a facility to coordinate loss and damage activities. However, the final agreement, which has acknowledged the problem, has only established a “dialogue” to discuss arrangements for funding of such activities. This is being seen as a major let-down.

**CARBON MARKET:** Such a market allows countries, or industries, to earn carbon credits for the emission reductions they make in excess of their targets. These carbon credits can be traded to the highest bidder in exchange for money. The buyers can show the

emission reductions as their own and use them to meet their targets.

A carbon market existed under the Kyoto Protocol. A new market under the Paris Agreement is yet to become functional. Developing countries like India, China or Brazil have large amounts of carbon credits left over because of the lack of demand, as many countries abandoned their emission reduction targets. The developing countries wanted their unused carbon credits to be transitioned to the new market, but the developed nations had been opposing this, and questioning whether these credits represent actual emission reductions. The deadlock this had been holding up the finalisation of the rules and procedures of the Paris Agreement.

The Glasgow Pact has offered some reprieve to the developing countries. It has allowed these carbon credits to be used in meeting countries' first NDC targets, but not subsequent NDC targets. Most countries have presented climate targets for 2025 in their first NDCs, which means a developed country can buy these credits until 2025.

The resolution of this deadlock is one of the major successes of COP26.

### Parallel processes

A lot of substantial action in Glasgow happened in parallel processes that were not part of the official COP discussions. These include the announcements by Prime Minister Narendra Modi about increased climate action from India.

- India announced a Panchamitra (a mixture of five elements) of climate actions. It raised the targets for two of its existing climate targets, announced two new ones, and promised to turn net-zero by the year 2070.
- Brazil said it would advance its net-zero target year from 2060 to 2050. China promised to come out with a detailed roadmap for its commitment to let emissions peak in 2030, and also for its 2060 net-zero target. Israel announced a net-zero target for 2050.

■ Over 100 countries pledged to reduce methane emissions by at least 30% from present levels by 2030. This pledge, if achieved, is estimated to prevent a temperature rise of about 0.2°C by the middle of the century. This is being seen as one of COP26's biggest successes.

■ Over 100 countries promised to arrest and reverse deforestation by 2030.

■ Over 30 countries signed on to a declaration promising to work towards a transition to 100% zero-emission cars by the year 2040, at least in the world's leading car markets.

# Manipur valley insurgents: dormancy and revival

ESHA ROY  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

THE PEOPLE'S Liberation Army (PLA) and the Manipur Naga People's Front have jointly claimed responsibility for Saturday's ambush of an Assam Rifles convoy in Manipur's Churachandpur district that killed seven, including Commanding Officer 46 Assam Rifles Viplav Tripathi, his wife and nine-year-old son.

### Who are the PLA?

It was founded on September 25, 1978, under the leadership of N Bisheshwar, after its members broke away from the United National Liberation Front (UNLF). In 1979, the PLA's political wing Revolutionary People's Front (RPF) was set up. Like the UNLF, and many other splinter groups that would follow, the PLA was fighting for secession of Manipur from India. While the PLA called for Kuki and Naga insurgents to join their ranks, it remains dominated by Imphal valley-

based Meitei Hindu insurgents.

Like other Meitei underground groups, in its initial years, PLA cadres were trained by Nagaland's NSCN and they follow Marxist ideology. Its political wing, RPF, campaigned against drug abuse, and banned alcohol in Manipur, often using violent means. Considered one of the strongest groups in Manipur, the PLA has been working out of Myanmar, along with other Meitei groups. With no ceasefire agreement with the Indian government, these groups have not expressed any intent of peace talks.

### Are these groups usually active in Churachandpur?

Experts have noted that Saturday's ambush marks a departure on several counts. Over a number of years, attacks on security forces have taken place in Chandel district, which like Churachandpur borders Myanmar. For example, in 2015, insurgents killed 18 soldiers of the Dogra Rifles and injured 16 others in a major attack in Chandel.

Since the Army's Operation All Clear in 2003-04, many insurgents have been driven into Myanmar, especially from Churachandpur which has remained largely peaceful since, with Suspension of Operation agreements in place between the Centre and over 20 Kuki, Paitei and Zomi groups

Valley groups do not operate from this district. In Bahiang village, where the attack took place, the group that wields local clout is the Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA), and the question being asked is how the PLA could have operated here without the ZRA's “permission”.

Churachandpur district neighbours Chin state in Myanmar, from where there have been reports of human rights violations. The People's Defence Force, the armed wing of the National Unity government in Myanmar, is believed to have pushed Indian insurgent groups towards the border.

### What else was different in the attack?

In the 1990s, there were reports of

women and children being attacked during clashes between the Nagas and Kukis in Manipur. Since then, this is the first attack in which a security officer's family has been killed. While claiming responsibility, the PLA and MNPF said they had not known that the officer was being accompanied by his family.

The PLA used to be one of the most active groups, but had been quiet for five or six years. Leaders in other groups said that the PLA used to shun even social programmes organised by insurgent groups, such as anti-drug campaigns, or anti-AFSPA protests. The ambush marked a sudden and violent revival.

There are six main valley groups – UNLF, PLA, KCP, KYKL, PREPAK, MPLF – apart from many splinter groups from each. All the groups operate out of Myanmar and raise funds largely through extortion. Their activity, however, has dwindled over the years, with recruitment having stalled, and the groups facing pressure inside Myanmar.

# Habibganj to Rani Kamlapati: How a railway station's name is changed

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

THE NAME of Bhopal's Habibganj railway station has been changed to Rani Kamlapati station. The BJP government of Madhya Pradesh proposed this last week, and the Centre has cleared it. On Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the station, which has been redeveloped at around Rs 100 crore with private participation.

### Who was Rani Kamlapati?

She was the widow of Nizam Shah, whose Gond dynasty ruled the then Ginnorgarh, 55 km from Bhopal, in the 18th century. Nizam Shah built the famous seven-storeyed Kamlapati Palace in Bhopal. Kamlapati committed suicide by drowning herself in the Bhopal lake in 1723.

According to the state government, Kamlapati showed great bravery in facing aggressors during her reign after her husband was killed. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh

Chouhan has said Kamlapati was the “last Hindu queen of Bhopal” who did great work in the area of water management, and set up parks and temples.

The Gond are one of the largest tribal communities in India spread across MP, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar and Odisha. The railway station is being inaugurated on the birth anniversary of the 19th-century tribal freedom fighter Birsu Munda.

### Why does a railway station's name change?

In most cases, the name of a railway station is the same as the name of the place where it is located. However, changing names is not new, although it is not common either.

There are times when state governments have gone for a name change to represent a long-standing popular demand, or even history.

For instance, in 1996, the city of Madras was officially rechristened Chennai to underline history and local sentiments. The



Rani Kamlapati station, being inaugurated on Monday. Twitter/PIB

name of the railway station, too, changed from Madras to Chennai as a result.

Since 2014, a number of stations have got new names. The most notable was Mughalsarai Junction, which became Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Junction in 2018 to honour the right-wing ideologue who was found dead in Mughalsarai in 1968.

The same year, Allahabad was renamed Prayagraj, restoring an ancient name that existed around 440 years ago.

The Manduadih station in Varanasi was

renamed Benaras to reflect the colloquial name by which the city is known. The larger station representing the city is already called Varanasi Junction.

Again this year, on Diwali, Faizabad Junction next to Ayodhya was renamed Ayodhya Cantonment station.

In most cases, the government of the day has changed names of places (stations included) for political reasons.

### How does the change of name happen?

While Indian Railways may own a sta-

tion, the business of naming it is left to the discretion of the state government concerned. Change of station names is a state subject even though Railways belongs to the Union government. The state government sends the request to the Home Ministry, which then gives its approval, keeping the Railways Ministry in the loop. Usually, it is checked that no other station with the proposed name exists anywhere in India.

### What happens when a name is changed?

Once the change of name of a place or a station is notified by the state government, Indian Railways steps in. A new station “code” for railway operations may need to be invented. For instance Faizabad Junction's code used to be “FD”, but the new code is “AYC”; for Rani Kamlapati station, the code changes from “HBJ” to “RKMP”. The change is then fed into the ticketing system so that the new name along with the code is reflected on tickets and reservation, and train information.

Railways also physically changes the

name at the station, and in its communication material.

### How are the languages and spellings on the signboard decided?

This aspect is governed by the Indian Railway Works Manual, which codifies everything related to civil engineering construction works. Traditionally, station names were written only in Hindi and English. Over time, it was instructed that the local language, too, should be included.

Even then, Paragraph 424 of the Manual says Railways should obtain approval of the state government concerned on the spelling of the names (in all three languages) before putting them on its signboards.

“The station names shall be exhibited in the following order: Regional Language, Hindi and English, except for Tamil Nadu where the use of Hindi will be restricted to important stations and pilgrim centres as determined by the Commercial Department. Where the Regional language is Hindi, the name boards will be in two languages, Hindi and English...,” the Manual says.



DROPS 3 CASES  
SIT to probe only  
Malik son-in-law,  
Aryan, Kohli cases

MOHAMED THAVER  
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 14

THE NCB Special Investigation Team (SIT) that took over six cases for further investigation from NCB's Mumbai unit, after the uproar over alleged procedural irregularities by zonal director Sameer Wankhede, has now dropped three of the cases. Headed by an IG-rank officer, the SIT will now be probing only the Cordelia drug raid case, the case involving NCP leader Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan in which a chargesheet has already been filed, and the one involving actor Armaan Kohli.

A senior NCB official told *The Indian Express*, "The SIT will now only be probing these three cases. While initially six cases were transferred to the SIT, it came to light that no foreign linkages were present in the remaining three cases and they were dropped from the NCB probe." The three cases that were

dropped did not have any well known person among the accused. All three were cases registered in Mumbai, pertaining to small drug seizures in Mumbra, Jogeshwari and Nagpada.

It now appears the SIT probe is focussed on the Sameer Khan and Cordelia drug bust case. So far the SIT has already recorded the statement of Karan Sajnani, who was arrested along with Sameer Khan in January this year. Further, the NCB has made an application before a court to get voice samples of Khan to further their probe. Agency sources said that they had found voice samples between Khan and Sajnani during forensic analysis and hence they wanted his voice sample to confirm the same.

When asked that the chargesheet had already been filed in the case, an NCB official said, "There is provision in the law that an investigation can continue following the chargesheet. If we find further evidence we can file a supplementary chargesheet..."

Minority-owned shops targeted  
in Amravati bandh, 60 held: cops

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU  
AMRAVATI, NOVEMBER 14

SHOPS OWNED by the minority Muslim community were targeted for arson and destruction during a bandh called by the BJP in this city, 150 km from Nagpur, officials told *The Indian Express*.

In Kotwali area, where the violence took place, police officials said they were outnumbered by a massive gathering of activists of the BJP, Bajrang Dal, VHP and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena.

"They gathered at Rajkamal Chowk. A section of this crowd turned violent, burnt two shops, damaged some other shops, burnt vehicles. Almost all the victims are from the minority community. It appears that the violence had been planned a day in advance in retaliation for the violence on Friday by some members of the minority community," said a police official.

On Friday, a massive protest march called by Raza Academy, a Muslim organisation, against the anti-Muslim violence in Tripura, had passed through the Kotwali area and stones were thrown at



Security forces in Amravati on Saturday. Express

the house of local BJP leader Pravin Pote, breaking a window. One person was injured in the stone-pelting elsewhere. By police estimates, some 25,000 people participated in this protest.

The BJP called Saturday's bandh in response, and, according to local police estimates, around 6,000 workers of the party and allied organisations came out to enforce the closure, which is when the violence erupted. Pote was seen in a video urging BJP workers to gather at Rajkamal Chowk. He also instructed that there

should be no violence.

In all, the police have registered 26 FIRs, 15 of them for Saturday's violence and 11 for Friday's incidents, at various police stations across the city, and arrested 60 people.

"All those involved have been booked for both Friday's and Saturday's violence," a senior police official in Amravati said.

A senior police official in Mumbai said the force was taken by surprise by the violence. "But we are sending out a strong message that this cannot happen

again," he said.

Several top police officers were sent here from Mumbai on Saturday as the situation threatened to spin out of control.

Despite the heavy police presence, there were minor clashes on Saturday night too between the two communities near Kholapur gate, where stone-pelting took place. But Sunday, the first day of curfew and Internet suspension in Amravati city, passed without incidents.

"The situation is completely under control. We took out a flag march on Sunday in the city," said Rajender Singh, additional DGP, law and order, who was in Amravati to take stock of the situation. The Kotwali area, where the arson and attacks on shops took place, is being heavily policed.

This is the first incident of communal violence in recent memory in Amravati. "The last time a minor violence was witnessed in Namuna was in the 1990s," said Asif Khan, 54, who runs an automobile repair business and has been born and brought up here.

FULL REPORT ON  
www.indianexpress.com



PM Modi with the delegation on Sunday. PTI

BJP delegation  
asks PM to open  
Kartarpur corridor

MAN AMAN SINGH CHHINA  
CHANDIGARH, NOVEMBER 14

A DELEGATION of Punjab BJP leaders met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Sunday and submitted a memorandum requesting him to reopen the Kartarpur Corridor to Pakistan.

The move has fueled speculation on whether the corridor's reopening was already on the cards to coincide with Guru Nanak's birth anniversary on November 19, with the BJP looking to take credit for it.

Among those who met Modi on Sunday were state BJP president Ashwani Sharma, senior leader Harjeet Singh Grewal, party's national general secretary Tarun Chugh, state in-charge Dushyant Gautam, party spokesperson RP Singh, senior leader from Amritsar Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina and BJP leader from Delhi Tejinder Bagga.

Speaking to mediapersons after the meeting, Grewal said the PM has been requested to consider the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor, which has been closed since March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "We are quite hopeful that the PM will consider our request positively so that some good news comes on the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev. We

are all soldiers of the PM and we are quite sure he will do something good for the followers of Guru Nanak," he added.

Asked if the issue of the farmers' protest had been broached with the PM, Grewal said that state BJP president Ashwani Sharma will brief the press on the subject. Sources say the issue came up for discussion and the PM listened to the comments of the leaders on the matter.

There has been widespread speculation that the BJP may resolve the imbroglio over the farm laws before the elections in Punjab and UP early next year.

BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh said the PM had taken several pro-Sikh decisions in the past which requested justice for the 1984 riots victims and taking off names of individuals from the 'black list'.

Ashwani Sharma also said that the PM has been requested to open the corridor before November 19 birth anniversary of Guru Nanak so that lakhs of devotees of the Guru could take advantage of it.

With Punjab headed to polls in February 2022, the reopening of the Kartarpur Corridor is an emotive subject in the state. The corridor had been operational for only a short duration of time after its opening in November 2019 as pandemic struck and all international travel got suspended.

From union leader to senior Maoist operative

VIVEK DESHPANDE  
NAGPUR, NOVEMBER 14

MILIND TELTUMBDE, who was among the 26 Maoists killed Saturday in an encounter with security forces in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli, was a union leader in the 1980s who went on to become a key operative of the banned CPI (Maoist) organisation with a reward of Rs 50 lakh for his capture, according to current and retired senior police officers.

In a note on Teltumbde released Sunday, the police said that the 58-year-old was allegedly involved in 42 incidents of encounters, seven cases of murder of civilians, four of murder of policemen,

two of arson and one of dacoity.

For many years, police officers said, Teltumbde was the secretary of Maharashtra unit of CPI (Maoist). Over the past few years, he had been a Central Committee Member and in-charge of the outfit's Maharashtra-Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh (MMC) zone, they said.

One of the officers said he was also a severe diabetic and suffered from knee pain. "While moving around in the hills of Abujhmad (in Chhattisgarh), he had to be taken on a horse as he couldn't walk on that terrain. He made several attempts to get his knees operated on but couldn't succeed. This may well have been the reason why he couldn't manage to



Milind Teltumbde

escape Saturday's encounter," the officer said.

"He was also active in Nashik and other places in western Maharashtra for a few years," the officer said.

According to a retired police officer, Teltumbde turned to the Maoist movement in the 1980s af-

ter a spat with a manager of Western Coalfields Ltd in Chandrapur, where he was working as a technician after his ITI course. Following the incident, he was accused of attempt to murder.

"As worker, he was active in a union called Akhil Maharashtra Kamgar Union. He steadily rose through the ranks of CPI (Maoist)," the former officer said.

In 2011, Teltumbde's wife Angela was arrested in Thane on charges linked to alleged Maoist activities. She was later released on bail.

Last year, Teltumbde was named in a supplementary chargesheet filed by the National Investigation Agency in the Elgar Parishad case as an accused along

with seven others, including his elder brother and former IIT professor Anand Teltumbde.

Referring to Milind Teltumbde's alleged role in the Elgar Parishad incident three years ago in Bhima-Koregaon near Pune, another officer described him as the "main financier of the programme". The officer claimed that "his communications with the organisers under the nickname Deepak are part of police records".

According to the retired officer, in the 1980s, Milind Teltumbde was part of the then People's War Group (PWG) led by Kondapalli Sitaramayya. "But due to some serious differences, the entire Maharashtra unit was thrown out of the party by

Sitaramayya. Teltumbde and others then formed a separate outfit called Maharashtra PWG but he was later taken back into the fold in 1992," the former officer said.

The police release on Milind Teltumbde also lists three "important incidents" -- all in Gadchiroli. They include a blast "triggered by Naxalites" that killed 15 policemen at Jambhulkhed village May 1, 2019, and an encounter in Koparshi on May 17, 2020, in which two police personnel were killed.

Listing the third incident, the release said: "On 13/11/2021, he has been killed in the encounter (that) took place between police and the Naxalites in the forests of Mardintola..."

Advertorial



India's premier management institute **National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE) Mumbai** held its **26<sup>th</sup> Convocation Ceremony** virtually at its campus in Mumbai on Oct. 31st, 2021. With a beautiful campus set in the country's financial capital, NITIE commands a pole position as one of the best Industrial Engineering institutions in India. Ranked 12th in the NIRF rankings, NITIE is known for its industry-ready curriculum and an excellent placement track record, attracting the best industries into its campus. NITIE is the ultimate destination for aspiring supply chain professionals in India.

The Hon'ble Minister of Education, Govt. of India, **Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan** graced the convocation as the Chief Guest. He hailed the role of NITIE in nation-building and called upon NITIE to continue to innovate in the space of technology and management education. The Guests of honour were **Dr. K. Radhakrishnan** (Chairman, IIT Kanpur), **Dr. Anil D. Sahasrabudhe** (Chairman, AICTE), and **Shri. Shashi Kiran Shetty** (Chairman, NITIE Board of Governors & Allcargo Logistics) addressed the event virtually. Over **1500** students, parents, alumni, academicians, and staff members attended the virtual gathering.

Our beloved Director, **Prof. Manoj Kumar Tiwari**, shared the achievements of the students and the awards won under various categories, both in academics and industry-collaborated projects. The break-up of students getting awarded this year are as follows:

- ◀ Fellow students: 25 (2020 & 2021) ◀ Industrial Engineering: 230 (48th & 49th Batch)
- ◀ Industrial Management: 510 (25th & 26th Batch)
- ◀ Industrial Safety & Environment Management: 34 (18th & 19th Batch)
- ◀ Manufacturing Management: 65 (5th & 6th Batch) ◀ Project Management: 62 (5th & 6th Batch)
- ◀ PGPEX-VLFM: 35 (2020 & 2021)



Shri Dharmendra Pradhan  
Hon'ble Minister of Education, Govt. of India



Dr. K. Radhakrishnan  
Chairman, IIT Kanpur



Prof. Manoj Kumar Tiwari  
Director, NITIE



Dr. Anil D. Sahasrabudhe  
Chairman, AICTE



Shri Shashi Kiran Shetty  
Chairman, BoG, NITIE



**NITIE Mumbai**  
**National Institute of**  
**Industrial Engineering**  
(Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)



NITIE remains committed to improving, innovating, and igniting the minds of the future business leaders in India to become the levers of change in the industry. Towards this end, The Centre of Excellence in Logistics and Supply Chain Management was inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs & Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, Govt. of India, **Shri. Piyush Goyal**.

The Centre aspires to be globally recognized as a Center of Excellence in Logistics and Supply Chain Management education in the contemporary business environment, focusing on nurturing and developing ethos, values, and practices of the Indian Management system blended with the agility of the Global Management practices. The center will conduct cutting-edge research, knowledge creation, and capacity-building programs in Logistics and Supply Chain Management and focus on knowledge building through applied research and development activities. The knowledge dissemination will be carried out through short-term projects and certificate programs.

NITIE received a roaring response from the industry and academia for its two highly successful online programmes- Global Online Certification Program on Supply Chain Digitization and Management in association with **Prof. David Simchi-Levi** (Director, Data Science Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA) and **Prof. Manoj K Tiwari** (Director, NITIE); Global Online Certification Course on 'Business and Operations Analytics' offered by **Prof. David Simchi-Levi** and **Prof. Manoj K Tiwari**. Recently NITIE concluded an online programme titled Supply Chain Operations and Disruptions Management: A way forward with **Prof. Tadeusz Sawik** (AGH University, Poland; Reykjavik University, Iceland) and **Prof. Manoj K Tiwari**. NITIE continues to strive towards excellence and innovation both in online and offline modes.

◀ NURTURING INDUSTRY TOWARDS EXCELLENCE ▶





The Indian EXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## HOLES IN METAVERSE

Facebook papers reveal company’s disregard for social consequences of misinformation in non-Western markets

THE DOCUMENTS ABOUT the internal functioning of Facebook, now Meta, from the cache accessed by whistleblower Frances Haugen, submitted to the US Congress and examined by *The Indian Express*, outline two sets of voices within the company. On one side, are staff memos and internal reports that flag issues such as misinformation, particularly about minorities, by politicians during the 2019 Lok Sabha election campaign, hate speech, and posts that could be seen as incitements to violence. On the other side, is Meta’s leadership seemingly either brushing these concerns aside or insisting that it has done enough to deal with them. Given the clear social and political harm caused through and, perhaps, by Meta and its products, it is unfortunate that the leadership seems to win the day more often than not.

Between 2018 and 2020, staff memos highlighted a “constant barrage of nationalistic content”, “misinformation” and content denigrating minorities in India. In West Bengal, as many as 40 per cent of posts actually viewed by users were found to be “inauthentic”. After the Pulwama terror attack in February 2019, a test account (which followed no pages, had no “friends”) was inundated with content around nationalism and the military. Yet, a review meeting with Chris Cox, then vice president, Facebook, concluded in essence that there was no reason to worry. However, as recently as the 2021 Assam assembly election campaign, Himanta Biswa Sarma — who subsequently became chief minister — was flagged for being involved in spreading rumours about “Muslims pursuing biological attacks against Assamese people by using chemical fertilisers to produce liver, kidney and heart disease in Assamese”. He is hardly the only politician or political outfit to be marked for such behaviour: Accounts linked to the BJP, RSS and Trinamool Congress too were similarly flagged. Yet, as hate content spiked in India, Meta shrunk the budget for its review team.

A host of technical, managerial and political reasons can account for the egregious inaction in Facebook’s biggest market: The company lacks the capacity or has not invested in AI and manpower to tackle misinformation in “vernacular” languages; Meta continues to take its ethical responsibility in Western markets more seriously; India lacks both the regulation and political will to clamp down on polarising and false political speech. However, the fundamental problem highlighted by Haugen’s revelations is that Meta continues to see its prime mandate as maximising views and screentime. For it, concern for the social and political consequences of this drive seems secondary. Meta’s AI needs to factor in ethics and social impact in its operations. Having said that, a mature constitutional democracy cannot merely place the blame for the erosion in the standards of its political and public conversation on the algorithms of a multinational company. Political parties, so-called cultural organisations, and those who seek and hold constitutional office must not use social media platforms for political gain through polarisation, because it takes a larger toll. Ahead of a crucial round of assembly elections, this is an important note of caution.

## HEAVY WEATHER

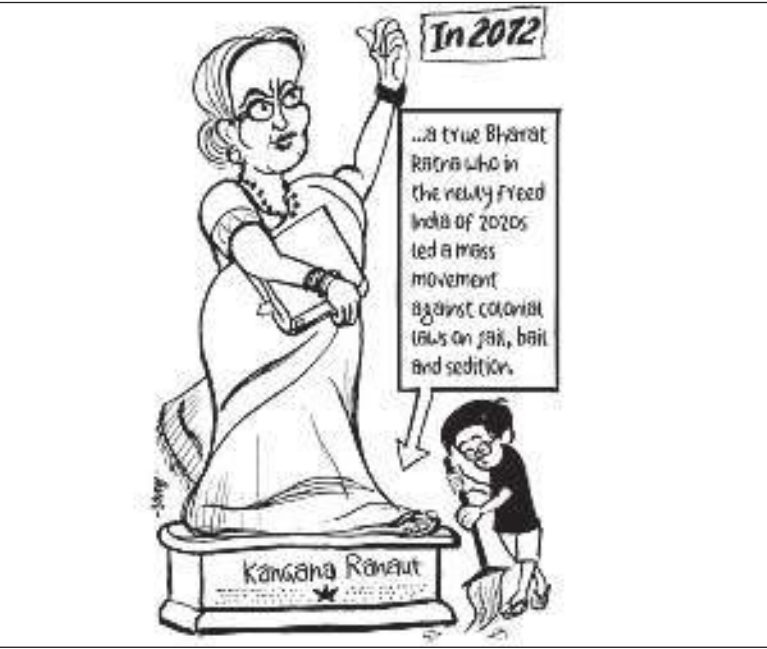
COP26 completed some unfinished tasks. But it failed to secure funding commitments from developed countries

AFTER THE DEBACLE at COP25 in Madrid in 2019, questions were asked about the relevance of the UNFCCC’s processes. The UN climate agency has managed to redeem itself somewhat at COP26. The conference, which concluded in Glasgow on November 13, resolved the long-pending issue of carbon markets that had held back the finalisation of rules for the implementation of the Paris Pact. In a major concession to India, China and Brazil, the Glasgow Accord allows countries to carry forward the Kyoto Protocol’s carbon credits earned after 2012. A two-year programme to define a global goal for adaptation to climate change carries the potential to remove another sticking point of the Paris Accord — framing uniform criteria for adaptation initiatives is difficult because their benefits are local, unlike global warming mitigation efforts that can bring universal benefits. But the deal has precious little for vulnerable nations desperate for funding to deal with climate vagaries. Developed countries have defaulted on the 2020 deadline, set in 2009, to deliver \$100 billion annually in climate finance. The Glasgow Declaration’s mild admonition that only “urges developed country parties to urgently and significantly scale up their provision of climate finance” left the vulnerable countries and emerging economies disappointed.

COP26 stretched into extra time because India, China, Iran, Venezuela and Cuba rejected a clause asking for “phasing-out unabated coal power and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies”. The final declaration carries an amendment moved by India, and backed by China, in which the phrase, “phasing-out” is replaced by “phased-down”. This “dilution” disappointed several countries, but they gave their assent, nonetheless, signaling Delhi’s growing heft in climate diplomacy. At Glasgow, India upscaled its renewable energy (RE) ambitions, pledged to reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 2030 and announced that it will be a net-zero emissions economy by 2070. Delhi also took a step towards building bridges with climate-vulnerable countries by launching The One Sun, One World Grid — the first international network of solar power grids.

Delhi would, however, do well to read the last-minute change in the Glasgow Declaration’s language as a reprieve. If the history of climate negotiations is anything to go by, pressure on India to cut down fossil use is likely to mount. The country’s RE projections are based on installed capacity — meeting the energy needs of people through renewables will require technological upscaling and administrative reforms. While stepping up efforts to meet these challenges, India must continue to press the developed countries to meet their climate finance commitments and resist pressure to cut down its own developmental imperatives.

FREEZE FRAME



E P UNNY



SHYAM SARAN

THE GLASGOW CLIMATE Pact was adopted on Saturday and, as was to be expected, it is a mixed bag of modest achievements and disappointed expectations. The achievements include a tacit consensus on a target of keeping global temperature rise down to 1.5 degrees Celsius with the Paris Agreement target of 2 degrees being no longer appropriate to the scale of the climate emergency. The notional target of 2 degrees remains but the international discourse is now firmly anchored in the more ambitious target and this is a plus.

The Pact is the first clear recognition of the need to transition away from fossil fuels, though the focus was on giving up coal-based power altogether. The focus on coal has the downside of not addressing other fossil fuels like oil and gas but a small window has opened. The original draft had contained a pledge to “phase out” coal. India introduced an amendment at the last moment to replace this phrase with “phase down” and this played negatively with both the advanced as well as a large constituency of developing countries. This was one big “disappointment”. This amendment reportedly came as a result of consultations among India, China, the UK and the US. The phrase “phase down” figures in the US-China Joint Declaration on Climate Change, announced on November 10. As the largest producer and consumer of coal and coal-based thermal power, it is understandable that China would prefer a gradual reduction rather than total elimination. India may have had similar concerns. However, it was inept diplomacy for India to move the amendment and carry the can rather than let the Chinese bell the cat. The stigma will stick and was unnecessary.

There is a welcome recognition of the importance of Adaptation and there is a commitment to double the current finance available for this to developing countries. Since this amount is currently only \$15 billion, doubling will mean \$30 billion. This remains grossly inadequate. According to UNEP, adaptation costs for developing countries are currently estimated at \$70 billion annually and will rise to an estimated \$130-300 billion annually by 2030. A start is being made in formulating an adaptation plan and this puts the issue firmly on the Climate agenda, balancing the overwhelming focus hitherto on mitigation.

On the critical issue of finance, there was little to cheer about. The Paris Agreement target of \$100 billion per annum between 2005-2020 was never met with the shortfall being

In the Climate Pact, there is more ambition to tackle climate change but little in terms of concrete action

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken centre stage at Glasgow during its early high-level segment thanks to the absence of Xi Jinping. His commitment to achieving net-zero carbon by 2070 compared favourably with China’s target date of 2060. His announcements of enhanced targets for renewable energy were also welcomed. However, the favourable image wore thin by the end of the conference with India declining to join the initiatives on methane and deforestation. India’s ill-considered amendment on the phasing out of coal pushed the positives of its position off the radar.

more than half, according to some calculations. There is now a renewed commitment to delivering on this pledge in the 2020-2025 period and there is a promise of an enhanced flow thereafter. But in a post-pandemic global economic slowdown, it is unlikely these promises will be met. In any event, it is unlikely that India will get even a small slice of the pie. As long as ambitious targets are not matched by adequate financing, they will remain ephemeral.

The same applies to the issue of compensation for loss and damage for developing countries who have suffered as a result of climate change for which they have not been responsible. This is now part of the multilateral discourse and the US has agreed that it should be examined in working groups. That is a step forward but is unlikely to translate into a meaningful flow of funds any time soon.

Two important plurilateral outcomes could potentially develop into more substantial measures. The most important is an agreement among 100 countries to cut methane emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. India is not a part of this group. Methane is a significant greenhouse gas with a much higher temperature forcing quality than carbon — 28 to 34 times more — but stays in the atmosphere for a shorter duration. Cutting methane emissions, which is generated mainly by livestock, is certainly useful but there is a much bigger methane emergency around the corner as the earth’s permafrost areas in Siberia, Greenland and the Arctic littoral begin to melt due to global warming that has already taken place and will continue to take place in the coming years. There are warnings that as the permafrost melts huge volumes of carbon and methane would be generated by the plant and animal material that has lain trapped under the ice.

Another group of 100 countries has agreed to begin to reverse deforestation by 2030. Since the group includes Brazil and Indonesia, which have large areas of forests that are being ravaged by legal and illegal logging, there is hope that there will be progress in expanding one of the most important carbon sinks on the planet. However, Brazil has subsequently clarified that its commitment only applies to illegal logging. India did not join the group due to concerns over a clause on possible trade measures related to forest products.

Going beyond the Glasgow summit and climate change, a noteworthy development was the US-China Joint Declaration on

Climate Change. This was a departure for China, which had held that bilateral cooperation on climate change could not be insulated from other aspects of their relations. The November 10 declaration implies a shift in China’s hardline position but this may be related to creating a favourable backdrop to the forthcoming Biden-Xi virtual summit on November 15. US Climate Envoy John Kerry and China’s seasoned climate negotiator, Xie Zhenhua, were seen consulting with each other frequently on the sidelines of the conference. It appears both countries are moving towards a less confrontational, more cooperative relationship overall. This will have geopolitical implications, including for India, which may find its room for manoeuvre shrinking.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken centre stage at Glasgow during its early high-level segment thanks to the absence of Xi Jinping. His commitment to achieving net-zero carbon by 2070 compared favourably with China’s target date of 2060. His announcements of enhanced targets for renewable energy were also welcomed. However, the favourable image wore thin by the end of the conference with India declining to join the initiatives on methane and deforestation. India’s ill-considered amendment on the phasing out of coal pushed the positives of its position off the radar.

How should one assess the Glasgow outcome? There is more ambition in the intent to tackle climate change but little to show in terms of concrete actions. These have been deferred to future deliberations. Enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are expected to be announced at a meeting next year and further deliberations are planned on the other pledges related to Adaptation and Finance. There are no compliance procedures, only “name and shame” to encourage delivery on targets. As in the past, the can has been kicked down the road, except that the climate road is fast approaching a dead-end. What provides a glimmer of light is the incredible and passionate advocacy of urgent action by young people across the world. This is putting enormous pressure on governments and leaders and if sustained, may become irresistible.

*The writer is a former Foreign Secretary and Senior Fellow, CPR. He was PM’s Special Special Envoy and India’s Chief Negotiator for Climate Change 2007-10*

## AN AMBEDKARITE STORY

By upholding hope embodied in Constitution, ‘Jai Bhim’ frames his principles



RAJESH RAJAMANI

THA SE GNANA VEL’S Tamil film *Jai Bhim* has not only been well-received by the public and critics, but has also been applauded by political activists in Tamil Nadu. It has been praised for drawing attention to the lives and struggles of the Irulas, a Scheduled Tribe whose population in the state is just around two lakh.

Based on a real life case from 1993, handled by former Madras High Court judge K Chandru, who was then a lawyer, the film narrates the story of the custodial death of Rajakannu, an Irula man, and his wife’s fight for justice.

While the importance of the film’s social commentary has been acknowledged, its prolonged and detailed torture scenes have been questioned on ethical and moral grounds as they are seen as compromising the dignity of the very people for whom the film attempts to speak up. Additionally, naming the film after the Ambedkarite slogan “Jai Bhim” has been criticised in several quarters as the story seems to have been predominantly told from a communist perspective.

In fact, a superficial look at the film and its promotional material does make one wonder about the choice of title. The film is filled with images of the red communist flag and photos of Karl Marx and busts of Vladimir Lenin ap-

While most anti-caste films, particularly in Tamil, have focussed on the Ambedkarite principles of social transformation — educate, agitate, organise — the importance of relying on constitutional methods has remained untouched. It is in this aspect that Gnanavel’s film stands out. At no point does the film or any of its characters romanticise or resort to unconstitutional methods in seeking justice.

pear during several key moments. Inducing more doubt is the fact that the images of B R Ambedkar appear only a few times in the film. Further, K Chandru is himself a former member of the CPM. The rapid commodification of Ambedkarite anti-caste politics in pop-culture, particularly since the demise of Rohith Vemula, has additionally made several critics sceptical of the choice of title.

However, if we ignore the visual imagery of the film and focus on its core narrative, which is about a woman from a marginalised and vulnerable community accessing justice through constitutional means, we can see that *Jai Bhim* is essentially an Ambedkarite film.

In his last speech to the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949, Ambedkar said that in order to maintain democracy, not only in form but also in fact, it is important to hold fast to constitutional methods in our struggle to achieve our social and economic objectives. He argued that when there was no way left for constitutional methods to proceed, there was a great deal of justification for unconstitutional methods. But where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for unconstitutional methods. He called these unconstitutional methods the “grammar of anarchy” and insisted that

sooner they are abandoned, the better for us.

While most anti-caste films, particularly in Tamil, have focussed on the Ambedkarite principles of social transformation — educate, agitate, organise — the importance of relying on constitutional methods has remained untouched. It is in this aspect that Gnanavel’s film stands out. At no point does the film or any of its characters romanticise or resort to unconstitutional methods in seeking justice.

Even among oppressed groups, those with a sizeable population have the advantage of organising themselves and pressurising the state for their rights or justice. However, in the case of groups whose population is minuscule, as with the Irulas, even this option is not available. It is only the Constitution and its provisions that can safeguard their rights.

By narrating the story of one of the longest *habeas corpus* petitions in the history of the Madras High Court, the film firmly reiterates the hope that the Constitution offers to the most oppressed, vulnerable and marginalised. By adhering closely to the words of Ambedkar, the film’s core narrative becomes undoubtedly Ambedkarite in nature. And there cannot be a more appropriate title for it than *Jai Bhim*.

*The writer is a Chennai-based filmmaker*

## NOVEMBER 15, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

REPOLL CANCELLED

THE CHIEF ELECTION Commissioner S L Shakti ordered the cancellation of the re-poll in the Garhwal parliamentary constituency, scheduled for November 22. The order came in the wake of the Uttar Pradesh government’s plea that it would not be in a position to hold a peaceful re-poll because of the strike by jail employees and other threatened agitations. While Shakti said he was satisfied by the arguments put forward by the state government, the Opposition candidate H N Bahuguna said that the CEC had been led up the garden path. The Election Commission had failed its constitutional duty and succumbed to the pres-

sure of the ruling party, he alleged. Leaders of the Opposition parties will meet President N Sanjiva Reddy to protest against the order.

RESIGNATION IN KERALA

M GOPALA MENON, adviser to the Kerala governor has resigned. Menon, former Kerala chief secretary, had assumed charge as one of the three advisers to the Governor on November 5. But he never attended the secretariat. The resignation came after a wrangle over questions of seniority and allocation of portfolios to the three advisers. Menon wanted to be ranked senior to the other two advisers. He was also not happy with the de-

partments allotted to him.

TARAPUR IMPASSE

WITH THREE SHIPMENTS of fuel from Tarapur overdue and no progress in the talks with Washington, India’s Atomic Chief H N Sethna and the External Affairs Secretary Eric Gonsalves told reporters, “We do not propose to divulge what we are going to report back to the government at this stage”. But Sethna said that India was ready to do with a mixed oxide of plutonium and natural uranium. Sethna said that Tarapur was operating at 80 per cent capacity. This would not be affected if there was a gradual switched to mixed oxide.







# 8 IDEA EXCHANGE

NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

VEENA GEORGE, HEALTH MINISTER, KERALA

“We now have to expect a viral era... Kerala tries to report every Covid case. Our data is the best in the country”

Kerala's Health Minister Veena George says the state's Covid strategy has always been to “delay the peak”, points out that despite the cases, the state's fatality rate is among the lowest in country, and explains why she has reached out to Centre on booster doses. The session was moderated by Deputy Political Editor Liz Mathew

**LIZ MATHEW:** The first Covid case in the country was reported in Kerala in January 2020. What have the challenges been since then?

We developed a protocol much before the World Health Organisation came up with one, and our strategy has been to delay the peak (of the Covid curve). The ultimate aim was to keep the total number of patients below the maximum threshold capacity. We went through the first wave and the pandemic is like an endemic now; the number of infections are reducing each day. On May 12, we had 42,000 new cases and since then, the numbers have plateaued and are now reducing. We eased the lockdown restrictions and now almost all sectors have opened up, including schools and colleges. Kerala's Covid fatality rate is one of the lowest in the country — 0.6 per cent.... We are scientifically analysing the number of breakthrough infections and re-infections. The population density of Kerala, from Trivandrum to Kasargod, is 860 persons/sq km, which is double the national average of 430 persons/sq km. There a huge ageing population and a high number of people with lifestyle diseases in Kerala... If you analyse the data, there wasn't a single person who died due to the lack of oxygen, hospital bed or ICU support. This was possible due to our strategy of keeping the number of patients lower than the medical capacity. Even now, when we are reporting 6,000-7,000 cases per day, the hospital and ICU occupancy is very low. The pandemic never hit Kerala like a tsunami.

**LIZ MATHEW:** You are the third woman health minister in a row for the CPI(M) —before you, there was K K Shailaja and P K Sreemathi. What is the significance of that record for a state that has earned kudos for its achievements in the health sector? Also, you took over at a time when the state was being criticised after being congratulated for the steps it initially took to contain the pandemic.

About the portfolio, I don't have to say anything; it is the party's decision.... In the CPI(M), I've never seen any discrimination on the basis of gender. It just so happened that women were appointed health ministers. About the criticism on our handling of the pandemic, let's look at some data. One, the fatality rate and the second, the undercounting factor. According to the ICMR's (Indian Council of Medical Research) data, the undercounting factor of Kerala is the lowest in the country. The ICMR data states that out of six cases, one case is being reported in Kerala, whereas we have other states where one in 100 or 120 cases is being reported. If you look at the state's population density, houses are very close to each other. Therefore, there were high chances of the virus spreading easily. This would have led to a sharp rise and fall, leading to more deaths. However, we could control the death rate. We try to report every single case and our data is maybe not perfect but is the best in the country, which the ICMR study reveals.

**LIZ MATHEW:** Your predecessor K K Shailaja was much senior to you in the party and government and under her, Kerala won a lot of praise for its handling of the pandemic. Did that put you under pressure when you took over?

I took charge during the peak of the pandemic... I was not under any pressure but I had to work hard because Shailaja Teacher had set a very good example and I had to work hard to rise to the expectations of my party and the people. CM Pinarayi Vijayan has been holding review meetings every week but earlier, when the cases were high, he would hold these meetings on a daily basis.

Thanks to our vaccination drives — among bed-ridden patients, people above the age of 60, tribals living in the coastal region and even a special drive for pregnant women — we were able vaccinate 95% of the population above the age of 18 with the first dose and 56% with both the doses.

**LIZ MATHEW:** Since October, a large number of previously unaccounted deaths have been added to the total death toll. Does that take the sheen off the 'Kerala model' in some way?

The fatality rate was 0.45-0.5... From June 14, 2020, we started reporting the deaths online. So a doctor working in a



## IDEA EXCHANGE

WHY

VEENA GEORGE, 45

Veena George took over as Health Minister in the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Kerala government at the peak of the second wave of the Covid pandemic. A journalist-turned-politician, George succeeded K K Shailaja, who had drawn international attention for the state's pandemic management. With Kerala still reporting around 6,000-7,000 cases a day, the new minister has had a tough task of convincing critics that the 'Kerala model' of delaying the peak has worked effectively

We developed a protocol much before the World Health Organisation came up with one, and our strategy has been to delay the peak (of the Covid curve). The ultimate aim was to keep the total number of patients below the maximum threshold capacity

hospital that witnessed a Covid death can upload the death bulletin and the District Medical Officer (DMO) would declare the number of deaths at the district level. We analysed the unreported deaths. To count a death as Covid death, you need an RT-PCR or similar test. When the doctors started uploading the death bulletin in June, they may not have had the proper documents at that time. Now, we have collected the appeals, examined each case and decided to add them to the death toll. The government was particular that everything should be transparent.

**LIZ MATHEW:** You mentioned that Kerala saw no deaths due to the lack of oxygen, hospital beds or ICU support. What else would you highlight as your success?

In Kerala, even if a person dies at home, we ensure that they are tested for Covid. If found positive, we mark it as a Covid death. Kerala is a state that follows all protocols. The media here is very vigilant. Today, all the cases and deaths are being reported and still our fatality rate is the lowest in the country.

**KAUNAIN SHERIFF M:** In the first wave, Kerala was lauded for its home isolation and contact tracing protocol but during the second wave, the chief of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) pointed out that home isolation was not being carried out well. How would you explain that?

We have Rapid Response Teams at the ward-level, comprising ASHA workers, a ward member, police personnel, social workers, etc. They have been taking care of those who are in quarantine. We have call centres at the panchayat and district levels where people who are in quarantine or have tested positive can call... Our home isolation was pretty good; it is quite evident from the ICMR data. ICMR's seroprevalence survey revealed that the seropositivity rate of the state was 42 per

cent in June. From there, to reach 82 per cent was possible only due to vaccination. All these things showed that we did pretty good. We also tried to execute the recommendations given by the Central teams that visited the state.

**KAUNAIN SHERIFF M:** One of the Central teams that visited the state after the second Covid wave pointed to a data submitted by the district magistrate of Pathanamthitta that spoke of breakthrough infections. Has the state able to understand the magnitude of breakthrough infections?

Yes, definitely. When a person tests positive, our district surveillance team contacts them and prepares the data in such a way that it mentions if the person was vaccinated, the number of doses he or she got, days since the vaccination, etc. Breakthrough infections are those that occur two weeks after the second dose. When the district collector of Pathanamthitta shared the data with the Central team, my Principal Secretary and I asked if this kind of data is available in other states. We were informed that no other state had it. We looked at the data on breakthrough infection from other countries such as the UK and saw that it was the same as Kerala's. So there's nothing to worry. More than 94 per cent of our adult population has been vaccinated so there are chances of natural infection but the severity of the disease will be very less. Hence, the hospital and ICU occupancy at this point is very less.

**KAUNAIN SHERIFF M:** Has the state discussed vaccinations for children?

Our schools have opened as biobubbles — one teacher for a maximum of 20 students. We have divided each class into two or three groups. We are closely monitoring the situation. We keep a 'symptom registry' in every class and one doctor is always made available in the school... Regarding vaccination of children, I myself have written to Honourable Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviyaji to take a quick decision on vaccinating our children. And also about reducing the period between the first and second dose (of Covishield). Now it is 84 days. But we have asked the Central government to reduce the period because, as you know, Kerala is a state where we have many NRIs. Many of our people work abroad and if they come here and take the first dose of vac-

cine, it will be difficult for them to stay for 84 days to take the second dose. So we have asked for the gap to be reduced. I have received a letter from the Union Health Minister that the Central government will consider it.

**KAUNAIN SHERIFF M:** Another conversation that has been unfolding outside India is of booster doses. The Central teams that visited Kerala have red flagged that 30 per cent of the population is co-morbid and the infection rate increases with diseases like diabetes. Have you take up the issue of the booster dose, especially for this co-morbid population?

I have already written a letter to the Union (health) minister, seeking a quick decision on the booster dose also. I think the Central government will be considering it. My principal secretary has taken up the issue with the Secretary, Union Health Ministry. And I have written to the minister. We are awaiting their decision.

**KAUNAIN SHERIFF M:** What does your own data say about the need for a booster dose? Have you looked at susceptibility to the disease post the second dose among the state's co-morbid population?

We have more number of people with lifestyle diseases — diabetes, hypertension, etc. We have analysed Covid-19 deaths and it was more in people with these comorbidities. It is good that they get a booster dose. This is why we have decided to request the Central government to take a decision on giving booster doses. Again, it is not our decision, the experts have to decide on that. And the Centre will have to take an opinion from experts and I hope a good decision will be taken soon.

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS:** Kerala is the diabetes capital of the country. Is Covid triggering new or early onset of diabetes? What have your findings been? Also, at least in Maharashtra, post-Covid, there were a lot of cases of

the fungal infection mucormycosis. What was Kerala's experience?

If a diabetic patient gets infected with Covid, we have observed that their diabetes levels shoot up fast and that may result in mucormycosis. So far, Kerala had around 114 cases, of which 70% patients were cured, which, I think, is a good figure. And the cost of medicines is quite high but as you may know, the Kerala government gives free treatment for Covid in all government hospitals. We also have empanelled private hospitals and they kept aside some beds for free treatment.

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS:** There is a lot of talk of a One-Health approach. Considering the rising threat of zoonotic diseases like nipah, zika and considering that the epidemic curve always starts in the southern states, how do you look at One-Health? What will your surveillance strategy be?

On One-Health, the state is holding discussions among the Health, Animal Husbandry, Agriculture departments etc. Also, we have started an Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) campaign. By 2023, we aim to be a completely AMR-literate state. We have given special orders to medical shops not to give antibiotics without medical prescription. With the cooperation of other departments, we are aiming to do more programmes on One-Health.

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS:** On diabetes control, what are the interventions you are looking at?

For early intervention, we are starting a people's campaign. In every panchayat, we have authorised ASHA workers to visit each and every house and collect data to analyse risk factors for all people above 30. We have a good network of laboratories in the state, especially after we implemented the Aardram Mission. We will test all those above 30 and keep a health card for each of them. As part of our campaign, we will take the message of good health to people, ask them to consider changing

their food habits. We are also going to implement public gymnasiums in every panchayat to encourage exercise etc. We have a good plan, a good non-communicable diseases team and we are working on that.

**LIZ MATHEW:** Did the floods affect the pandemic situation in any way?

We had a plan in place before the monsoon. We had special (flood relief) camps for those in quarantine, those with symptoms and those positive were taken to CLTCs (Covid First-Line Treatment Centres), CSLTCs (Covid First-Line Treatment Centres) or DCCs (Domiciliary Care Centres). So we did the separation at the initial level itself, when those affected by the floods were moved from their houses to the camps. We gave special attention to children and senior citizens. Also, antigen tests were done and people were allowed to enter the camps only after they were tested. So the relief camps didn't affect our Covid cases.

**MANOJ CG:** On the Anupama case, the CPI(M) machinery's delay in resolving her issue forced her to sit on a dharna outside the secretariat. Now she is back on strike. How do you see the party's handling of the case? (Anupama S Chandran, an SFI leader, and her partner Ajith had filed a complaint alleging that their baby was illegally put up for adoption by her family, allegedly in collusion with CPI(M) leaders).

As a minister of the Woman and Child Development department, I haven't received any complaint. I came to know of the case from a TV report. I asked my director and principal secretary what the issue was and that's when I got to know. I was not in Trivandrum then, I was in Pathanamthitta.... I asked my principal secretary to order an inquiry without any formal complaint. That was October 20. The government order (on an inquiry) was issued on October 21 or 22. I got to know that family court was handling the adoption case and I discussed with Chief Minister. After that, I took legal advice and got to know that court has put aside the case for final orders. So we had very little time to act. That day, we authorised an advocate to file a statement before the family court. That was crucial because the court postponed the order and the matter is under the consideration of the court.

**SHUBHAJIT ROY:** According to you, which states managed the Covid situation well and which ones didn't manage as well as Kerala? Also, were there lessons you learnt from other states?

Kerala's demography and geography are quite different from other states. So we always try to have our own strategy. As I said in the beginning, we issued Covid guidelines back in 2020, even before WHO issued those guidelines. We followed our strategy and that helped us to keep the fatality on the lower side. This helped us to ensure treatment for those who required it.

**UMA VISHNU:** The decision-making apparatus in the CPI(M), like in most other parties, is still largely male dominated. Is there a push from within the party's women members to change that in some way, to be heard more?

As a member of the party, I have space to raise my voice, my opinion is also heard. The party's stand on women reservation and empowerment is very clear. As you all know, we have three women ministers now. So the party will be giving more importance to women leaders and we are organising more programmes on the same.

**LIZ MATHEW:** Once you have tackled Covid, what would your priority be for the health sector and for WCD, the other department that you are handling?

We opened post-Covid clinics everywhere, including in medical colleges, after the Delta variant caused the second wave of Covid in Kerala. Also, we now have to expect a viral era... new viruses, new variants. There are now reports in the UK and Israel of new variants of the coronavirus. The Kerala government will focus more on non-communicable diseases because it's very important.

Illustration: Shyam Kumar Prasad

In Kerala, there wasn't a single person who died due to the lack of oxygen, hospital bed or ICU support. This was possible due to our strategy of keeping the number of patients lower than the medical capacity



# 9 ECONOMY

## REGULATOR COMING UP WITH AN INVESTOR CHARTER

# Sebi Chairman cautions investors against 'lure of unrealistic returns'

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 14

SECURITIES AND Exchange Board of India (Sebi) Chairman Ajay Tyagi on Sunday cautioned investors against getting lured by unrealistic returns and promises that are "too good to be true".

"Investors should be careful against getting carried away by the lure of unrealistic returns in the securities market," Tyagi said while addressing the India International Trade Fair. Sebi is coming up with an Investor Charter for protection of investors' interests in the Indian securities markets, he said.

Stock market valuations have already touched new peaks and companies are lining up with IPOs to raise funds from investors.

"Many a time, undesirable ele-

ments take advantage of the gullible investors by making promises that are 'too good to be true'. Investors are advised to be cautious of such offerings," the Sebi Chairman said.

According to him, the first thing the investors need to understand is that any financial investment comes with a set of risks. So, it is important that the investors are cognizant of the risks involved in the product they are investing in and of their risk-taking ability. If they are not able to assess the suitability of a particular financial product, it might be wiser to remain away from it than going the wrong way, he said.

In addition to the Investor Charter of Sebi, separate investor charters have been developed by registered intermediaries, regulated entities and asset manage-

**EXPLAINED**  
**Valuations at peaks**

THE SEBI Chairman's statement comes at a time when stock market valuations have already touched new peaks and companies are lining up with IPOs to raise funds from investors.

ment companies, he said. "These investor charters aim to create awareness among investors about different services being provided to them, timelines related to various services like investor grievance redressal mechanism, their rights and responsibilities and dos and

don'ts of investing in securities market," Tyagi said.

From around Rs 120 lakh crore at the end of 2016-17, market capitalisation has now almost doubled to Rs 230 lakh crore. Turnover in the equity cash market and derivatives market also witnessed a significant jump. Average monthly equity cash market turnover increased from Rs 8 lakh crore in FY2019-20 to more than Rs 15.5 lakh crore this FY till October 2021, he said.

On the equity derivatives side, the corresponding turnover figures based on premium value were Rs 19.0 lakh crore in FY2019-20, which increased to around Rs 28.4 lakh crore in this FY till October 2021. The AUM of mutual fund industry has almost doubled from Rs 21 lakh crore in 2017-18 to Rs 37 lakh crore as on October 31,

2021. Tyagi said participation of retail investors in securities markets has seen a significant rise, especially in the last two years, which is evident from the increase in number of demat accounts, mutual fund folios and number of SIPs. In 2019-20, on an average, 4 lakh new demat accounts were opened every month which increased to over 26 lakh per month in the current financial year, he said.

"If we look at number of mutual fund folios, in the beginning of FY2019-20, total number of folios were 8.25 crore, which increased to 11.44 crore as on October 31, 2021," he said. With regard to SIP, while on an average around 52 lakh SIPs were added during the last two financial years, already around 75 lakhs have been added during the first six months of this financial year.

## INTERVIEW WITH INDIGO CEO

# 'Looking at non-stop flights to a lot of new international markets'

Want to fly to Moscow, Tel Aviv, Milan, Nairobi, Bali: Dutta

WHILE COVID was the worst period for airlines globally in terms of the loss of business, it was also a time that changed behaviours of both consumers and markets. One of the views echoed the most across the airline industry is that travellers are increasingly preferring to fly non-stop routes on the fear of catching the virus. CEO of low-cost airline IndiGo RONOJOY DUTTA, who spoke to PRANAV MUKUL, expects this trend to stay, and said the carrier is looking to capitalise on this by expanding into new international markets as the sole non-stop service. He also talked about the aviation industry shaping up in context of a revitalised Air India. Edited excerpts:



Ronojoy Dutta

competitor's point of view. That's why we are very optimistic about these markets because there is no non-stop competition in those markets at all.

**There seems to be a view that customers are preferring non-stop flights over one-stop because of Covid. Is this trend likely to continue in the long term?**

Absolutely. This non-stop vs one-stop has been a repeat issue in the industry for a long time. I have tried various non-stops from the West — at Air Canada, I tried doing Toronto-Delhi, at United, we did a Chicago-Delhi and then at Air Sahara also, we tried London. The problem is that these non-stop flights face a lot of one-stop problems. Between Delhi and London, we counted there are 22 ways of getting there — through Oman, Dubai, Amsterdam and people never paid premium for the non-stop. But that has changed, and as a result you're seeing United doing San Francisco to Bangalore, and American doing Seattle to Delhi. These things were unthinkable. But now I believe it's here to stay and that works for us.

**How much is your growth strategy being dictated by the single-fleet strategy and the product that you have to offer?**

The good thing about the Airbus A320 family (A320, A321, A321XLR) is that they have common cockpits. The same pilot who can fly an A320 can fly an A321 and can fly an A321XLR. So there's no fleet complexity but the product at the back is different. Therefore, we are not getting into fleet complexity. We have ATR planes, which is admittedly a different fleet, but all this analysis that we have done at different airlines shows that beyond 20-25 planes, it doesn't matter. If it's less than 25 planes — meaning if you have eight of one fleet and 14 of another, you have big trouble. But if you have 50 of one and 60 of another, it doesn't matter. That was also our thinking in CFM vs Pratt because

our fleet is so big now that even if we have two engine types, they are large enough in numbers where the complexity is not there.

**In light of Air India's disinvestment and Akasa coming up, how are you looking at competition shaping up?**

First of all, let me tell you that I am very happy with disinvestment of Air India. It is good for the country, the aviation industry and also IndiGo, and I'll tell you why. Having a competitor, who was not driven by basic economics but by politics and having a taxpayer as a cushion was not healthy for us. It also got a lot of unfair advantages — if slots were made available in Mumbai, they always got first preference. All those things even out and, therefore, I think that's a good thing for the industry. Will there be more competition? Sure. But there is some degree of separation between Vistara and Air India on the one side, and us. They are full-service carriers, we are not. They'll fly wide-bodied aircraft to London and New York, we will fly narrow-bodied planes to a 6-7 hour range.

**During Covid, IndiGo did a lot of charter flights. Does this have the potential to translate into a permanent business strategy for the airline?**

Charters have been a positive surprise and, I think, it's a permanent change. Let me give you some examples — we did charters for religious groups to Nairobi, we did three charters for student groups to Tashkent, we have done charters for shipping companies all over the world, we have done charters to Male, and now Phuket. We have done a lot of wedding charters. It is a good solid business, and in addition to passengers, we are also doing cargo charters — Singapore, Yangon, Hanoi. We see charters as a permanent revenue stream for us. Are we also looking at scheduled services to these cities? Of course, we are. I didn't know there was so much demand in these cities.

## MARKETS WATCH

### FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTORS

# FPIs remain net sellers in Nov so far as valuations in expensive zone

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

FOREIGN PORTFOLIO investors (FPIs) were net sellers in the domestic markets to the tune of Rs 949 crore in the first half of November.

As per the depositories data, they pulled out Rs 4,694 crore from equities between November 1-12.

At the same time, they pumped Rs 3,745 crore in the debt segment.

This translated into total net withdrawal of Rs 949 crore.

In October, FPIs remained net sellers at Rs 12,437 crore.

FPIs have been worried about higher valuations of Indian equities, which continue to trade near all-time high levels, said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director-manager research, Morningstar India.

Additionally, concerns over the global inflationary pressure and slowdown in some of the developed economies are also cause for concern, he said.

FPIs sitting on profit, would have chosen to book the same which is reflected in the flow trend over the last few weeks, he said.

"It appears that FPIs are exiting on valuation concerns. The important point to note is that the old scenario where FPIs representing smart money dictated market trends is over for the present...We are in a period of uncertainty," said VK Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services.



The BSE, Mumbai. As per the depositories data, FPIs pulled out Rs 4,694 crore from equities between November 1-12. *File*

For debt segment, Srivastava said, "The flow trend has largely been driven by the direction of dollar and US treasury yields. FPIs tend to park their investments in Indian bonds for short term when they adopt a wait-and-watch approach towards Indian equities."

FPI flows in November were positive so far for Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand to the tune of \$78 million, \$47 million, \$203 million, \$1,565 million and \$59 million, respectively, noted Shrikant Chouhan, head of equity research retail, Kotak Securities.

Going forward, Chouhan said FPI flows may remain volatile in the emerging markets on account of the sharp increase in global energy prices and prospects of elevated prices may pose an either source of risk to global and domestic inflation. **WITH PTI**

## 'Institutional investors place more emphasis on ESG performance'

A significant percentage of investors globally are paying more attention to companies' environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance when making investment decisions, as per the 2021 EY Global Institutional Investor Survey



**Methodology** The report, now in its sixth year, canvasses the views of 320 institutional investors across 19 countries, including 15 respondents from India

**74% OF INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS NOW MORE LIKELY TO "DIVEST" BASED ON POOR ESG PERFORMANCE, THAN BEFORE THE COVID PANDEMIC**

**92%** of investors said they have made decisions over the past 12 months based on the potential benefits of a "green recovery"

**Covid pandemic** has spurred investors to place more emphasis on ESG performance

**Source:** EY/PTI

# Future Retail to CCI: Amazon misled regulator

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 14

INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS of Future Retail (FRL) have shot off another letter to the Competition Commission of India (CCI), alleging that Amazon's submissions to the watchdog were completely "contradictory" to its earlier internal correspondence and statements given to courts.

The directors reiterated their plea for revocation of approval given by CCI for Amazon's investment in Future Coupons Private Ltd (FCPL) two years ago.

"In spite of the fact that in their mind, the rights acquired by Amazon over FRL were strategic, Amazon has chosen to represent these rights as 'investment protection rights' to CCI," the directors of FRL stated in the letter dated November 10.

In the latest letter, the independent directors alleged that Amazon's representation that it does not have any direct or indirect shareholding in FRL is also contradicted by their own internal records. They quoted a letter writ-

**The directors reiterated their plea for revocation of approval given by CCI for Amazon's investment in Future Coupons Private Ltd 2 years ago**

ten by Amazon India legal head to Amazon CEO, mentioning a 25 per cent premium over regulatory price of FRL was being paid on account of the strategic rights and call options.

Originally, Amazon was to invest directly in FRL through the Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) route, but due to restrictions in Indian foreign investment laws the company decided to use a "twin-entity investment" structure.

That is, Amazon was to invest in FCPL and FCPL would acquire a 9.82 per cent of FRL, the letter added.

The letter, a copy of which was sent to BSE and Sebi, also alleged that Amazon gave different and contradictory reasons to courts and CCI for the investments. **FE**

## 'FTAs to help provide more market access to Indian goods'

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 14

TALKS FOR the proposed free trade agreements (FTAs) with countries, including Australia, the UK and the UAE, are moving at a fast pace and these pacts, when implemented, would help provide greater market access to domestic goods, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

Goyal said that talks for such pacts are going on with Australia, UAE, GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council), European Union, Israel and the UK. When these agreements would be finalised, it would provide "greater access to our manufactured goods as there will be less or zero customs duties," the minister said at Vaishya Samaj Sammelan.

Goyal added said the economy was witnessing a bounce back in every sphere, and the country is well on track to achieve historical highs in goods and services exports. He said India is on course to achieve \$400 billion of merchandise exports in the current financial year ending March.

"Also, on the services (exports) side, we are well on track to go up to a \$150 billion," he said. **WITH PTI**

## 'USTR to visit this month, eye on investment'

**New Delhi:** India and the US will discuss ways to promote trade and investments besides increasing cooperation in agriculture sector and intellectual property rights during a meeting this month between US Trade Representative Katherine Tai and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, an official said. The two-day meeting will begin from November 22.

The US Trade Representative (USTR) is visiting India to revive the Trade Policy Forum (TPF), which has not met for the last four years, the official said. The meeting is also important as the 12th ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is scheduled from November 30 to December 3 in Geneva. **PTI**



ELON MUSK  
CEO, Tesla

AP file

basis) option exercise rate, thus closer to tax maximization than minimization," he said in a tweet.

REUTERS  
BENGALURU, NOVEMBER 14

TESLA CEO Elon Musk has said the result of his sale of nearly \$7 billion worth of Tesla shares this week was "closer to tax maximisation than minimisation."

Musk was responding to a Twitter commenter who said Musk would end up with more Tesla shares if he sold options instead of shares.

"A careful observer would note that my (low basis) share sale rate significantly exceeds my 10b (high

## Govt to enhance funding under solar PLI to ₹24K cr: Singh

**New Delhi:** The government will soon enhance the funding under the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the domestic solar cells and module manufacturing to Rs 24,000 crore from the existing Rs 4,500 crore to make India an exporting nation.

"We brought the PLI scheme (for solar cells and modules) worth Rs 4,500 crore. We invited bids and we got 54,500 MW manufacturing capacity of solar equipment. We asked the government to sanction Rs 19,000 crore more under the PLI, which was approved (in principle). Now we would have a PLI of Rs 24,000 crore," Power and Minister R K Singh told PTI. **PTI**

## BRIEFLY

### CEA on economy

**New Delhi:** Economy is expected to see a double-digit growth in 2021-22 and between 6.5-7 per cent in the next financial year, outgoing chief economic advisor KV Subramanian said.

### Maruti CNG

**New Delhi:** Maruti Suzuki plans to drive in more CNG trims, said senior executive director (sales and marketing) Shashank Srivastava.

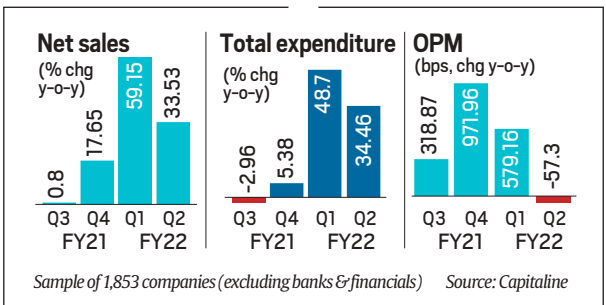
### Amazon unit

**New Delhi:** Amazon has infused capital of Rs 1,460 crore into one of its India units, Amazon Seller Services. **PTI**

## MARKET WATCH

### M-CAP OF 6 OF TOP-10 VALUED COS JUMPS

**New Delhi:** Six of the 10 most valued companies together added Rs 1,18,383.07 crore in market valuation last week, with major contribution coming in from RIL. During the last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark jumped 619.07 points or 1.03 per cent. **PTI**



The concerns are the shortage of key components plaguing the auto sector, the rising cost of energy, input inflation in general and the high attrition at IT firms. While the revival in consumer demand has been fairly strong, not all companies have been able to pass on the higher costs; that has pressured margins.

Several companies have talked of the need to raise prices to be able to pass on the higher cost of inputs.

Revenues in the September quarter grew well, albeit with the

help of a low base; for a sample of 1,853 companies (excluding banks and financials), they were up 33 per cent y-o-y, a good part of it helped by commodity inflation.

At the same time realisations improved for a range of goods. Net standalone revenues at Mahindra & Mahindra were up 15 per cent y-o-y on the back of a good ASP (average selling price).

However, rising raw material costs caused some damage, up 430 bps y-o-y; operating margins for the sample contracted 57 bps. **FE**



# 10 THE WORLD

## TOPOF THE WORLD



Mako and her husband Kei Komuro at Tokyo airport. AP

### JAPAN

#### Former princess leaves for life in US with husband

A JAPANESE princess who gave up her royal status to marry her commoner college sweetheart left for New York on Sunday, as the couple left behind a nation that has criticised their romance. The departure of Mako Komuro, the former Princess Mako, and Kei Komuro, both 30, was carried live by major Japanese broadcasters, showing them boarding a plane amid a flurry of camera flashes at Haneda Airport in Tokyo. Kei Komuro, a graduate of Fordham University law school, has a job at a New York law firm. He has yet to pass his bar exam, another piece of news that local media have used to attack him, although it is common to pass after multiple attempts. **AP**

### SUDAN

#### Al-Jazeera says bureau chief detained

THE QATAR-BASED satellite news network Al-Jazeera said Sunday its bureau chief in Sudan was detained by security forces, a day after mass protests across the country against last month's military coup. The network said on Twitter that Sudanese forces raided the home of El Musalmi El Kabbashi and detained him. The development comes after security forces fired live ammunition and teargas Saturday to disperse protesters denouncing the military's tightening grip on the country. **AP**

### WEST ASIA

#### Israeli rights group: Settler violence a tool to seize land

ISRAEL HAS been using settler violence as a "major informal tool" to drive Palestinians from farming and pasture lands in the occupied West Bank, an Israeli rights group said Sunday. A report by the group B'Tselem detailed the takeover of nearly 30 square km of farm and pasture land in the territory by settlers over the past five years. B'Tselem also challenged repeated claims by the government that violence against Palestinians is carried out by a fringe and security forces are doing their best to stop it. **AP**

## COP26 president offers emotional apology for changes to climate agreement

### REUTERS

GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 14

THE PRESIDENT of the COP26 climate conference, Alok Sharma, said Saturday he was "deeply sorry" for how the gathering concluded with changes on the wording about coal.

His voice breaking with emotion after hearing from vulnerable nations which expressed their anger over the changes, he said: "May I just say to all delegates I apologise for the way this process has unfolded and I am deeply sorry."

"I also understand the deep disappointment but I think as you have noted, it's also vital that we protect this package."

He said he wished he had been able to preserve the originally agreed language on phasing out coal power in the Glasgow climate deal.

"Of course I wish that we had managed to preserve the language on coal that was originally



Reuters

May I just say to all delegates I apologise for the way this process has unfolded and I am deeply sorry... it's also vital that we protect this package."

### ALOK SHARMA

PRESIDENT OF THIS YEAR'S CLIMATE CONFERENCE

agreed," he told reporters.

"Nevertheless, we do have language on coal, on phase down, and I don't think anyone at the start of this process would have necessarily expected that that would have been retained."

## UK: 1 dead in car explosion outside Liverpool hospital

London: Counter-terrorism police in Britain were investigating an explosion at a hospital Sunday in the city of Liverpool that killed one person and injured another.

Police were called to reports of a blast involving a taxi at Liverpool Women's Hospital on Sunday morning. Police said the explosion had not been declared a terrorist incident, but counter-terrorism police were leading

the investigation as a precaution. "So far we understand, the car involved was a taxi, which pulled up at the hospital shortly before the explosion occurred," Merseyside Police said.

One person died and a man was being treated for non life-threatening injuries. Police said they were "keeping an open mind" about what caused the explosion. **AP**

## Prolonged gunbattle battle among Ecuador prison gangs leaves at least 68 inmates dead

### GONZALO SOLANO

QUITO, NOVEMBER 14

A PROLONGED gunbattle between rival gangs inside Ecuador's largest prison killed at least 68 inmates and wounded 25 on Saturday, while authorities said it took most of the day to regain control at the Litoral Penitentiary, which recently saw the country's worst prison bloodbath.

The killing erupted before dawn at the prison in the coastal city of Guayaquil in what officials said was the latest outbreak of



Relatives of inmates in the Litoral Penitentiary wait outside the jail in Guayaquil, Ecuador. AP

fighting among prison gangs linked to international drug cartels. Videos circulating on social media showed bodies, some burned, lying on the ground inside the prison. The shooting lasted around

eight hours, officials said, and then new clashes were reported in part of the prison in the afternoon.

Presidential spokesman Carlos Jijón finally announced after night-fall that "the situation is controlled

throughout the penitentiary." He said about 900 police officers had taken control of the situation.

In the initial fighting, inmates "tried to dynamite a wall to get into Pavilion 2 to carry out a massacre. They also burned mattresses to try to drown (their rivals) in smoke," said the governor of Guayas, Pablo Arosemena. "We are fighting against drug trafficking," Arosemena said. "It is very hard."

The bloodshed came less than two months after fighting among gangs killed 119 people at the prison, which houses more than 8,000 inmates. **AP**

## Gadhafi's son, Seif al-Islam, announces his candidacy for Libyan presidential election

### ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAIRO, NOVEMBER 14

THE SON and one-time heir apparent of late Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi announced Sunday his candidacy for the country's presidential election next month. Libya's election agency said.

Seif al-Islam submitted his candidacy papers in the southern town of Sabah, the agency said in a statement.

Gadhafi's son was captured by



Seif al-Islam in 2011. AP

fighters late in 2011, the year when a popular uprising toppled his father after more than 40 years in

power. Moammar Gadhafi was later killed amid the ensuing fighting that would turn into a civil war.

In a video released by the elections office where he registered, Seif al-Islam addressed the camera said that God will decide the right path for the country's future. He wore a traditional Libyan robe and turban and spectacles.

Seif al-Islam was released in June 2017 after more than five years of detention, and in July told *The New York Times* in an exclusive interview that he was considering a run for the coun-

try's top office. Libya is set to hold presidential elections on Dec. 24, after years of UN-led attempts to usher in a more democratic future and bring the war to an end.

The long-awaited vote still faces challenges, including unresolved issues over election laws and occasional infighting among armed groups. Other obstacles include the deep rift that remains between the country's east and west, split for years by the war, and the presence of thousands of foreign fighters and troops.



A Taliban military parade in Kabul on Sunday. Reuters

## Taliban hold military parade with US-made weapons in Kabul

### GIBRAN NAIYYAR

PESHIMAM

KABUL, NOVEMBER 14

TALIBAN FORCES held a military parade in Kabul on Sunday using captured American-made armoured vehicles and Russian helicopters in a display that showed their ongoing transformation from an insurgent force to a regular standing army.

The Taliban operated as insurgent fighters for two decades but have used the large stock of weapons and equipment left behind when the former Western-backed government collapsed in August to overhaul their forces.

The parade was linked to the graduation of 250 freshly trained soldiers, defence ministry spokesman Enayatullah Khwarazmi said.

The exercise involved dozens of U.S.-made M117 armoured se-



Members of Taliban sit on a military vehicle during the parade. Reuters

curity vehicles driving slowly up and down a major Kabul road with MI-17 helicopters patrolling overhead. Many soldiers carried American-made M4 assault rifles.

Most of the weapons and equipment the Taliban forces are now using are those supplied by Washington to the American-backed government in Kabul in a bid to construct an Afghan national force capable of fighting the Taliban.

Those forces melted away with the fleeing of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani from Afghanistan - leaving the Taliban to take over major military assets.

Taliban officials have said that pilots, mechanics and other specialists from the former Afghan National Army would be integrated into a new force, which has also started wearing conventional military uniforms in place of the traditional Afghan clothing normally worn by their fighters.

According to a report late last year by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (Sigar), the US government transferred to the Afghan government more than \$28 billion worth of defence articles and services, including weapons, ammunition, vehicles, night-vision devices, aircraft, and surveillance systems, from 2002 to 2017. **REUTERS**



Many Austrians are sceptical about vaccines. Reuters

## Lockdown in Austria for those not vaccinated against Covid

Vienna: Austria is placing millions of people not fully vaccinated against the coronavirus in lockdown as of Monday to deal with a surge in infections to record levels, Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg said on Sunday.

Europe has become the epicentre of the Covid-19 pandemic again, prompting some governments to consider re-imposing unpopular lockdowns. Roughly 65% of Austria's population is fully vaccinated, which is one of the lowest rates in western Europe. Many Austrians are sceptical about vaccines, a view promoted by the far-right Freedom Party, the third biggest in parliament. While the Netherlands is dealing with its surge in infections by imposing a partial lockdown that applies to all, Austria's government says it wants to avoid imposing more restrictions on those who are fully vaccinated. **REUTERS**

Yemen's Warring sides clashed south of the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah late on Saturday, after Iranian-backed Houthi fighters moved into territory ceded by forces allied to a Saudi-led coalition, military sources and witnesses said.

Yemeni forces backed by the United Arab Emirates had on Friday announced they were re-deploying from around Yemen's main port in the west, a move which a UN monitoring mission and the government said they had no advance notice of.

The Saudi-backed government and the Iran-aligned Houthis, who hold Hodeidah city, had in 2018 agreed a United Nations-sponsored pact for a truce in Hodeidah that largely held and a troop withdrawal by both sides, stalled since 2019.

## US hid airstrike in Syria that killed dozens of civilians

### DAVE PHILIPPS & ERIC SCHMITT

NOVEMBER 14

IN THE last days of the battle against the Islamic State group in Syria, when members of the once-fierce caliphate were cornered in a dirt field next to a town called Baghuz, a US military drone circled high overhead, hunting for military targets. But it saw only a large crowd of women and children huddled against a river bank. Without warning, a US F-15E attack jet streaked across the drone's high-definition field of vision and dropped a 500-pound bomb on the crowd. Then a jet dropped one 2,000-pound bomb, then another.

It was March 18, 2019. At the US military's busy Combined Air Operations Centre at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, uniformed personnel watching the live drone footage looked on in stunned disbelief.

"Who dropped that?" a confused analyst typed on a secure chat system being used by those monitoring the drone. Another responded, "We just dropped on 50 women and children."

An initial battle damage assessment quickly found that the number of dead was actually about 70.

The Baghuz strike was one of the largest civilian casualty incidents of the war against the Islamic State, but it has never been publicly acknowledged by the US military. The details, reported by *The New York Times* for the first time, show that the death toll was almost immediately apparent to military officials. A legal officer flagged the strike as a possible war crime that required an investigation. But at nearly every step, the military made moves that concealed the strike. The death toll was downplayed. Reports were delayed, sanitized and classified. US-led coalition forces bulldozed the blast site. And top leaders were not notified.

The US Defence Department's independent in-



At Raqqa, Syria. Many Syrian cities and towns endured withering coalition airstrikes and fighting between ISIS and Syrian forces. NYT

spector general began an inquiry, but the report containing its findings was stalled and stripped of any mention of the strike.

The details of the strikes were pieced together by *The New York Times* over months from confidential documents and descriptions of classified reports as well as interviews with personnel directly involved and officials with top secret security clearances who discussed the incident on the condition that they not be named.

The *Times* investigation found that the bombing had been called in by a classified US special operations unit, Task Force 9, which was in charge of ground operations in Syria. The task force operated in such secrecy that at times it did not inform even its own military partners of its actions. In the case of the Baghuz bombing, the US Air Force command in Qatar had no idea the strike was coming.

After the strike, an alarmed Air Force intelligence officer in the operations center called over an Air Force lawyer in charge of determining the legality of strikes. The lawyer ordered the F-15E squadron and the drone crew to preserve all video and other evidence. He went upstairs and reported the strike to his chain of command, saying it was a possible violation of the law of armed conflict — a war crime — and regulations required a thorough, independent investigation.

But a thorough, independent probe never happened. **NYT**

## Clashes in key Yemeni city as pro-coalition forces cede ground to Houthi rebels

### REUTERS

ADEN, NOVEMBER 14

YEMEN'S Warring sides clashed south of the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah late on Saturday, after Iranian-backed Houthi fighters moved into territory ceded by forces allied to a Saudi-led coalition, military sources and witnesses said.

Yemeni forces backed by the United Arab Emirates had on Friday announced they were re-deploying from around Yemen's main port in the west, a move which a UN monitoring mission and the government said they had no advance notice of.

The Saudi-backed government and the Iran-aligned Houthis, who hold Hodeidah city, had in 2018 agreed a United Nations-sponsored pact for a truce in Hodeidah that largely held and a troop withdrawal by both sides, stalled since 2019.

Coalition warplanes launched

## EXPLAINED Why control of Hodeidah is important

THE WAR in Yemen has led to what the UN describes as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, and the blockade of Houthi-held ports by the Saudi-led military coalition has been a major factor in precipitating this crisis. Hodeidah is the main entry point for imports and aid into Yemen, and control over this port is essential for access to supplies.

airstrikes on the Al Faza area south of Hodeidah as Houthi fighters battled UAE-backed forces until midnight, two military sources and residents said.

Al Faza is 15 km from coalition-held Al-Khokha, to which hundreds of Yemenis have fled after the Houthi advance.

## THE BELARUSIAN LEADER HAS PREVIOUSLY OFFENDED WESTERN POWERS, NOW HIS ACTIONS ARE DIRECTLY AFFECTING THEM

# Lukashenko, 'Europe's last dictator', raises the stakes with the West

### JIM HEINTZ

MOSCOW, NOVEMBER 14

FOR MOST of his 27 years as Belarus' authoritarian president, Alexander Lukashenko's repressions and truculent statements frequently offended the West. This year, that belligerence is directly affecting Europe.

His government forcefully diverted an airliner flying between Greece and Lithuania that was carrying a political opponent. As the European Union imposed sanctions for that action, Belarus responded by easing its border controls for migrants from the Middle East and Africa, allowing

them to head for the EU frontier.

That has forced Poland, Latvia and Lithuania to declare a state of emergency in their border zones to halt illegal crossings. Warsaw has sent thousands of riot police and troops to bolster security, leading to tense confrontations.

Lukashenko has since raised the stakes by threatening to cut off natural gas shipments from Russia that transit Belarus — a potentially severe blow to Europe as winter settles in.

The moves are a dramatic escalation for Lukashenko, who became president in 1994 when Belarus was a country that had existed less than three years.

His disdain for democratic

norms and the country's dismal human rights record has made Belarus a pariah in the West, bringing him the sobriquet of "Europe's last dictator".

The 67-year-old Lukashenko prefers to be styled as "Batka" — "Father" or "Dad" — a stern but wise patriarch.

Although he has made occasional moves toward rapprochement with the West, Lukashenko abandoned conciliation after massive demonstrations rose up against him in 2020 following an election to a sixth term as president. The opposition, and many in the West, rejected the outcome as rigged. Tens of thousands of protest-



Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko with a rifle last year, when thousands took to the streets in protest against him. AP

ers were arrested, many of them beaten by police; main opposition figures either fled the coun-

try or were jailed; foreign journalists were driven out; and ordinary citizens reportedly were ar-

rested for "unauthorised mass gatherings," that included even birthday parties.

By suppressing opposition through such harsh actions, along with keeping much of the economy under state control, Belarus has become a neo-Soviet outlier, wary of its thriving NATO and EU neighbours. He alternately quarreled with and coaxed up to Russia.

He's noted for mercurial actions and provocative statements, which a leaked US diplomatic cable assessed as outright "bizarre".

In 2006, he threatened protesters by saying he would "wring their necks like a duck." He also attracted uneasy notice this year in a Christmas season

TV interview when he let his fluffy little dog walk on the table among the festive dishes.

His draconian dramatics spiked in May, when he ordered a Lithuania-bound Ryanair jetliner diverted to Minsk and arrested self-exiled opposition journalist Raman Pratasevich, who was aboard. Belarusian authorities said the action was taken after a bomb threat was made against the plane, but Western officials dismissed that as a preposterous attempt to disguise what they called an act of piracy.

The strapping Lukashenko presents a tough-guy image by frequently playing ice hockey, including a spring 2020 outing where he

dismissed the coronavirus by asking a TV reporter if she saw any viruses "flying around" in the arena. He also advised Belarusians to "kill the virus with vodka," go to saunas and work in the fields to avoid infection, saying "Tractors will cure everybody!"

Once well-regarded by his countrymen as an anti-corruption leader, Lukashenko lost their trust through decades of jailing opponents, stifling independent media and holding elections that gave him term after term in power.

Protests had broken out after some of the balloting, but not sizable or sustained enough to long withstand club-swinging police and mass detentions. **AP**





I can't believe people wrote (David Warner) off a couple of weeks ago. That's when he plays his best cricket. It's like poking the bear."

AARON FINCH, AUSTRALIA CAPTAIN ON WARNER, WHO REGAINED HIS FORM DURING THE TOURNAMENT

# Making Australia Great Again

Marsh, Warner power Aussies to first T20 world title, adding to the five 50-over World Cup triumphs



Mitchell Marsh scored the fastest fifty in a T20 World Cup final (31 balls), breaking Kane Williamson's record (32) set in the first innings. Reuters

## EXPRESS AT T20 WORLD CUP



SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY  
DUBAI, NOVEMBER 14

KANE WILLIAMSON'S innings deserved the Cup. But a Mitchell Marsh-led Australian assault ensured that the New Zealand bowlers blew it up. Imperiously, the men in Green and Gold chased down the victory target of 173 at the cost of just two wickets with seven balls to spare. The Blackcaps suffered another final heartbreak, this time to a better team.

New Zealand actually lost the T20 World Cup final in the first 10 overs, when they scored 57/1, batting first. A fifth-gear switch in the next 10 overs made their total very challenging. But on a beauty of a surface, befitting a T20 final, they were still about 20 runs below par. Aaron Finch's customary toss win meant that Australia were batting second, when the ball was coming even more nicely on to the bat. And although a couple of deliveries from Mitchell Santner turned, David Warner and Marsh were unperturbed in pursuit of Australia's first T20 world title which adds to their trophy cabinet containing five 50-over World Cup trophies.

Finally, more than a decade after Dean Jones had made the prediction, Marsh chose the world stage to rise to stardom. Until this game, the 30-year-old has been a fine allrounder, a utility man, with ups and downs in his career. Belatedly, he became a match-winner to anchor Australia to the title. His 50-ball 77 not out was worthy of the Player of the Match accolade. It rattled the Kiwis for its audacity. A six followed by back-to-back fours off Adam Milne gave



David Warner (53) put on a 92-run stand with Mitchell Marsh. AP

Australia the psychological upper hand over their trans-Tasman rivals early into their chase apart from triggering a Powerplay run-rate upsurge. Australia carried that advantage until the last ball of the game, when Glenn Maxwell reverse-lapped Tim Southee to break into a war dance, Marsh in tow.

"This kid is the next superstar of Australian cricket, no doubt," the late Jones had said in 2010. But an injury-prone career, the latest setback being an ankle injury during the Indian Premier League last year, took time to fulfil its

potential. Jones didn't live to see Marsh's finest hour. Far afield in Perth, his father Geoff must be a proud man.

"I don't really have words, what an amazing six weeks with this group. Love them to death," Marsh said after the match.

For Warner, it was atonement. For Marsh, it was carrying forward a great family legacy that boasts three Baggy Green holders. A 92-run second wicket partnership between the two that slammed the door shut on the Kiwis, revelled in its power-punch as also tactical brilliance. Marsh attacked Santner, while Warner took on Ish Sodhi, who bowled some ordinary deliveries under pressure. Once the spin-choke was cancelled out, Jimmy Neesham was the last man standing for New Zealand, bowling-wise. Marsh sent him a few rows back over the deep fine leg boundary and Warner joined the fun with another maximum. New Zealand ran out of options.

### Working in sync

For Marsh, it was about facing the New Zealand bowling. Warner had the added challenge to silence the naysayers. Only about a month ago, the sun seemingly was setting on his T20 career. On Sunday, he made hay while the moon shone in the Dubai sky. Marsh allowed Warner to grow into the game and it was important. For the 35-year-old left-hander, this tournament was a lot more than just turning up for Australia and scoring runs. This was about returning to global prominence yet again from the desolation row of the IPL. A flat-bat six off Neesham to bring up a 34-ball half-century had a bout of anger, attested by the bat-speed and the ferocity of the shot. An aggregate of 289 runs from seven matches earned Warner the Player of the Tournament award.

New Zealand bowled some loose stuff and Sodhi wasn't the only offender. Bereft of swing, Southee chose back-of-length, becoming ineffective in the process. Trent Boult was the only

saving grace in New Zealand bowling, but his 2/18 from four overs wasn't enough. Dropped catches of Marsh made matters worse.

Australia bossed the game from start to finish, save the 10 overs during New Zealand's innings, when Williamson painted a picture. From 21 off as many balls at one stage, the New Zealand captain exploded, capturing the attention of a sparse turnout that sort of reluctantly walked through the turnstiles. Some fans had India face paints, a few shouted for Pakistan. Williamson made them watch cricket.

A Mitchell Starc over triggered the acceleration. A dropped catch by Josh Hazlewood contributed to the first boundary. A couple of fours followed, including one off a no-ball. Maxwell came, and Williamson went one-handed for a six. Another six next ball took him to a 32-ball half-century. Williamson upped the ante, taking Starc to the cleaners in his next over. It was cultured aggression, utterly bewitching. A century beckoned, but a leg-cutter from Hazlewood ended Williamson's innings on 85 (48 balls), as he departed to a standing ovation. Finch ran across from backward point to give a pat on the back. Hazlewood, meanwhile, made up for his dropped catch with figures of 3/16 from four overs; an outstanding performance on a featherbed.

Looking back though, Williamson and Martin Guppill would probably rue their slow burn, when they crawled at less than six runs per over. Leaving the attack for a little too late didn't augur well for the Kiwis. Yes, the Australian bowlers were excellent to start with, cutting down the angles and bowling to the field. But in Williamson and Guppill, New Zealand had enough quality to counter that by embracing adventurism, especially on a good pitch.

**BRIEF SCORES:** New Zealand 172 for 4 (Williamson 85, Hazlewood 3-16) lost to Australia 173 for 2 (Marsh 77\*, Warner 53) by eight wickets



Josh Hazlewood took three wickets for 16 runs in the final. Reuters

for the evening session, he would be there sometimes bowling alone in the nets."

Though emboldened by the new bag of tricks, he knew his biggest strength still

was the oldest strength, hitting hard-lengths, top of off-stump or thereabouts and bending the ball both ways with unbending control. That's his A game, the rest

## EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER



Hot heads, calm minds and everything in between at the game

## UnFinching success at toss



Aaron Finch's toss luck has to be his rivals' envy and Australia's pride. Winning six out of seven tosses in a tournament where batting second has offered a distinct advantage, cancels out luck factor and defies the probability theory. No wonder, the Australia white-ball captain looked happy after winning the toss in the final and his Kiwi counterpart Kane Williamson opted for indifference.

Williamson had to take Finch's toss luck with a pinch of salt. The Aussie skipper reckoned that the pitch for the final was a "bit drier than the one from the other night (semifinal)" and hoped that it would "skid on" (later). Phlegmatically, Williamson admitted that he would have chosen to field as well. "Who knows about the dew, but important we focus on that task at hand," he said at the toss.

## Wobbles, Wade, Wicket

Matthew

Wade, the man who doesn't love wicketkeeping, dropped a catch from Daryl Mitchell, off Glenn Maxwell. But a over later, he had his redemption and lunged forward to remove Mitchell, off Josh Hazlewood this time. Mitchell had shaped for a cut, off Maxwell and got an inside edge and it did dip and not easy but we have seen better keepers take that. Wade had his eyes off the ball. Not sure how he has been off the field in the nights before the games in this tournament, but when he was keeping in Tests, by his own admission he would be a nervous wreck. "The night a game before I would be stressed about keeping – for 10 years I did that," Wade had once said. Luckily for him, Mitchell gave another chance which he grabbed. The nerves would have eased.



## Mitch Perfect

Mitchell Marsh had both the pedigree and performance to be a match-winner. Being the son of Geoff Marsh and baby brother of Shaun had its pitfalls, but also perks. He got a longer rope. You thought twice before dropping Marsh. Having led Australia to the under-19 World Cup title in 2010, he had proved that the apple hadn't tumbled away too far from the tree. As expected he graduated to the senior team in 2011. Injuries did play a role but Mitchell couldn't cement his place in the side. The old joke about him being the "third best" batsman in his family was repeated so often that it lost its sting. For more than a decade, the Aussies waited for him to turn into at least Shaun, if not Geoff. Just last month he turned 30. Mitchell saved his best for a game that Australia was desperate to win. Always the team man, Mitchell till very recently was famous as the team's vlogger. He would move around with his camera in the dressing room speaking to the star performers. At Dubai on Sunday, there was a queue to interview the man of the moment.

## Kane's or Cairns? Two men, one-handed 6s

Was it Kane Williamson or Lance Cairns, circa 1983? Chris's father Lance and his one-handed six with his famous Excalibur bat off Dennis Lillee is part of folklore in New Zealand. Kane did it off far more gentler pace of Glenn Maxwell. It was floated on the leg stump line and Williamson went for the big heave-ho and took his top hand off the



a stunning six.

Photos: AP, Reuters

## OLD FOX, NEW TRICKS

# How Hazlewood upskilled to become craftiest T20 pacer Down Under

SANDIP G  
NOVEMBER 14

FOR THREE-AND-A-HALF years, from March 2016 to December 2019, Josh Hazlewood didn't know what it is to bowl in a T20 game. But in these three-and-a-half years, he learned how it is to bowl in a T20 game.

From an outlier, he has emerged as one of the most lethal in the business, wielding more influence in Australia's World Cup triumph than Pat Cummins and Mitchell Starc, the designated white-ball wreckers.

It began with a realisation that his red-ball methods of success were untranslatable into white-ball realm. "That top of off (stump), challenging the batsman (philosophy) is still important. That time doesn't last very long before they're running at you, and lapping, all this sort of thing."

Often his brain would begin to scramble when batsmen started resorting to the outlandish stuff. The first half of his T20 career, spanning just seven games, had plenty of such instances. Thrice in those games, he ended conceding more than 10 runs an over, including 50 runs from fours overs against South Africa. "Something had to

change. You've definitely got to try and be one step ahead as much as you can be and try and predict what the batter is going to do each delivery," he told australia.com.au.

He turned to state-mate and friend James Faulkner, the forgotten hero of 2015 World Cup, a white-ball virtuoso. "He has plenty of variations and I used to pick his brains all the time, not only to learn about the variations, but how to use them, and obviously I practised a lot in the nets and in my mind. He told me, 'You need to have not just one, but two or three,'" he said.

### Variety

So he developed not just the routine rolling the fingers over the seam slower-ball, but the cutters, cross-seamers and the knuckle ball too. Cutters he developed watching his idols Glenn McGrath, who used the variations abundantly in white-ball cricket towards the end of his career while the knuckle ball he learned from observing another Australian Andrew Tye. After development came mastery, something that comes intrinsically to him. His one-time club-mate Ben Middlebrook had told this paper of his meticulous work ethics. "He would practice at the club in the morning, then go home and practice, and when we are back

brushed the out-stretched bat of Mitchell, who was prematurely sucked into the shot. New Zealand were then 28/1 in 3.5 overs. For the next 33 balls, they could hit a single ball to the fence and dawdled to 57/1 in 10 overs on a perfectly fine batting surface.

### Match-defining

His match-defining moment, though, was yet to come. Kane Williamson and Glenn Phillips, with a mixture of fortune and daring, had propelled New Zealand to 144/2 in 17.2 overs. Hazlewood dialled his knuckle-ball that quivered and wobbled before it shrivelled off Phillips' bat to the fielder at mid-wicket. Williamson dishevelled him with a rare scoop, but he outfoxed him with a side-of-the-hand leg-cutter, as he charged down the track and mishit to long-off. New Zealand's charge was clipped, and were restricted to 172, when they looked destined for 180-plus.

It's not a coincidence that upon his return to T20 cricket, he had picked three titles in just a year—the Big Bash 2019-20, IPL 2021 and the World T20—and had influenced each of his teams with his retooled repertoire. His lost years, in a sense, turned out to be his biggest gain in a format he was once considered an outlier.





