







on Sunday

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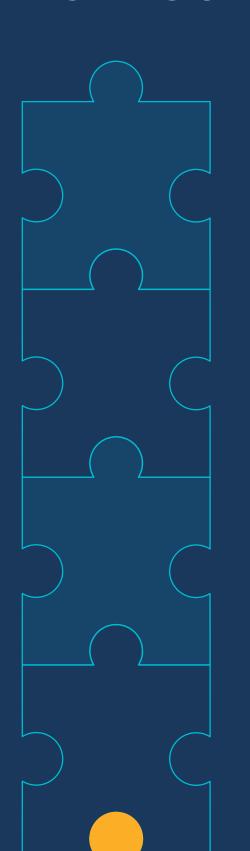
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on Sunday 📰



Cong. leader Abhishek Singhvi calls for removal of 'Modi tax' on fuel



Onus on India for progress in relations, says Imran Khan



42 girls abducted from Nigerian school two weeks ago released Page 9

Ashwin hits back at pitch critics, asks what a good surface is Page 14



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BPF joins Congress-led grand alliance in Assam

The Bodoland People's Front has severed its ties with the ruling BJP in Assam and joined the Congress-led grand alliance. The announcement came less than a month before the three-phase Assembly polls. NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 5

17-year-old stabbed for speaking up for sister

NEW DELH A 17-year-old boy was stabbed by a group of boys after he objected to the passing of lewd remarks against his sister on Friday, the police said, A case has been registered. A police officer said that they received a call around 1 p.m. regarding the stabbing of a boy in Kalkaji. **NEWS** ▶ PAGE 8

Police search for journalist in rape case

A team of Delhi Police has reached Mumbai to arrest a TV anchor who is accused in a rape case reported in New Delhi last week. On February 23, a 22-year-old woman alleged she was raped by the man in a hotel room in the Chanakvapuri area. **NEWS** ▶ PAGE 8

MAGAZINE ▶ 8 PAGES **CLASSIFIEDS** ▶ PAGES 4 & 5

COVID-19 upsurge: Cabinet Secretary reviews situation

Maharashtra reports 8,333 new cases, contributing over half of country's 16,488

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

With Maharashtra, Punjab, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Telangana and Jammu & Kashmir reporting a high active COVID-19 caseload and an increasing trend in new cases last week, Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on Saturday reviewed the situation with their Chief Secretaries.

The States have been advised not to lower their guard, enforce pandemicappropriate behaviour and deal firmly with violations. They are also required to follow effective surveillance and tracking strategies in respect of potential super spreader events.

The Health Ministry said Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat had also shown a surge in new cases in the last 24 hours, taking the active caseload to 1,59,590. Maharashtra continues to report the highest daily new cases at 8,333, followed by Kerala with 3,671 while Punjab reported 622 new cases, it said.

India reported 16,488 new cases in the last 24 hours.

"Maharashtra, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Karna-



Virus check: A woman waiting to get tested for COVID-19 at the Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital in New Delhi. • R.V. MOORTHY

taka and Haryana are displaying an upward trajectory in daily new cases. In the last two weeks, Kerala has shown the maximum decline in the number of active cases, from 63,847 on February 14 to 51,679, while Maharashtra has shown the highest rise, from 34,449 to 68,810," said the Ministry.

Six States/UTs account for 82.3% of the 113 deaths reported in the last 24 hours. Maharashtra saw the highest number of casualties (48). Punjab reported 15 daily deaths and Kerala 14 while 17 States and UTs have not reported any deaths.

A presentation was made at the meeting chaired by Mr. Gauba with a focus on districts reporting increasing numbers of cases and trend in positivity. This was followed by a comprehensive review with all the States/UTs.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6 **MORE REPORTS PAGES ▶** 6.8 & 9 SUPER-SPREADERS AND RISE

Hospitals can charge up to ₹250 per dose

Private hospitals functioning as COVID-19 Vaccination Centres may recover a charge subject to a ceiling of ₹250 per person per dose, the Health Ministry said on Saturday. It released a list of 20 co-morbidities that allow those between 45-59 years to get vaccinated. ▶ PAGE 8

Eight held for cow slaughter in Telangana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Tension prevailed in Siddipet district of Telangana on Friday following reports of the slaughter of 16 cows, with members of BJP, ABVP, RSS and other right wing organisations protesting against the incident.

Earlier, acting on information that cows were being slaughtered on the outskirts of the town, a police team rushed to the spot and arrested eight persons.

A case was registered under Sections 429, 153 and 153-A of the IPC against those involved, according to D. Joel Davis, Commissioner of Police, Siddipet.

Police said 68 cows had been brought from villages in Karimnagar district.

The remaining 52 cows were shifted to a goshala.

After post-mortem, carcasses of the slaughtered animals were buried at the same place to avoid any untoward incidents.

The police worked all the night, forming multiple teams to arrest the accused within hours.

The arrested persons were identified as Mohd. Jaber, Mohd. Kahaja, Mohd. Saddam, Mohd Arafat, Mohd. Rahim, Mohd. Arshad, Mohd. Ashraf and Mohd. Javed.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6

Dreams fade for kids of migrants

Pandemic has led to school drop outs



Few in school: Children of migrant labourers at an NGO-run school on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar. • BISWARANJAN ROUT

SATYASUNDAR BARIK

jun Naik, 11, had never stayed in a dingy room near Somu Naik, was put up in sant experience.

Almost a year after the onset of COVID-19, schoolstudies or preparing to labour as adolescent workers.

from one place to another,

my eldest son's studies have been hampered. We wanted Arjun to be devoted to his studies but COVID-19 shattered our hopes. The hostel has remained closed for a vear. We cannot leave our son anywhere else," said Basila Naik, Arjun's father, who works at a brick kiln in Bingharpur on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.

SPECIAL

In a nearby brick kiln, little Nandita, 11, is happy that she can join a residential school at Kukudakhandi in Ganjam district from the next academic session. However, as uncertainty prevails over the opening of residential schools, her stay at the kiln has been prolonged.

⁺ Cong. rift widens with 'G-23' Jammu meet

Party leadership reacts cautiously ahead of polls

SOBHANA K NAIR NEW DELHI/JAMMU

The internal differences in the Congress spilled out into the open on Saturday, with the dissenting group, or the 'G-23', in a show of strength holding a rally in Jammu ostensibly to felicitate Ghulam Nabi Azad on his retirement from the Rajya Sabha but clearly challenging the party leadership.

The party leadership



Congress at a rally in Jammu on Saturday. •PTI

reacted cautiously and did not comment about the possibility of disciplinary action against the participants. The meeting was attended

Show of strength: Leaders from the dissenting group of the

by senior Congress leaders, sucha as Harvana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Anand Sharma, Kapil Si-

bal, Manish Tewari, Raj

addition to Mr. Azad. This is the first collective, public appearance of the

Babbar and Vivek Tankha, in

group that, in August last year, had written to interim resident Sonia Gandhi urg ing her to ensure "full time" and "visible" leadership.

The Congress leadership has remained mum about renominating Mr. Azad and the G-23 members find themselves sidelined within the party. Mr. Azad, speaking at the rally, said that he may have retired from the Rajya Sabha but not from politics.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6

Five municipal wards go to polls today

STAFF REPORTER

The stage is set for bypolls in five municipal wards in Delhi on Sunday with all three contenders – the Aam Aadmi Party, BJP and the Congress - exuding confidence about emerging victorious. The bypolls are being seen as the semifinal ahead of the civic body elections for 272 wards of three municipal corporations in early 2022.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 3

Three held in Hapur gang-rape case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Chhotu, Aqil, and Akash of Galand village of Pilakhwa night when she was return-

near Hindalpur village in the district. "When the police

Rajasthan bypolls: Gehlot, Pilot put up united front

Both leaders address farmers' rallies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Congress in Rajasthan on Saturday launched its campaign for bypolls to four Assembly seats with farmers' rallies in two districts, where the party leadership tried to put up a united face. Both Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Tonk MLA Sachin Pilot, who was sacked as the Deputy CM last year, addressed the large gatherings of farmers.

Shared helicopter ride

Mr. Gehlot and his former deputy shared a helicopter ride from Jaipur to the two villages in Bikaner and Chittorgarh districts for the first time in more than a year. Mr. Pilot, who had staged a rebellion in July last year, has been addressing huge 'kisan mahapanchayats' along with the MLAs of his camp in the eastern Rajasthan region.

The two leaders came together apparently at the instance of the party's top leabesides the political necessity in which Mr. Pilot could not be sidelined any more in the run-



Photo of Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot shared by Ajay Maken on social media. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

up to the bypolls. AICC general secretary in-charge of Rajasthan, Ajay Maken, who flew along with Mr. Gehlot and Mr. Pilot, shared their picture on social media platforms.

The by-elections are to be held in Sujangarh (Churu), Sahara (Bhilwara), Vallabhnagar (Udaipur) and Rajsamand, where the sitting MLAs died in the last four months. Three of these seats were with the Congress, while the Rajsamand constituency was represented by BJP leader Kiran Maheshwari. The dates for the bypolls are yet to be announced.

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GHAZIABAD

ing from work in Ghaziabad. Hapur SP Neeraj Jadaun

said they received information that some suspects had gathered in an autorickshaw

reached the spot, the accused fired at the team. The police returned fire and arrested the three men." He said the three accused suftered bullet injuries in the lower limbs. Two policemen were also injured.

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Unlike his three siblings, Ar-

a brick kiln along with his parents. All these years, he was a student at a residential school run by the Odisha government. His classmate, such accommodation for months. It was not a plea-

going children of migrating parents, including Arjun and Somu, are either on the verge of discontinuing their

"My elder daughter, who is 14 years old, has already started helping me in brick making. As we keep moving **CONTINUED ON ▶** PAGE 6

town in Hapur. The woman was raped on Wednesday

Investigating the alleged gang rape of a 30-year-old woman in Hapur, the Uttar Pradesh police arrested three persons on Saturday morning after a brief encounter.

The accused have been identified as Ankit alias

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AQI to worsen, says SAFAR

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The air quality of Delhi improved slightly but stayed in the lower end of the 'poor' category on Saturday, as per the Central Pollution Control Board data.

"Increased surface wind speed, higher temperature, and higher boundary layer heights are influencing AQI positively," said monitoring agency SAFAR.

"AQI is forecast to fall to the 'poor' category in the next two days," it said, adding that dust from dry desert regions of Rajasthan may start influencing Delhi's AQI soon.

Labourer dies in warehouse fire

'Workers were staying in rooms where plastic and nail polish material were kept'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old labourer was killed and another suffered injuries when a fire broke out at a warehouse in north Delhi's Gulabi Bagh in the early hours of Saturday.

A case has been registered in the matter.

A Delhi Fire Services (DFS) official said a call regarding a fire near Pratap Nagar metro station was received at 3.47 a.m., and 15 fire tenders were rushed to the site. Subsequently, 10 more fire tenders were sent.

The fire was brought under control around 8.30 a.m. and doused by 11.00 a.m.

'The fire broke out at a warehouse where plastic and nail polish material is kept. It started from the upper ground floor and the first floor," the official said.

A charred body was found inside the building and an injured person was also res-



Firefighters dousing flames at a warehouse in north Delhi on Saturday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

cued. The deceased was identified as Upchand Kumar, from Bihar. The injured was identified as Sunil, 22, a resident of Kishan Ganj.

Police said that workers used to stay in rooms in the warehouse and that Upchand was likely sleeping when the fire broke out.

A case under Sections 435 (Mischief by fire or explosive substance with intent to cause damage), 436 (Mischief by fire or explosive subgistered and investigation is underway. stance with intent to destroy

house), 304 (Punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder), and 308 (Attempt to commit culpable homicide) of the Indian Penal Code has been re-

further

A first, DU awards 'digital degrees'

Parents, friends of students view 97th convocation online

STAFF REPORTER

Delhi University (DU) on Saturday awarded over 1.76 lakh 'digital degrees' - a first in the country, according to acting Vice-Chancellor P.C. Joshi. The 97th convocation also saw 670 PhD degrees being conferred, the highest in the last five years, according to officials.

Apart from the degrees awarded to bachelors and masters graduates, 156 medals and 36 prizes were also awarded to students across disciplines.

Due to the pandemic, the convocation was held with social distancing norms in place. Arrangements were made for parents and kin to view the event online.

On the endeavours in the last few months, Mr. Joshi said, "The university has initiated the innovative 'Vidya Vistar Scheme' to establish academic links between partner colleges and depart-



Breaking a five-year record, 670 PhD degrees were conferred during the event on Saturday. • SHINJINI GHOSH

ments of fellow universities. Aimed at maximising the utilisation of resources available with the university through academic collaboration and cooperation with partner institutions, the scheme is deemed to be instrumental in augmenting

collective human resources." Mr. Joshi added that DU was the first in India to conduct the Open Book Examination during the pandemic.

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' was the chief guest, and UPSC Chairman P.K. Joshi was the Guest of Honour.

Education policy

The Minister said DU was expected to be a frontrunner in implementing the National Education Policy (NEP).

"We will reform, perform, transform and show results. We will go vocal for local and then make local, global. You [students] have to be the ones generating employment instead of seeking employment." He said the university has been witness to a time when the "country was burning" with the Vice-Regal Lodge being a place where several freedom fighters had been confined at a point.

Urging students to ensure that "dreams are fulfilled," he said, "We have a dream in front of us... we have to make India a 'Vishwaguru' vet again."

INTERVIEW | ANU SINGH LATHER

'AUD used lockdown to prepare for online shift, focus now on research'

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ

Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD) Vice-Chancellor Anu Singh Lather talks about how the institution adapted during the lockdown, implementation of the National Education Policy, introduction of the Happiness Curriculum and focus on research and entrepreneurship. Excerpts from the interview:

It has been a very tough year for education and learning. How did AUD switch from physical classes to online?

As soon as the lockdown was announced, we went in for a long vacation that was initially planned for June-July. This gave us time to plan and prepare, including facul-

ty training, for a shift to online classes. While many universities had short-term plans, expecting educational institutions to open by May, we realised that COVID-19 was not going away. Hence, we made a plan till December that included the new admission process. We also folcontinuous a assessment system so we did not face problems regarding conduct of exams.

How did you deal with the digital divide and access to high-speed Internet as AUD attracts students from across the country?

■ We went in for a synchronous as well as an asynchronous mode of teaching. sentations and case studies were all put together and emailed to students. We also recorded the lectures so that students from the Northeast and Kashmir, who were facing problems with Internet connectivity, could watch recordings and access material. We had students approaching us for laptops, smartphones and other relief. We provided EWS students with reimbursements for their Internet connection. We also purchased and gave tablets to those who

When can students expect to attend classes like pre-

were in need.

pandemic times? ■ We waited for the State government to notify us when



Ambedkar University Delhi Vice-Chancellor Anu Singh Lather. • JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ

we could open the university for students. PhD students who are interested are already on campus. We are working on a definite schedule for UG and PG students as well. We want final-year MA and UG students to attend classes on campus before opening it up for other students.

How does AUD fare now when compared with other universities in the Capital that have been around for much longer? Do you feel it has become the first choice for students?

We have started organising campus placements and appointed a full-time assistant registrar for placement and training. The assistant registrar ensures that "skilling" is a part of education here. While we are approaching the industry for placement of our students, we saw an interesting trend students who are graduating from courses like history and global affairs are being placed for unique profiles that show that there is an integration of social sciences and acceptability for employability. It is encouraging that we have found profiles for our students from the social sciences, and we hope to take further steps in this aspect.

With the National Education Policy (NEP) coming in, what changes will we see at AUD?

■ The university is taking a few steps on the quality parameters when it comes to research. We have created our own ordinance for the PhD programme. Also, regulations for that have been created to meet the international demands of research

work. This kind of direction is required as there is a perception that Indian research is often plagiarised and viewed to be fake or not up to international standards. These ordinances will help researchers be professional and move towards better integration of what is expected

of them internationally. The NEP also has a lot of focus on early childhood care. We are one of the universities in the country that thought about it far ahead and have established ourselves in the field of early childhood care. We also want at least three-four programmes at the UG level to be of the four-year duration. We might make the switch in the next session after discussions with all the Deans.

AUD is regularly adding new courses. Any more new courses that AUD is planning to start?

■ We are going in for a major revision of our syllabus in the near future to incorporate aspects of the NEP and keep it updated. We are also planning to launch a Happiness Curriculum. This will be done at two levels. At the university-level, it will be introduced as an essential course. On a wider note, a training programme will be launched for the judiciary, government officials and others.

In the three-six months of training, the course will teach those enrolled to look at life differently.

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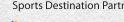
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THE HINDU

Five municipal corporation wards go to the polls today

Police Commissioner reviews law and order situation, security arrangements

STAFF REPORTER

The stage is set for bypolls in five municipal wards in Delhi on Sunday with all three contenders – the Aam Aadmi Party, BJP and the Congress exuding confidence of emerging victorious.

The bypolls are being seen as a curtainraiser for the civic body elections for 272 wards of the three municipal corporations in early 2022.

Delhi Police Commissioner S.N. Shrivastava on Saturday reviewed the law and order situation and security arrangements made for the by-elections. He emphasised on keeping vigil on border areas in view of the bypolls and ongoing farmers' stir.

According to the State Commission, Election around 2.42 lakh people are eligible to cast their votes in the five municipal wards: Ro-Shalimar



AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow in support of his bypoll candidate in Shalimar Bagh. • FILE PHOTO

(North), Trilokpuri, Kalyanpuri and Chauan Banger. Voting will be held from

Results on March 3 The results will be an-

7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

nounced on March 3, officials said, adding that there are 327 polling stations. Twenty-six candidates are

contesting the elections. Officials said that CO-VID-19 patients can vote during the last hour of polling. The main candidates in

the bypolls are Dhirendra from AAP, Siyaram Kanojia from the BJP and Dharampal Maurya from the Congress in the Kalyanpuri ward. Vijay Kumar from the AAP, Om Prakash Gugarwal from the BJP and Bal Kishan are contesting from Trilokpuri ward.

Former AAP MLA Haji Ishraq Khan is pitted against Chaudhary Zubair Ahmad of the Congress and Nazir Ansari of the BJP from Chauhan Bamgar ward.

These three wards are under the East Delhi Municipal Corporation. The AAP held these wards which were vacated after sitting councillors contested the Assembly polls last year and became MLAs.

From the Shalimar Bagh North ward that fell vacant after the death of the BJP councillor, the contest is between Surbhi Jaju of the BJP,

Sunita Mishra of the AAP and Mamta of the Congress.

The Rohini-C ward will witness a contest between former Bawana MLA Ramchandra of the AAP, Rajesh Goyal of the BJP and Mewati Barwala of the Congress.

Blame game

The AAP and the BJP have been attacking each other over a range of issues, including corruption, during the campaigning.

Earlier this week, senior AAP leader Raghav Chadha had alleged that the BJP, ruling the three municipal corporations, has turned the city into a "heap of garbage". Delhi BIP president Adesh

Gupta said that the party will win all the five wards. The Congress leaders have

already appealed to Delhiites to vote for the party candidates in the by-elections.

(With inputs from PTI)

Poll commission issues show-cause notice to 3 officers over circle rate ad

'It violates the model code of conduct'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The State Election Commission has issued a showcause notice to Principal Secretary (Revenue) Sanjeev Khirwar and two officers of the Directorate of Information and Publicity seeking their reply on an advertisement about 20% reduction in circle rates in the city on the eve of the civic bypolls.

In the notice issued to Mr. Khirwar, DIP secretary Padmini Singla and director Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, the panel said that prima facie the advertisement violates the model code of conduct.

On Saturday, an advertisement on the Delhi government's recent decision to reduce circle rates by 20% appeared in several newspapers.

"It has come to the notice of the Commission that an advertisement is published

It has come to the notice of the

commission that an ad was published on the eve of the bypolls at the cost of the public exchequer for publicity regarding achievements with a view to furthering the prospects of the party in power

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

in various national newspapers just before the day of polls at the cost of the public exchequer for publicity regarding achievements with a view to furthering the prospects of the party in power," the notice stated.

It also said, "The Commission is, prima facie, of the view that by the said advertisement, the provision of the Model Code of Conduct has been violated."

claims: Bidhuri

AAP making

sensational

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Saturday accused the Aam Aadmi Party of "reducing the level of politics" in the city by allegedly lying about issues on a daily basis.

"The AAP is making sensational claims daily despite many of the previous ones falling flat. From allegations about the reduction of his security cover, to the alleged price at which the BJP was allocated land for its State office, the AAP makes one sensational claim after another without any proof," he alleged.

"Not only is the party spoiling its own image but is reducing the level of politics," Mr. Bidhuri added.

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta met the family of a girl who was allegedly kidnapped from her Kalyanpuri residence and murdered earlier this week, to offer condolences.

tion drive on Saturday. It

will resume from Monday.

announced that vaccina-

tion for general public will

start from March 1, the Del-

hi government is yet to is-

The Union Health De-

partment on Saturday said

that private hospitals func-

tioning as COVID-19 vacci-

nation centres can charge a

maximum of ₹250 per per-

sue any orders on it.

Though the Centre has

Labour rights activist rejoins farmers' protest

'Raise voice for Shiv Kumar's release'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A day after she was granted bail, labour rights activist Naudeep Kaur on Saturday urged people to raise their voice for the release of Shiv Kumar, who is a co-accused in criminal cases registered against Ms. Kaur.

Mr. Kumar, the president of Majdoor Adhikar Sanghathan, was held a few days after the arrest of Ms. Kaur.

She was arrested on January 12 for allegedly gheraoing an industrial unit and demanding money from the company. She has been charged with rioting and attempt to murder.

"Mr. Kumar is in jail even today. No one is talking about him. He is innocent. He was severely beaten up by the police and his bones are broken. I request people

to raise their voice for his bail as well," Ms. Kaur said during a press conference at Singhu border.

A medical examination of Mr. Kumar done by a Chandigarh-based hospital found two fractures on his hand and foot along with some broken nail beds on his toe.

Ms. Kaur's arrest received global attention after Meena Harris, the niece of American Vice-President Kamala Harris, tweeted saying the activist was arrested and tortured in police custody.

Ms. Kaur, who rejoined the farmers' protest at Singhu border on Saturday, said the movement has space for everyone to contribute. whether it is farmers or

Ms. Kaur also accused the police of beating her up in the custody.

Going strong



Farmers during their ongoing protest against the agriculture laws, at Ghazipur, on Saturday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

Man held for killing wife after drunken scrimmage

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old man allegedly killed his wife following a drunken brawl in Rohini's Budh Vihar on Friday night, the police said, adding that the accused has been arrested.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Rohini) Jeetender Meena said that the accused has been identified as Chetan Prakash Solanki, a driver by profession, and his wife was identified as Geeta.

The police said that a call was received at 10.45 p.m. on Friday regarding a fight between a couple in Budh Vihar Phase-I.

When Vijay Vihar police reached the spot, both the husband and the wife were unconscious.

"They were both rushed to Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital where Geeta was declared brought dead and the husband was admitted," Mr. Meena said.

A senior police officer said that during probe, it was found that the husband had beaten the woman to death and she had also retaliated. "They both used to fight often after the husband would get drunk. He also used to beat her regularly," the officer said.

Based on Geeta's brother's statement, a caseunder Section 302 (punishment for murder) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered and further probe is under way.

On-duty Delhi police officer dies by suicide

He was posted near Zakhira flyover

STAFF REPORTER

A 55-year-old Delhi Police Assistant Sub Inspectorrank officer allegedly killed himself on Saturday morning while on duty. The police said that the officer was posted in the Police Control Room unit and was on duty near Zakhira flyover.

"An information was received regarding the incident at Moti Nagar police station. When officials reached the hospital, they were informed that the ASI was brought in an unconscious state and there was an entry-exit wound in his body," a senior officer said.

The police said that the ASI was facing some issues at his residence and had al-

The ASI was facing

before he allegedly took the step SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

so received a call from his house before he allegedly took the step.

some issues at his

residence and had

also received a call

from his house

He had joined Delhi Police in 1986 and was residing in Ghaziabad. The police said that in-

quest proceedings have been initiated.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for *Mental Health, Telephone:* 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -7.30 p.m.

2 held for plotting to kill Sushil Pandit

They were promised ₹10 lakh and provided 4 pistols: police

STAFF REPORTER

Two persons, who were allegedly hired to kill human rights activist and noted speaker Sushil Pandit, have been arrested, the police said on Saturday. Deputy Commissioner of

Police (South-West) Ingit Pratap Singh said that the accused have been identified as Sukhwinder Singh, 25, and Lakhan, 21, both residents of Faridkot.

"They were promised ₹10 lakh if they assassinated Mr. Pandit, who is the CEO of **Hive Communications India** Private Limited. They were also provided four pistols, four live cartridges and Mr. Pandit's photograph," Mr. Singh said.

The police said that the two were sent to Delhi at the behest of one Prince alias Tutti who is Lakhan's childhood friend and also facing murder trial in Faridkot.

The police said that "considering the nature of the case and that foreign hand may be involved in the case", it has been transferred to Special Cell unit.

For fourth day in a row, city sees over 200 cases

There are 1,307 active cases in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi witnessed 243 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the tally to 6,39,092, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Saturday. This is the fourth consecutive day that 200 or more cases have been reported in the Capital.

Three deaths were reported in the past 24 hours, taking the death toll to 10,909. A total of 67,484 tests were done in a day. Of the total cases,

6,26,876 people have recovered and there are 1,307 active cases in the city.

son per dose. On January 13, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had

said that the Delhi government would provide free vaccination to all residents of Delhi if the Central government fails to do so.

'Switch Delhi' turns focus on electric four-wheelers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The third week of the Delhi government's 'Switch Delhi' electric vehicle campaign focused on sensitising Delhiites on the benefits of electric four-wheelers along with the incentives that EV adopters can avail under the government's EV policy.

According to the Delhi government, since the launch of the Delhi EV policy in August 2020, 465 new EV four-wheelers have been registered and more are being registered every day.

Transport Minister Kai lash Gahlot said, "Incentives of up to ₹3 lakh are provided under Delhi EV policy, which includes 1.5 lakh subsidy, registration, and road tax exemption. This is the highest subsidy in India and makes the total cost of ownership of an electric car in Delhi the same as a diesel car."

The government said subsidies provided on electric cars under the Delhi EV policy are reducing the total cost of ownership of electric cars by up to 30%.

Mother, son attacked by group of minors

STAFF REPORTER

A 22-year-old youth and his mother were attacked by a group of minors in west Delhi's Punjabi Bagh on Friday when the youth's parents objected to them making noise. A case has been registered, police said.

The police said that the victim, Moin, a resident of DDU camp, stated that four minors, all residents of DDU camp, were making noise and when his parents objected, they attacked the mother and the son.

Both the injured were ta-

ken to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, the police said, adding that a case has been registered.

During probe, it was revealed that all the accused are minors and are absconding. Teams have been formed to nab them, the police said.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR TOMO RIBA INSTITUTE (Society Under the Government of Arunachal Pradesh) Naharlagun-791110: Arunachal Pradesh. Ph: 0360-2350331 **ADDENDUM**

In continuation of this office Advertisement even No. dated 10/2/2021, the interview for the following posts are also to be field on 4th March, 2021 at 9.00 hrs onwards for recruitment. (1). Dean-1 Post (2). Professor, Microbiology-1 Post NB: The applicants for the above posts found eligible as per NMC orms will be telephonically intimated for appearing interview. The other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged. For nore detail please visit www.trihms.org or contact Dr. B.V.S.Murthy, OSD HR) at Mobile No. 9612484018. Email: trihmsap@gmail.com (Dr. Moji Jini), Director (TRIHMS)

'Ensure supply of treated water to public parks'

NGT directs DJB to stop extraction of groundwater for gardening purposes

STAFF REPORTER

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) to ensure supply of treated water to public parks and to stop extraction of groundwater for gardening purposes.

A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson. **Iustice** Adarsh Kumar Goel, noted that while steps were reported to have been taken, it was to be ensured that freshwater was not used for gardening purposes in pu-



velopment Authority (DDA)

and the South Delhi Munici-

pal Corporation (SDMC).

supply of such treated water with adequate pressure and wherever piped supply is not available, supply may be ensured by tankers," the The Bench added,

"The DJB may ensure

"DPCC [Delhi Pollution Control Committee]s may monitor similar action by other agencies in Delhi owning parks and by bulk users, including other municipal corporations for adopting a similar course of action to save drinking water for drinking purposes to fulfil the basic need of maximum people."

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a petition, which sought execution of a 2017 order directing the DDA and civic bodies to use treated sewage water for gardening purposes instead of groundwater.

The plea had contended that treated water should be used for maintenance of greenery in the Vasant Kunj



PUNCHKUIAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.) WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh) • JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543 • NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

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MATRIMONIAL

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

grooms. ct- 9159860877

esarao5@gmail.com

nai. Contact # 9344569990.

gobinath.tharmarajan@gmail.com

MALAYALEE VISWAKARMA(G.S) girl 37/

9446489258. 9061434972.

Hospital Administration, doing final ye-

researchers from Kerala. Contact:

Chithra, MDS Doctor working Abroad. Looking for Suitable alliance.

Ezhava Girl , Fair, Puram, Papajatham, 27/153 , BAMS, Working in

Chennai seeks Suitable Alliance. Con-

CSI CHRISTIAN Nadar Girl Fair.

TAMIL MUSLIM Girl 27/165, BE, MBA

Fair, 6Lac pa. Preferd Chennai/ abroad Settled. Ct: 6381837552

tured decent family groom. Ct:

9841715417/+91 7358449569.

ing worki 86407217

5'6"seeks suitable fair good looking working professional.Contact:94

SC AD, Hindu, B.E MBA, 25-9-89, 5'7', Kadagam Poosam, 13LPA, Well settled seeks suitable groom. Ph-

HINDU SC AD 33, BE SWE TCS 95000/

in Chennai/Bangalore Ct 9952147216

Elite Family- Seeks Groom Doctor/ Eng- 8939012419

MUDALIAR 28/166 V.Fair MBA Steel &

Metal Industry Own Gym, Elite Family Seeks Groom Busines/Eng

Fair,MBBS,MD, Forth-

seeks suitable grooms working

25/155.V

Father Business

bar.Contact:+91

Whatsapp

7397348611

Looking to 9495545852.

Ct:9448852772

INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED BRIDES WANTED

BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED

Classification common for Brides, Bridegrooms, Brides & Grooms

Assamese

Awadhi

Bengali Bhojpuri

Bihari

Chhattisgarhi English

Gujarati

Harvanvi Hindi

Kannada Kashmiri

Konkani Malayalam

Manipuri

Marathi Marwari

Nepali Oriya

Parsi Puniab

Saurashtra

Sindhi Tamil

Teluau

Tulu Urdu

Advocate

Business Defence

Doctor

Engineer Finance/ Banking

Government/ Quasi-Govt.

IAS/ Allied Services Information Technology

MBA/CA/ICWA

Cosmopolitan

Divorcee

Physically Challenged

MARRIAGE BUREAUS

WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

Bengali 33 5'2" Fair M.Tech Working CPSE in Vizag Divorcee 6 months Looking for a Vizag Based Person or wants to Relocate Caste no bar, Mobile: 7901335531

✓ GROOM NEEDED, Maithil Brahmin, Btech 2012 from Bits Pilani,Date of Birth:Nov 09, 1989 ,Time of hrs:15 mins.con- tact: 9944935625. tact:9005481209

COSMOPOLITAN

ATTRACTIVE, KIND teacher, 43, 174cm, divorced (no kids), veg, loving family, seeks educated, compartner. jdsppt@gmail.com 9345634365

PROPOSAL INVITED from professional ly qualified youth for a Hindu Ezhava girl 30 yrs, 156 cm, slim hailing from Thrissur, Kerala presently employed in USA. 9847256736

DIVORCEE

WELL CHENNAI settled 34 yr old MBA Australia Single Mother with 7 year old son, seek alliance from suitable groom Contact 9381046406

REMARRIAGE. AGE Expect- 45 to 65 A comfortable, very beautiful talented woman needs a groom (busi ness or good government job) The person should be rich, in good health. Pls avoid mediator 9600661677

TAMIL VISWAKARMA Govt Doctor Bride MD (GM) 30/167 Fair Vishagam. Seeks Doctors / Govt Officer Bride-

GOLDSMITH GIRL Surgeon 28/MS seeks HINDU TAMIL Pallan / 44 / BE Comp / other equal caste. W-app 9444563880

EZHAVA GIRL 32, 173, Ayilliyam, Mch (Surgical Gastro). Prefer PG Ct. 9444752894 Mch (Surgical Gastro Doctors. 9444183400

TIRUNELVELI SAIVA Pillai, 30yrs, MBBS., TN Govt.Doctor seeks suitable MBBS/ MD/ BDS Groom from

Brahmin. Contact: 9486901679 HINDU, 30, 5,2. Devendrakulavellalar Sadhayam, Wheatish, MBBS, MD, PG Doctor Pathology employed in private

seeks PG Doctor Groom 9488984128. VISWAKARMA 35YRS MD Govt 7305810258

MUDALIAR, 28YRS, 5'5" B.E., PGDM **Hindu, Telugu,** MD Paed 28y, Chennai, Alliance from MD / MS Doctor. Phon: 9884614168

CM YK

Ph.D seeks Educated 8973345370

HINDU/DKV 32/152 B.E. Middle Class. Divorce Seeks Suitable Groom. Caste No Bar. 94896 95984

Hindu Senguntha Mudaliyar 25 / 153 DOCTOR/ 38/ pallar/ divorcee seeks Mithunam thiruvadirai no dosam MBBS MS Gynaecology fair slim loodoctor/engineer king daughter of a Surgeon good family background Seeks upsc, tnpsc group 1 services groom. Contact : 75981 87528

MS GENL. Surgery 2nd Yr Doctor Naidu Girl from Chennai 27 Yrs 5'6" Fair B'ful Seeks PG Doctors Only (Clinical) from TN/AP/ TS#9840694410 & Email Id: Kumbam Poorattadhi IAS IPS Groom Wanted Chennai Contact: 9840887788

Looking for a Doctor Groom living in GAVARA NAIDU ME/26 Divorcee, No is-India for a Brahmin Girl Vadulam / Uthram 2nd Paadham /30/5.5"/MD Practicing in a Private Hospital Chensues seeks suitable Broad minded Groom born in1990s & well settled 9444049457/vthayalanacs@yahoo.co.in

AGAMUDAYAR MUDALIYAR, 28/167cm, BE (CS)Working as developer in a IT organization earning 75K per month, Divorcee(No Issues) seeks HINDU TAMIL Mukkulathor, Magam, Chevia at 7, 25/ 170 cm, MSC Gom, Well educated , family ori-Stat, HR Analyst Bengaluru, Seeks ented person. Contact – 9884494909/ Professionally Qualified Groom hav-

ing Chevvai at 7. Subcastes/ Intercaste acceptable # 096633 13500. PRACTISING AND successful Gynaecologist, 38 years, divorcee with a good family background seeks suitable groom, well educated and well

placed in and around Kancheepuram. Contact: 9443337606. NAIR GIRL Pooyam two dosham 167cm MCA, 1979, HSBC, never married seeks professionally qualified employed Nair boy. Email: hbalacha@gmail.com SOZHIA VELLALA 40/167 Uthratadi BE MBA empld SW Chennai Divorcee no encumbrance seeks educated groom. Subsect no bar. 9283433069/9840329160

MALTALEE VIOLANCIA (Manager in MNC, Chennai. Seeks educated & Emed family. Caste no bar, 9940507235

ployed Groom(CNB). 9445651626 / 9790739037 REQD VADAKALAI Iyengar Doctor above 30 for a Highly Employed Well Settled fair Complexioned Beautiful Girl People Broadminded Preferably Large Family need apply Ct:8925634705 MALAYALEE NAIR girl 30/167, Thiruvathira , MA,PHD, working as Asst. Professor in Central Govt. Institute Chennai seeking alliance from well employed nair boys.

EZHAVA GIRL, Chithira, 25/158cm, from a well known doctor family, Kozhikode, fair complexion, Masters in Hospital Administration, doing final ve-

Implantology., 35yrs / 163cms seeks suitable, good natured & well settled groom from amicable family. Contact: 8124583002. SOZHIYA VELLALAR 25/B.E/ PGDM/Worksing/5'6"/Wheatish/ Poosam/ Kadagam/ Seeks from well qualified & settled family same community. ar LLB. Looking for a groom preferably from doctors in and around Malabar. 9446782433. MUDALYIAR, BDS., Fellowship in Implantology., 35yrs / 163cms seeks suitable, good natured & well settled VISWAKARMA-EZHAVA girl, 34/154, Uthram, Nilambur, M.Sc., M.Phil., Pur-suing PhD in Chennai, seeks suitable HINDU THULUVA Vellalar 27/ 160 cms alliance from well-educated and pro-fessionally qualified grooms preferably

Meenam/ Uthirattathi B Tech(IT) Software Engineer in WIPRO 6-7 Lacs Per Annum Seeks Groom Caste No Bar. Ct:9566000597

HINDU NADAR, BE, Age 27years , 165cm , S/W , 1.25Lakhs PM ,Bride Groom Wanted K.A Raman Nadar w-KANNUR, NAMBIAR Girl, 42/165,

MUDALIAR 24 MBBS., MRCH. Transport Services(Bus) & Hoteliers Family & Commrl. Properties. WApp: 7305491610

TULUVA VELLAL MUDALIAR Good looking Girl 33(Uthirattathy, Meenam, Ph.D(Physics), Employed, Parents Seeks Alliance from First and Un-REQD USA Settled Godly Man for USA married Bachelor Bridegroom Aged 33 – 36 Yrs, Employed , Caste No Bar. Contact: After 7 PM: 9940840760, 7550245659 Employed Born Again/Christian Gud looking Girl 34vrs/162.

MARUTHUVAR, 24YRS, B.Tech. Barani, 155cms, Fair Girl, Chen-Barani, 155cms, Fair Girl, Chennai, Seeks suitable Bride Groom Ct. 9283216911

Good Looking, 03–04–1986 born / 152cm / M.Sc M.Phil , working as Assistant Professor in a Reputed AD 25/163 BHMS Doctor working in Women's College, Mount Road, Chenpvt. hospital seeks Tamil-cultured Educated Well-settled Dr./Engr Both Parents Doctors (Private) , Suitable Alliance, Employed / Govt. Employed Groom in & around Settled in Chennai / With Clean Chennai. 9444220872

Habits from Same Community. Contact: 9841182514 tor. Divorced. Seeks Well Settled ALLIANCE INVITED from Christian parents for 25 MBBS Doctor Central Govt. MD/MS/MBBS prfd. Whatsapp: 9442532552/ danielebenezer1951@ MUTHURAJA AMBALAKARAR 28 /

172 Rohini, BE (ECE) Seeks Pro Qlfd. employed groom. 89034 18219

SEEKING TAMIL / Telugu speaking Professionally settled Groom (Age 39–42yrs) for a Telugu Naidu Girl 38/162 B.E.MBA,SWE working in US. send BHP to:yamini.hari@gmail.com

DIVORCEE, 34YRS with a daughter, BORN AGAIN Groom from Nadar Christian Family is invited for a Smart Girl 31/ 165cm/ MBA attending AG Church Employed in Hyderabad Cost tact: 9944935605

Ilyr Paediatrician @ Bangalore. Parents residing @ Chennai seeks Veg family. Whatsapp: Tamil Muslim 25/167 MBBS MD Seeks prof qualified groom. Ct 8220042091 mdullahsafi@gmail.com

✓ VEG CHETTIAR, Bharani 29F B.Tech, QA Analyst–MNC Chennai. Di-vorcee & Break in few days not TAMIL MUSLIM Girl 30/163cm MIS, Lives in Vancouver, Canada PR Status. Seeking Allaiance from a Suitable Groom living in Vancouver / Intend moving to Vancouver. Ct. CNB.Veg.prfd.Mb-9444230534.Ml:balu thiru.ce@gmail.com.

Wanted Groom born 1983 - 1986 ELITE SOZHIA VELLALA PILLAI 36/ Christian (BC) AD / PR with Degree 163cm, MBA FAIR Visakam 16 lacs Employed Pvt / PSU / IT for BE. Bride.

p.a Chennai seeks SWE Groom, CNB rasnan1948@gmail.com Ct: 9884607858 TAMIL MUSLIM, Chennai, 29 yrs, S/w

PENTECOST 23/170 BA (Eng Litt) B.Ed., working 30K wheatish beautiful seeks well educated, good na-Engr, fair & slim seeks suitable groom. Ct. 9551518696 VANIYA CHETTIAR, M.Sc, 40/157, Karthigai, Govt.Officer, Chennai seeks RC CHRISTIAN 36 yrs BE, MS in USA equal Qlfn employed Boy 9486507399. HINDU SC PR Kongu 36, MBBS DCH

Software Eng seeks suitable BE or MS(USA),SWE/other Professional Bridegroom working in USA/India, MARTHUVAR, FAIR SLIM 25 yrs, B.E.

> PILLAI 25 MBBS 165cm Chennai seeks PG Doctor from Pillai/Mudaliar Ct: Geetham 9884858014

> 25, FAIR, M.S.IN U.S. Working in a reputed firm in Bangalore, seeks settled groom below 30. CNB 9489935653

Works in Public Sector Bank seeks HINDU MARUTHUVAR 25yrs girl MCom from the same caste equal age, Computer Engg. foreign deputation emwants educated employed groom below 30yrs Ct 9884491616

parents Hindu AD / Vellalar Set-tled in Chennai. Elder son/ Brokers excuse. matri9757@gmail.com Busines/Eng PILLAI/MUDALIAR NV Visakam-4, 25/ BALIJA, 1993, Magam, M.Phil, Ph.D.

155, B.E. Employed. No Dhosam. 9600041705 (MBA), MNC, earning above 18 L/p.a seeks professionally qualified, employed Groom. Sub-sect. no bar. Ct. 7550194136, 9444901994.

Suitable Groom IT.Call:9962601864/ Seeks infosys, Preferably

HINDU TAMIL Doctor Surgeon 32/158 well to do Edu. In seeks Doctors/ Highly qualified/ Properties. Seeks seeks Doctors/ Highly qualified/ decent well settled Business famigroom aged 33-36 yrs. Ct: 9884202884

sect Welcome. 94865 31194/86374

MUDALIAR 31/165 VERY Fair Girl B 9486951960/9790824752

INDUMATHY.S 39 F/163cm, BE Seeks Pillai Karuneegar (Caste no bar) Groom Age 39–41 Call 97910 08014 Share Horoscope ramanishan1010@

nial alliance from a well quali-fied and settled partner Caste no fied and settled partner Caste no bar. Contact: 9899514993, rcjiloha@ hotmail.com

7760516769

Contact: 6366448344

ness background seeks Bridegroom similar Industrial Family of the same community for their daughter aged 26 Yrs MBA @ Liverpool Email horoscope to pvsrao79@gmail.com

HINDU SC PR 28/170 BSc, well Sett- Diamond Merchant/Mirs. Family led Family Karaikudi. Seeks well Edu- seeks handsome Groom. WAPp. 9940284235

WApp:9884300680

ing S/w seeks professionally qualified groom. India/ Abroad. tied groom. 9444991806 KAMMA M.TECH well settled Fair slim

KSHATRIYA RAJU 23/ 157 B.Tech work-

BALIJA 25/160, M.Tech, Swathi, Thulam, Fair, well settled. Seeks Educated, Fair, well settled bride-

WE ARE looking for a suitable alliance for our daughter,27 years, 5'4'f,air,slim,BBA LLB and working with a reputed MNC at Mumbai. Interested families may kindly contact at 09934176636 or at subby00.0e40e0@mmil.com

subby90.pedep@gmail.com

GROOM WANTED aidu 26 yrs / 170 cm / B.Arch m / Beautiful / Very well to do Seeks - well qualified, Cosmopolitan, Elite and Decent family Chennai based. 70949 23123 / 93442 42541

Naidu Elite Family

uthiradam 4 magaram

9841743266

7092143266

9791111321/9445623800

Good

9884587114

9495519229, 8547259809

Settled Groom.Preferably from Chen-

nai &Bangalore.Contact 9448495448

mands please. aghouse022@gmail.com

Doctorate in Engg (Ph.D.), Senior Scientist, traditional family seeks Religious / Spiritual Doctor bride (MBBS / G) from respectable family in TN. Ct: +91-96297 77513.

CSI CHRISTIAN 28/170Cms 5 ft 7 inch 70kg–Senior Engineer Non IT har) Only MNC Chennai–12L pa–Seeks educated bride–BC Preferred–Ct: Parents 82301612/47 23.02.90/165 fair slim MBBS Dr. TN Govt 8939161247 hennai seeks Dr, Govt

CSI, 28, 178 cm, BE (MBA) MNC. lass-A officer, Business fearing God **Groom Any naidu** drjchris02@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN PARENTS invite suitable proposal for their son living in London, BE, MBA (UK), aged 44, Godlearing, smart, working for a glob-al firm earning GBP 100,000 p.a., and also overseeing family busi-ness in India and the UK. Please contact our daughter at email: ✓ TELUGU BRAHMIN girl 1984/btec/v fair/swe/required suitably em sherin.gt@outlook.com / mob: +91 9499007199.

fair/swe/required suitable any language RC. NADAR-BOY, 38 years, Manager, Own House Chennai, Rs.1,50,000 Per Month. No Brokers. Contact: 8667517487

CSI / SC / 26yrs / 172cm Wheatish / B.Sc / Salary 25,000 seeks suitable Bride.

URDU MUSLIM Labbai 29yrs/150cm, B.E Software Engineer/1.3 lakh PM. Seeks Software Engineer Groom KA & 9841258349 TN State only. Contact: 9442669961. CHRISTIAN NADAR 35 yrs Blind work ing with a leading company seeks Bride, Remarriage /Partially blind SEEKING PROFESSIONALS for Urdu Mus

lim MBBS Govt Doctor Age34,Fair, Height 158cm,Chennai,Ct:9171806480/ also welcome contact 8220762634 9840582124: javid786@gmail.com WE ARE looking for an Alliance for our Son aged (32) years, height (5' 7"), B.Com graduate, Sunny Urdu Muslim, residing in Chennai. Looking our Family Business. The Bride should hail from a Decent, Fair, Graduate, Non-working Person Should he argued (23 to 28). SMU 24/168 B.Arch Working, Fair Good looking.Affluent Parents from Bangalore Seek High Educated Wel

SMU PARENTS Chennai seek suitable, professionally qualified and settled groom under 33 years, with clean habits, for daughter fair 27years 5'2" M.Phil working. No de-productions on the production of the product MUSLIM, AGE 43. M.Com. Well Sett led in Dubai, 2nd Marriage, S Bride Wanted. Ph: 8056177826 SUNNI MUSLIM Tamil boy 30yrs/

175cm/BE MS(France) l'less Divorcee seeks professionally qlfd girl from re spectable family. Chennai 9597557582 SM URDU speaking, unmarried, M.Com, B.Ed, Government Employed in higher Post 42/160 cm. Seeks SMU TAMIL YADAVA (Caste No Bar) 26 / 178 cm, fair, handsome/ MS (USA), employed in Seattle, HIB, Seeks grooms of same Sect. Kerala / Tamil-nadu. Divorcees please excuse. Mob. rofessional bride from wel tled family. ct: rkamal2k1@ yahoo.com, 6374476302.

> MBA IIM graduate, Program Manager, Chennai, 28/178, Sozhiya Vellalar, Fair groom seeks slim, goodlooking, working bride from Pillai/ Mudaliyar, B.E/PG from reputed institutions. Ph: 9840002359/9994226490 stitutions. 9994226490

HINDU OBC, MBA, Age:43, Specialist
- IT, Monthly salary Rs:1 Lakh, Legally
Divorced Bridegroom seeks Bride. Caste No bar. Contact: 9865195031.

THULUVA VELLALA Mudaliyar 27/MBA settled in Chennai, Working in a well established Company. Seeks suitable vegetarian Bride Cont: BRAHMIN, 27, 165 cms, pursuing Masters in 9176368282 AD(PR) Hindu Tamil 4-12-1984 / Ashwini / 178cm. M.Sc., M.Phill., Lecturer private, Tiruchirapalli. Only child

of a retired SM, Nationalised Bank. Seeks suitable Bride. 99448 49049 HINDU AD PR, 38/163 BE, SWE, Bengaluru (20 Lac / PA) well settled seeks suitable employed Bride. Caste

No Bar. Native Tuticorin dist settled in Bengaluru. 9480030312, 7676532081 VANIYAKULA KSHATRIYA Doctor M.D,

D.M, Slim Fair good looking 44/175 Own Hospital 4 lac/ pm well settled clean habits innocent divorce seeks bride unmarried/ Divorcee fair & slim Doctor or PG/ UG from good family background below 38expectation. Contact: 9840619514 Chennai

HINDU NADAR 56(B.COM) Ist Marriage Own Business & House @Chennai First/Divorcee/Widow Bride Ok

COIMBATORE, MBA 37 yrs, legally divorced, no kids, 7.5 lakh per annum MNC job. No horoscope. CNB. Expects qualified girl. Call: 94430 60030, 98431 69594.

PRAVEEN 31, BE , Yadava, Deputy Man 70kg 1lac/month, No demands, innocent divorcee 2 month marriage, Email : hereiam_hi@yahoo.com Ph: 9629012248 ager, Pvt. Ltd,Chennai, Salary 60K PM, No Brokers, CT 7304465699 ISAIVELLALAR PILLAI 32/172cm

B.E.Mech Automobile Co. Chennai. Seeks Good Looking Graduate Girl VISWAKARMA BOY 39 Yrs, B.E/ MBA,Fitness Trainer / Coach,Self Employed,Issueless Divorcee from

Chennai Seeks Bride Below 38 Yrs 9384471588 / 9442132774 HINDU VANNIAR 37/Tiruvonam, ma-

gara rasi, B.Pharm, PG (Diet), PhD, PG(Yoga Therapy) MLT, MD(Acu), Teetotaller, Widower, Govt.officer 2.5 L/pm own 6 acre plot and 2500 sqft area hospital at Kallakurichi seeks bride to look after his hospital, Caste, Religion no bar. Contact: 9865502670, 9500575834

NAIR DOCTOR (M.D.S) 44Years Divorced Well Settled in Chennai years, Good looking, fair, 5ft 11 years, Good looking, fair, 5ft 11 inch, M.Arch working in US holding H1B Visa and has applied for green card under investment program. Our son has a rare genetic disorder which impedes him from fathering a child naturally while his all other functional requirements are in order including his physical appearance. Interested parents/Girls may write in complete confidence NAIR, CHATHAYAM 28/160 Grad Sr.Tm

Malayalam Own Business Middle Class, Widow/ Divorce Ok : 9445776071

ganathan. S, No.15, Doctors Enclave, KALPAKKAM.603102. Ct:94444

TAMIL MUSLIM GROOM, 30/173 cm, Chettiyar 46 BA Unmarried Business ROYAL MUDALIYAR 27 / B.E (US), En-Looking any BC only CT: 94433-19722 whatsapp 86789-15522, 99940-35122.

> SAIVA PILLAI 36,BE/MBA-MNC(Salary-Lac above) Bangalore Divorcee Lac above) Bangalore Divorcee BRAHMIN,40, ASSOCIATE Project Man-eeks Bride 1st Marriage ager HCL Technologies Madurai, (ThirunelveliSaiva Pillai ct- 9344701672/

MUDALIAR 29, BE, MBA, 20 Lacs P. A, 178 cm, Smart Look Seeks Suitable Bride CNB Ct. 7200866346/ 8778514465

HANDSOME NADAR 32, 5'11", LLB, rewell-to-do biz family seeks compat bride. jdsppt@gmail.com

BRAHMIN AGE: 53, B.E, M.B.A, Central Govt Officer, Divorce, Caste, Religion no Bar. Cont: 98409 61998.

MUDALIAR HANDSOME 27/B.Tech well settled BusinessClass Metal &Hotel Industry Seeks Bride. WApp 9940284235

SMART EDUCATED Girl (any communi-

SMAH EDUCATED clin (any communi-ty), brought up in a professional environment in metro cities, of around 26-30, 165 plus for a pro-fessional (30, 182) with Engg + MBA, working in a leading multi na-Ct: tional firm ,now based in Chennai. Family well settled in Chennai with professional background. Interested persons please WhatsApp: 9176639970 kshatriyacdm1991@gmail.com

> G.SIVARAJ, 36 /167,B.E., Pillai, Senior Consultant Abudhabi Salary 60 L/yr. Caste No Bar. 9894114549. MUDALIAR PHD Research Scientist UK

son. Should be around (23 to 26) years. Height (5' 4" to 5' 7").Ct: 9789988927. SAIVA PILLAI CNB MSc MBA compa ny owner 4Lakhs/Month 10crores pro perty Unmarried Only son 46years oriented Brahmin Girl with clean veg

> **THEVAR 42**/170 DECE Business Settled Chennai Seeks Bride Decent Family. 9444405590/ smmalini15@ gmail.com BRAHMIN 41/5.3 IT Software

SOWRASTRA 35, Astham 1, Kanni, B.Com, MBA, Manager, Pvt. Chennai, Pm Suitable Bride Wanted 9444735240 DIVORCEE, 55, MBA, Govt.Officer, well Settled, Seeks Partner from Good Family CNB, 8778514465/

7200866346 MUDALIAR 44 BE 6Ft Uthiram Chennai Seeks Educated Good Looking Bride below 40Yrs. Ct: Geetham 9884858014

WANTED A Hindu Bride age Between 45 to 55 for a Well Settled Person Residing in Chennai Ct.7395951839 HINDU NADAR 38/178 BE MBA Divorced Well to do Family Fair

HINDU NADAR Educated well to do family, seeks alliance from a cultured family for their son 31/182 B.E Fair Complexion Asst. commandant in CRPF Group "A" Police Officer Native of Thoothukkudi Dist.

settled in Chennai from 1975. Ct:

9840790190 AGE 51 Hindu Mudaliyar Industrial-Divorced. Seeks any Mudaliyar Divorcee /Widower Ok. 86109

MUDALIYAR 27 / B.D.S., Own Star Hotels , Resorts , [Business All over India] High Net Worthy Fami-Seeks Suitable Bride Call 9940284235 IYER BOY 20-12-1988 Bharatwajam 30s), teetotaller, post grad, unmarried,

Barl, MBA, Family Business: Good car seeks bride-working / not wrkg, Earning. Looking For Suitable Bride veg, 12th / Dip /graduate from cultured from Economically Weaker Brahmin background (poor /middle class family Families. Bride Can Be a Graduate fine), between age 34-40. No and Willing to be a Home maker in a demands. 2nd marriage cases can be good Joint Family: For Further Details considered. WhatsApp:09028225 299.

Mail to anugraha1957@Gmail.Com / Plz Email BHP: smwed@mail.com 63834 88021

to others. Contact: 91766 22449.

VANNIAKULA KSHATRIYAR, Rohini. Rishabam, 44, Landlord & Lawyer, MBA, ML, Reputed & well settled Same caste, Degree & PG. 9884406866

PILLAI 29/185CM working in US H1B BALIJA NAIDU Hastham 31/172, MS Visa. Seeks Bride Staying in US USA, Design Engr, INTEL, USA Hillswith H1B Visa/Green Card. 9144- boro, H1B Visa Elite, 140K USD P.A

suitable Bride, Divorcee or Widow, Caste no Bar Contact: 9488070659. Wanted Homely Bride for Groom with Clean Habits, Hindu, 34, Vegitarian, Chitra-Kanni, Chennai, Private firm, 6L Naidu Family - Upper middle class

/annum, Ct. 9566234554.

Mudaliar, 40, BE, Kidney transplanted, wants Hindu Vegetarian employed bride caste no bar Ct: 9344284888 / ramadasvimal@gmail.com

ty / others. Please send Horoscope along with Bio data to + 919443233977 TAMIL SAIVA CHETTIAR, 37, Punarin poosam, B.E., Chennai based, widower with 5 year girl child, IT Pro-fessional, employed in USA seeks suitable bride from veg family –

Aged 28, Fair & Beautiful seeks Bride Groom from the same communi-

HINDU SC PR 33/172 BE API Inspec-SECOND MARRIAGE Age: 45, BA, Tamil, tor Petroleum Industry 25LPA well settled family Trichy seeks well educated good looking Bride 9865350317

SAIVAPILLAI 28/178 Pooradam SWE Seeks Chennai Emp. Bride 9600050802

only

gineering College [Chennai] Polytechnic Colleges, Commercia Complex [T.Nagar] ,Well to do Seeks Suitable Bride Ct: 7305491610

seeks anybrahmin girl, 9487851429 IYER VADAMA Thiruvathirai 56Yrs DEE Unmarried Smart Healthy Own Business Chennai 40K/PM Seeks blw 48Yrs Prfrd Widow / Unmarried / Slight defect Pure Veg, Orthadox (Divorcee / Brkrs Excuse)

IYER VADAMAL Vathulam Poosam Kadagam, 28/6'2", MS(SE), Em-ployed in an MNC, Very Good Salary. Seeking Employed Girl, 9884387334/8825562817

Ct:9840846524

IYER DIVORCEE Boy Vadoolam Thiru vonam 46/168 Director IT MNC Seeks lyer/lyengar Graduate Girl Di-vorcee/ Widow without Issues 9841942915

IYER KAUSHIKA Seeking any Brahmin Empld girl for swathi 30, 182cms slim MNC B'lore. 15 lakh well settled decent family 9380680289 IYER BOY, 42, Divorcee with no issue 170, BTECH, PGDBM, Running a well established business in Kochi. Looking for BRIDE from Brahmin community.

- 9544 400963 Fmail

gsmatri2000@gmail.com

IYER BHARADHWAJAM Uthiram 39vrs 180cms, BE, HCL Chennai Rs.19 L/Annum, Own House at Chennai, seeks any Brahmin Girl. Ct: 09445222214 IYER, VADAMA, 40YEAR. Self

Employed Chartered Accountant

Right leg slightly short. He can walk and drive vehicle normally. Need suitable Bride. Call - 9994934568 29/183 Seeks Well Educated Bride Decent Family Ct: 9176620067/68

TAR ASHWINI, Udithya Gothram, Jar 75 born, 25L PA, Divorced (uncon-

> rajeshvenkataramani4@gmail.com GOVT. EMPLOYED (Puducherry Seeks Brahmin Bride, Age: 40 TO 47, No Expectations. Call: 94869 05156 63795 57959 / 0413-2244052.

Sal:80k in Chennai. Seeks Any Brah-min Girl. Call 2–5pm 9445919926, 9444849926 TAMIL IYER boy 85 born 6ft tall MBA working in Qatar as marketing officer seeking alliance. Girls from same community or southern part of India. Girl should be mini-

Whattsapp +97470911141 WANTED UG/PG QUALIFIED **BRIDE FROM TAMILNADU** FOR OCTOBER 1984

BORN UNMARRIED

CHETTIAR BOY BELONGING TO A RICH / AFFLUENT FAMILY IN MADURAI

HINDU TAMIL VANNIYAR 29 vrs / 5'10", Fair and Handsome

B.Tech, Car Design Engineer, 12 Lacs per year, Chennai, well to do Family Seeks very Fair, Tall and Beautiful Girl

Ph. 95000 <u>69325</u> Brahmin Palakkad Iver bov. Sankriti gotra 170cm, pious, handsome, looks much younger (late

AGE: 34. Height: 5.5. Working in USA. Caste: Thevar. Bride preferably from same community but open ably from same community but open lands. Seeks educated Bride from lands. Seeks educated Bride from

den) Puratathi , Working in Sweden. Send BHP bk72009@gmail.com 8220014155

9884457973 ARYA VYSYA (41 Yrs) USA Pharmacist 150K, Un-Married Looking For Educated BRIDE y VISA HOLDER. Contact

Ph: 91 9840315727.

seeks Alliance for their Son 28/164CM, Star: Pooradam - Dhanush Rasi; Working in Ericsson Bangalore as Business Data Analyst, Father: VP Wipro Technologies: Working Girl in IT. Sub-caste: No Bar Email Id: ravichandar.saketharaman@gmail.com, Contact: 9845064780 VANNIYA GOUNDER MD Radiologist

HINDU TELUGU Devanga 33 BSc , HI. 6' Railway job at Erode , house at CBE, Prefers Suitable bride Caste No Bar Mob 8144250566 BALIJA 27/175, MBA, Moolam

Thanusu, Fair, Business, well set-tled. Seeks Educated, Fair, well settled bride having Raghu Kethu 8825463854 / 9840814337

DKV 31/173/73 Hastam Wheatish Deputy Manager in PSU Bank seeks bride from educated family. 9940507235

| Altia Deputy Manager in PSU Bank seeks bride from startness gar Ct: 9940311676 | Seeks bride from startness affiliation. | Seeks bride

BALIJA NAIDU [Own Jewelleries] 27 / M.Tech ., Elite Family Seeks Bride Ct: 7305491610 BALIJA NAIDU, Network Engineer, 26 175 cm/ Fair/ M.tech/ Salary

PARENTS OF South Indian Brahmin Bride working only in USA can contact for Engineer 41 years Telugu Groom skngomathi@gmail.com THEMOHINDU DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries and satisfy themselves about the authenticity

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HINDU ADIDRAVIDAR Kongu Parayar 29 YADAVA 33, MBA, Wheatish, Working@ KAMMA NAIDU with Industrial/ Busi-

VIJAYA.P, 19.9.92 BE Wipro Chennai 8L Per Annum Mirugaseerisham 2nd Part Pure Vegetarian Thanjavur Saiva Pillai Seeking Resident and Work in Chennai Born on or After Divorcee, Seeks Well Settlet Sep 88 Well Qualified and Employed Groom, Contact: 9361613388 Chennai Only Preferable. Ct

cated Good Looking Groom same Caste or Caste no bar. Contact-9480842649/9483134055.

THULUVAVELLALA ARCOT Mudaliar 28/ 168 / BDS Kirthikigai Fair Good looking Girl Well- to-do Seeks Pro-fessionally Qualified Groom sub

Tech(IT) Working in MNC Chennal seeks well educated (BE/MS Engg) good looking BOY working in Chennai/Abroad.Preferrably IT Professional. PI Contact 9677235022/

gmail.com CONVENT EDUCATED 85, 5'5" Fair, Grad mass comm., PG Dip Film Direction FTII , MA Scrit writing UK , Freelancer, SC girl seeks matrimo-

MUDALIAR, 22/162, Fair, BE, SWE, MNC, CHE, 7 Lac.PA, Fa-Principal, Well to do, CNB. 7299576644, 7299576666

ELITE BRIDES WANTED

pursuing Masters in Medicine, Lives in Chennai, Father

is a Doctor. Family is affluent. Looking for a compatible

and well educated match from any community

MUDALIYAR, 34, 180 cms, Professional, Masters in Engineering. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Doctor. Family is affluent. Looking for a well educated match

VELLALAR/CASTE NO BAR. 32 178 cms

Businessman, Masters in Management, Lives in Trichy

Belongs to an affluent business family with a good net worth. Looking for a well educated match from the

CHETTIAR/CASTE NO BAR, 29, 183 cms, Student

same community, Contact: 6366448345

from the same community. Contact: 6366448346

NAIDU 23/B.COM Fair beautiful from

NAIDU 26/MBA Only Daughter, Fair well to do Edu. Instit /Comrl. /Comrl. Groom.

27 163 MNC Bengaluru 13lpa divorced within a month seeks groom from well educated decent family TN/Bengaluru Ct: 7045638920

Contact: 9894440200 groom. Co 9840814337

Exclusive matchmaking service for the elite From BharatMatrimony

BRAHMIN/CASTE NO BAR, 28, 175 cms BRAHMIN, 33, 165 cms, Consultant, Masters Management, Lives in USA, Father is a Chartered Professional, Masters in Engineering, Lives in USA Accountant. Looking for a compatible and well educated match from the same community. Contact: Father is a working Professional. Looking for a well educated match. Contact: 6366448343 6366448343 MUDALIYAR/CASTE NO BAR, 30, 180 cms, Doctor

> CHETTIAR/CASTE NO BAR, 29, 158 cms Managing Director, Masters in Marketing. Lives in Coimbatore. Father is an affluent Businessman with a good net worth. Looking for an affable and well

> Engineering. Lives in Chennai. Family is affluent with a good net worth. Looking for a well educated match from the same community, Contact: 6366448344

oursuing Medicine from a reputed Institute. Lives in Engineering, Lives in Chennai, Father is retired, Family Coimbatore. Father is an affluent Businessman with a good net worth. Looking for a suitable well educated is financially well off. Looking for a suitable well educated match. Contact: 6366448345

COIMBATORE MNC manager 1976 5'8 HINDU, 35/175. IT. 25 Lakh PA.

Call for Free Consultation © 99629 76000 www.elitematrimony.com

9677776525

ow or Divorcee Bride Ct: 73587

MAY' 88 , born , Hindu ,MS Germany , working in Mumbai. Atheist, liberal, dog lover, looking for similar strong, liberal, independent, career woman, dog lover .Caste , religion no bar. 79001 87830

PQM 4 h'some SC boy 29 5'8.5 MS

BE MECH Handsome 32/178 well set-

yrs of age (tall, slim, v.fair, virtuous) from educated upper

caste family for a Tamil– Cosmopolitan MD doctor pursuing SS–2nd year at Kochi (6'1, 29 yrs,

Mudaliar Veg CNB 38/172 Fair Good-

ear at Kochi (6'1, 29 yrs, humble). Parents: 93425-

ELITE MUDALIYAR 22 / M.B.A., Own

Spinning Mills , Textile Mills Coimbatore], Fair , Rich Famil Seeks Suitable Groom Ct:9940284235 WANTED TAMIL Vadagalai iyenga bride groompreferably allopathic doctor/Dental surgeon for girl of same sect fair complexion Kausika gothram Pooradam 2nd paadam 25yea old165cm dental surgeon MDS professionally well trained.09444194705 varsham _35@yahoo.co.in

lyer Koundinaya Anusham 5ft8in Jan1983 BE/MBA Employed Seeks well placed Educated Brahmin Boy 8884395223. BRAHMIN IYER (Gurukkal) Bharadwa ja, Arudra, 26, 54 very fair B.Tech, PM MNC Chennai, 12Lpm, seek

ing suitable groom from South Indian Brahmin family, CT 8106198440, 9052224838,rohineesh.s99@gmail.com SEEKING ALLIANCE for our daughter May'87 born, height 5.6, Hindu tamil iyengar Brahmin, Bharatwaj Gothram, with good family values and tradition. Currently working in Denmark, holding Australian PR, HINDU SC PR Kongu 36, MBBS DCH Doctor, working in Govt Hospital seeks suitable groom. Ct: 94436 80973 some bridegroom with two to three suitable groom. Ct: 94436 80973 some bridegroom with two to three years difference, similar back-ground hailing from decent family HINDU NADAR girl, 41, 152, Teacher, widow with 7yr old son, caste no bar, 9789240521 ground and clean character. Iyer or Iyengar . Willing to settle in India/abroad. Send profile with photo at the mail ID santhanarasimhan@gmail.com Contact 9558814378

> WANTED PG QUALIFIED BUSINESSMAN GROOM FROM CHENNAI / BANGALORE / COIMBATORE FOR MAY 1989 BORN UNMARRIED CHETTIAR GIRL BELONGING TO

> > **TELUGU**

PQM contact 9444674942.

looking Software Masters Reputed Family seeks Matching Bride Mobile : 9840054382 after 6 pm 152cm, M.Com/B.Ed Pursing, Chennai Seeks Educated Employed Groom (Un-married), Caste No Bar. Ct:

v.fair, 29547

Medicine. Lives in Thiruvananthapuram. Father is a Chartered Accountant. Looking for a well educated match from the same community. Contact

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

educated match. Contact: 6366448346 MUDALIYAR, 25, 165 cms, Professional, Bachelors in

NADAR, 27, 168 cms, Professional, Bachelors in

BRIDES WANTED

54 YRS Young Energetic Working in Reputed Concern Seeks 40/45yrs Widgen Gowda, M.Com. 26, vrs. 6', V. ga Gowda, M.com 26 yrs, 6', V. Fair, 7 Lacs PA, Own House ,Teeto-taler. Prefered Educated & Em-ployed Girl. Ph : 9444067325

fearing, smart, working for a global firm earning GBP 100,000 p.a., and also overseeing family business in India and the UK. Please (US) IT Engineer in NewYork seeks
US working girl. Caste/ Religion
no bar. Whatsapp 9953612328
#vijaymohan07@hotmail.com contact our daughter at email: sherin.gt@outlook.com / mob: sherin.gt@outlook.com

9499007199

CHRISTIAN PARENTS invite suitable

proposal for their son living in London, BE, MBA (UK), aged 44, God-

tled F-Hindu Mudaliar/ M-Anglo Indian RC seeks bride good looking 27-32yr Hindu/ Christian/ Inter Re-Seeks Suitable Bride. Ct: ligion Ph: 9940418934/ chrisann9@

NEED A PG doctor bride below 29 Ldr CTS 7L/PA Chennai Settled yrs of age (tall, slim, v.fair, Seeks Edu Bride. 044-26536946/ 9840651618 EZHAVA/32/ 186 Cms., B Com., MBA

> 26/5.5, Bharani, Mesham, B.E., S/W MNC Chennai, seeks suitable Mad-hwa, Employed bride preferably from Chennai, Whatsapp: 9940147926 Email: krishlaw2011@gmail.com

HINDU MALAYALI Viswakarma Boy BE MBA (S'pore) 30/180 Bangalore TAMIL MUSLIM 28/175cms MCh seeks
MBBS completed/PG student bride.
Modern, pious & small family

Dased Intercaste paremage employed in AP at present, well settled seeks
Educated Malayali Bride, Ct:
09480183919/pbpbmon@gmail.com

(UK) Fair tall and Handsome Vishakam Dy Manager Sales in a Ltd Co., Chennai, Seeking Suitable Eployed Bride. Contact 9003041149

PARKAVAKULAM UDAIYAR 33/178cm, BE

6385124111

mum graduate tall good looking. We Prabhakargatar@outlook.com

from well Respected Family from the Same Community

decent family willing to relocate to Netherlands. Contact: 9444403745 NAIDU, 26/180CM, BTech, MS (Swe-

Fair Bride 9840407738/ HINDU PILLAI, 42, 30,000 p.m seeks

yrs/ 175 cm/ Fair/ willedin Galla, 1.3L per month. Only Son, Own House and Property. 9790777700

Govt, Asst. Manager, Insurance, from Veg Pillai / Chettiar Salem. 90 thousands per month. Ran- 9840012011

9025246259/

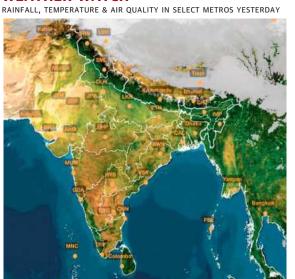
MUDALIAR, 27/170 Smart BF MS Design Engineer/ MNC/70000.PA, Elite, 50Cr, CNB. 7299576644, TAMIL IYER girl in London 29/167, MSc Fin, Magam, Kaushika, seeks groom from same sect. Age 30–32 yrs working in UK or Singapore. Ct MUDALIAR /26/174. B.E./ L&T INFOTECH, Chennai. VISAGAM - FIRST A RICH / AFFLUENT FAMILY IYENGAR GROOM aged 40 yrs 5'9" Handsome MBBS doctor 28/180cm tall BE, MBA, earning 24 LPA seeks only son, well-to-do family. Seeks graqualified bride from same community. Earlier marriage annulled as 96 Kuli. 099390 77556 / 097675 44400 PADHAM. Seeks employed bride from reputed organization, preferably Chennai. Contact – +91 9445179398 / 7299576666 CHRISTIAN AD Girl 25yrs/ 167cm CHETTIAR VEG Bharani 28/180 MS USA MBBS (Govt., Cbe) good looking. Seeks Doctor / any Govt (IAS/IPS/IFS) 9176981598 Engr, working in MNC USA, NC H1B Visa Elite. 110k USD PA. Seeks Good PROFESSIONAL GROOM for only daughter 29/160 M.E.,Ph.D.,(BME) for ion-consummated ramsnuptials@ Looking & Upper Middle Class Bride groom, Ct: 9578815447, 9442353301 MUDALIAR, 30/170, B.E., Central amail.com. MADHWA DESISTHA, Sandilya Gothra,

LOURING FOR allialize from considerable for succession and the family for our Son, divorcee aged 43/5'8", residing in Chennai, MSc.IT.

Should be around 30-40 yrs. Contact 35 years, MBA, IT Manager, Chennai. CT – 7397379685.

Rasi, Handsome Boy Seeks Bride Education Carlot (and the family) cated & Decent family, CNB Ct. 9003117259 thangavel.balasubramania m@gmail.com M ND-NDE

WEATHER WATCH



Forecast for Sunday: Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh. Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	34.4	22.2	Kozhikode	–	34.6	24.3
Ahmedabad	–	34.9	20.3	Kurnool	–	37.8	21.8
Aizawl	–	26.0	11.7	Lucknow	–	33.6	17.7
Allahabad		33.3	15.8	Madurai	–	36.5	23.1
Bengaluru		33.8	19.0	Mangaluru	–	34.6	24.2
Bhopal	–	35.5	15.4	Mumbai	–	34.6	20.8
Bhubaneswar	–	40.6	19.0	Mysuru	–	33.0	18.4
Chandigarh	3.4	29.6	18.8	New Delhi	–	31.7	17.8
Chennai	–	33.0	23.0	Patna	–	33.0	18.0
Coimbatore	–	36.1	21.7	Port Blair	–	30.4	21.6
Dehradun	–	30.5	16.3	Puducherry	–	31.8	21.2
Gangtok	14.8	11.2	10.6	Pune	–	36.3	17.1
Goa		33.9	22.0	Raipur	–	36.4	18.7
Guwahati		28.4	17.6	Ranchi	–	33.5	16.4
Hubballi		34.0	22.0	Shillong	–	23.0	12.0
Hyderabad		35.8	20.0	Shimla	5.8	17.6	7.6
Imphal		28.8	11.1	Srinagar	9	4.8	2.8
Jaipur	–	33.8	21.4	Thiruvananthapuram	–	34.2	25.1
Kochi	–	32.2	25.8	Tiruchi	–	36.5	20.2
Kohima		19.8	10.0	Vijayawada	–	35.8	19.6
Kolkata		35.8	19.8	Visakhapatnam		31.0	24.6
(Rainfall data i	in mm;	tempera	ature in	Celsius)			

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	co	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	37	.78	37	73	.162	
Bengaluru	16	.89	47	122	.122	
Chennai	27	.34	19	38	55	
Delhi	18	107	74	185	.254	
Hyderabad	28	.98	19	213		
Kolkata	24	.78	20	137	.161	
Lucknow	16	124	60	228	.168	
Mumbai	8	.43	59	149	.115	
Pune	_	103	37	96	88	

Visakhapatnam ..- .52 38 ..125 .132

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

NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters. CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death. PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eves

nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature

Naveen govt. presents + Puri heritage corridor project plan in House

The ₹3,200-crore project would be split into 9 zones

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

The Naveen Patnaik government aggressively pushed the ₹3,200-crore heritage corridor project for Puri Jagannath Temple by presenting its plan in the Assembly on Saturday. The Assembly unanimously passed a resolution for its effective and smooth implementation.

According to the State government, the heritage corridor would be divided into

"A seven metre green buffer zone adjacent to Meghanad Prachir (temple boundary) would be followed by 10 metre Antar Parikrama (inner circuitry walk) to be used for ceremonial procession of the deities, eight metre outer Pradikshyan

(circumambulation) for devotees and a 10 metre public conveyance zone having restrooms, drinking water fountain, information-cumdonation kiosks and shelter pavilions," said the government. The corridor plan says there will be a five metre service lane for maintenance of the corridor, 4.5 metre dedicated shuttle-cum-emergency lane, 7.5 metre mixed traffic lane to aid movement of vehicles around the corridor and seven metre wide shaded footpath.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said the mega project was conceptualised keeping three objectives such as the security of the temple, safety of devotees and religious atmosphere for devotees in mind.

Oppn. pledges support Leader of the Opposition Pradipta Naik and leader of the Congress legislative party, Narasingha Mishra, backed the resolution by pledging their parties' sup-

port for infrastructure deve-

lopment around the temple.

'Modi is the PM of capitalists'

RLD chief Ajit Singh cites FCI woes, sugarcane dues to target Centre, U.P. govt.

GHAZIABAD

"Narendra Modi is not the Prime Minister of the poor and the farmers," charged Rashtriya Lok Dal President Ajit Singh while addressing a massive gathering of farmers in Bamnauli village of Baghpat on Saturday. "He is the Prime Minister of capitalists and corporates. He shows dreams but doesn't care to fulfil them," said Mr. Singh at the meeting called by the Desh Khap on the birth anniversary of Raja Sulakshpal Tomar.

The RLD chief said the PM and U.P. Chief Minister promise to make the pending payment of sugarcane farmers in the region but the sugar mills were not listening.

He said it was true that MSP had not been touched in the farm laws but in the last four years the debt on Food Corporation of India had increased by four times. Mr. Singh said it seemed the government made these laws to help corporates that are making huge godowns instead of the FCI. "It is on the verge of bankruptcy. How will it pay the MSP," he wondered.

Bihar's example

Mr. Singh reminded that farmers in Bihar were suffering because they didn't get the MSP. "The capitalists work for profit. It is the government's role to look after the welfare of the poor. If the farmer didn't have money in his hand, the rural economy would flounder," he said. The RLD chief said the new farm laws were against

the interest of farmers and consumers as it allows corporates to hoard as much as they want. "We are not against corporate farming. Sugarcane farming is also a kind of contract between farmer and mill owners but here the government also has a specific role to ensure that the interest of the farmers is not violated. Do you think a farmer with two bigha land could stand up to the lawyers of the corporates?" he said.

Continuing with his aggressive approach against the farm laws, Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait appealed to farmers to keep their tractors ready. "Keep one eye on your tractor and the other on Delhi." he said. "Private godowns were built first, Bills came later. It shows the nexus between the capitalists and the government. I appeal to the government to acquire those godowns."

This was the first time after the January 28 outburst that hogged national headlines that Mr. Tikait addressed a gathering in western U.P. in which political leaders were also present. BKU sources played it down as a social event in honour of the Jat king. "Rakeshji addressed before political leaders from a separate stage erected for farmers," said an

BPF joins Congress-led grand alliance in Assam

Party had fought 2016 polls as BJP ally

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Bodoland People's Front (BPF) has severed its ties with the ruling BJP in Assam and joined the Congress-led grand alliance to contest the upcoming State

The announcement by BPF chief Hagrama Mohilary came less than a month before the three-phase elections to the 126-member Assembly are to be held.

"To work for peace, unity, and development, the BPF has joined hands with the Mahajath (grand alliance) for the upcoming Assembly elections. We shall no longer maintain friendship or alliance with the BJP," Mr. Mohilary said on Saturday night.

The BPF had contested the 2016 State polls as one of the two regional allies of the BIP. The other regional party is the Asom Gana Parishad, which has remained with the BIP.

Differences between Mr. Mohilary and State Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma led to the souring of ties between BPF and BJP more than a year ago.

The estrangement became clear when the BJP tied up with United People's Party Liberal, BPF's rival, to contest the elections to the 40-member Bodoland Territorial Council in December

RJD set to join grand alliance, contest election in Assam

Tejashwi Yadav says they are targeting Hindi speakers in 11 constituencies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Rashtriya Janata Dal is likely to contest the upcoming Assembly election in Assam as a constituent of the Congress-led grand alliance.

Party leader Tejashwi Yaday, on a two-day visit to Assam, said he met State Congress president Ripun Bora and All India United Democratic Front chief Maulana Badruddin Ajmal. The Congress and AIUDF are the two

major constituents of the grand alliance that also has three Left Front parties and the regional Anchalik Gana Morcha.

"My meeting with the Congress and AIUDF leaders was fruitful," Mr. Yadav told journalists in Guwahati on Saturday

He said his party would be targeting about 5% Hindispeaking people who have been living in Assam after migrating from other States.

"Hindi speakers are a significant number in 11 constituencies. We will contest seats where the chances are high," he said.

"Our effort in Assam will be to prevent the communal forces from forming the government. We will go to places where campaigning is required. We will also go to West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. We will place issues, which are in the interests of the coun-

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try, in front of the people and let them decide," Mr. Ya-

He was critical of the Election Commission of India for scheduling an eight-phase election in West Bengal and a three-phase one in Assam. "Assam usually had twophase polls. Do the three phases this time mean the atmosphere is not good? If so, isn't the BIP-led government responsible?" he said.

Mr. Yadav panned the BJP



RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav with AIUDF chief Maulana Badruddin Ajmal in Guwahati on Saturday. • PTI

for taking the tea plantation workers for a ride. He also said BJPhas robbed the country's constitutional bodies of

their independence. "They brought the Citizenship (Amendment) Act by toying with the Constitution.

Odisha issues stricter COVID protocol

STAFF REPORTER

The Odisha government has made home isolation for seven days mandatory for people coming from five States and set up a strict screening mechanism at airports and railway

All Collectors and civic body heads have been asked to keep a close tab on people coming from Maharashtra, Punjab, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh where there has been a surge in CO-VID-19 cases.

Even as the government is returning to stricter surveillance, 25 students of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla, have tested positive for CO-VID-19 during the past 48

P.K. Mohapatra, Additional Chief Secretary (Health and Family Welfare), said any laxity could lead to a surge in cases. Apart from screening of passengers from five States at the point of arrival, onsite rapid antigen testing of all the symptomatic passengers has to be ensured, he said. "All the incoming passengers will remain under mandatory home isolation for seven days. If they develop any symptoms they will be subjected to RT-PCR test. If found positive, they will be treated as per the treatment proto-

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NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

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NER-BSB0Sn1(O1)/1/2021: Name of Work: Supply & laying of Quad Cable Strengthening for Axel Counter in BSB Division. Details: Approx. Value: ₹66,43,715.47, Earnest Money: ₹00.00/-, Cost of Tender Form: ₹00.00/-, Completion Period: 09 Months. Tender Closing date & Time: 24.03.2021 up to 15.00 Hrs. 1. Tender Online will be submitted up to 15.00 Hrs. on date 24.03.2021. 2. For full details and submission of bid full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of ndian Railways i.e. www.ireps.gov.in.

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has been missing from the area of P.S. Madhu Vihar, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 44-A dated 10.06.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Madhu Vihar, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this

missing person may kindly inform to the following:-E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in SHO : P.S. Madhu Vihar, Delhi Website: http://cbi.nic.in

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इस कार्यालय से प्रकाशित निविदा संख्या 26, 27 /2020-21 जिसको क्रय करने की तिथि 25.02.2021 एवं खोले जाने की तिथि 26.02.2021 थी, अपरिहार्य कारणों से विस्तारित किया जाता है। निविदा संख्या 26, 27 /2020-21 के क्रय किये जाने की तिथि 05.03.2021 तथा खोले जाने की तिथि 06.03.2021 की जाती है। तथा उक्त निविदा में धरोहर धनराशि, कार्य की अनमानित लागत टर्न ओवर को निम्नप्रकार संशोधित किया जाता है। निविदा संख्या- 26/2020-21 1. धरोहर धनराशि रु. 72000.00 2. कार्य की अनुमानित लागत- रु. 24.00 लाख 3. टर्नओवर- रु. 72.00 लाख निविदा संख्या- 27/2020-21 1. धरोहर धनराशि-रु. 72000.00 2. कार्य की अनुमानित तागत- रु. 24.00 लाख 3. टर्नओवर- रु. 72.00 लाख

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2	C45/1/AVM/ BDTS/ Concourse	BDTS	A1	Concourse Hall, between AMUL Stall and SSE Linen Office	3,41,000/-	34,100/-
3	C45/1/AVM/ VAPI/1/1	VAPI	А	PF No. 1, between Pillar No. 12 & 13 North Side of OHE MAST 171/34	2,58,500/-	25,900/-
4	C45/1/AVM/ UDN/1/1	UDN	Α	PF No. 1, between Pole No. 11 & 12 South Side of Water Cooler	1,74,000/-	17,400/-
5	C45/1/AVM/ VYA/1/1	VYA	D	PF No.1, East Side of OHE Mast 56/41 & Water Fountain	11,750/-	1,200/-
6	C45/1/AVM/ VYA/1/2	VYA	D	PF No.1, West Side of OHE Mast 56/29 & Water Fountain	11,750/-	1,200/-
7	C45/1/AVM/ VYA/2/1	VYA	D	PF No.2, East Side of OHE Mast 56/46 & Water Fountain	11,750/-	1,200/-
8	C45/1/AVM/ CHM/1/1	СНМ	D	PF No. 1, between Station Building and Toilet Block	32,250/-	3,300/-
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10	C45/1/AVM/ MID/1/1	MID	E	PF No. 1, between OHE Mast 41/25 and Water Hut	9,500/-	1,000/-
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12	C45/1/AVM/ BIY/1/1	BIY	E	PF No.1, on East Side of Water Fountain on NDB End	9,500/-	1,000/-
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Time and Date for Closure for Submission of e-Tender Document: Up to 15:00 Hrs. on 25/03/2021 through online only. Date and Time of Opening of e-Tender: At 15.30 hrs. on 25/03/2021. Note: Please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in to download the tender document, for submission, corrigendum and further details

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FROM PAGE ONE

Dreams fade for children of migrants

Instead of studying, she looks after her younger siblings while her mother works at the kiln.

According to a survey conducted by Sankalp, a voluntary organisation, in five villages of the Belpada block of Balangir district, education became the lowest priority among children of brick workers . Out of 1,427 children enrolled in different schools in Kharkhara, Anlabhata, Sarmuhan, Bharuapali and Bhalukhai villages, 319 have already migrated with their parents.

No seasonal hostels

"We find that parents who migrated for work had no alternative arrangement but to leave behind their children. Schoolgoing children used to stay in seasonal hostels. This year, no seasonal hostel is functioning," said Sadanana Meher, head of Sankalp.

Last year, about 8,000 children had stayed back in seasonal hostels in four western Odisha districts and continued their studies.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the loss of two [academic] years for scores of children of migrating labourers from Odisha. Schoolgoing children had migrated with their parents in October-November of 2019," said Umi Daniel, an expert on migration. "They

would have resumed their studies after returning in June 2020. But schools remained closed due to the pandemic. This year, child migration has again taken place," Mr. Daniel added.

"The government has to come up with a special drive to prevent mass drop-outs in schools as children are more susceptible than before due to longer absences from classrooms," he said.

In Odisha's tribal-dominated areas, children in higher secondary classes who lacked access to online classes, were lured with mobile phones and new clothes to work as labourers.

Several students from the Bonda tribe, who were staying in residential schools run by the State government in Malkangiri district, were found to have escaped to Visakhapatnam soon after lockdown restrictions were lifted in 2020.

Surendra Khara, a meritorious Kondh tribal student, the first from his village to study in the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya in Malkangiri, was about to migrate as a daily wager to earn enough to buy a smartphone for his online classes last year. He was, however, rescued from such a fate as a local tahasildar provided him with a smartphone. Not many in Odisha's hinterland are as lucky as Surendra.

Cabinet Secretary reviews COVID-19 situation

The Chief Secretaries were briefed about the situation and preparedness to tackle the recent spike, said the

Stressing on effective testing, comprehensive tracking, prompt isolation of pos-+ itive cases and quick quarantine of close contacts, the States have also been told to increase RT-PCR tests. The Cabinet Secretary said States must maintain rigorous vigil and not squander away the gains of the collective hard work of the last year.

Eight held for cow slaughter in Telangana

To prevent any further untoward incidents, members of right wing groups were arrested and but released later. As a precautionary measure, police picketing was enforced and an undeclared Section 144 was in force. BJP MLA M. Raghunandan Rao also had visited the spot.

The Commissioner said they conducted a raid after they got credible information that cows were slaughtered in a shed. All the accused were presented before the First Class Judicial Magistrate on Saturday, who imposed 14 days' judicial custody.

Cong. rift widens G-23's Jammu meet

One of the sharpest speeches came from Mr. Sharma, who said, "A party can give a designation and rank but not every person occupying the designation necessarily

becomes a people's leader." Mr. Sharma said all the leaders at the meeting had come a long distance starting from their days in the Youth Congress. "I have not given anyone the right to tell me if we are Congress members or not. We built this party and we will strengthen it. We believe in the unity of Congress," he said.

Mr. Sibal, opening another flank, said, "The truth is that the Congress party is getting weak. That is why we have gathered here. We had gathered together earlier too and we have to strengthen the party together."

Mr. Sibal, in a metaphor, said to fly an aircraft one needs an experienced pilot, but for the aircraft to function well, it needs an engineer for its upkeep, adding that Mr. Azad can play both the roles with ease.

Stating that Mr. Azad was a leader who knows the ground reality of the Congress in every district of every State, Mr Sibal said, "We were saddened when we realised that he is being freed from Parliament. We didn't want to let him go from Parliament...I can't understand why is Congress not utilising his expe-

In Delhi, the party reacted cautiously, with spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi saying that all the participants of the Jammu rally were part of the "Congress family".

"All of the persons who are in Jammu and have spoken, are senior, highly respected, and well regarded members of our party. We are proud of having them in the party and I believe they are equally proud to be members of the Congress. They are part of the Congress family," he said.

However, he countered Mr. Sibal's comments about the party not "utilising" Mr. Azad's experience.

"We are proud and he (Azad) is proud that he has held the Congress flag afloat for more than seven terms two LS and four in RS for nearly 40 years in Parliament. We are proud and he is proud that party president Sonia Gandhi nominated him as Jammu and Kashmir CM. From Indira Gandhi's time onwards, he has been a respected central minister for over 30 de-

cades," Mr Singhvi said. He said, it would be amiss if he doesn't recall Mr. Azad's role in the party over the years.

Polling cut by 1 hour in parts of Kerala

1,280 pockets identified as Left Wing Extremism-affected, critical & vulnerable

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has identified 298 Left-wing extremism-affected locations in five northern Kerala districts ahead of the April 6 Assembly election. The polling booths in these locations will have one hour less for polling, said Chief Electoral Officer Teeka Ram Meena here on Satur-

In addition to the 298 extremism-affected locations, election officials have identified 549 critical locations, and 433 vulnerable locations in the State. The LWE-hit locations are in Wayanad, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode and Kannur districts.

While the polling time has been fixed as 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the State, in the extremism-affected locations it

Man held in

online posts

STAFF REPORTER

Th Hyderabad

Hyderabad for

Crime Police on Saturday

arrested a 50-year-old man

for posting objectionable

content on social media

The accused, Abu Fasal,

was detained at the Rajiv

Gandhi International Air-

port, Shamshabad, on his

arrival from Dubai, follow-

of Chandrayangutta here

in Telangana, made several

videos abusing a particular

community during lock-

down, the police said.

Since then he has been tak-

ing shelter in Dubai. Sever-

al cases were booked

against him in Hyderabad.

Cyberabad and other parts

of the country. A look-out circular was also issued

against him.

Karnataka

teen's body

touna in bag

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The accused, a resident

against a community.

ing a tip-off.

Cyber

will be from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Mr. Meena said.

Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) units, and not the Kerala Police, will have the primary role in providing security cover in the 1,280 locations. Each 'location' may contain multiple polling

Live webcast

Kerala has asked for 150 companies of Central forces for the polls. Of these, 30 companies were deployed in different districts this week.

The deployment of the Central forces is finalised by a panel headed by Mr. Meena and consisting of the State police nodal officer, Additional Director General of Police Manoj Abraham, and CAPF coordinator Sandeep

As part of tackling vote



Teeka Ram Meena

fraud and bogus voting, 50% booths in the State will have live webcast. Only 10% of the booths had the facility on the last occasion, Mr. Meena said.

The Election Commission will provide protection during and after the elections to election officers for carrying out their duty impartially. "They should not sit silently. Stern action would be taken against officials who aid and abet bogus voting. Suspension will be followed by prosecution," he said.

Postal ballot for essential service workers too

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Postal ballots will be issued to personnel in notified essential services, including health officials, police, and journalists, for the Assembly elections, Chief Electoral Officer Teeka Ram Meena said on Saturday.

The earlier decision was to issue postal ballots to voters in the 'Absentee Voter' category, which included 80-plus voters, the differently abled, the COVID-19-positive and service voters.

Notified essential services include health, police and prison officials; fire and rescue service personnel; excise, Milma, water and power supply, forest, State road transport and treasury services staff; and staff of Central government institutions such as All India Radio, Doordarshan, BSNL, Railways, and Post and Telegraph.

Ambulance personnel and mediapersons authorised by the Election Commission to cover the polls also will be issued the postal ballots. Postal ballots are optional.

Distribution of the 12-D consent form to special category voters will begin soon. The commission has identified 6,21,401 80 yearsplus voters, 1.3 lakh voters in the People with Disabilities (PwD) category, and 56,759 service voters.

COVID-19 patients can visit booths to cast their votes in the last hour of polling.

Braille slips will be issued to visually challenged vo-

Another virus cluster in Bengaluru

New cases at paying guest facility in Yelahanka take the total clusters to seven

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Close on the heels of nine students from the Sambhram Academy of Management Studies testing positive for COVID-19, another cluster has been detected at a paying guest accommodation managed by the educational institution in Yelahanka zone.

This takes the number of such clusters in Bengaluru to

On Saturday, eight of the 51 students residing in Inspire Livesuit PG were found to have contracted the virus. According to Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad, all of them have been admitted to K.C. General Hospital, while the PG has



Ready to fight: A traffic policeman getting vaccinated against COVID-19 at a hospital in Bengaluru on Friday. • AFP

been declared as a containment zone.

There now are four clusters in the Yelahanka zone alone with 33 positive cases. Mr. Prasad said one more student of the Academy had tested positive on Friday.

Ten students, who have mild symptoms, had self-quarantined, while one student had gone to his parents' house in Kolar. Mr. Prasad said more cases were being detected as a result of increased testing, especially in educational inof students from States particularly Kerala Maharashtra.

stitutions with high numbers

'Spread contained'

The cases in the clusters have been isolated and quarantined. The infection spread has been contained and there are no more cases reported," he said. He has directed officials to ensure that all food handlers undergo RT-PCR tests once every 15 days. This, he said, was in line with the State government's directions.

The State on Saturday reported 523 cases taking the total to 9,50,730. Of these 329 are from Bengaluru. Five of the six deaths reported in Karnataka are also from Bengaluru.



arjitha sevas from Ugadi

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams board of trustees has resolved to allow devotees to take part in arjitha sevas performed inside the Lord Venkateswara temple from the Telugu New Year day, Ugadi, which falls on April 13. It was on March 20 last year that the devotees were last allowed to take part in these sevas.

PSLV-C51 to be launched from Sriharikota today

PSLV-C51, carrying Amazonia and 18 other satellites, will be launched at 10.24 a.m. on Sunday from the Satish Dhavan Space Centre at Sriharikota, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman K. Sivan said on Saturday. He termed it the first dedicated commercial mission by the ISRO. Earlier, he visited the Lord Venkateswara temple.

Advocate killed on court premises in Karnataka

KALABURAGI

An advocate who was associated with the Congress, was murdered on the Civil and JMFC court premises at Hosapete in Karnataka's Vijayanagara district on Saturday. The victim has been identified as Tarihalli Venkatesh, 48. According to the police, he was killed by his relative, Manoj. Police suspect property dispute to

Man from A.P. found dead in Australia

A 36-year-old man hailing from Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam district was found dead under suspicious circumstances at his house at Salisbury in Australia, on Friday. The NRI, R. Harishbabu, was living there for over six years and was running his own IT firm. His wife, who is in A.P., said she suspected foul play.

Karnataka to focus on 'one district, one product'

Over ₹100 crore earmarked in budget

NAGESH PRABHU BENGALURU In the 2021-22 Karnataka

credit, avenues for the

marketing of pro-

ducts, and technical

the State has identi-

fied and approved 20 dis-

tricts for horticultural pro-

ducts, six for agricultural

products, two for marine

products, one for poultry,

and one for bakery pro-

ducts. The products in each

district were chosen on the

basis of their availability,

status of current processing,

product in each district is

Under the policy, one

and scope of marketing.

Under this scheme, KARNATAKA

know-how.

Budget, the State govern-The body of a 14-year-old ment plans to give a big boy stuffed in a gunny bag push to the "one district, was recovered from Bhima one product" policy for exriver near Naribol village in ploiting the potential of un-Karnataka's Kalaburagi disorganised micro-food protrict on Saturday. cessing by offering

The deceased was identified as Mahesh Mallikar-

According to police sources, the teenager was in a relationship with a girl from a different community. They suspect that the girl's family killed him, stuffed the body in a bag

and threw it into the river. The Jewargi police have arrested three persons in this connection.

Mahesh went missing three days ago, and his parents had lodged a complaint at the Jewargi police

identified and entrepreneurs involved with these products are eligible to avail credit-linked capital subsidy at 35% of the project cost, with a maximum ceiling of ₹10 lakh per unit. The maximum credit will be ₹30 lakh

per project. Food processing organisations and selfhelp groups/producer cooperatives are also eligible for the subsidy, according to Manoj

Rajan, Special Secretary, Food Processing, who is the overall in-charge of the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PM-FME) scheme. A total of 132 applications had been received under the scheme as on February 25, 2021.

The expenditure will be shared 60:40 between the Union and State govern-

Surge in COVID-19 restricts Attukal Pongala to homes

Festivities toned down following request by temple trust

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The milling multitudes and the burning brick hearths that annually line the streets of the Kerala capital on Attukal Pongala day were missing on Saturday.

For all intents and purposes, the day was like any other here as women devotees made the pongala offering to Attukal Bhagavathy, the presiding deity of one of the capital city's landmark temples, from the safety of their homes, given the worrisome COVID-19 scenario.

Every year, tens of thousands of women converge on the city to make the offering - a sweet pudding of rice, jaggery, grated coconut, ghee, and banana - prepared in earthen pots. This time, in view of the pandemic, the temple trust had re-



At home: A family making pongala in front of their house in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday. •s. манімяна

quested them to confine the festivities to their homes. The pongala offering at the temple itself was limited to the *pandara aduppu* – the main hearth – that was lit at 10.50 a.m.

Never before in recent memory had the city appeared so deserted on the day of Attukal Pongala, often dubbed the biggest assemblage of women, some city residents said. Only family members set the hearths this time at many houses that usually hosted small

crowds every year.

Schools devise digital detox routine

They are working with teachers & parents to help students overcome screen fatigue

TANU KULKARNI

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has not only upended the way we socialise or interact with each other but has also altered the learning patterns of lakhs of students, with online classes becoming the

For the last nine months, students in private schools have been glued to their screens for hours on end where otherwise they would have been in a physical classroom interacting with their peers and teachers. The fallout is digital fatigue and eye strain.

School managements in Bengaluru are now devising ways to help students cope with digital fatigue – from reorganising holiday schedules and limiting screen time to holding wellness sessions and asking parents to restrict their children's personal screen time. School principals have

enthusiasm about online

classes," said Dakshayini

acknowledged the problem, with many saying students as well as teachers have been complaining of headache, burning eyes and sleeplessness. "Earlier, there was a lot of



Kanna, principal of Harvest International School. Nooraine Fazal, founder-

director of Inventure Academy, said they would be shortening the summer holidays to about a month. Instead, they will give

students a week's holiday after every six to eight weeks of online classes. Manoj Kumar Sharma,

additional professor, Service for the Healthy use of Technology clinic at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences, said schools should encourage students to use apps to track their screen time. "Parents and teachers, rather than urging kids to restrict screen time should encourage students to take part in physical activity and spend time with family and friends. Parents should set an example and restrict their screen time," he said.

PM calls for e-marketing of Channapatna toys

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called upon Channapatna toymakers to explore the possibility of emarketing their traditional wares across the country and the world

Interacting with a group of artisans from Channapatna while virtually inaugurating the India Toy Fair 2021 in New Delhi on Saturday, Mr. Modi suggested that artisans make use of the advanced technology to popularise the toys across the world and use the information technology workforce in Bengaluru for the purpose.

Earlier, the artisans from

Channapatna displayed a

cus and a plane, to which Mr. Modi said he was being

reminded of his childhood. The artisans said about 2.000 of them engaged in

set of toys, including an aba-

Only vegetable dyes are

used on these toys.

the Channapatna toy industry, which had a history of over 200 years old.

India-Pak. ceasefire had high-level nod: experts Roll back 'Modi tax' on

It may not be the result of a 'package deal to stabilise relations with China', they say

SUHASINI HAIDAR

NEW DELHI The decision of the Directors-General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan was unlikely to have been purely local, say experts, pointing to the language of the joint statement while declaring an observance of the 2003 ceasefire from the midnight of February 24/25, which had a highlevel "imprimatur" on it, though there is little clarity on the nature of the backchannel operating between the two countries two days after the announcement.

"I would imagine a decision like this in both countries would have involved considerable amount of inter-agency discussion and consensus. So, whether [Indian officials] were speaking both to the Pakistani military chief or to the Prime Minister's [office], the two certainly would have been in touch on this," said T.C.A. Raghavan, former High Commissioner to Pakistan and the Director-General of the MEA-run think tank Indian Council of World Affairs. He added that the rising violence at the Line of Control was the most obvious reason for the "tactical" decision to stop firing.

The DGMOs had announced a similar decision to observe the ceasefire line in December 2013 and May 2018 after similar hotline conversations. Ceasefire violations (CFVs) have been increasing year-on-year for the past decade, with a sudden spike after 2018, according to data from the Army, which is matched by the Pakistani side. From just four CFVs in 2004, the number reported in 2014 was 583, which grew nearly tenfold by 2020 to

"I don't think this kind of a joint statement, specifying a date for the ceasefire could be a result purely of the DGMO conversations, this had to have some high-level imprimatur," said Happymon Jacob, JNU Professor and author of books on the Line of Control. He added that given the "vitiated bilateral situation" it was unlikely



On alert: A BSF personnel keeping vigil along the International border in Jammu. •PT

that one side could propose a ceasefire without some "back-channel conversations and parleys".

While Pakistan Prime Minister's Special Assistant on National Security Affairs denied a specific report that he was conducting the talks with the National Security Adviser that are believed to have led to the LoC announcement, neither New Delhi nor Islamabad has denied a series of reports that suggested that there have been secret talks for the past few months. On Thursday, the MEA spokesperson declined to answer a specific question from The Hindu on the re-

Speculation over the timing of the announcement has also grown, as it came amid the India-China disengagement talks, and just hours before a conversation between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, where they agreed to establish a hotline between them. However, Mr. Jacob said he doubted that the DGMO talks were the result of a "package deal" to stabilise relations with China on the eastern front and with Pakistan on the northern

"The government of India perhaps decided to make sure that at least one front is defused, that is, Pakistan. And then negotiations with China happened," he said, as a more likely scenario.

and western front.

Mr. Raghavan dismissed criticism of the DGMO agreement as a "climbdown" from the government's earlier policy of not talking to Pakistan until terrorism ends, while the Imran Khan government had said there would be no talks until India restores Jammu and Kashmir's autonomous status.

Asked what was likely to be the next step, if in fact the DGMO agreement indicates a deeper dialogue, Mr. Raghavan felt that the first step could be the restoration of High Commissioners to the missions in Delhi and Islamabad, who were pulled in the aftermath of the government's decision to amend Article 370 in J&K in August 2019.

He also felt that cooperation on COVID-19 and healthcare was another area the two sides could make immediate progress.

(The entire conversation can be accessed at The Hindu In Focus Podcast https://www.thehindu. com/podcast/what-does-theceasefire-agreement-meanfor-the-future-of-indiapakistan-relations-thehindu-in-focus-podcast/ article33943563.ece)

fuel quickly: Congress

Centre trying to shift blame on State governments: Singhvi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Terming the additional excise burden on fuel the "Modi Tax", the Congress on Saturday renewed campaign against the government, demanding an immediate rollback of additional taxes that would bring down the price of petrol to ₹67 per litre and of diesel to ₹53 per litre, as per the party's estimate.

At a press conference, party spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi lambasted the Centre for confusing customers by attempting to shift the blame on the State governments.

"We demand the immediate withdrawal of 'Modi Tax' of ₹23.87 and ₹28.37 per litre on petrol and diesel, which was increased by the Modi government since May 2014. I will like to emphasise that this has got nothing to do with VAT or State taxes, with which the BJP tries to confuse the people. I repeat, this is not a favour, the people deserve relief in these hard pandemic times," Mr.



Burning issue: Youth Congress activists protesting outside Union Minister Smriti Irani's house in Delhi on Saturday. • AFF

Mr. Singhvi said the Modi government has been the most "mehengi sarkaar" (expensive government), which has heavily taxed the

Crude oil prices

Mr. Singhvi said in May 2014, when the international crude oil price was \$108 per barrel, petrol was sold at ₹71.51 per litre in Delhi and diesel at ₹57.28 per litre.

However, on February 25, 2021, when the international crude oil price was \$65.70 per barrel, the price of petrol had increased to ₹91.17 per litre in Delhi and diesel to ₹81.47 per litre. The price of domestic gas cylinder had also increased by ₹200 in the past three months.

"Over the past six years, the additional excise burden on the common consumer has been increased by a whopping ₹23.78 per litre on petrol and by ₹28.37 per litre on diesel, which is 820% on diesel and 258% on petrol. This government earned over ₹21.5 lakh crore by imposing additional excise duties on petrol and diesel, but it has done away all the subsidies or under recoveries on petrol, diesel and LPG," he

Onus on India for progress in relations, says Pak. PM

New Delhi must create enabling environment: Imran Khan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Saturday welcomed the ceasefire agreement with India, but said the onus of creating an "enabling environment" for further progress in bilateral relations rests with New

In his first comments since the militaries of India and Pakistan jointly announced on Thursday that they had agreed to strictly observe all agreements on the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) and other sectors, Mr. Khan said Pakistan was ready to move forward to resolve "all outstanding issues" with India through dialogue.

"I welcome restoration of the ceasenre along the LoC. The onus of creating an enabling environment for further progress rests with India. India must take necessary steps to meet the long-standing demand & right of the Kashmiri people to self determination according to

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

Attorney-General K.K.Venu-

gopal has refused to give

consent to an activist to in-

itiate criminal contempt

proceedings against former

Chief Justice of India Ranjan

Gogoi for his comments

Activist Saket Gokhale

about the Supreme Court.

said Justice Gogoi's remarks,

during a widely publicised

interview given during the

India Today conclave in Fe-

bruary, had scandalised the

court and lowered its digni-

ty in the eyes of the public.

tice Gogoi, now a Rajya Sab-

ha member, had used terms

such as "ramshackled" judi-

Mr. Venugopal, in a letter

to Mr. Gokhale, agreed that

Justice Gogoi's statements

were indeed "very strong",

but it was said for the "good

of the institution" and

would not "in any manner

scandalise the court or low-

er its authority in the eyes of

rently reflect his deep frus-

"The statements appa-

ciary and so on.

the public".

It was reported that Jus-

NEW DELHI

A-G refuses consent for

contempt proceedings

'Statements don't scandalise court'

against former CJI Gogoi

[I welcome restoration of the ceasefire along the LoC. The onus of creating an enabling environment for further progress rests with India. India must take necessary steps to meet the long-standing demand & right of the Kashmiri people to self determination according to UNSC resolutions IMRAN KHAN, Pakistan Prime Minister

UNSC resolutions," Mr. Khan

tweeted. "We have always stood for peace & remain ready to move forward to resolve all outstanding issues through dialogue," he added in a series of tweets.

'Stop terror attacks'

taiks and terror" cannot go together and asked Islamabad to take demonstrable steps against terror groups responsible for launching various attacks on India.

On Thursday, India said it desired normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan and

was committed to resolving all issues bilaterally in a peaceful manner.

"On relations with Pakistan, as we have said earlier, India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan. We have always mainthat we are committed to addressing is-India has told Pakistan that sues, if any, in a peaceful and bilateral manner," nistry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said in New Delhi.

India and Pakistan signed a ceasefire agreement in 2003, but it has hardly been followed in letter and spirit over the past several years.

Anti-terror operations will continue: Army

'We will be alert, despite ceasefire'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Army's Northern Commander Lt. Gen. Y.K. Joshi on Saturday said the agreement between India and Pakistan to strictly adhere to the ceasefire pact along the Line of Control would have no bearing on the counterterrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the Northern Command, which looks after the security of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh, remained on the highest alert and made possible what was believed impossible by the bravery, grit and determination of its personnel in the face of challenging situations along the border.

"Recently, the Directors-General of Military Operations of india and Pakistan announced an agreement to uphold ceasefire along the LoC. I want to assure that this ceasefire will have no bearing on the counter-terrorist operations and we will maintain our alertness," Lt. Gen. Joshi said at the

CENTRAL PULP & PAPER RESEARCH INSTITUTE, SAHARANPUR, U.P. 247001

Northern Command investiture ceremony here.

'Like a shield'

"The Northern Command has always stood like a shield against the attempts by our neighbouring countries to spread disturbance and it will continue to remain so in the future. Whenever anyone raises an evil eye on our country, Indian Army has replied strongly," Lt. Gen. Joshi said. Without naming China and Pakistan, he said the Indian Army had maintained its domination on its borders with the neighbouring countries and helped in maintaining peace in the hinterland.

Referring to the Ladakh stand-off with the Chinese Army, he said the Indian Army stood up to the chalienge on the snow-capped mountains of the Line of Actual Control during the challenging situation in 2020 and maintained the highest alert. "The success of the operation (in Ladakh) is the glaring example of the bravery of Indian Army," he said.

RSS-affiliate BMS plans protest against disinvestment of PSUs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), which is affiliated to the RSS, has announced a six-phase agitafrom March to November against the proposed disinvestment programme of public sector undertakings (PSUs) by the Centre.

The decision was taken at a two-day meeting of the PSUs Coordination Committee of the BMS in Hyderabad that ended on Friday. The meeting came 10 days after

the deliberations of the BMS National Executive in Chennai on Budget 2021 "in the context of the onslaught of the government" against the central PSUs.

In the meeting in Hyderabad, attended by BMS president H.J. Pandya, general secretary Binoy Kumar Sinha and organising secretary B. Surendran, a consensus emerged that the BMS should strongly oppose the policies of the Centre on disinvestment, privatisation and monetisation. The Swadeshi Jagaran Manch has also criticised the disinvestment programme. The agitation

grammes in the first phase will include industry-wise seminars from March 15 to April 14 followed by unit-level workshops in May and a mass awareness campaign in June. The fourth phase will see unit-level mass demonstrations on July 15 followed by State-level conventions in September. The sixth phase will be on November 23, when the BMS will hold demonstrations at the corporate offices of all the PSUs.

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Admissions for the Session 2021-22

Ph. D. PROGRAMME (FULL TIME & PART

The admission forms of Ph.D. Programme

are available throughout the year on the website of the School but the candidates shall be admitted twice in a year. The application form must be submitted along with photocopy of receipt, after making online payment 1. Through website of SPA, New Delhi <www.spa.ac.in>, 2. Through SBI Collect of Rs.2,500 (Non Refundable) for Indian Nationals and US\$ 300 (Non Refundable)

for foreign nationals/NRI/PIO/OCI. For further

details please visit our website MASTER'S PROGRAMMES:

Two Years (Full Time only) Master of Architecture (Architectural

Conservation) 2. Master of Architecture (Urban Design)

3. Master of Architecture (Landscape

Architecture) 4. Master of Building Engineering and

Management

5. Master of Design (Industrial Design) Master of Planning (Environmental

Planning)

7. Master of Planning (Housing)

8. Master of Planning (Regional Planning)

9. Master of Planning (Transport Planning) 10. Master of Planning (Urban Planning)

ELIGIBILITY: May be checked on the SPA, New Delhi website (www.spa.ac.in) under tab ADMISSION 2021. **BASIS OF SELECTION:**

May be checked on the SPA, New Delhi website (www.spa.ac.in) under Tab ADMISSION 2021.

MODE OF CONDUCT OF COURSES: Online/In person, depending upon COVID19 situation.

APPLICATION FORM (PG PROGRAMMES): Eligible candidates may submit filled in Application Form through link provided on School's website

An applicant can apply for single programme only Application fee for PG programme is Rs.2,500

6.

8.

www.spa.ac.in along with requisite self attested documents at spadpgadmn2021@spa.ac.in **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

(Non Refundable) for Indian Nationals and US\$ 300 (Non Refundable) for Foreign National/NRI/ PIO/OCI to be paid by online 1.Through website of

SPA, New Delhi <www.spa.ac.in>, 2. Through SBI Collect. The School reserves the right to reject/ cancel any application without assigning any reason to the applicant.

PG SCHOLARSHIPS: The scholarships to GATE and CEED (applicable only for Industrial Design course) qualified candidates will be paid to those who have valid score card.

C. BACHELOR'S PROGRAMMES

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Admission to Bachelor of Architecture and Bachelor of Planning will be made through JEE (Main) 2021 by NTA (National Testing

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Admission of Foreign National/Non Resident Indian and Person of Indian Origin is made through DASA. Candidates desirous for admission in Bachelor's Programme may visit DASA website. As per COA guidelines, students admitted under B.Arch. Course without clearing any aptitude test in Architecture will not be eligible for Registration with COA

RESERVATION OF SEATS:

Reservations will be applicable as per rules of the Government of India. For details please visit

QUERIES: Any queries may be addressed by e-mail to admission@spa.ac.in or Phone No.23724383-23702382. (On working days during office hours only)

In case all the seats are not filled, SPA reserves right to have subsequent rounds for admission. RESULT AWAITED:

Candidates whose final year results are still awaited can also apply, but must submit the final marks by 1 August 2021, failing which the admission will stand cancelled.

HOSTEL: SPA has limited hostel accommodation and is not guaranteed for all. Candidates may have to make

Any dispute arising at any stage will be limited to

M ND-NDE

iurisdiction of the courts of Delhi

IMPORTANT DATES FOR POST GRADUATE ADMISSIONS						
Application forms available on website of the School	Monday, 8 March 2021					
Last date of receipt of Application (for PG Courses)	Saturday, 27 March 2021					
Display of list of eligible candidates on SPA, New Delhi website	Friday, 9 April 2021					
Display of Selection List on SPA, New Delhi website	Tuesday 20 April 2021					
Registration in respective Departments	Friday, 6 August 2021					
Orientation Programme	Friday, 6 August 2021					
Start of Academic Session	Monday, 9 August 2021					
Closure of Admission	Sunday, 15 August 2021					

For details, please visit our website <u>www.spa.ac.in</u>
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n the Pay Scale of PML-14, Rs. 144200-218200 (Pre-revised PB-4 Rs.37,400-67,000+10,000 GP) . Essential Qualifications: Educational Qualifications: Doctorate Degree with 1st Class Post Graduate in any branch o (ii) Experience: 15 years relevant experience out of which five years' experience in a senior position in the pay scale of Rs. 37,400-67,000 plus GP 8900 (pre-revised) (Revised PML 13A) or analogous post as Departmental head in Production or Engineering or Research or Project Planning in Pulp & Paper Mill or in a reputed Research Institute in Pulp & Paper Technology in

2. Desirable Qualifications: Experience as Chief of similar research organization in ar industrial complex or reputed research establishment in pulp and paper.

3. Age limit for Direct Recruitment: Not more than 55 years. For Departmental candidates the age is relaxable up to 58 years. The date of determining the age limit shall be the closing date

Inviting applications for appointment of Director

prescribed for receipt of applications. Mode of Recruitment: Direct Recruitment/ Deputation. The Director shall be appointed by Govt. of India. 5. Interested candidates may submit his/her application in the prescribed format, and as per

detailed instructions, which can be downloaded from this Department's website https://dipp.gov.in/ as well as from the CPPRI's website www.cppri.res.in. The last date for the application to be submitted physically at the address given below is

31/03/2021 till 05: 00 PM. Applications that are incomplete in any respect such as those not accompanied by the documents will liable to be rejected. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Arun Kumar, Under Secretary (Paper), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, Udyog Bhawan (Room No. 367), New Delhi-110011.

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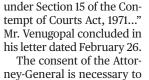




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For more details, please visit IISER admission website (www.iiseradmission.in)

The important dates will be announced in the website after 29th of March 2021



tration with the ills that undoubtedly beset the justice delivery system," Mr. Venugopal explained to Mr. Gok-



Shankar Prasad on Saturday expressed strong disapproval of legal activists making objectionable comments about judges who do not pass favourable orders on their petitions, calling it a "disturbing new trend". "We can surely criticise the reasoning of a judgement. But, I foresee a new trend which I need to flag today," Mr. Prasad said referring to "grossly unfair" comments on social media

hale. "I accordingly decline consent to initiate proceedings for criminal contempt under Section 15 of the Con-

initiate contempt proceedings in the Supreme Court.



Union Law Minister Ravi against judges.

IN BRIEF



in fake emails case

Actor Hrithik Roshan on Saturday recorded his statement with the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) of the Mumbai Crime Branch in connection with his 2016 complaint about fake emails in his name to actor Kangana Ranaut, an official said. Mr. recorded by a team of CIU officials headed by an Assistant Police Inspector, the official said.

Death toll in Chamoli disaster touches 72

The death toll in the disaster in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district has increased to 72 The identities of 40 bodies have been established so far. In all, 30 human body parts have been found at different places. The DNA samples of 110 family members of the missing persons and 86 bodies/body parts have been sent to the forensic science laboratory in Dehradun for matching.

Ex-PMO official takes charge of Revenue dept.

The Centre has preferred not to extend the tenure of Finance Secretary Aiav Bhushan Pandey, who is superannuating on February 28. It has handed over the charge of the Department of Revenue to Tarun Bajaj, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs. Mr. Bajaj was previously in the Prime Minister's Office as Additional Secretary. The 1988 batch IAS officer had served the Ministry of Finance.

Priyanka visits Sant Ravidas' birthplace

Congress general Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday paid her respects at the birthplace of Sant Ravidas in Varanasi on the poet-saint's birth anniversary. Ms. Vadra tweeted that she had the good fortune to bow at the feet of Guru Ravidas, who inspired people to build an ideal society through the "gurumantra" of equality, service and goodwill.

I&B Ministry says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Union Ministry of Infor-

mation and Broadcasting on

Saturday clarified that no

"new provision" had been

added to the existing law, af-

ter the uproar over a provi-

sion of the Information Tech-

Guidelines and Digital Media

(Intermediary

it has existed

for 11 years



VIKAS VASUDEVA CHANDIGARH

Himachal Pradesh's high-altitude hilly terrain could be harbouring as many as 73 snow leopards (Panthera uncia), says a recent study based on a scientific enumeration of the elusive animal. Snow leopards are one of the most endangered wildlife species. The study observed that local communities are the strongest allies in conser-

The first-ever such study on snow leopards, a top predator of the Indian Himalaya, was completed in January by the Himachal Pradesh Wildlife Department and the Mysore-based Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF).

"We are the pioneers in getting snow leopards count done in a scientific manner

in the country. Till now, it was only a guess work surrounding the population of snow leopards. But now we have numbers which are reliable. We detected 44 individual snow leopards on 187 occasions in this study. From this dataset of 44 individuals, we estimated that the snow leopard population

SPECIAL

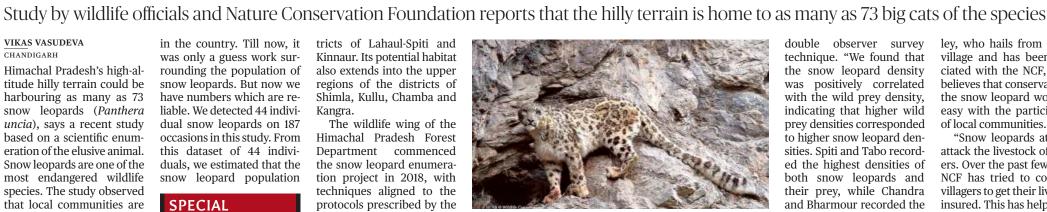
size is likely to be 51 individuals and this population can be reliably estimated to be up to 73 individuals, excluding cubs. This is an encouraging count," Archana Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), told *The Hindu*.

In Himachal Pradesh, the snow leopard's habitat covers a greater part of the dis-

tricts of Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur. Its potential habitat also extends into the upper regions of the districts of Shimla, Kullu, Chamba and Kangra.

The wildlife wing of the Himachal Pradesh Forest Department commenced the snow leopard enumeration project in 2018, with techniques aligned to the protocols prescribed by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI). "This project is the first

systematic effort at a large regional scale that utilised a stratified sampling design to estimate the snow leopard population over an area of 26,112 sq. km. The entire snow leopard habitat of the



Cat count: Snow leopards are one of the most vulnerable wildlife species. • wildlife conservation society/ap

State [of Himachal Pradesh] was first stratified into three categories - high, low or unknown snow leopard occurrence, based on questionnaire surveys of local communities residing in these areas. Camera trap surveys were then carried out in areas under each of

Footfall in the flurry: tracking the elusive snow leopard in Himachal

the categories," Ajay Bijoor, assistant programme director of NCF's high altitude programme told The Hindu.

The population of the primary wild ungulate prey of snow leopards - blue sheep and ibex - for the entire snow leopard habitat was assessed by using the

Banner hub

double observer survey technique. "We found that the snow leopard density was positively correlated with the wild prey density, indicating that higher wild prey densities corresponded to higher snow leopard densities. Spiti and Tabo recorded the highest densities of both snow leopards and their prey, while Chandra and Bharmour recorded the lowest densities of both snow leopards and their prey," he said.

Local support

The entire camera trapping exercise was led by a team of eight local youth of Kibber village in Spiti, who have been working on such surveys across the upper Spiti landscape since 2010.

45-year-old Tanzin Thin-

ley, who hails from Kibber village and has been associated with the NCF, firmly believes that conservation of the snow leopard would be easy with the participation of local communities.

"Snow leopards at times attack the livestock of villagers. Over the past few years, NCF has tried to convince villagers to get their livestock insured. This has helped in a way that in case anyone has lost livestock to snow leopards, the sense of anguish against the animal is not there, eventually helping in its conservation," Mr. Thinley said.

The results reiterate, the study said, that local communities are the strongest allies in conservation, if their concerns can be factored into conservation planning.

Cost of vaccine dose capped at ₹250 in private hospitals

Facilities will be mapped with the nearest cold chain points, says Health Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Private hospitals functioning as COVID Vaccination Centres (CVCs) may recover a charge subject to a ceiling of ₹250 per person per dose, the Health Ministry said on Saturday

The Ministry released a list of 20 co-morbidities that enhance the risk of mortality from COVID-19, and now allow beneficiaries in the 45-59 years age bracket to avail of the vaccine.

India is all set to start the second phase of COVID-19 vaccination on March 1, which will cover those above 60 years and people who are 45+ years with specified co-morbid conditions. Government CVCs will offer free vaccination for all and the Central government will bear the full cost of vaccination conducted by them.

"To ramp up the COVID

Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, un-

der which the Secretary of

the Ministry can block public

access to any information in

being raised regarding Rule

16 under Part III of the rules.

which mention that in a case

of emergency nature, inte-

rim blocking directions may

be issued by the Secretary,

Ministry of Information and

Broadcasting. It is to inform

that this provision is exactly

the same as being exercised

by the Secretary, Ministry of

"Certain misgivings are

case of emergency.



More coverage: The COVID-19 vaccine will continue to be given free of cost in government centres. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

capacity, around 10,000 private hospitals can be used under Ayushman Bharat PMJAY and more than 600 hospitals under Central Government Health Scheme. Other private hospitals empanelled under State Health Insurance Schemes can also participate as COVID Vaccina-

tion Centers (CVCs)," said

'Provision to block content under IT rules not new'

Electronics and Information

Technology (MeitY), since

the past 11 years under the

(Procedure and Safeguards

for Blocking for Access of In-

formation by Public) Rules,

2009," the I&B Ministry said

been replaced by the Secre-

tary, I&B Ministry, as the

rules have been amended to

suitably to bring over-the-top

(OTT) platforms and the dig-

ital media within the ambit

The Secretary, MeitY, has

in a statement here.

of the I&B Ministry.

Information

Technology

the Health Ministry on Saturday.

It added that the Health Departments of State governments had already initiated a dialogue with these private hospitals so that they can be encouraged to participate in the drive as CVCs.

A list of all these private hospitals has been uploaded on the website of the Minis-

government has

drawn severe criticism for

bringing in rules to govern

the digital media without

any consultations with the

Digipub News India Founda-

tion, the largest collection of

digital news publishers in In-

dia, has called the new rules

unfair, the process of their

formulation undemocratic

and the method of their im-

plementation an infringe-

ment upon the freedom of

The

news portals.

Flak from forum

try of Health and Family Welfare and the National Health Authority. All the private health facilities that will serve as government CVCs are required to follow strict norms of due process, quality and safety, including integration with the national Co-Win platform.

The Ministry has specified that all private health facilities must have adequate space, adequate cold chain arrangements, adequate number of vaccinators and support staff, and adequate arrangements for addressing Adverse Event Following Immunisation. "User names and passwords will be provided to the private facilities to facilitate effective use of CoWIN 2.0. The government will also do mapping of private facilities with the nearest cold chain points to ensure seamless flow of vaccines,"

the Ministry release said.

expression. In a letter, jointly

addressed to IT Minister Ravi

Shankar Prasad and I&B Mi-

nister Prakash Javadekar, Di-

gipub said, "These Rules in

some places appear to go

against the fundamental

principle of news and its role

in a democracy. While rules

and laws already exist to

hold news media accounta-

ble, the aforesaid rules ena-

ble the executive govern-

ment to even remove

content published as current

affairs or news (Rule 14)

EC shunts out top police official in West Bengal

More paramilitary forces arrive as campaigning picks up

Busy time: A worker in Ahmedabad arranging campaign banner material printed with the

symbol of the Trinamool Congress, ahead of the West Bengal election. The city has several

small-scale units that are receiving orders from all over India for such banners. • VIJAY SONEJI

In the first administrative shuffle after the model code of conduct for the Assembly polls came into force in West Bengal, the Election Commission transferred Jawed Shamim, Additional Director General (Law and Order) of West Bengal Police.

Jag Mohan, who was serving as Director General of West Bengal Fire and Emergency Services, will be the new ADG (Law and Order) and Mr. Shamim will take over as DG, Fire and Emergency Services. Mr. Shamim was appointed ADG (Law and Order) only a few weeks ago by the State government.

Central Armed Police Forces pur. (CAPF) have arrived in the State from Patna

The forces have been de-

ployed in Basirhat, Bongaon and Barasat areas of North 24 Parganas and parts of Kol-Eight additional compa-

nies of CAPF are likely to arrive from Assam for north Bengal. More than 20 companies of CAPF have already been deployed.

A day after the Assembly election schedule for West Bengal was announced, campaigning in the State gathered momentum.

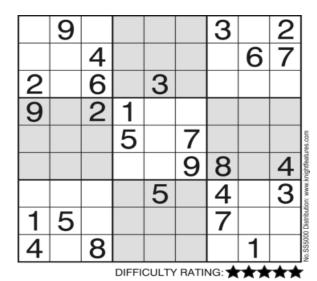
Trinamool Congress leaders organised a road show at

About 10 companies of Ghatal at Paschim Medni-

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari also held a number of public meetings in neighbouring Purba Medinipur, including participating in a kirtan programme at an Iskcon Temple in Mecheda. Mr Adhikari urged the people to defeat the Congress

Meanwhile, several leaders of Left parties, including Left Front chairperson Biman Bose and Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Sujan Chakraborty went to Brigade Parade Grounds to oversee the preparations for the mega

SUDOKU



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	4	5	2	6	9	3	1	7
9	1	2	7	8	3	4	5	6
7	6	3	5	4	1	8	9	2
1	5	6	4	3	7	9	2	8
3	2	8	9	1	6	5	7	4
4			8					3
5	3	1	6	7	8	2	4	ξ
			3					
2	8	7	1	9	4	6	3	5

Police search for journalist in rape case

STAFF REPORTER

A team of Delhi Police has reached Mumbai to arrest a TV anchor who is accused in a rape case reported in New Delhi last week, a police officer said on Sunday.

On February 23, a 22year-old woman alleged she was raped by the man in a hotel room in Chanakyapuri area. The victim is known to the accused for the past three years. He is alleged to have taken her to his hotel room.

The woman managed to come out of the room, and reported the incident at the Chanakyapuri station. A police officer said a case had been registered.

The accused has been identified as Varun Hiremath, 28, in the FIR. The team has been in Mumbai for the past three days but unable to trace the accused, a television journalist. His phones have been switched off.

India, Bangladesh agree to speed up border fencing

among other things."

19th Home Secretary-level talks conducted in virtual mode

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Home Secretaries of India and Bangladesh met virtually on Saturday and discussed early completion of pending fencing along the Indo-Bangladesh border as agreed to by the Prime Ministers of the two countries, a statement by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said.

The 19th Home Secretary level talks between India and Bangladesh was held in the backdrop of 'Mujib Barsho' and 50 years since the Bangladesh Liberation War.

The Indian delegation was led by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla and Bangladesh was led by Mostafa Kamal Uddin, Senior Secretary, Public Security Division.

"India and Bangladesh attach highest importance to their bilateral relations. Both Secretaries reiterated

Both sides agreed to

enhance the level of cooperation to prevent smuggling of fake Indian currency notes and contraband

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

their commitment to further expand and strengthen mutual cooperation in the security and border related issues. Both sides reaffirmed not to allow the territory of either country to be used for any activity inimical to each other's interests," the statement said.

Fight against terror It added that both sides ap-

preciated the cooperation between the two countries and the action taken to address the menace of terrorism and extremism.

On February 10, Union

Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai had informed the Rajya Sabha that the total length of the Bangladesh border was 2,126 kilometre of which 319 km cannot be fenced due to topographical constraints. "The effective function-

ing of the Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) to control the illegal cross border activities was appreciated by both sides. The holding of the inaugural Police Chiefs' Dialogue in January, 2021, implementing the decision taken at the Home Minister Level Talks (HMLT) held in August, 2019, was noted with appreciation by both sides. Both sides agreed to further enhance the level of cooperation to prevent the smuggling of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) and contraband," the statement

said.

17-year-old stabbed for speaking up for sister

The accused had passed lewd remarks

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A 17-year-old boy was stabbed by a group of boys after he objected to the passing of lewd remarks against his sister on Friday, the police said on Saturday. A case has been registered.

A senior police officer said that they received a call around 1 p.m. regarding the stabbing of a boy near Sarvodaya Vidyalaya in Kalkaji and that he was being taken

to AIIMS. The police said that the eyewitness, his 18-year-old sister and a Class 12 student, told them that they were walking back home after school. A police officer, stated, "She said that three boys followed her and passed lewd remarks. When the brother objected to it, they all started beating him and one of them stabbed him on the left side of the abdomen

and fled the spot." Deputy Commissioner of the queries by March 3.

Police (South-East) R.P. Meena said that a case under Section 307 (attempt to murder), 354D (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 509 (intent to insult modesty of a woman), and 34 (common intention) has been registered at Kalkaji police station. The police said that the

complainant told them that the boys had been troubling her for the last two days.

Panel seeks report Taking suo motu cognisance

of the incident, the Delhi Commission for Women on Saturday issued notice to the Delhi Police seeking a detailed action report on the matter.

The women's panel also sought a copy of the complaint made by the woman pertaining to stalking and eve-teasing. The Delhi Police was asked to respond to

U.S. in delicate balancing act as Saudi Prince spared sanctions

'Biden seeks to recalibrate, not rupture ties with Riyadh over journalist's murder'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

U.S. President Joe Biden's decision not to sanction Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince over journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder has frustrated campaigners, underscoring Washington's delicate balancing act as it seeks to avoid a diplomatic rupture.

Washington on Friday released a long-delayed intelligence report that accused Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of approving Khashoggi's 2018 murder in Istanbul, drawing a rebuke from Riyadh, which strongly rejected the assessment.

The public censure of the Prince and a slew of U.S. sanctions on dozens of Saudi officials marks a sharp departure from the policy of former President Donald Trump, who sought to shield the kingdom's de facto ruler.

But Washington did not slap any direct sanctions on Prince Mohammed, known



Preserving ties: A file photo of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. • REUTERS

by his initials MBS, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken explaining that Mr. Biden wants to "recalibrate" but not "rupture" its relations with Riyadh, a long-Middle standing partner.

"This is not the Saudi smack-down that many hoped for," said Varsha Koduvayur, a research analyst at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a Washington think-tank.

Washington-based

campaign group Freedom House said it was "disappointing and frustrating that the U.S. is yet unwilling to act on its own intelligence" and impose sanctions on the

Call for sanctions

Saudi Prince.

"We expect nothing less than justice for Jamal Khashoggi and all of Saudi Arabia's brave dissidents," said the York-based Human Rights Foundation. "The U.S. and the European Union must urgently place sanctions on MBS himself."

The report - which had been withheld after being completed under Mr. Trump said it was "highly unlikely" that Khashoggi's murder could have taken place without his green light.

The killing of Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist and critic of Prince Mohammed, also fits a pattern of "the crown prince's support for using violent measures to silence dissidents abroad", it added.

But Saudi observers dismissed the highly anticipated report, with Ali Shihabi, a government adviser close to the kingdom's royal court, saying the "thin" assessment lacked a "smoking gun".

Mr. Biden had pledged during his campaign to make the kingdom a "pariah" after it got a free pass under Mr. Trump, but observers say he is instead adopting a middle

Myanmar police intensify crackdown

The country's envoy to UN urges 'strongest' action to end military rule, gets 'fired'

REUTERS

Police in Myanmar launched their most sweeping crackdown in three weeks of nationwide protests against military rule on Saturday, arresting hundreds of people and shooting and wounding at least one person.

State television nounced that Myanmar's UN envoy had been fired for betraying the country, a day after he urged the United Nations to use "any means necessary" to reverse the February 1 coup that ousted elected leader Aung San Suu

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military seized power and detained Ms. Suu Kyi and much of her party leadership, alleging fraud in a November election that her party won in a landslide.

The coup has brought hundreds of thousands of protesters onto the streets and drawn condemnation from Western countries, with some imposing limited sanctions



Tense showdown: Protesters taking cover as riot police fire teargas at a rally against the military coup in Yangon. • REUTERS

Police were out in force early on Saturday, taking up positions at usual protest sites in Yangon.

Confrontations developed as people came out despite the police operation, chanting and singing. They scattered into side streets and buildings as police advanced, firing tear gas, setting off stun grenades and shooting guns into the air. Police set upon some people with clubs, witnesses said.

State-run MRTV television said more than 470 people had been arrested across the country. It said police had given warnings before dispersing people grenades.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners rights group said it believed the number of arrests was higher, with at least 10 prison buses carrying 40 to 50 people each taken to the Insein Prison in Yangon.

Several journalists were among those detained, their media organisations and colleagues said.

One woman was shot and wounded in the central town of Monwya, local media 7Day News and an emergency worker said. 7Day and two other media organisations had earlier reported that she was dead.

Appeal at UN

Saturday's violence came a day after Myanmar's Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun urged the UN General Assembly "to use any means necessary to take action against the Myanmar military and to provide safety and security for the people".

"We need further strongest possible action from the international community to immediately end the military coup, to stop oppressing the innocent people... and to restore the democracy," he told the group, receiving applause as he finished.

MRTV television said he had been fired in accordance with civil service rules because he had "betrayed the country" and "abused the power and responsibilities of an ambassador".

However, the UN has not officially recognised the junta as Myanmar's new government.

Biden's \$1.9 tn virus relief plan clears House, heads to Senate

Two Democrats cross party lines to vote against the Bill

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The House approved a \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief Bill in a win for President Joe Biden, even as top Democrats tried assuring agitated progressives that they'd revive their derailed drive to boost the minimum wage.

The President's vision for flushing cash to individuals, businesses, States and cities battered by COVID-19 passed in a 219 to 212 vote, with not one Republican vote, on Saturday. That ships the massive measure to the Senate, where Democrats seem bent on resuscitating their minimum wage push and fights could erupt over state aid and other issues.

Democrats said the stillfaltering economy and the half-million American lives

sive action. GOP lawmakers, they said, were out of step with a public that polling shows largely views the Bill favourably. "I am a happy camper tonight," Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., said on Friday. "This is what America needs. Republicans, you ought to be a part of this. But if you're not, we're going

without you." Republicans said the bill was too expensive and said too few education dollars would be spent quickly to immediately reopen schools. They said it was laden with gifts to Democratic constituencies like labour unions and funnelled money to Democratic-run States that didn't need it as their

budgets had bounced back. "To my colleagues who say this bill is bold, I say it's ty Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. "To those who say it's urgent, I say it's unfocused. To those who say it's popular, I say it is entirely partisan.'

Challenge for Biden

Moderate Democratic Reps. Jared Golden of Maine and Kurt Schrader of Oregon were the only two lawmakers to cross party lines. That sharp partisan divide is making the fight a showdown over who voters will reward for heaping more spending to combat COVID-19 and revive the economy atop the \$4 trillion approved last year.

The battle is also emerging as an early test of Mr. Biden's ability to hold together his party's fragile congressional majorities - just 10 votes in the House and an

U.S. airstrike in eastern Syria a warning to Iran, says Biden

'You cannot act with impunity against our people, partners'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

President Joe Biden said on Friday that a U.S. airstrike against an Iranian-backed militia in eastern Syria, the first since he took office, should be seen by Iran as a warning.

Asked what the message was from the air strike, Mr. Biden said: "You can't act with impunity." "Be careful," he added,

speaking in Houston during a tour of relief efforts after a huge winter storm in Texas.

Syria and Iran on Friday condemned the attack, with Damascus calling it a "bad sign" from the new Biden administration and Tehran saying it would further destabilise the region. spokesman Pentagon

John Kirby said two F-15E



Joe Biden

ven precision-guided munitions on Thursday on facilities in eastern Syria used by the militias believed to be behind a spate of rocket attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said Mr. Biden was sending "an unambiguous message?

"He's going to act to pro-

threats are posed, he has the right to take an action at the time and in the manner of his choosing," Ms. Psaki said. Secretary of State Antony

Blinken said the administration wanted to make it "very, very clear - notably to Iran - that they cannot act with impunity against our peopartners, our

"And I think – and expect that that message was clearly received," Mr. Blinken said.

Syria condemned the strike as "cowardly American aggression."

The Iranian Foreign Ministry strongly condemned the U.S. attack as a clear violation of international law, saying it would "intensify military conflicts and furth-

42 abducted from Nigerian school 2 weeks ago freed

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Kidnappers have freed 42 people, including 27 children, snatched from a school in central Nigeria 10 days ago, officials said on Saturday, a day after gunmen abducted more than 300 schoolgirls in northwest.

"The abducted students. staff and relatives of Government Science College Kagara have regained their freeand have been received by the Niger state government," Niger state Governor Abubakar Bello said on Twitter.

In mid-February, gunmen raided the college, killing one student and taking 42 others. They included 27 schoolboys, three teachers and other relatives of school staff, officials said. Northwest and central Ni-

geria have seen a surge in attacks by heavily armed criminal gangs raiding villages, killing and abducting residents after looting and torching homes.

On Friday, in the Jangebe, a village in Zamfara state, a gang attacked the Government Girls Science Secondary School and kidnapped over 300 students.

Trump backs rival to Republican who voted for his impeachment

Anthony Gonzalez was one of 10 who opposed him during trial

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Former U.S. President Donald Trump has signalled he will seek revenge on fellow Republicans who voted to impeach him last month, and he followed through Friday, endorsing an ex-aide against an Congressman. Mr. Trump threw his

"complete and total" support behind Max Miller, a 2020 deputy campaign manager and White House adviser challenging Representative Anthony Gonzalez, one of 10 Republicans who voted to impeach Mr. Trump after the deadly January 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Armenian President Armen

Sarkisian said on Saturday

he had refused to sign the

Prime Minister's order to

dismiss the Army's Chief of

Staff, deepening a national

The ex-Soviet nation has

faced turmoil since Prime

Minister Nikol Pashinyan

signed a Moscow-brokered

peace accord in November,

sealing a humiliating defeat

political crisis.



Donald Trump

Armenian President says

he won't sack Army chief

"Max Miller is a wonderful person who did a great job at the White House and will be a fantastic congressman," Mr. Trump said in a statement.

"Current Rep. Anthony Gonzalez should not be re-

Thursday when Mr. Pashi-

nyan defied a call by the mil-

itary to resign, accused the

Army of an attempted coup,

and ordered the Chief of the

General Staff Onik Gas-

President Sarkisian said that

he would not back the sack-

ing. "The president of the

republic, within the frame-

work of his constitutional

powers, returned the draft

decree with objections," the

presidency said. It added

that the political crisis "can-

not be resolved through fre-

quent personnel changes".

On Saturday, Armenian

paryan to be fired.

presenting the people of the 16th district because he does not represent their interest or their heart," Mr. Trump It is believed to be the first

endorsement Mr. Trump has offered to a challenger of one of the Republicans who voted for his ouster. "I will never back down

and will never betray my constituents," Mr. Miller, 32, said in a tweet highlighting Mr. Trump's endorsement.

Mr. Trump was impeached on January 13 but acquitted one month later by the Senate. He has said he aims to play a role in Republican efforts to win back the House in 2022.

25 dead in

breakout

PORT-AU-PRINCE

director, dead.

antus said.

Haiti prison

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

More than 200 prisoners

were on the run in Haiti on

Friday, a day after they es-

caped from jail in a violent

breakout that left 25 peo-

ple, including the prison

on Thursday. "Twenty-five

people died, including six

prisoners and Divisional

Inspector Paul Hector Jo-

seph who was in charge of

the prison," Secretary of

Communication Frantz Ex-

About 400 inmates fled

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS: TIRUPATI **NOTICE INVITING TENDER** e-Tenders are invited for procurement of Self Adhesive Sticker Rolls (Barcode

Labels) with Resin Transfer Ribbon to TTD Press. For Tender Notice & details: Pleas see the NIT. Roc.No.TTD-44021(35)/5/2021-PRESS SEC-TTD. Please log on to the web site http://www.tirumala.org and https://tender.ap.eprocur For further details contact: 0877-2264355 (or) 0877-2264292. Roc.No.PR4/13927/Adv.No.334/PR0/2021; Dated:27-02-2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

By E_Mail/e-Despatch E Mail ID : serwcbaripada@nic.in Ph-No-06792-261343/261344 Gangraj, Baripada OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER **RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BARIPADA**

"e" Procurement Notice for Bridge Work Identification No.- Online Tender- Bridge N.C.B. No. 178 for 2020-21. Letter No. 422 / Date 23.2.2021 //

. Name of the work Construction of Bridge over Local Nallah at 0.20 Km on Bakala to Battainsara road under Inter District Inter Block

Dt.01.03.202

Connectivity Scheme for the year 2020-21 under 2. Total No. of work

. Estimated Cost 4. Eligible Class of Contractor Period of Completion

6. Other details

Superintending

sppp.rai.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

R.W.Division, Karanjia in the District of Mayurbhanj :- Rs.212.16 lakhs (Approximately) :- 'B', & 'A' Class (of Odisha P.W.D.) or relevant Class of

other licensing authorities :- 12 (Twelve) Calendar months for the work.

Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/O S.E.R.W. Circle, Baripada vailability of tender On-line Last Date & echnical Bid

Dt.12.03.202

Dt.16.03.202

Dt.20.03.2021

मख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी

श्री सांवलियाजी मंदिर मण्डल, मण्डफिया, जिला-वित्तांड्गढ़ (राज.)

Engineer, Rural Works Circle, at 11.00 A.M. up to 5.00 P.M. up to 5.00 P.M. at 11.00 A.M. 11.00 A.M. N.C.B. Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the above e_tender website only. Superintending Engineer, R.W. Circle, Baripada

Dt.15.03.202

क्रमांक/लेखा/श्रीसांमंमं/2020-21

ई-निविदा सूचना-02 श्री सांवलियाजी मंदिर मण्डल, मण्डफिया द्वारा निम्नानुसार ई-निविदाएं अ निविदा ऑनलाईन उपलब्ध होने एवं जमा कराने की दिनांक व समर 28.02.2021, 09:00 AM रो 19.03.2021, 06:00 PM निविदा शुल्क, प्रोसेसिंग फीस व धरोहर राशि का घोषणा पत्र जमा 20.03.2021 को 01:00 PM तक करवाने की दिनांक समय तकनिकी निविदाएं खोलने की दिनांक व समय 20.03.2021 को 02:30 PM तक विलीय निविद्राएं खोलने की दिनांक व समय तकनिकी निविदा में सभी सफल निविदाकार को प्रयक्त से सुचित कर दिया जावेगा। NIB Code - SMM2021A0004 क्र.सं. कार्य का विवरण UBN CODE अनुमानित लागत (लाखों में) कार्मिक आपूर्ति कार्य SMM2021SL0B00039 1000.00 **गौराला हेतु हरी उचार एवं हरा बाजरा, सोवाबीन का सूखला एवं** SMM2021SL0B0004 मक्का कड्प, गेहूं का सूखला (खाखला), घास पूला, ज्वार पूली सूखी ञ्चार कुट्टी सूखी सामग्री आपूर्ति कार्य। ग्रीस पूफ/ऑयल पूफ ७० जी.एस.एम. खाकी कागज की वैलिया SMM2021SL0B00041 विस्तृत निविदा सूचना, निविदा प्रपत्र एवं संबंधित विवरण व अन्य शतेँ इन्टरनेट वेबसाईट www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in तथा

कार्यालय श्री सांवलियाजी मंदिर मण्डल, मण्डफिया, जिला-वित्तौड्गढ़ (राज.)

E-TENDER NOTICE: TN-45(RVU2021GLOB01769) ases to various power plants of RVUN (KTPS, Suratgarh/STPS-SC, Suratgarh/CTPP-O&M, Chhabra/CTPP-SC nhabra/KATPP, Jhalawar/RGTPP Jaisalmer/GLPL, Giral/MAHI Hydel Banswar Tender details are available on websites http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in (for e ender), www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvunl & www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in. vad/C/20/10297 RVUN/PR-3490 Superintending Engineer (Fuel

GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT

No.104/Webcasting/GEPLA2021

Dated: 26.02.2021

Notice for e-Tender

Elections Department, Puducherry, invites e-Tender for "Web streaming of General Elections to Puducherry Legislative Assembly, 2021". The eligibility and other criteria are detailed in the tender document which can be downloaded from the https://pudutenders.gov.in

Closing Date: 13.03.2021 at 5.00 P.M.

The Bidder should submit their tender online only at https://pudutenders.gov.in. and the bidder should possess necessary digital signature for participation online.

No:449/DIP/AD(Press)/2020-2021

DIPR/SMG/No.151-02

enkar/2020-21

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER PUDUCHERRY

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED (A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited, **Upper Tunga Project Division, Shimoga** Ph: 08182-257189 Fax: 08182-254832

E-mail: eeutpsmg@gmail.com SHORT TERM PERCENTAGE TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement only)

1.EE/UTPDN/SMG/KNNL/PB-2/2020-21 T.N. NO-38 Dt: 25.02.2021 2.EE/UTPDN/SMG/KNNL/PB-2/2020-21 T.N. NO-39 Dt: 25.02.2021 3.EE/UTPDN/SMG/KNNL/PB-2/2020-21 T.N. NO-40 Dt: 25.02.2021 On Behalf of the Managing Director, KNNL, Bengaluru, the Under signed invites tender Through e-portal system from Eligible contractors for six (6) works.

1) Apprx. Amount put to tender as per estimation is from 40.00 to 495.00 laks. 2) Last date for questions/ clarifications regarding the tender: 02.03.2021 up to 17.30hrs. 3) Date for Submission of filled tenders from 25.02.2021 to 06.03.2021 up to 17.30 hrs (During office Hours)

Further details on date of opening the Tender/ Detail of work E.M.D. Amount/Terms and Conditions of the tender/Class of Contractor, Etc, can be obtained in the Tender Notification or from the office of the Under signed during office hours or in website Https:\\eproc.Karanataka.Gov.in for further details the office of the Undersigned can be contacted during office hours on phone no.08182 254832 from 25.02.2021 Information can be obtained through http:\www.eproc.Karanataka.gov.in

> Sd/- Executive Engineer, KNNL, U.T.P., Division, Shivamogga

> > M ND-NDE

to Azerbaijan after six weeks of fighting over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. Divisions widened on





Lists of 'chemicals of concern' in toys focus on a few such as phthalates. A study published in Environment International finds that out of 419 chemicals found in plastic toys, the study found 126 to be potentially harmful. The chemicals list included butyrate TXIB and citrate ATBC which are used as pthalate substitutes.



Genetic Lego

Like Lego blocks can be rearranged, genetic elements can be shuffled to form new genes, a study published in Science finds. Researchers found that the so-called jumping genes or transposons were added to the genetic mix during evolution to rustle up new genes through a process called exon shuffling which generates new genes.



Quantum limits

The existence of a speed limit to quantum processes was shown theoretically 60 years ago. Namely, for a 'two-level' quantum system, this limit depends on the uncertainty in energy. Experimentalists at University of Bonn show that a lower speed limit applies in the case of 'multi-level' systems, depending on the energy uncertainty as well as



Storing and retrieving with a central nervous system to function smartly. New research published in PNAS shows how the slime mould Physarum polycephalum stores and retrieves memories even though it has no brain. This organism's body consists of a single cell that may stretch to even metres. It weaves its memories into its network like

Is India witnessing the beginning of the second wave?

While there were no large surges even during the festival season, ICMR's third serosurvey found only 21.5% of India has been exposed to the virus

Six months after India witnessed a peak, a spike in daily fresh COVID-19 cases is seen in a handful of States, particularly in Maharashtra. From 10.9 million cases across India as on February 17, the cases shot up to 11 million on February 26, with daily cases staying above 13,000 from February 18 onwards and even almost touching 17,000 on February

From below 5%, the test positivity rate has suddenly shot up in Maharashtra - the seven-day average test positivity rate in the State as on February 26 was 9.5%; the national figure stands at 1.9%. Does the sharp rise in numbers suggest the beginning of a second wave in

"No, the increase in daily cases is only a spike. It cannot be called as the beginning of a second wave, not even in Maharashtra," says Dr. Giridhara Babu, Epidemiologist at the Public Health Foundation of India, Bengaluru and a member of the Karnataka COVID-19 **Technical Advisory Commit**tee. "There's no strict definition for what a wave is; usually, epidemiologists refer to the second wave as a resurgence of infection in an area where the transmission had decreased to below the outbreak potential but is now continually increasing over a certain period."

Dr. Babu adds that the prerequisites for defining the second wave are that the first wave should have been contained – the reproduction number or RO is below 1.5 and low rate of infection has been sustained for at least one month.

Sharp criterion

The cumulative test positivity rate below 5% is generally used as a criterion to decide the end of a wave. Any increase in the cumulative test positivity rate beyond 5% and cases show a steadily increasing trend for over twothree continuous weeks are used to define the beginning

The Karnataka COVID-19 task force also considered other criteria to define the beginning of a new wave seven-day average growth rate should be in excess of normal expectancy and where the test positivity



particularly in Maharashtra, where the test positivity rate has suddenly shot up to 9.5%.

rate doubles in a week despite there being no changes in the testing pattern, and hospitalisations double in the corresponding seven consecutive days. Also, the cases should be increasing steadily after crossing the

basic reproduction rate (R0)

more than 1.5. "Any of the

above conditions that shows

a steadily increasing trend

for over two-three weeks is to be used to define the beginning of a new wave," he

Too early

Referring to sudden spurt in daily cases in Maharashtra, he says it is a bit too early to call it as a second wave. "Yes, the number of cases starting to recede around mid-January, but there has been a spike in new cases in the last one week. We need to wait and see if it is sustained over the next one week at least. If there is sustained increase in cases along with either a doubling in hospitalisation or test positivity rate in a week then we can call it a second wave, at least in Maharashtra," Dr. Babu explains.

Since millions have been infected by the first wave in India, and there have been no large surges in cases even during the festival season, winter and large gatherings, will India ever witness a second wave? "With the currently prevailing strains, I do not think that India, as a nation, will have a second wave bigger than the first wave. If anything, we will have second waves regionally in States, which may occur over a period, depending on compliance to COVID-19 appropriate behaviour, testing levels and population movement. For instance, Delhi witnessed not one but three waves. But we may not see a sudden spurt in cases in the entire country all at once," he adds.

Third serosurvey

The third serosurvey of ICMR found that only 21.5% of India (around 225 million people) has been exposed to the virus – and hence, a large population is still vulnerable to infection. Dr. Babu is not entirely convinced with the results of the third serosurvey. "There is a lot of uncertainty looming around how long the IgG antibodies can be detected. The evidence suggests that IgG estimation underestimates the overall level of protection in the community. This is corroborated by the higher level of antibodies seen in the serosurveys done in many metros, such as Mumbai and Delhi," he says.

"My own personal assessment is that we have had a greater number of infections in urban areas in the first wave. The threshold for population immunity might have been achieved in the densest settings, responsible for the greater number of cases in the first wave," Dr. Babu adds.

New variant But all these assumptions

would prove wrong if a new variant that shows greater transmissibility either arises in India or those circulating in other countries spreads here. Dr. Babu says: "Newer variants, especially those capable of immune escape. can change everything we know, and this is the only way to have a second wave more devastating than the first wave. As of now, we have not seen such trends af-

Covid-19 can be transmitted via lung transplant

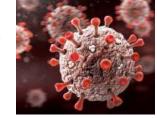
The surgeon wore only a surgical mask when preparing the lungs

The coronavirus can linger in the lungs even when swab tests of the back of the nose and throat are negative, doctors reported after unknowingly transplanting infected lungs into a patient who later died of COVID-19.

University of Michigan surgeons obtained the lungs from a deceased donor who had tested negative for the virus and had reportedly never been exposed to it. Soon afterward, the transplant recipient and one of the surgeons developed

Comparative study

The team collected a fluid sample from the patient's new lungs and compared it to a sample taken from the lungs immediately after removal from the donor, as well as to swab samples from the infected surgeon. Genetic analyses showed the patient and surgeon had both acquired virus from the donor lungs, the doctors



Stealthy presence: The coronavirus can linger in the lungs even when swab tests are negative, doctors reported. • GETTY IMAGES

reported in the American Journal of Transplantation.

The surgeon had worn only a surgical mask when preparing the lungs for transplant, rather than full personal protective equipment, because both donor and re-

Potential lung transplant donors should all have specimens collected from deep within the lungs to be tested for the coronavirus, the report's co-author Dr. Daniel Kaul said. The virus is less likely to be transmitted by other donated organs, such as liver or kidneys, he said.

IISER Kolkata scientists simulate Mars on the computer, suggest how it lost its atmosphere

The researchers model a Mars-like planet interacting with plasma wind from a Sun-like star

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

A new and exciting field in astronomy to study exoplanets and gauge whether thev possess conditions that will favour the presence and sustainability of life. In this quest, an important part is looking at our own celestial backyard to gain insights hence the many missions to Mars and Venus probing for signs of past life. One thing that astronomers search for in exoplanets, in the socalled Goldilocks zone of habitability, is the existence of liquid water and an atmosphere like that on Earth. In this context it is believed by many that Mars once had such an annosphere. mechanism as to why it lost its atmosphere has remained in doubt. Scientists from Indian Institution for Science Education and Research (IIS-ER) Kolkata suggest that it was the planet's intrinsic magnetic dynamo which, by shielding its atmosphere from the sun's solar wind.

protected its atmosphere.



Protective shroud: The magnetosphere enveloped Mars, shielding its atmosphere from erosion by solar wind.

When the magnetic dynamo switched off, the atmosphere slowly was eroded by the solar wind and eventually vanished, leaving the thin remnant we see today. These in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical

Two scenarios

In the simulation, the researchers build a computer model of a Mars-like planet interacting with the plasma wind from a Sun-like star. They study two scenarios. In

the first one, the planet has a magnetic dynamo and an intrinsic magnetosphere surrounding it. The physics is described by Maxwell's equations - which describe their interactions with matter - in the presence of plasma. In a simulation, they mimic the Mars model with an intrinsic magnetosphere and allow a solar-wind like plasma to fall on the dayside of the planet. They run the model to simulate the interactions between the magne-

tized solar wind and Mars.

In the second scenario, they modelled the same system but with no intrinsic magnetic field.

The right track

To ascertain that they are indeed on the right track, the researchers modelled the present day Mars, with no intrinsic magnetosphere. "We perform a simulation for present day Mars based on which we generate the magnetic environment around the planet. We find that this has good correspondence with observations from NA-SA Mars Global Surveyor and NASA Maven missions," says Dibyendu Nandi from Center of Excellence in Space Sciences India (CESSI), in IIS-ER Kolkata, in an email to

From the study, the scientists infer that when Mars had an intrinsic magnetosphere, it enveloped the planet like a shroud and shielded its atmosphere from the stripping effect of the solar wind. When the planet lost its intrinsic magnetosphere, only

the imposed one due to the pileup of the solar wind remained. "This imposed magnetosphere was made of the Sun's magnetic fields which slips past Mars when the solar wind flows past it after impacting the day side," explains Prof. Nandi. "So, there is a continuous slippage of magnetised plasma from the day-side to the night-side of Mars which also strips away the atmosphere of Mars slowly."

The computational models being developed in CES-SI, in IISER Kolkata can be used to simulate and predict the space environment around planets, according to Prof. Nandi.

Thus these are particu larly important to complement and aid in the interpretation of data from planetary space missions," he says. "These simulations can also help in understanding how astrophysical space environments determine atmospheric evolution and thus habitability of planets and exoplanets," he adds.

New light on rise of mammals

The ancestor of all primates likely lived alongside large dinosaurs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Scientists have documented the earliest-known fossil evidence of primates, an advance which sheds light on how life on land recovered after the extinction event 66 million years ago that wiped out the dinosaurs and led to the rise of mammals.

The researchers, including those from the University of Washington in the US, analysed several fossils of Purgatorius - the oldest genus in a group of the earliest-known primates called plesiadapiforms.

Ancient mammals

According to the study, published in the journal Royal Society Open Science, these ancient mammals were small-bodied and ate specialised diets of insects and fruits that varied by species.

"This discovery is exciting because it represents the oldest dated occurrence of archaic primates in the fossil record," said Stephen Chester, co-leader of the study from Brooklyn College in the

"It adds to our understanding of how the earliest primates separated themselves from their competitors following the demise of the dinosaurs," Chester said. The scientists analysed

fossilised teeth found in the Hell Creek area of northeastern Montana in the U.S. which are now part of the collections at the University of California Museum of Paleontology.

Mass extinction event

They are estimated to be 65.9 million years old, about 1,05,000 to 1,39,000 years after the mass extinction event.

Based on the age of the fossils, the scientists said the ancestor of all primates, including the plesiadapiforms and modern day primates such as lemurs, monkeys and apes, likely lived alongside large dinosaurs.

"It's mind blowing to think of our earliest archaic primate ancestors," said study co-author Wilson Mantilla, a University of Washington (UW) professor of biology.

First to diversify

"They were some of the first mammals to diversify in this new post-mass extinction world, taking advantage of the fruits and insects up in the forest canopy," Mantilla said.

Nanosheets help in the detection of uric acid in urine, alcohol in breath

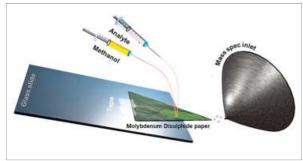
The device could detect alcohol concentrations of even less than 3% in breath

ASWATHI PACHA

Mass spectrometry is an importantat tool and has helped win several Nobel Prizes. It provides valuable information about the composition and structure of molecules and has found applications from drug testing to carbon dating. Using this, researchers can ionise or break down the compound into simple ions and then identify the molecules based on their masses. The current process of ionisation requires electrical potential of a few kilo volts, heat or high energy ultraviolet lasers (UVlasers). But now, researchers have developed a new method of soft ionisation using nanosheets which eliminates the need for external energy sources completely.

Sheet-like structures The team used a simple filter paper as a support material and coated this with 2D molybdenum disulphide (MoS₂). "The 2D materials are sheet-like structures and graphene is a perfect example. You pull out sheets of

carbon and create gra-



Simple but effective: Flowing urine over the nanostructured surface and measuring the current, the team detected uric acid in the urine of a healthy individual.

phene. Similarly, this molybdenum disulphide was created as a thin sheet and spread on a paper. This modified paper produces an electric current when liquids flow over it," explains Thalappil Pradeep from the Department of Chemistry at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras. He is the corresponding author of the work published last week in

The team observed that a flow of pure methanol over the nanosheet generates a record-high current of 1.3 microampere. The sample to be tested can be mixed with this methanol, and the

induced current helps make ions of the compound to be

The team then tested the device to measure uric acid. By simply flowing raw urine (about 5 microlitre) over the nanostructured surface and measuring the corresponding current (with no other stimulus), the team detected the uric acid in the urine of a healthy individual. They also demonstrated

that the device can be used as a self-energised disposable sensor for breath alcohol detection. The device was modified in such a way that the breath of a drunken person can interact directly

with the flowing liquid on the MoS2-coated surface. A volunteer who had consumed 650 mL of beer containing 9% (v/v) alcohol blew over the paper, and the corresponding current was measured. While standard breath analysers detect breath alcohol concentration above 5%, this device could detect even less than

Many applications "The device can find many

more applications: check glucose in blood, toxic chemicals in any liquid, pesticide or any contaminants in drinking water. The main plus point is that it can even detect very low levels. The current wet chemical or reagent-based methods are lengthy and require skilled labour. The new method is cost-effective, and all you need is simple paper coated with nanostructures. By just flowing the liquid and studying the spectrum, molecular detection has now been made simple and easy," adds the first author of the paper Pallab Basuri, a PhD scholar at the institute.

Question Corner

Man's old friend

Did dogs migrate with humans to the Americas?

A bone fragment discovered from southeast Alaska has now answered a few questions on dog migration into the Americas. Researchers found that the thigh bone belonged to a dog that lived in the region about 10,150 years ago. Scientists say the remains represent the oldest confirmed remains of a domestic dog in the Americas.

Analysis of the mitochondrial genome revealed that the dog belonged to a lineage of dogs that diverged from Siberian dogs. Researchers (Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences) say in a release that this study provides not only the timing but also a location for the entry of dogs and people into the Americas. The study also supports the theory that this migration occurred just as coastal glaciers retreated during the last Ice Age.

The researchers from University of Buffalo, New York, who studied the bone say that canines did not arrive in the Americas all at once.

The researchers did not set out to study dogs. They came across the femur fragment while sequencing DNA from a collection of hundreds of bones excavated years before in southeast Alaska by other researchers. The bone fragment, originally thought to come from a bear, was quite small, but when the DNA was studied, the team realised it was from a

dog. "Our early dog from southeast Alaska supports the hypothesis that the first dog and human migration occurred through the northwest Pacific coastal route instead of the central continental corridor," Flavio Augusto da Silva Coelho notes in the release.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in

M ND-NDE

THE HINDU DELHI SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2021



The damaged engine of the United Airlines flight,

Engine trouble

What are the concerns around the 'engine failure' of a Boeing 777 and why is the maker under scrutiny?

MURALI N. KRISHNASWAMY

The story so far: Regulatory moves have come into effect following an "uncontained engine failure" on a United Airlines Boeing 777 during a scheduled domestic flight in the United States. Dozens of Boeing 777 aircraft with a Pratt and Whitney engine variant have been grounded and subjected to further checks.

What happened to the United Airlines flight? On February 20, 2021, Flight UA 328, from Denver to Honolulu, with over 200 passengers and 10 crew had just departed and was in the initial climb phase, when the inlet on the right turbofan engine, a Pratt and Whitney PW4077 build, separated in what is technically known as an engine failure event. The crew stopped the climb, levelled off the aircraft, and declared an emergency. The plane touched down safely within 25 minutes of take-off.

The engine failure was a dramatic event with many eyewitnesses on the ground, as debris rained down on some neighbourhoods under its flight path. There were police reports of the debris field extending to over one nautical mile. This is being investigated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Some of the passengers also filmed the remains of the engine wobbling on the engine pylon in a fiery blaze. The FAA and the NTSB have determined that there was damage to the engine and the fuselage of the plane (a machine a little over 26 years old) as well as an inflight engine fire. The initial examination has shown up two stressed and fractured blades.

Air India, which is the only Boeing 777 operator in India, uses General Electricmanufactured engines. jet engine seldom fails, says The two new Boeing 777 aircraft for the transportation of India's VVIPs also use **GE** engines

How common is engine failure?

Given the technological advances made by engine manufacturers, the modern a senior Boeing 777 pilot. Nevertheless, there have been events. In recent examples, on February 26, a Rossiya cargo Boeing 777 flight on the Hong Kong-Moscow-Madrid sector had an engine electronic

control issue in one of its General Electric (GE) engines while it was about to land. The plane touched down in Moscow without any further eventuality.

In 2018, a United Airlines Boeing 777 flight had a fan blade fracture. Some of the blade debris impacted the fuselage, but the aircraft was safe.

In 2017, an Air France Airbus A380 had an extreme engine failure that left behind only a metal stub. Experts determined this to be an "uncontained failure".

However, the most dramatic incident occurred in November 2010, when a Qantas Airbus A380 with 459 passengers and crew on a scheduled flight from London to Sydney via Singapore experienced engine failure in one of its four Rolls-Royce Trent 900 engines just after leaving Singapore. At that time, it was the first-of-its-kind incident involving the Airbus A380. After the aircraft returned to Singapore safely, inspections showed that a turbine disc in the number two engine had disintegrated, in turn damaging a part of the wing, fuel system, landing gear and destroying some of the flight and engine controls. It was eventually traced to a manufacturing defect in an oil pipe.

What are the kinds of engine failure?

Engines are designed to handle issues such as damaged blades and bird hits. Engine failure, in general, is classified as contained or uncontained. In the first, even if engine components disintegrate or separate, they remain within the engine, or as designed by the engine manufacturer, exit the engine case.

In the second, there is a "random, violent event, and one that is usually beyond the design parameters". Damaged components can pose a danger to the aircraft, its fuselage, and in some cases, as in a four-engine aircraft, threaten the adjacent engine. They can affect crucial flight and engine control systems and, in turn, passengers and crew and also people on the ground.

After the United Airlines incident, what are the regulatory measures now?

On February 21, Boeing, the aircraft manufacturer, said it has recommended "suspending operations of the 69 in-service and 59 in-storage 777s powered by Pratt & Whitney 4000-112 engines until the FAA identifies the appropriate inspection protocol".

In an initial statement, FAA administrator Steve Dickson said the FAA had issued an Emergency Airworthiness Directive that would need immediate or enhanced inspections of Boeing 777s with certain Pratt & Whitney PW4000 engine variants. In an Emergency Airworthiness Directive issued on February 24, the FAA now requires U.S. operators to conduct immediate thermal acoustic image (TAI) inspection of the engine blades for the PW4074/D, 4077/D, 4084/D and 4090/-3 engines. It says TAI technology can detect cracks on the interior surfaces of hollow fan blades, or in areas that cannot be seen during a visual inspection. The hollow fan blades are unique to this engine model. Cracks in the blades can be a problem and airlines use technologies such as ultrasound to detect such fissures.

So far, Japan, New Zealand and the United Kingdom have stopped operators using the Boeing 777 with this engine variant from entering their airspace.

Will the directive affect India?

Flag carrier Air India, which is the only Boeing 777 operator in India, uses GE-manufactured engines (GE90). The two new Boeing 777 aircraft for the transportation of India's VVIPs are also unaffected as they, too, have GE engines.

Super-spreaders and rise in COVID-19 cases

Is the recent spike in infections indicative of a 'second wave' and will it be as severe as the first one?

RAMYA KANNAN

The story so far: Experts remain divided on the question of whether the slow yet steady rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in the country over the last week of February is indicative of the onset of a 'second wave'. But the Centre and some State governments are on the alert against the rising numbers and are reinforcing aggressive testing and proper social and hygiene protocols. In several States, some restrictions have come back into play, though in a watered-down form.

What is happening around the globe?

Globally, nations in Europe that witnessed a spike in May 2020 have slowly started emerging out of the grip of COVID-19. As the number of cases dropped, countries also let their guard down, opened up the economy, and resumed travel and near-normal activity. In the summer of 2020, people started travelling across Europe, eager to be released from the confinement and stress of the

In November, the second wave struck. Experts said every country in Europe that had managed to get away lightly with the first wave was nearly crippled by the second one. Even nations that had suffered badly initially, including Italy, were hit hard again. Hospitals started filling up, beds went scarce again, and the death rate started climbing. Stricter lockdowns were introduced, with curfews and restrictions on gatherings in public places; schools were shut down again, as governments struggled to cope with this new wave. In late 2020, the emergence of newer, mutated strains of the virus in Britain and South Africa meant a faster-spreading variant had established dominance in some countries. However, scientists said there was no evidence to show that the new British strain caused a more severe disease.

Are cases growing in India?

After infections peaked in September last year, cases across the country had been steadily declining, with the exception of Kerala, an outlier State that continued to see high numbers after having seen initial success in flattening the curve. However, in the last week of February this year, the trend reversed, with some States beginning to report higher numbers. While the overall rise was rather gradual, the average was skewed by high spikes in some districts in the States – particularly in Maharashtra and Punjab. The average increase was around 14,000 new infections per day and the upward trajectory began around the last week of February. Two States, Maharashtra and Punjab, led the increase in the number of cases, even as their testing numbers had dipped over the past few months.

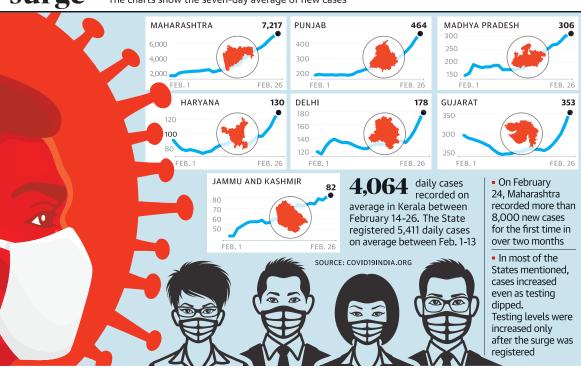
The Union Health Ministry said on Saturday nearly 86% of the over 16,400 cases recorded in the previous 24 hours were from six States and one Union Territory. The Cabinet Secretary chaired a review meeting with eight States and UTs that have shown a surge in infections recently, namely Telangana, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, West Bengal and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

What is causing the spike?

"The spikes in Maharashtra were caused by a series of super-spreader events, or clusters," said V. Ravi, nodal officer for Genomic Confirmation of SARS-CoV-2, government of Karnataka. He was speaking at a seminar organised recently by Neuberg Diagnostics on

Second surge

In several States, COVID-19 cases saw a rise in the second half of February. Both Maharashtra and Punjab recorded significant spikes. In Maharashtra, the average daily cases increased by more than twice in the second half of the month compared to the first half. The charts show the seven-day average of new cases



There are only two ways "Coronavirus – Variants of getting immunity from the virus, one is getting infected, and the other is via a vaccine, say experts. Fast-tracking the vaccine programme and increasing the rate of testing are equally important

and Vaccines". The rise in the number of cases was not due to a variant of the virus with a tendency to transmit faster, but because of select superspreader events, he said.

V. Ramasubramanian, infectious diseases specialist at Apollo Hospitals and part of the Tamil Nadu task force on COVID-19, says, "With common sense, and

looking at a little bit of history globally, a second wave could be down the line for India. I don't see any reason why India shouldn't have a second wave. However, the severity this time round may be milder."

In general, there seems to be an impression among people that the country is over the worst phase of the pandemic, and hence, many are letting their guard and masks down. During the previous surge, strict regulations imposed by States along with fines and penalties for violating protocols helped ensure compliance. However, with the seeming let-up in virus activity in terms of the number of positive cases being reported daily, safety measures were overlooked, possibly leading to the



clusters that have pushed the numbers up again.

There are others who believe that a 'second wave' is not really a wave, but more of a blip. In an interview to The Hindu, Manindra Agrawal, deputy director at IIT Kanpur and a leading mathematician involved with the National 'Super Model' initiative, said India is unlikely to see a second wave. He said based on the model, the cases would "at most rise to 11.3 million or 11.5 million infections by April 2021 – or about 300,000-500,000 new confirmed infections over the next 10 weeks (approximately)".

One reason for this, he said, could be the fact that 60% of India's population had already been exposed to the virus and the country may have approached herd immunity. But the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), according to the third national serological survey conducted from December 17, 2020 to January 8, 2021, had reported that around 21% of Indians were estimated to have been exposed to COVID-19.

Earlier, T. Jacob John, former Professor of Clinical Virology at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, had cited the consistently low number of cases in Tamil Nadu despite poor compliance and said that fewer people may be susceptible or vulnerable to catching the infection.

What is the way ahead?

"There are only two ways of getting immunity from the virus, one is getting infected, and the other is via a vaccine," says Dr. Ravi. It is important to fast track the vaccine programme across the country, but testing is equally important. "Testing is the most powerful tool in our hands," he says, and adds that contact tracing is key for disrupting the chain of transmission. The number of tests must go up again and contact tracing, ideally 20 persons for every case, should be taken up intently, he recommends. Experts call for a renewed emphasis on following safety protocols, such as wearing masks, washing hands and maintaining physical distance to fend off a possible 'second wave' or a sustained hike in the numbers. Draconian total lockdowns are no longer necessary, they add.

New rules for social media, OTT platforms

Why has the government announced new guidelines to regulate digital content and what are the dos and don'ts?

SRIRAM SRINIVASAN

The story so far: On Thursday, in a long-anticipated move, the government notified guidelines that seek to provide a grievance redressal mechanism for users of digital platforms of all kinds - social media sites, messaging apps, over-the-top (OTT) streaming services, and digital news publishers. The Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 also mandate that social media and messaging platforms will have to adhere to new requirements in assisting investigative agencies of the government. Launching the guidelines, Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said they were a "soft-touch oversight" mechanism to deal with issues such as the persistent spread of fake news and other misinformation.

Broadly, what do the new rules require digital

platforms to do? Although there is no single set of rules that uniformly applies to the different kinds of digital platforms, the broad themes of the guidelines revolve around grievance redressal, compliance with the law, and adherence to the media code. Social media platforms like Google or Facebook, or intermediaries, for instance, will now have to appoint a grievance officer to deal with users' complaints. There are additional requirements on 'significant' social media intermediaries - meaning the platforms whose registered users in India are above the threshold notified by the government. Such intermediaries have to appoint a 'Chief Compliance Officer', who will have to ensure that the rules are followed; the officer "shall be liable in any proceedings relating to any relevant third-party information, data or communication link made available or hosted by that intermediary". The intermediaries will also have to appoint a nodal contact person for "24x7 coordination with law enforcement agencies".

The other key requirement is that such a social media intermediary would have to "enable the identification of the first originator of the information on its computer resource" as may be required by a judicial order. In other words, a problematic message, that is considered "an offence related to the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, or public order, or of incitement to an offence relating to the above or in relation with rape, sexually explicit material or child sexual abuse material", will have to be traced to its initiator on messaging applications like WhatsApp and Signal.

For digital publishers of news and current affairs as well as video streaming services, an identical three-tier structure for grievance redressal has been mandated.



There is no single set of rules that uniformly applies to the different kinds of digital platforms, but the broad themes of the guidelines revolve around grievance redressal, compliance with the law, and adherence to the media code

This structure will look into grievances in relation to a Code of Ethics, which is listed in the appendix to the rules. Among other things, the Code of Ethics includes the 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' as prescribed by the Press Council of India, as also content that shall not be published – "content which is prohibited under any law for the time being in force shall not be published or transmitted", and the

Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. The guidelines also require streaming services to classify content based on its nature and type. So, for instance, content "for persons aged 16 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 16 years with parental guidance shall be classified as U/A 16+".

What is the context in which these rules have been

The question of stricter regulation of digital media has come up unceasingly in different forms and forums over the last few years. The issue came up last year when the Supreme Court was hearing a case involving *Sudarshan* TV. In the course of the case, it asked the government for suggestions to improve the self-regulatory mechanism for electronic media. The government, in its affidavit, highlighted the need to regulate web-based media.

There has also been a face-off between the government and Twitter in recent weeks over the social media platform's non-compliance with its order to block several hashtags and handles of journalists, activists and politicians in the backdrop of the ongoing farmers' protests. Twitter eventually complied, though not fully.

Questions about how social media platforms can be

made accountable for the spread of fake news and pornographic content have been raised in Parliament and by the Supreme Court in recent years, something that has been highlighted by the government in its release as well. Taking all this into account, it was no surprise that such rules were being envisaged, but critics have said some of these guidelines will lead to restriction of free speech. There have been many controversies involving content on over-the-top platforms. In one such recent incident, two BJP leaders filed a case against the makers of Tandav for hurting religious sentiments. There have been calls to censor content that appears on digital platforms.

What has changed from earlier?

The scope of regulation of the digital space has been expanded. The new guidelines not only replace the Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules, 2011, but go a step further. They also regulate digital news publishers and streaming services, which was not the case earlier. The 2011 rules were a narrower set of guidelines for intermediaries.

Under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, the intermediaries are not liable for user-generated content, provided they adhere to the rules – "an intermediary shall not be liable for any third-party information, data, or communication link made available or hosted by him," it states. These rules have been tightened now.

Why are the rules being criticised? For digital news media, these guidelines will subject it to

governmental regulation in a way. The three-tier structure of regulation will entail oversight by a government committee at the highest level. Any grievance that does not get satisfactorily solved at the self-regulatory levels will get escalated to the government panel. The Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF), a digital liberties organisation, refers to this as "excessive governmental control over digital news and OTT content".

The other rule that has been criticised by the IFF is the requirement of traceability of the originator of a problematic message. The news guidelines do suggest that this will not be required "where other less intrusive means are effective in identifying the originator of the information". They also suggest that in identifying the originator, "no significant social media intermediary shall be required to disclose the contents of any electronic message". But the IFF reckons that the government has powers under the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Interception, Monitoring and Decryption of Information) Rules, 2009, to make demands for the content of the messages. The rules have also been criticised for increasing the potential for censorship and surveillance.

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

IAEA

In Focus

up as an

autonomous

organisation on July 29,

1957, at the

Describing

its mission

IAEA claims

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promote the

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The 'imperfect' fight against proliferation

The Biden administration's attempts to revive the Iran deal have turned the spotlight on the United Nations' nuclear watchdog

KALLOL BHATTACHERIEE

The move by the Joe Biden administration of the U.S. to revive the Iran nuclear deal has once again turned the spotlight on the International Atomic Agency (IAEA), which played a key role in enforcing the original nuclear deal from which Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. in 2018.

The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or the Iran nuclear deal, proved that the IAEA can emerge beyond its mandate of being a monitoring and inspection agency and, in fact, play a key role in finding solutions to tense international crises. Last week, the IAEA and Iranian diplo mats struck a "temporary' deal to continue inspection of Iran's nuclear plants for three more months, which keeps at least the diplomatic path to revive the deal open.

As the preeminent nuclear watchdog under the UN, the IAEA is entrusted with the task of upholding the principles of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970. Established as an autonomous organisation on July 29, 1957, at the height of the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the IAEA claims that it "works with its member states and multiple partners worldwide to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies". Though established independently of the UN through its own international treaty, the agency reports to both the UN General Assembly and the Security

However, there have al-

ways been questions about the Agency's ability to work independently, without being drawn into big power rivalries.

What the IAEA missed in terms of real authority over sovereign states, it compensated for that by cultivating some tall leadership whose actions kept the issue of non-

As a nuclear watchdog under the UN family, the IAEA is entrusted with the task of upholding the principles of the Nuclear **Non-Proliferation** Treaty of 1970

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proliferation on the multilateral table. Both Mohamed El Baradei (1997-2009) and Yukiya Amano (2009-19) were vocal at difficult moments. Under pressure from the George W. Bush administration to back the American claim that the Saddam Hussein regime of Iraq was pursuing nuclear weapons, Mr. El Baradei maintained that he would not rush into a judgment on this matter without incontrovertible evidence that could prove that Hussein had committed a gross violation of non-proliferation. History proved that his cautious approach was right as the invasion of Iraq failed to yield the necessary proof of Hussein's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

While the agency played a key role in providing the platform for holding frank discussion about civil nuclear requirement for several

countries, it proved to be ineffective to prevent power politics from influencing nuclear negotiations. This was particularly visible when Pakistan pursued a nuclear weapons programme in the 1980s and despite overwhelming evidence in possession of the American authorities, they did not pursue the case effectively through the IAEA because of the cooperation between the U.S. and Pakistan on the Afghan front.

Defenders of the Agency would say the lack of executive authority has not been a real issue as the IAEA was originally set up as a monitoring organ. Richard Barlow, who was in charge of the CIA's non-proliferation programme that tracked Pakistan's nuclear programme, says that having the IAEA is an "imperfect system but it's better than nothing".

Civil nuclear solution Apart from dealing with the sovereign states and their pursuit of civil and military nuclear programmes, the IAEA is also active in championing civil nuclear solution to a number of areas like health, which is one of the main areas of peaceful application of nuclear know how. That apart, in recent years, the IAEA is also active in dealing with climate change, pandemic containment and in prevention of Zoonotic

The IAEA's lack of enforcement capability was hinted by El Baradei who had observed that IAEA had "uneven authority" as it does not have any power to override the sovereign rights of any member nation of the UN.

The uneven authority produced results when in the case of Iran when the Agency's efforts were backed by big powers. The same, however cannot be said about North Korea.

The IAEA was the first to announce that the North Korean nuclear programme was not peaceful. North Korea finally expelled IAEA observers and as a result, there are no on-the-ground international inspectors in North Korea. The world is reliant on ground sensors and satellite imageries to observe North Korea's nuclear actions

In comparison, Yukiya Amano was able to conduct some tough negotiation with Iran and managed to convince Iran to allow inspection of some of the top nuclear sites of the country by scientists and observers. His negotiation coincided with the back channel negotiation

between the Barack Obama administration and Iran, which ultimately led to the JCPOA. As a partner to some of the complex and high stakes diplomacy, the IAEA has an air of secrecy around its functions and is accused of not being transparent about its actions.

The IAEA-certified the nuclear power plant at Rawatbhata in Rajasthan in 2012, which drew criticism as the power plant had two incidents of leakage of nuclear material earlier that year. The second incident affected at least four workers who worked in the nuclear power plant and had caused concern among the scientific community. One major criticism of the IAEA is that it never challenges the nuclear dominance of the five permanent members of the UNSC, who themselves hold some of the biggest nuclear arsenals of the world. That apart,

there were controversies in the case of inspection of Iranian nuclear installations when Iran's then Intelligence Minister Heydar Moslehi had accused the IAEA of sending intelligence operatives who engaged in espionage against the interest of the Islamic Republic. The 2010 allegation also hinted that IAEA inspectors and observers had shared information with the U.S. government.

Iran challenge

The coming weeks will, however, test the 63-year old organisation as Iran remains suspicious of the exact intentions of the U.S. under the Biden administration. The current episode, which involves regional political concerns like Saudi-Iran and Iran-Israel rivalries as well as the American interests in the region, will certainly test the leadership of Rafael Mariano Grossi, the current Director

General of the IAEA. It will also test the ability of the IAEA to deal with powerful states from its position of "uneven authority".

After this week's visit to Tehran, Mr. Grossi had posted on Twitter, "A temporary technical understanding has been reached" with Iran. However, the main negotiation on this front is dependent on Tehran's demand of lifting of American sanctions. Iran has said its compliance will depend on lifting of sanctions.

The issues involved between Iran and the U.S. indicate that they are not part of the mandate of the IAEA. Iran also requires assurance that once activated, the deal will not be abandoned in future by an American President in the way that President Trump had done in 2018. Tying all the loose ends of this difficult negotiation will be the biggest challenge



NODEEP KAUR

Always at the forefront

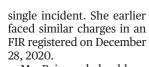
Released from jail, labour activist says she will soon join the farmers' protest

ASHOK KUMAR

or Nodeep Kaur, a → poor Dalit woman from a Punjab village, activism has never been a choice, but a necessity. In fact, a way of life. "We have faced it (the discrimination) since childhood. And the choice always was either to keep mum or speak out," said Ms. Nodeep's elder sister Raiveer Kaur, a PhD student in Delhi University's Punjabi Department, in a recent conversation with The Hindu.

And coming from a family of fiercely politically active women, Nodeep, who was granted bail by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Friday, had been at the forefront of workers and farmers' agitations for months till she was arrested by the Haryana police last month. Her mother has been a Punjab Khet Mazdoor Union activist for more than a decade and Ms. Rajveer heads the Bhagat Singh Chhatra Ekta Manch in Delhi University. The third sister, Harveer Kaur, is part of a student union in Punjab.

Ms. Nodeep, 24, was arrested on January 12 from Sonipat's Kundli Industrial Area - near the site of a criminal intimidation and extortion under the Indian Penal Code, among others, in two separate cases registered in connection with a



Ms. Rajveer, helped by a few of her friends and activists, fought for her sister's release. She highlighted the alleged high-handedness of the police and, in a press conference, alleged sexual violence and torture against Ms. Nodeep in the police custody. The matter caught the media's attention in a big way after the U.S.-based lawyer Meena Harris, a relative of U.S. Vice-President Kamala Harris, put out a tweet seeking her release. "#ReleaseNodeepKaur," read Ms. Harris's tweet on

Call for release

soon, everybody seemed interested in the story of this young activist. She was all over the social and mainstream media, with hashtags seeking her release trending on Twitter. The issue gained the centre



ILLUSTRATION: LA PREMICIMAR

"When I met Nodeep a day after her arrest, she was bleeding from her legs. She told me that the male police personnel tortured her in custody causing injuries on her private parts and the back. She was not molested or raped, as reported in a section of media, but can't a woman complain of sexual violence till the time she is subjected to its highest form?," Ms. Rajveer told The *Hindu*. The Haryana Police have denied the allegations as "arbitrary" and "base-

Before the High Court order in the third case paved the way for her release, Ms. Nodeep was granted bail by

the Judicial Magistrate First Class in the two other cases. Born in Sir Muktsar Sahib's Gandhar village, Ms.

Nodeep had come to Delhi to pursue graduation last year, but the circumstances her father had to shut down his workshop in Telangana due to the COVIDinduced lockdown - forced her to give up her dreams.

She took up a job at a company manufacturing automotive lighting in Sonipat six months back, but was gradually drawn to the workers' struggle. She later joined Mazdoor Adhikar Sangathan (MAS), a local workers rights' group in the Kundli Industrial Area. The group would take up the issue of non-payment of dues to the workers. It led to complaints by the local industrialists to the police, alleging extortion by the group.

After the farmers agitation reached the Delhi borders in November, Ms. Nodeep, along with other MAS activists, gave the slogan for the unity of farmers and the workers. They would distribute pamphlets in the industrial area to tell workers as to how the farm laws would impact them. She also lost her job because of her participation in the farmers' stir.

She may now be out of jail, but the fight continues for her. Stepping out of the Karnal Jail, Ms. Nodeep said she would soon join the farmers' protest at Delhi's Singhu border. Meena Harris was among those who welcomed the release of Ms. Nodeep and Disha Ravi: "Please stay loud – this fight is far from over," Ms. Harris tweeted.



The fugitive merchant

India moves a step ahead to get the trader extradited with a recent U.K. ruling

DEVESH K. PANDEY

iding high on the fame that his exquisite collection of precious gem jewellery had generated in the glamour world within such a short span, a third-generation diamantaire made it to the elite Indian billionaires' club in 2013. However, Nirav Modi's success story lasted for just about a decade. Wanted by Indian agencies for bank fraud and money laundering, he now awaits his fate currently confined in Lon-

don's Wandsworth prison. With the Westminster Magistrates' Court allowing the extradition request against him on Thursday, Mr. Modi's first attempt to escape trial in India has failed. His wife Ami (U.S. citizen); father Deepak Modi; younger brothers, Nehal and Neeshal; sister Purvi and her husband Maiank; and uncle Mehul Choksi are also facing probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate.

While Mr. Modi is an Indian citizen, his parents and younger siblings are Belgian nationals. His grandfather was a diamond trader from Gujarat's Surat, from where he shifted to Singapore. His father then migrated to Belgium in the 1960s. At the age of 19, the aspiring diamond merchant dropped out of the Wharton School to learn the tricks of the diamond trade from his uncle, Mr. Choksi, who has fled to Antigua and is now facing extra-

dition proceedings there.



Back in 2017, when the agencies did not have the slightest inkling of the alleged crimes being committed by him, the businessman made it to the list of Indian billionaires for the fifth consecutive year. He often talked about business expansion in other parts of the world, in Hong Kong, Dubai, New York, Macau, Singapore, Beijing and London. The top celebrities engaged by him to endorse his collections played a key role in establishing his brand.

Nothing seemed unusual when Mr. Modi and other members of the family flew abroad in the first week of January 2018. However, all hell broke loose as reports of a scam emerged.

As it turned out, the CBI received a complaint from Punjab National Bank (PNB) on January 29, 2018, days after the family had left the country, alleging that Mr. Modi's companies were involved in the fraudulent use of eight Letters of Undertak-

ing (LoUs), which is a form of bank guarantee to facilitate overseas transactions by getting credit from fo-

reign banks. The perpetrators, in conspiracy with certain officials of the PNB's Brady House branch in Mumbai, had exploited the flaws in the system of keeping LoU records. About a month later, the bank again wrote to the CBI, this time informing that there were 150 fraudulent LoUs worth ₹6,498.20 crore, issued to companies that were part of Mr. Modi's Firestar Group.

Money laundering probe Based on the CBI case, the ED launched a money laundering probe into the financial scam. The agencies found that Mr. Choksi was also part of the racket. Further enquiries revealed that he had already taken Antiguan citizenship. The diverted funds were used to acquire prime properties in different countries, for

which Trusts were also set

Dummy directors and partners, who were mostly the employees of Mr. Modi, were roped in. The ED discovered that the businessman had floated a number of overseas companies in Hong Kong and Dubai, which received the proceeds of the fraud, noted the U.K. court's order.

These companies were used for the circular trade of diamonds, pearls, gold and jewellery at highly inflated values to give the impression that the firms in receipt of the LoUs issued via the PNB were engaged in legiti-

mate trade. The agencies alleged that in a bid to escape the law, Mr. Modi also got the dummy directors of Dubai-based firms shifted to Cairo, where they were kept in confinement. Their mobile phones were disposed of and a server in Dubai, in which all the data related to his companies was stored, was also

destroyed. On the strength of two sets of criminal proceedings pursued by the CBI and the ED, India requested for Mr. Modi's extradition from the U.K. in July-August 2018. Another request was made in February last year on the allegation that he had destroyed evidence and threatened witnesses. Mr. Modi was arrested in London on March 19, 2019, and since then, he has been in judicial custody there. His wife and three children are said to be in the U.S.

M ND-NDE

farmers' sit-in agitation at the Delhi border against the Centre's farm laws. She was slapped with charges of attempt to murder, rioting,

'TRIPS waiver for vaccines key to growth' Govt. vendors may use only

For \$30-40 bn in vaccine output, we are blocking \$6-7 tn of global GDP: India's Ambassador to WTO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Failing to approve the CO-VID-19 waiver for equitable access to medicines under the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement could dent global economic output by trillions of dollars at the cost of protecting vaccine makers' business worth just \$30-40 billion, India's ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) said on Saturday.

India and South Africa have jointly moved a proposal at the WTO's TRIPS council for a waiver to help more countries get access to medicines and vaccines during the pandemic. Fifty-seven WTO members have backed the proposal, but the EU, U.S., Japan and Canada have opposed the idea stressing the importance of intellec-



Different priorities: EU, U.S., Japan and Canada have opposed the waiver bid, citing the importance of IP. • JOTHI RAMALINGAM .B

tual property for innovation. "If we fail in the next one or two quarters by not delivering on the TRIPS waiver, let me tell you we will not just fail on the question of equity, we are coming in the way of global growth and livelihoods. It is not only that we are coming in the way of

life," asserted India's ambassador to the WTO Brajendra

"It's very simple economics. For a commercial business of \$30-40 billion of annual vaccine output of a few companies, we are coming in the way of \$6-7 trillion of global GDP output in one year. It doesn't make any sense – to give \$1.5 trillion worth of fiscal stimulus on one side, and not to be willing to design a remuneration for the IP rights holder and expand the manufacturing by just putting in \$30-40 billion in

Stressing that the TRIPS waiver is 'the priority agenda' for the multilateral trade body, Mr. Navnit said India is a committed soldier of the multilateral trading system and doesn't believe the WTO and multilateralism is dying in the face of a greater reliance on plurilateral and bilateral trade pacts.

the bucket," he said.

Speaking in a session on the future of the WTO after the COVID-19 pandemic at the Asia Economic Dialogue hosted by External Affairs Ministry and the Pune International Centre, Mr. Navnit said that India's Atma Nirbhar Bharat campaign is 'not contradictory' to the principles of 'free trade'.

An India that can produce for itself can also make for the world and provide an alternative source of production, he said, adding that a key learning from the pandemic is the need to diversify so that the global supply chain is not 'concentrated in India's WTO representa-

tive also pitched for greater market access for agriculture, arguing that developing countries have reduced their tariffs but still face barriers to trade from countries that continue to give high subsidies to large farmers. "This has created a lot of imbalance. We hope we can have a more durable and viable multilateral trading system."

parts, inputs from China'

'Finished goods from neighbour require registration'

VIKAS DHOOT

The government has placed curbs on the procurement of finished goods from China by firms supplying goods and services under the public procurement system, while allowing the use of Chinese raw material or components without prior permission.

"A bidder is permitted to procure raw material, components, sub-assemblies, etc. from the vendors from such countries which shares a land border," the Department of Expenditure in the Finance Ministry has said in a memo, arguing that such procurement cannot be equated with sub-contracting.

Last July, the government

The Centre is considering rebooting approvals for China-related investments

had altered its public procurement norms to ensure that contractors executing works and turnkey projects do not sub-contract any work to players from 'a country sharing a land border with India' unless the proposed sub-contractor was registered with the Indian government.

A registration committee had been set up by the Department for Promotion of Investment and Internal Trade under the Commerce and Industry Ministry to

deal with such proposals. However, no explicit restriction had been placed on successful bidders in public procurement of goods and services, on sourcing their deliverables from countries such as China.

'Rebooting approvals' Now, vendors proposing to

source finished goods from Chinese suppliers will need to seek registration with the committee.

The development assumes significance at a time the government is considering rebooting approvals for China-related investment proposals following the disengagement at the Indo-Chinese border after an extended period of tension.

GHCL to expand textile capacities in Tamil Nadu

Firm may invest ₹150-₹200 cr. in FY22

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT COIMBATORE

GHCL, which has two textile mills in Tamil Nadu, plans to invest ₹150-₹200 crore in the State in FY22

R.S. Jalan, MD, told *The Hindu* that the company 'has aggressive plans for expansion and a team is work-

The company will look at expanding capacities at its yarn production facilities near Madurai and Tiruchirapalli and also in solar power.

"We are looking at putting up weaving infrastructure, too," he said. The company makes cotton and synthetic yarn in the mills.

The textiles business had been doing well in the third

Levy of import duty on cotton, as announced in the Budget, would hit textiles exports

and fourth quarters of this fiscal and was expected to continue the performance. GHCL exports home textiles and yarn. Mr. Jalan said India had grown in the textiles segment in terms of ex-

The levy of import duty on cotton, as announced in the Budget, would affect the growth of textiles exports as several units imported cotton, mainly branded and extra-long staple, to make and export premium textile pro-

We must continue trade with China: Bajaj

Halting imports suddenly is like cutting your nose to spite your face: Bajaj Auto MD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Favouring continuation of trade with China, Bajaj Auto Managing Director Rajiv Bajaj on Saturday said goods should be procured from wherever they are most competitively available.

He was speaking at a session on 'Building a reliable supply chain' at the second day of the three-day virtual Asia Economic Dialogue 2021, jointly convened by the Ministry of External Affairs and Pune International

Mr. Bajaj also said that in terms of ease of doing business, operating something in one of the ASEAN countries was certainly easier than "what we encounter here in India. We like to believe that



Rajiv Bajaj

we are a global company, and therefore, this to my mind, from a cultural point of view, and an operational point of view, demands completeness or inclusiveness not just of employee gender, but also of having dealers, distributors and equally, suppliers from all over the

"If we conduct our busi-

ness at the exclusion of such a large country, such a large market, we will find ourselves incomplete over time, and we will be poorer for the loss of that experience," he added.

'Continuity is important' Emphasising the need for continuity in the supply chain, Mr. Bajaj said, "I say this in the context of what happened around June or July, when our government, for whatever reasons, suddenly came down hard on imports, especially from

"Doing something like that is to cut your nose to spite your face. Because overnight, how can one source components that are simply not made in the domestic market, that you need to deliver products to domestic or export customers?" he said.

Noting that if it is cheaper to make something out of China or procure something from Thailand, Bajaj said, We must always procure stuff from wherever it is most competitively available."

He said as the automaker hoped to venture into Asia in a significant way in the future, it did an elaborate comparison of certain metrics. Based on five metrics -

land, labour, electricity, logistics and the legal system -"we did an exhaustive comparison of India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia.""We were not very pleased with the conclusion we drew for India," he said.

U.K.'s CDC Group pares stake in Equitas Holdings

It sells 89 lakh shares in open market

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The U.K.'s development finance institution CDC Group has pruned its stake in Equitas Holdings Ltd. by 2.61% through sale of more than 89 lakh shares in the open market earlier this week, according to a filing.

"We have on February 25, 2021, sold (in open market) 89,30,410 equity shares of Equitas Holdings Ltd., constituting 2.61% of the paidup share capital of Equitas Holdings Ltd.," CDC Group plc said in the filing.

The disclosures are required under SEBI's regulation on substantial acquisition of shares takeovers, it added.

Total shareholding of the development finance institution has now come

down to 5.23%

Before the sale of shares, CDC Group held 7.84% stake in Equitas Holdings, equivalent to 2,67,91,230 equity shares. Hence, the total shareholding of the U.K.'s development finance institution has now come down to equivalent to 1,78,60,820 equity shares.

CDC Group is a public shareholder in Equitas Holdings, as per BSE data. Equitas Holdings is the promoter of the south-India based Equitas Small Finance

IN BRIEF

Hyundai Motor India bags award for i20

Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) has bagged the 'Indian Car of the Year 2021 (ICOTY)' award for its i20 car. The South Korean carmaker had won the award seven times for its products such as Venue. Verna. Creta. Elite. i10 and Grand i10 since 2008, said HMIL. Since its launch in November, the i20 had sold over 42,000 units.

Maruti's cumulative exports cross 20 lakh

NEW DELHI

India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India on Saturday said it had achieved the milestone of 20 lakh in cumulative exports. The auto major achieved the milestone as a batch of products comprising S-Presso, Swift and Vitara Brezza left for South Africa from the Mundra Port, PTI

Airtel bank eyes fourfold rise in Safe Pay users

Security feature can stop fraud: Biswas

N. ANAND

Airtel Payments Bank plans to increase the user base for its recently-introduced Airtel Safe Pay by fourfold, said a top official. "We launched Airtel Safe

Pay during January 2021 and within one month, we got a quarter of a million users," said Anubrata Biswas, MD and CEO of the bank.

"Our goal is to get one million users in the next one year. To achieve this, we will be rolling it out in regional languages," he added. Safe Pay is a security fea-

ture that can be availed by Airtel Payments Bank Savings Account customers



Anubrata Biswas

with an Airtel Mobile number linked to the account.

"Everyone has a two-step authentication. But, here we offer three-step authentication. This additional step would prevent customers from making payment. Thus, online fraud can be prevented," he said.

INTERVIEW | ASHWIN YARDI

'Black Swan event has rewritten global business rules'

Robust, tech-driven business strategy resilient to next big disruption is vital: Capgemini India CEO

COVID-19, a Black Swan event, has rewritten the rules of businesses across the globe, says **Ashwin Yardi**, CEO, Capge mini India. Edited excerpts:

Can vou give us a brief account of the acceleration in digital that the world has seen in the last 10 months?

From healthcare to edutech, we have seen digital technologies getting to the core of solutions. We see health services delivered seamlessly in a virtual mode. Similarly, intensive, classroom-based education has moved online from Ivy League universities to early-stage learning. New pro-

duct development for new drug discovery is accelerated using technologies like data and artificial intelligence. We believe that technology will be more than ever a part of our lives and of all chains, whether logistical, indusrelational

Has the pandemic made selling technology easier?

solidarity-based.

■ The pandemic has accelerated the need for marketing and IT teams to collaborate and radically transform the business to drive revenue and digital maturity.

Technology now is key to business models, products and services and hence, the need is pervasive across the C suite of any organisation.

Therefore, the key stakeholders for the tech decision-making now extend beyond CIOs to CMOs, CTOs, CFOs, and CHROs and chief product development officers. There is a greater need for agili-

ty, especially understanding customer

sentiments and accordingly deploy technology solutions.

How is Capgemini readying its employees to serve in a changing marketplace?

■ We all know the pandemic has brought about a multitude of changes and

disruptions across the globe. Today, more than 95% of our

employees

working from home and this is also an industrywide reality in IT.

sult, new ways of working have evolved with agility. We received numerous client appreciations for continuing business operations in this difficult time.

Even a few security-sensitive customers, especially in banking, healthcare and manufacturing sectors were convinced with our security model and consented to work from home for teams on their projects. For the foreseeable future, this is likely to stay.

Face-to-face localised communication is something we aren't likely to see too soon and participants in the ecosystem will have to play their part to stay relevant.

Mithali, Harmanpreet to lead

Shikha and Taniya dropped for series against South Africa

CRICKET

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI

Mithali Raj and Harmanpreet Kaur will lead the ODI and T20I squads in the series against South Africa, beginning at Lucknow on March 7.

Pacer Shikha Pandey and wicketkeeper Taniya Bhatia have been dropped from both squads by the Neetu David-led selection commit-

Explosive opener Shafali Verma hasn't been included in the ODI team. The squads:

For ODIs: Mithali Raj (Capt.), Harmanpreet Kaur (vice-capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Punam Raut, Priya Punia, Yastika Bhatia, D. Hemalatha, Deepti Sharma, Sushma Verma (wk). Swetha Verma (wk), Radha Yadav, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Jhulan Goswami, Mansi Joshi, Poonam Yadav, C.



Prathyusha and Monica Patel. For T20Is: Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana (vice-capt.), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma. Richa Ghosh. Harleen Deol. Sushma Verma (wk), Nuzhat

Parveen (wk), Ayushi Soni,

Arundhati Reddy, Radha Yadav,



Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Poonam Yadav, Mansi Joshi, Monica Patel, C. Prathyusha and Simran Dil Bahadur

The schedule: ODIs: March 7, 9, 12, 14 and 17. **T20Is:** March 20, 21 and 23.

All matches will be played at

Cavallini obliges in the main event

BENGALURU: Irfan Ghatala-trained Cavallini (Akshay K up) won the Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wadi-yar Memorial Trophy, the feature event of the races held here on Sat-urday (Feb 27). The winner is owned by M/s. Arun Alagappan Racing LLP.

1. BULL TEMPLE PLATE (DIV. III), (1,200m), rated 15 to 35: COPPER SUNRISE (Antony) 1, Belli Deepa (R. Pradeep) 2, Tifanny (Trevor) 3 and Carmine (Shrevas Singh) 4, 2-1/4, 1 3/4 and 1-1/4. 1m, 13.07s. ₹29 (w), 14, 12 and 21 (p), SHP: 41, THP: 40, FP: 166, Q: 90, Trinella: 336 and 255. Exacta: 1,144 and 440. Favour ite: Belli Deepa. Owners: Mr. Gurpal Singh, Mr. N. Ramesh & Jagadamba. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

2. NETHRAVATHI PLATE (DIV. II), (1,400m), rated 15 to 35, 5-y-o & over: DESERT ROSE (Nazerul) 1, Pastiche (P. Surya) 2, Daring Sweetheart (R. Pradeep) 3 and Glorious Dancer (Jagadeesh) 4. Lnk, 2 and 1-1/4. 1m, 26.48s. ₹103 (w), 45, 25 and 25 (p), SHP: 67, THP: 84, FP: 3,199, Q: 1,780, Trinella: 18,740 and 12,046, Exacta: 13,357 and 31,166 (carried over). Favourite: Glorious Dancer. Owner: Mr. K.P.G. Appu. Trainer: Neil Darashah. 3. KITTY BANK PLATE (1,200m),

maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms): KNIGHT IN HOOVES (Suraj) 1, Brun-

hild (Akshay K) 2, Divine Blessings (Antony) 3 and Moonlight Sonata (Zervan) 4. 3-3/4, 2-1/4 and 1-1/4.

1m, 12.65s. ₹16 (w), 11, 12 and 23 (p), SHP: 28, THP: 40, FP: 42, Q: 19,

Trinella: 202 and 148, Exacta: 398

and 141. Favourite: Knight In Hooves. Owner: Mr. Daulat Chhabria. Trainer: Rajesh Narredu.
4. BULL TEMPLE PLATE (DIV. II),

(1,200m), rated 15 to 35: STONE HOUSE (Shreyas Singh) 1, Ocean Dunes (Ankit Yadav) 2, Sir Jersey (Antony) 3 and Chisox (J.H. Arul) 4. 3-1/4, 2-1/2 and 1-1/4. Im, 13.47s. ₹229 (w), 40, 15 and 17 (p), SHP: 41, THP: 49, FP: 1,500, Q: 560, Trinella: 5,949 and 4,462, Exacta: 46,811 and 20,061. Favourite: Profound. Owner: Mr. Harakchand C. Gandhi. Trainer: M. Rajendra

GATEWAY OF INDIA PLATE (1,600m), rated 30 to 50, 5-y-o & over: GREEN CHANNEL (J.H. Arul) 1, High Priestess (Trevor) 2, Queen Regnant (A. Imran) 3 and Speaking Of Stars (Zervan) 4. Not run: Brown Bess. Shd, Lnk and 1. 1m, 37.89s. ₹486 (w), 55, 13 and 18 (p), SHP: 35, THP: 46, FP: 979, Q: 321, Trinella: 3,810 and 1,270, Exacta: 8,061 and 2,764. Favourite: Speaking Of Stars. Owner: Dr. Suresh Chintamaneni. Trainer: Neil Devaney.

6. BYERLEY TURK TROPHY (1,200m), rated 30 to 50: DONNA BELLA (Srinath) 1, Asgardia (Shreyas Singh) 2, Ultimate Speed (Jagadeesh) 3 and Benediction (Jagadeesh) 3 and 5 alrich Ericht (Md. Aliyar) 4. 4, 2-3/4 and 1/2. Im, 12.24s. ₹75 (w), 23, 15 and 39 (p), SHP: 37, THP: 91, FP: 583, Q: 215, Trinella: 6,264 and 3,068, Exacta: 43,257 (carried over). Favourite: Kimera. Owners: Mrs. Mahima Shailesh, Dr. Dayananda Pai. P, Dr. Thomas A. Chandy and Mr. K. Ravi. Trainer: Irfan Ghatala

7. SRIKANTADATTA NARASIMHA WADIYAR TROPHY (1,200m), rated 45 to 65: CAVALLINI (Akshay K) 1, Glenary (Arshad) 2, Regal Music (Sai Vamshi) 3 and Harmonia (J.H. Arul) 4 Not run: Ice Floe. 1-3/4, 2-3/4 and 2-1/2. 1m, 11.27s. ₹17 (w), 12, 23 and 22 (n). SHP: 61. THP: 42, FP: 167, Q: 115, Trinella: 1,850 and 453, Exacta: 6,488 and 2,780. Favourite: Cavallini. Owner: M/s. Arun Alagappan Racing LLP. Trainer: Irfan Ghatala. 8. NETHRAVATHI PLATE (DIV. I),

(1,400m), rated 15 to 35, 5-y-o & over: RADIANT TREASURE (Ashhad Asbar) 1, Ultimate Striker (Sai Vamshi) 2, Apollo Bay (Akshay K) 3 and Celestial Highway (Nazerul) 4. 3, 1 and 1. 1m, 26.45s. ₹31 (w), 17, 24 and 21 (p), SHP: 63, THP: 42, FP: 341, Q: 164, Trinella: 2,564 and 806, Exacta: 3,089 and 1,135. Favourite: Celestial Highway. Owner Mr. Satish G. Kundapur. Trainer: 9. BULL TEMPLE PLATE (DIV. I)

(1,200m), rated 15 to 35: MICHIGAN MELODY (Naveen K) 1, Blazing Gold (Arvind K) 2, Areca Angel (R. Ravi) 3 and Flamingo Road (J.H. Arul) 4. 2-3/4, 1 and Lnk. Im, 14.06s. ₹48 (w), 16, 33 and 150 (p), SHP: 82, THP: 254, FP: 667, Q: 325, Trinella: 17,404 and 7,459, Exacta: 20,803 and 48,540 (carried over). Favourite: Arathorn. Owner: Mr. Satish G. Kundapur. Trainer: B. Prithviraj. Jackpot: ₹3,54,237 (carried over); Runner-up: 7,990 (19 tkts.); Treble (i): 1,752 (three tkts.); (ii): 6,662 (carried over); (iii): 698 (17 tkts.).

IN BRIEF



Gayle returns to WI T20 squad after two years

Chris Gayle was called into the West Indies Twenty20 squad on Friday for the first time in two years as the 41-year-old eyes a place in the World Cup later this year. Gayle was named in the 14-man squad for the three-game series against Sri Lanka which starts in Antigua on Wednesday. Andre Russell, recovering from COVID-19, has been ruled out.

Prajnesh loses NUR SULTAN (KAZAKHSTAN)

Fourth-seeded Prajnesh Gunneswaran was halted by sixth seed Jurij Rodionov of Austria with a 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 win in the semifinals of the \$104,160 Challenger tennis tournament here on Saturday. Prajnesh collected 35 ATP points and \$5,020.

NZC moves T20Is to Wellington

The upcoming T20Is between New Zealand and the Australia men's team and England women's side, to be played at Eden Park next week, were on Saturday moved to Wellington due to fresh COVID-19 lockdown restrictions imposed here. Both matches will now be held behind closed doors



Woods in 'good spirits' after follow-up procedures LOS ANGELES

Tiger Woods was recovering and in "good spirits" after he received follow-up procedures following his horrific rollover solo car smash that left him with serious leg injuries. "Tiger and his family want to thank you all for the wonderful support," said a statement on Woods' Twitter account. AFP

TV PICKS

Premier League: Star Sports 3 (SD & HD), 10 p.m.; SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m., 7.30 p.m., 10 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Monday)

Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD &

HD), 5 p.m., 7.30 p.m. & 10,30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Monday)
ISL: Star Sports 2 & 3 (SD &

HD), 5 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Injured Nadal to miss two tournaments

Rafael Nadal said on Friday he would not play in the Acapulco ATP tournament in March because of a back injury which also caused his withdrawal from next week's Rotterdam event. AFP



Heat snaps Jazz's run LOS ANGELES

Jimmy Butler scored a season-high 33 points as Miami Heat beat the NBAleading Utah Jazz 124-116 on Friday.

Other results: Miami Heat 124 bt Utah Jazz 116: Boston Celtics 118 bt Indiana Pacers 112; Golden State Warriors 130 bt Charlotte Hornets 121; LA Lakers 102 bt Portland Trail Blazers 93; Memphis Grizzlies 99 lost to LA Clippers 119. AFP

Aditi hangs on for the weekend; Ko keeps lead

Aditi Ashok overcame an early double-bogey with three birdies in the second round to make the cut in her first start of 2021 at the Gainbridge LPGA here. With rounds of 74 and 71, Aditi is now T-57 as Lydia Ko continued to lead on 10-under 134. рті

Ministry restores GFI recognition

NEW DELHI The Sports Ministry on Friday restored recognition for the Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI), which was de recognised in 2011 because of infighting. The ministry has also taken on record Sudhir Mittal's election as president, and Kaushik Bidiwala as treasurer while keeping Shanti Kumar Singh's election as general secretary in abeyance pending a Manipur High Court decision on a writ

Germany routs India in women's hockey

DUSSELDORE World No. 3 Germany blanked the Indian women's hockey team 5-0 in the first game of the four-match tour here on

Saturday. The result: Germany 5 (Pia Maertens 10 & 14, Lena Micheel 20, Pauline Heinz 28, Lisa Altenburg 41) bt India O.

Bronze for Indian men's skeet team

SPORTS BUREAU

Angad Vir Singh Bajwa, Mairaj Ahmad Khan and Gurjoat Khangura narrowly missed a chance to fight for the gold, but clinched the skeet team bronze in the Shotgun World Cup here.

The Indian team shot 146 out of 150 to reach a total of 491 and tied with Russia, while Czech Republic topped with 498.

Russia not only won the shoot-off against India 6-5, but went on to capture the gold with a 6-0 victory over Czech Republic.

India beat Kazakhstan

6-2 to win the bronze. The Indian women's team of Parinaaz Dhaliwal, Ganemat Sekhon and Karttiki Singh Shaktawat lost the battle for bronze 4-6 to Kazakhstan, while Russia beat Czech Republic 6-2 for

the gold. The results: Skeet: Men: 1. Russia 6 (491); 2. Czech Republic 0 (498); 3. India 6 (491); Women: 1. Russia 6 (481); 2.

4. Kazakhstan 2 (490). Czech Republic 2 (485); 3. Kazakhstan 6 (476); 4. India 4 (462).

Who defines what a good surface is?

We need to get over it and not talk about whatever picture you want to paint, Ashwin tells pitch critics

ENGLAND IN INDIA

AMOL KARHADKAR AHMEDABAD

A day after his cryptic tweets led to various theories, not only did R. Ashwin confirm that he was referring to the furore over the pitches in the last two Tests but the India off-spinner also lashed out at the critics who have been blaming England's losses on the surfaces rather than crediting India's all-round performances.

Ashwin addressed the media on Saturday through a virtual interaction. Asked whether the strip at the Narendra Modi stadium, which saw the third Test lasting less than two days, was a good pitch, Ashwin shot back: "I have a question back. What is a good cricket surface?"

'The bowler wants to win the game. The batsman needs to bat well to get runs. No question about it. What makes a good surface? Who defines this? Seam on the first day and then bat well and then spin on the last two days? Come on!" Ashwin

"Who makes all these rules, we need to get over it and not talk about whatever picture you want to paint. If you're asking if it is a good Test surface, I don't see any of the players coming from England having an issue with the surface.

'They want to improve, they look like they want to have a contest. Is it the players and the people who are reporting back that want their players to not complete and complain about the pitches? Because we have never done that on any of the

Different response

Ashwin also pointed out that the pink ball responded differently to the surface than

the red ball, with things happening "quicker".

"I started the game, in the nets. I used to be a little sceptical. When I bowled, the balance of the ball was a lot different to the red ball.

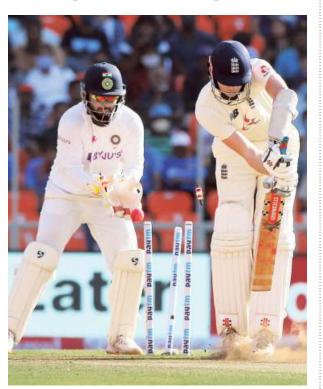
"When you try to put too many revs, it wasn't rotating as much at the seam as I thought the red ball was rotating," he said.

Spinning quite big

"If at all it fell on the seam, it was spinning quite big at that time. It wasn't responding the way the red ball was responding. Whatever was happening, was happening auicker off the surface. It didn't make a difference.

Touch slower

"If we played with a red ball game on the same surface, the pace of the game must have been a touch slower. These are all the things I'm talking about in hindsight."



Misread: Crawley plays down the wrong line and is bowled by Axar in England's second innings in the third Test.

IN BRIEF

Bumrah released from squad for personal reasons AHMEDABAD

Jasprit Bumrah has been released from India's squad ahead of the fourth Test due to personal reasons. Bumrah is understood to have left the team after the early finish to the third Test. The BCCI, while confirming Bumrah's release, said that there would be no replacement for the

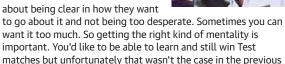
fourth Test. Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Siraj are the pacemen in the squad

Pune ODIs to be held behind closed doors

The Maharashtra Government has given the green signal for the three-match ODI series between India and England to be held in Pune next month. However, spectators will be barred as the COVID-19 cases are on the rise in the State. The clearance was obtained on Saturday when the Maharashtra Cricket Association president Vikas Kakatkar and Mumbai Cricket Association governing-council member Milind Narvekar met Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

Don't become too desperate, Trott tells England batsmen

Jonathan Trott wants the England batsmen to be patient and "not become too desperate" when facing R. Ashwin and Axar Patel. "It's



to go about it and not being too desperate. Sometimes you ca want it too much. So getting the right kind of mentality is important. You'd like to be able to learn and still win Test matches but unfortunately that wasn't the case in the previous two," said Trott during a conference call on Saturday. AFP

Dhawan's century takes Delhi home

Shreyas leads from the front, Mumbai makes it four out of four

HAZARE TROPHY

SPORTS BUREAU

Shikhar Dhawan struck 153 off just 118 balls (21x4, 1x6) to star in Delhi's three-wicket win over Maharashtra in the Vijay Hazare Trophy oneday tournament here on Saturday.

xious moments towards the end of its chase of a challenging target of 329, but Pradeep Sangwan swung seam-Rajvardhan Hangargekar's second ball of the final over for a six over mid-wicket to take his side

The run-out of Shivank Vashisht in the previous over had given Maharashtra some faint hope.

Big partnerships

Dhawan's first wicket partnership of 136 with Dhruv Shorey (61, 75b, 7x4) had put Delhi firmly on course for its third win in four matches. The left-handed opener then added 101 for the fourth with Kshitiz Sharma (36, 29b, 4x4, Ix6) to take the team closer to the target.

Earlier, Kedar Jadhav (86, 81b, 10x4) and Azim Kazi (91, 73b, 10x4, 2x6) were the main contributors in the Maharasthra innings. Opener Yash Nahar made 45 (64b, 6x4, 1x6).

Meanwhile, Mumbai made it four out of four with



Blitz: Dhawan's 153 off 118 balls contained 21 fours and a six.

a 67-run win over host Rajasthan. Skipper Shreyas Iyer led from the front once again, scoring 116 off 103 balls (11x4, 3x6).

The captain's second hundred in as many matches helped Mumbai make 317 for seven. In reply, Rajasthan was bowled out for 250 in 42.2 overs. Mahipal Lomror top-scored with 76 (69b,

6x4, 4x6) while Shardul Thakur claimed four for 50 from eight overs.

Pondicherry posts win In the other match in Pool D,

Pondicherry, riding on Sheldon Jackson's 104 (141b, 12x4) and left-arm spinner Sagar Udeshi's four for 35, thrashed Himachal Pradesh by 104 runs.

Sunday's Hazare Trophy matches

- Elite A (Surat): Gujarat vs Baroda; Hyderabad vs Goa; Tripura vs Chhattisgarh
- Elite B (Indore): Tamil Nadu vs Vidarbha; Jharkhand vs Andhra; Madhya Pradesh vs Punjab
- Elite C (Bengaluru): Karnataka vs Railways; Kerala vs Bihar; Odisha vs Uttar Pradesh
- All matches at 9 a.m.

SATURDAY'S VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY SCORES

Elite D (Jaipur): Pondicherry 227/9 in 50 overs (Sheldon Jackson 104, Sagar Trivedi 51, Rishi Dhawan 4/44) bt Himachal 123 in 34.5 overs (Sagar Udeshi 4/35)

Mumbai 317/7 in 50 overs (Shreyas Iyer 116) bt Rajasthan 250 in 42.2 overs (Manender Singh 40, Mahipal Lomror 76, Shardul Thakur 4/50).

Maharashtra 328/7 in 50 overs (Yash Nahar 45, Kedar Jadhav 86, Azim Kazi 91) lost to Delhi 330/7 in 49.2 overs (Dhruv Shorey 61, Shikhar Dhawan 153).

Elite E (Kolkata): Saurashtra 388/7 in 50 overs (Vishvaraj Jadeja 50, Prerak Mankad 174, Arpit Vasavada 71, Jaskaran Singh

EURO LEAGUES

Manchester City won its 20th

straight game in all competi-

tions and opened up a 13-

point lead in the Premier

League by beating West Ham

2-1 thanks to goals from centre

backs Ruben Dias and John

Dias, Stones' partner in

central defence, put City in

front off a header from a deep

cross by Kevin De Bruyne in

the 30th only for Pep Guar-

diola's team to concede its

first home goal in 2-1/2

months when Michail Anto-

nio equalised just before half-

time. Stones swept in the de-

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stones on Saturday.

Barcelona gets the better of Sevilla

50 overs (Arslan Khan 61. Manan Vohra 50, Ankit Kaushik 54, Gauray Gambhir 40 n.o.).

4/60) bt Chandigarh 326/7 in

Services 287/5 in 50 overs (Shivam Tiwari 74, Rajat Paliwal 78 n.o.) bt Haryana 175 in 43.3 overs (Jayant Yadav 59). Bengal 368/4 in 50 overs

(Abhimanyu Easwaran 99, Ritwik Roy Chowdhury 55, Anustup Majumdar 92 n.o., Kaif Ahmed 42, Shahbaz Ahmed 48 n.o.) bt Jammu & Kashmir 286 in 45.3 overs (Shubham Khajuria 44, Parvez Rasool 50, Abid Mushtaq 68, Arnab Nandi 4/46).

Plate (Chennai): Arunachal Pradesh 153 in 50 overs (Akhilesh Sahani 45) lost to Megha-

Centre-backs do it for Manchester City

cisive goal in the 68th from

Rivad Mahrez's pass. It was Ci-

ty's 14th win in a row in the

league - only the sixth time

that has been achieved in En-

A Lionel Messi goal in the

85th minute preceded by an

assist, to set up the Ousmane

Dembele's opener in the

29th, powered Barcelona past

Sevilla 2-0 and in to second in

LaLiga standings. Barcelona

is on 53 points, two behind

leader Atletico Madrid but

having played two extra

games. Sevilla remains on 48.

The results: Premier League:

Manchester City 2 (Dias 30,

Stones 68) bt West Ham 1 (An-

tonio 43); West Brom 1 (Bartley

LaLiga: Eibar 1 (Diop 83) drew

11) bt Brighton O.

glish top-flight history.

laya 157/2 in 28.5 overs (Rohit Shah 70 n.o.).

Nagaland 257/9 in 50 overs (R. Jonathan 46, Shrikant Mundhe 52, Hem Chetri 82 n.o.) bt Manipur 240/9 in 50 overs (Narsingh Yadav 62, Nitesh Sedai 50, M. Langlonyamba 45).

Mizoram 117 in 38.3 overs (Taruwar Kohli 62, Dikshanshu Negi 6/21) lost to Uttarakhand 118/2 in 10.5 overs (Kamal Singh 40 n.o., Kunal Chandela

Sikkim 245 in 50 overs (Robin Bist 120, Varun Sood 50, Pritam Das 5/34) lost to Assam 249/6 in 47.5 overs (Denish Das 53, Saahil Jain 61 n.o., Kunal

with Huesca 1 (Ramirez 81); Se-

(Dembele 29, Messi 85).

villa O lost to Barcelona 2

Serie A: Spezia 2 (Gyasi 52, 72)

drew with Parma 2 (Karamoh

17, Hernani 25). Bundesliga:

Bayern Munich 5 (Choupo-Mot-

ing 18, Lewandowski 33, 65,

Gnabry 82, Gnabry 86) bt Co-

logne 1 (Skhiri 49); Borussia

Dortmund 3 (Dahoud 48, San-

cho 58-pen. Reinier 81) bt Ar-

minia Bielefeld O; Wolfsburg 2

Hertha Berlin O; Stuttgart 5

(Endo 10, Endo 26, Kalajdzic

34, Klement 88, Didavi 90+2)

bt Schalke 04 1 (Kolasinac 40).

Friday: LaLiga: Levante 1 (Rog-

er 33-pen) drew with Athletic

Bundesliga: Werder Bremen 2

(Gebre Selassie 47, Sargent 62)

bt Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Andre

Bilbao 1 (Raul Garcia 56-pen).

Deepak wins silver



Deepak Kumar..creditable **show** • special arrangement

BOXING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Deepak Kumar's fantastic run at the 72nd Strandja Memorial boxing tournament ended with a silver medal, after he lost the flyweight (52kg) final on a split verdict to Bulgaria's Daniel Asenov,

Saturday. Deepak, an Asian silverwinner, was up against Bulgaria's Daniel Asenov, a two-time European championships gold-medallist.

The bout ended in a split verdict in favour of the local favourite.

The Indian stunned reigning Olympic and World champion Shakhobidin Zoirov of Uzbekistan in the semifinal.

Naveen Boora (69kg) settled for a bronze medal after going down to Asian Games champion Bobo-Usmon Baturov of Uzbekistan in the semifinal.

Vote for Sportstar Aces Awards 2021

The *Sportstar* Aces Awards 2021 celebrate consistency in performance and impact of sports stars in the decade between 2011 and

The nominees for the Mo-

ment of the Decade award: Sachin Tendulkar's 100th hundred in international cricket: March 16, 2012, Dhaka's Sher-E-Bangla National Stadium. Sachin Tendulkar completed a century

of centuries. It was indeed a

special moment for him, In-

dia and world cricket. Tendulkar's Sachin speech announcing his retirement: An image of inspiration, an idol of reverence and a man of honour, Sachin Tendulkar ended his celebrated career on November 16, 2013. Twenty-four years after his debut in Pakistan,



he bid adieu to a glorious chapter after playing 200

Viswanathan Anand winning the World rapid championship: He pulled off a truly remarkable feat at Riyadh on December 28, 2017, when, at the age of 48, he became the World rapid chess champion. It was a



stunning performance as the field featured stronger and younger rivals, including

pics: She put Indian gymnastics on the world map, becoming the first from the country to book a berth at the Olympic Games (Rio 2016). Performing the extremely tough and risky Produnova vault, she missed out on a bronze by just 0.150

M.S. Dhoni's winning six in the 2011 World Cup final: With India requiring four off 11 balls, Dhoni's giant blade sent the ball soaring over the ropes to kickstart a celebration that went on through the night and for many more months to follow. The match-winning hit is part of Indian cricket folklore.



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Associate partner: LIC

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- Sports Destination partner: Odisha
- The results (finals): School Education partner: SSVM Institutions,

title.

Coimbatore ■ Energy partner: **BPCL**

P. V. Sindhu's World Championship victory in Basel: India's first World titbecame a reality when Sindin

Fans can cast their votes on sportstar.thehindu.com/aces-awards/popular-awards.

Nagaraj wins title NEW DELHI: Nagaraj Revanasiddaiah put it across doubles partner Chandra Bhushan 6-2, 6-1 in the over-55 final of the PHDCCI-ITF seniors tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Saturday. Nagaraj and Bhushan had earlier won the doubles

Pradeep Pant and Preetam Yashvant won the over-35 and over-45 titles respectively, as both their opponents, Ashish Khanna and Shankar Krishnaswamy, retired owing to injuries. Preetam had earlier claimed the doubles title with Jagdish Tanwar.

Over-35: Pradeep Pant bt Ashish Khanna 2-0 (retd.). Over-45: Preetam Yashvant bt Shankar Krishnaswamy 6-0 (retd.).

Vaishnavi and Aman triumph INDORE: Second seed

Revanasiddaiah bt Chandra

Over-55: Nagaraj

Bhushan 6-2, 6-1.

Vaishnavi Adkar defeated Lakshmi Prabha 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 to clinch the girls' title in the ITF grade-5 junior tournament at the Indore Tennis Club on Saturday. It was a double for Vaishnavi as she had earlier won the doubles title with Gargi Pawar. In the boys final, top seed

TENNIS ROUND-UP

Proud moment: Nagaraj (over-55), Preetam (over-45) and



Best of the lot: Aman Dahiya and Vaishnavi Adkar.

Aman Dahiya beat third seed Denim Yadav 4-6, 6-0, 6-4, for his third successive ITF junior singles title, following the ones won in

Sterling show by Madhwin RAIPUR: Qualifier Madhwin Kamath came up with a

sterling performance to beat Lohith Bathrinath 6-2, 7-6(6) and clinch the singles title in the ₹2,50,000 Gondwana Cup AITA men's ranking tennis tournament. Other result: Doubles: Final:

Parikshit Somani & Paras Dahiya bt Lakshit Sood & Chandril Sood 7-6(7), 6-4.









Magnus Carlsen. Dipa Karmakar finishing fourth at the Rio Olym-

points.

- Powered by MRF
- Union Bank of India ■ Realty partner: Baashyaam

le on the badminton court hu's grit and power-packed performances culminated in a monumental achievement. She saved her best for the last, trouncing archrival Nozomi Okuhara of Japan 21-7, masterclass.