



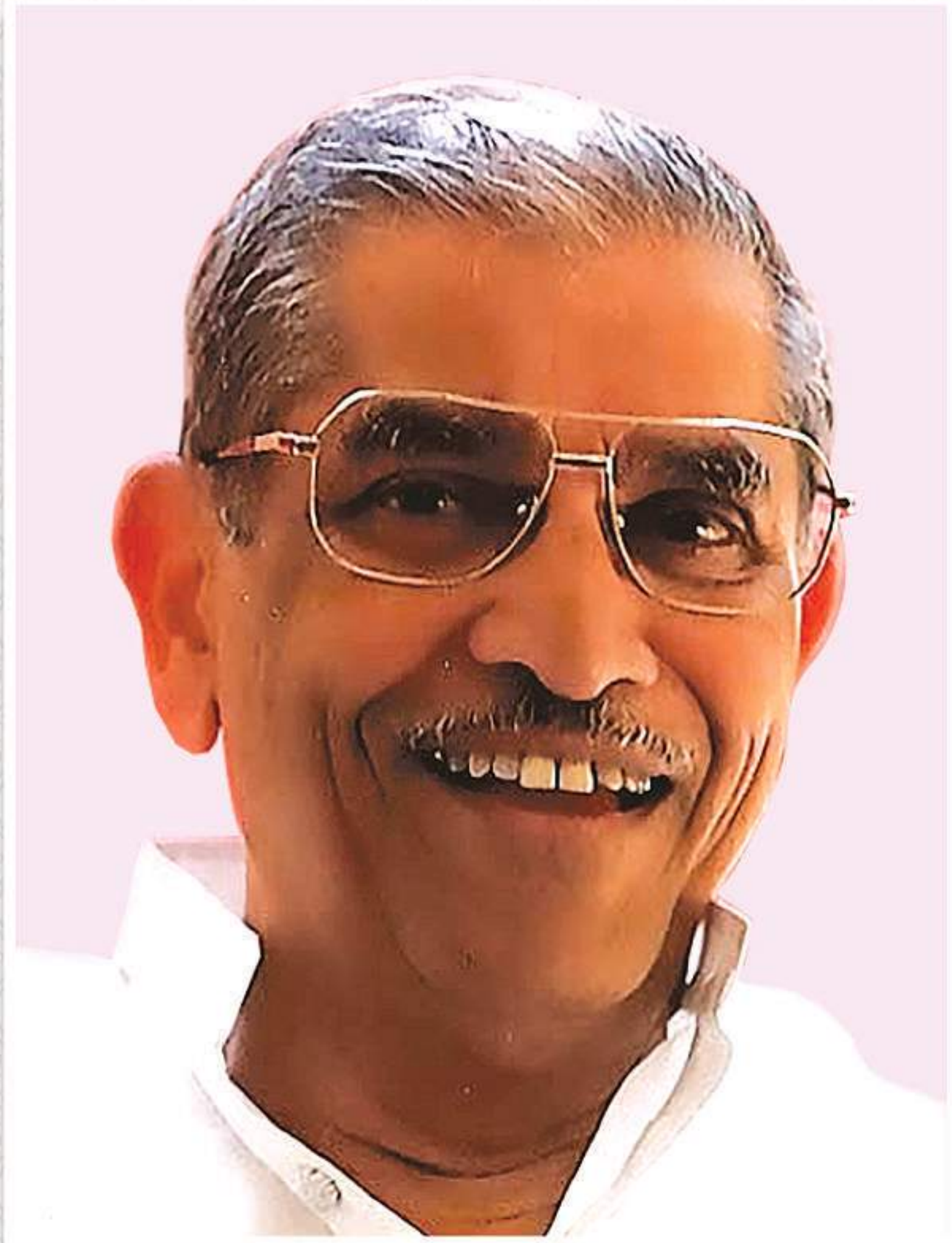
The lockdown to contain the coronavirus outbreak has disrupted supply chains. One crucial chain is delivery of information and insight — news and analysis that is fair and accurate and reliably reported from across a nation in quarantine.

A voice you can trust amid the clanging of alarm bells.

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(October 19, 1920 - October 25, 2003)

## Human Dignity Day

19<sup>th</sup> October

We offer our limitless salutations to the  
benefactor of divine life vision to millions and  
the conferrer of human dignity

**Param Poojaniya Pandurangshastri Athavale**

**on the Occasion of his Birth Centenary Year**

Nikka Instrumentation Pvt Ltd  
Makarpura, Vadodara  
Gujarat, India

Hem Techsys Pvt Ltd  
Makarpura, Vadodara  
Gujarat, India

Shree Agrotech  
Manjusar(Savli), Vadodara  
Gujarat, India



New Delhi



Classifieds

**PERSONAL**

**I, Avi Kapoor, S/O -Harinder Singh Kapoor, R/O-B-5/118, Sector-8, Rohini, Delhi-85, have changed my name to Avi Singh Kapoor for all future purposes.**  
0040551842-1

**I Sonia w/o of Manoj Kumar R/O of B-141/14 Amrit Puri Garhi East of Kailash, New Delhi-110065, have changed my name to Sonia Baswal**  
0040551723-1

**I, Kaushal Devi, W/O-Shri Kishor Kumar, R/O-H-1/13-14, Third Floor, Sharma Colony, Budh Vihar, Phase-2, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Kamini.** 0040551842-2

**I, Neelam Rana D/O Sansar Chand residing at B-152, Gali No.2, Amrit Vihar, Burari, New Delhi-110084, have changed my name to NEELAM RANA vide affidavit dated 17/10/2020 at Delhi -110084.**  
0050170426-1

**I, Anita Singh W/o Late Virender Singh R/o D-37, Saket, ND-17 have changed my daughter's name from Sweety to Malvika Singh for all purposes.**  
0040551761-1

**I, Ajay Bhatti S/o Sukhbir r/o 188, Dairy Kot, Dadr, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh - 203207 have changed my name from Ajay Bhatti to Ajay Bhatti.**  
0070717327-1

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My Client Yogita Kaur D/o Sh. Mahender Kumar R/o 5/20 A, 2nd floor Block-5, Moti Nagar New Delhi-15, due to their misbehave She have severed all relations from her sister Sanita Narang Bahal urf Shital urf Simmy and her husband Parminder Singh Bahal urf price Debarred from movable/ immovable properties. if anyone deals with them, my client shall not be responsible in any manner whatsoever in the future.

R.M. Tiwari, (Advocate)  
563, Lawyer's Chamber,  
Western Wing, Tis Hazari Courts  
Delhi-110054

**LOST & FOUND**

Notice is hereby given that the Original Sale Deed dated 22.09.1994 duly registered with the Joint Sub-Registrar, Faridabad vide Document No. 3748, Book No 1, Vol. No. 1561, Page No. 54, on 22.09.1994 in respect of land measuring 174 Kanal 11 Marla situated at Village Tikri Khara, Sub-Tehsil Dhau, District Faridabad, Haryana, has been lost/misplaced by my client Mr. N. Patnaik, and is not traceable. If any person is in possession of this document, he or she may kindly return the same to me at the following address.

V. Srinivas Raju, FCS  
15, Institutional Area,  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003  
Mob. No. 9810015423

**WESTERN RAILWAY-AHMEDABAD DIVISION**

**TENDER NOTICE FOR FLASH BUTT WELDING**

No.: W/623/02/2020-21. Date: 13.10.2020. (i) E-Tender No.: CWM-EW-SBI-02-2020-21. Name of Work: Flash Butt Welding of 52kg/60kg rails to make 3/10/20 rail panels with Contractor's own Flash Butt Welding Plant on stationary mode, at premises of Flash Butt Welding Plant, in Engineering Workshop, Sabarmati, at Existing Location in Workshop/ New location of Engineering Workshop, Sabarmati, Near Kallgaon, Ahmedabad. Location: Office of the Chief Workshop Manager, Engineering Workshop, Western Railway, Opposite "D" Cabin, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad-380019. Tel.: 079-27506503 & 079-27508245. Completion Period: 05 Months (ii) Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹22,18,600.00/- (iii) Earnest Money to be deposited : ₹2.61,100.00 (iv) Date & Time for submission of Tender: 11.11.2020 upto 15.00 Hrs. (v) Date and time of opening:-11.11.2020 at 15.30 Hrs. (vi) Website Particulars, www.irops.gov.in Notice Board Location and address of the Office: Office of the Chief Workshop Manager, Engineering Workshop, Western Railway, Opposite "D" Cabin, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad - 380019. Tel.: 079 - 27506503 & 079 - 27508245. NOTE:- The complete detailed terms and conditions of work are available on Railway Website.

Chief Workshop Manager  
Bridge Workshop (S&T),  
Western Railway,  
Sabarmati, Ahmedabad

ADI-123  
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GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER: ANINI HYDRO POWER DIVISION DHPD: ANINI

PRESS NOTICE FOR RE TENDERING

The Executive Engineer, Anini Hydro Power Division, Department of Hydro Power development on behalf of the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh re invites sealed Item Rate tenders for the following work from the registered Class III contractors in civil categories domiciled within the territorial jurisdiction of Lower Dibang Valley District as per the Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh Extraordinary gazette notification published on 13th April 2015 Gazette No.94, Vol - XXII (The Arunachal Pradesh District based Entrepreneurs and Professionals (Incentives Development and Promotion) Act 2015) and amendment notification vide No. SPWD/W-66/2012 dated 13th August 2015 mentioned on Clause 4 (ii) (f).

Sl. No.	Name of Work	NIT No.	Estimated cost put to Tender (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender paper (in Rs.)	Period of completion	Last date & time of sale of Bids/Tenders.	Date & time of submission & opening of Bids/Tenders
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	C/O Common Service Centre (CSC) under Pradhan Mantri Vikas Karyakram (PMVK) Scheme at Roing.	NIT No.: AHPD/DHPD/ NIT- 01/2020-21	₹.1,21,19,986/-	₹.1,21,200/-	₹.1,000/-	12 months	22/10/2020 upto 1600 Hrs	26/10/2020 upto 1500 Hrs & 1530 Hrs onwards

The Tender forms will be given only to those bidders who had applied for the same in form of application addressed to the undersigned from the office of the Executive Engineer Anini Hydro Power Division, Department of Hydro Power Development upto 1600Hrs on all working days upto 21/10/2020.

Tender forms can be received from the Office of the undersigned upto 1600Hrs on 22/10/2020 on payment in cash (non refundable) as mentioned in column 6 being the cost of tender papers.

As per The Arunachal Pradesh Gazette, August 14 2018 vide No. SPWD/W-66/2012-1. In exercise of the power conferred by the section 5 of Arunachal Pradesh District-Based Entrepreneurs & Professionals (Incentives, Development and Promotional) Act, 2015, the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, a contractor shall be allowed to have only 3 (three) works in hand in any of departments under Government of Arunachal Pradesh at of any tender work under the State Government and for which he shall make a declaration to be executed in an Affidavit that he is not engaged in more than two tender works under the State Government. He shall also eligible for participation in any tender be required to submit completion certificate issued by the Engineer-in-charge.

The under sign is not bound to accept the tender and reserves the right to cancel whole or part of any of the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

SD/-  
Executive Engineer  
Anini Hydro Power Division  
Department of Hydro Power Development  
On behalf of Governor of Arunachal Pradesh

ARN/13485-87.

**दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लिमिटेड**  
CIN:U31200UP2003SGC027460

**अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना**

1. विविध करण सं० जी०पी०एन०एल-एम एम/3044-2020 के जनपद-चित्रकूट के अन्तर्गत 132 के०वी० विद्युत उपकेंद्र, राजापुर चित्रकूट से 33/11 के०वी० विद्युत उपकेंद्र सरसवा एवं राजापुर तक 33 के०वी० डबल सर्किट लिंक लाइन का निर्माण कार्य बिजनेस प्लान में दर्जकी आधार पर कराने हेतु, धरोहर राशि: रु० 95,000/-, निविदा शुल्क रु० 3,540/-, (जी०एस०टी० सहित) उपरकी निविदा निर्धारित दिनांक 05.11.2020 को 13:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन अपलोड की जा सकगी एवं निर्धारित दिनांक 06.11.2020 को सांय 16:00 बजे खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रपत्र रु००० शासन के ई-प्रोक्वायर्सट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर अपलोड की जायेगी, जहाँ से निविदा प्रपत्र डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। अधिक जानकारी हेतु कृपया <https://etender.up.nic.in> की लोग-इन करें।

अपी० अति० (सा०न०)-1, आगरा 8816(अध्यापक/निविदा)-आगरा/विभाग दिनांक 17-10-2020

**राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाये**

**दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लिमिटेड**  
CIN:U31200UP2003SGC027460

**अल्पकालीन (ई-निविदा)**

निविदा ख़ुलने की तिथि एवं निविदा से सम्बन्धित अन्य सभी विवरण ई-प्रोक्वायर्सट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> एवं निगम की वेबसाइट <http://dvnvl.org> पर उपलब्ध है। 1. ई-निविदा संख्या-46/SE/EDCH/2020-21: विद्युत वितरण मण्डल हमीरपुर के अन्तर्गत नवसृजित प्रवर्तक दल हेतु कम्प्यूटर आधारित उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। 2. ई-निविदा संख्या-47/SE/EDCH/2020-21: विद्युत वितरण मण्डल हमीरपुर के अन्तर्गत नवसृजित प्रवर्तक दल हेतु एक नग वाहन मय चालक उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। 3. ई-निविदा संख्या-48/SE/EDCH/2020-21: विद्युत वितरण मण्डल हमीरपुर के अन्तर्गत नवसृजित प्रवर्तक दल हेतु फनीवर उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। 4. ई-निविदा संख्या-49/SE/EDCH/2020-21: विद्युत वितरण मण्डल हमीरपुर के अन्तर्गत नवसृजित प्रवर्तक दल हेतु एक अद कम्प्यूटर (मय फिन्टर एवं स्कैपर) उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। अधीक्षण अभियंता गि०वि०ग०, हमीरपुर दिनांक 17-10-2020

**राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाये**

**"IMPORTANT"**

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NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

E-NIT S. No. 51/PHEP/Fresh of 2020-21

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of J&K e-tenders (Two cover System) on Item Rate Basis are invited from reputed and resourceful contractors /Firms/companies/joint venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/Railways and other state Governments for the following works, which should be uploaded on the Procurement web portal <http://jktenders.gov.in> for the subjected work(s) referred below to be received by the Superintending Engineer, Hydrl. Circle, Pulwama/Shopian HQ: Shopianand as per the details mentioned in this e-tender notification and to whom all the terms and conditions of detailed e-NIT/ Tender Documents/ PWD Form No:- 25 double are accepted. The detailed tender document and Specifications etc. can be downloaded on the e-procurement portal <http://jktenders.gov.in>. The cost of tender documents (Non-refundable/ Non-Transferable) should bein the shape of e-Challan or Treasury Challan/Receipt in favour Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Division Pulwama.

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Cost of Tender Document	Earnest Money Deposit	Time of Completion	Tender Opening Authority	Class of Contract
1	Shifting of PHE utilities along Pinglinga-Mohired-Uptpora road (affected due to road widening programme by P M G S Y Department)	Rs. 160.21 lacs	Rs. 5000/- (Favoring Executive Engineer (JSD) PHE Division Pulwama under (MH 0215)	Rs. 320420/- (Pledged to the Superintending Engineer, Hydrl. Circle, Pulwama/ Shopian HQ: Shopian.	06 Months	Superintending Engineer, Hydrl. Circle, Pulwama/ Shopian HQ: Shopian	"A" Class - Reputed and resourceful contractors/ Firms/Companies/ Joint Venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments.

The Bidding documents consisting of eligibility criteria, specification, drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms & conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the e-procurement Portal "<http://jktenders.gov.in>" as per schedule of dates given below:-

S. No	Description	Date	Time		
		DD	MM	YYYY	
1	Publishing date of NIT	17	10	2020	900 Hrs
2	Download start date	17	10	2020	900 Hrs
3	Bid submission start date	17	10	2020	900 Hrs
4	Bid submission end date	06	11	2020	1600 Hrs.
5	Bid opening date (Technical Cover)	07	11	2020	1000 Hrs.

No: -PHEP/3588-3600  
Dated:- 16.10.2020

SD/-  
Executive Engineer,  
(JSD) PHE Div, Pulwama,  
DIPK-7545

**Central Coalfields Limited**  
A Miniratna Company  
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

**NOTICE**

All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on websites of Coal India Ltd. [www.coalindia.in/](http://www.coalindia.in/) respective Subsidiary Company ([CCL www.centralcoalfields.in](http://CCL.www.centralcoalfields.in)). CIL e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in>.

**Tel: 0191-2459029**  
**Web: www.jkpolice.gov.in**

**Fax:0191-2459255**  
**Email: jkpolice.gov.nic.in**

**J & K POLICE HEADQUARTERS**  
**Amendment Notice**

Pursuant to the queries raised by the prospective bidders, necessary amendments with regard to the quantity of tendered items and tender value are hereby issued under e-tender No. 43 of 2020 dated 17.09.2020 floated by this Hqrs for procurement of stationery articles for information of intending bidders. The amendment can be accessed by the intending bidders on J&K Govt. e-Tender portal [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).

However, other contents of the tender shall remain unchanged.

SD/- (Rayees Mohammad Bhat) IPS  
(AIG (Provision/Transport)  
For Director General of Police, PHQ, J&K, Srinagar.

Dipk-nb-7504

**INDIAN RAILWAYS**  
**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**  
**(RAILWAY BOARD)**  
**E-TENDER NO. 2020RSI8743TC**

Executive Director, Railways Store(S), Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, Government of India invites e-tender for procurement of 1,79,659 Nos. AAR approved Cartridge Taper Roller Bearings (CTRB) Class E(6"X11") for use on Freight Stock for Indian Railways to RDSO Specification No.AB/RB-40-2016 (Rev.1) of August, 2018 & latest amendments.

2.0 The interested tenderers are advised to visit the website <http://ireps.gov.in> for details of the tender and submission of their e-bids.

3.0 No manual offers will be accepted against e-tender.

4.0 Tender will be closed at 15.00 hours on 09.11.2020.

Director, Railway Stores (W),  
Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi.  
for and on behalf of the President of India.

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

**आईआरएल (इंडिया) लिमिटेड IREL (India) Limited.**  
(पूर्व में इंडियन रेअर अर्थ लिमिटेड Formerly Indian Rare Earths Ltd.)  
रेअर अर्थ डिवीजन Rare Earths Division  
अधिमंडल उद्योगमण्डल, कोरू कोची - 683 501  
CIN:U31500MH19900000817  
(ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & OHSAS 18001:2007 Certified Company)  
Phones : +91 484 2545062 - 65 Fax : +91 484 2545269

**निविदा सूचना/TENDER NOTICE**

'IREL (India) Limited, RED' invites e-tenders for the following works using E-Procurement portal of M/s MSTC Limited.

Item	Construction of RCC Silo No. 9	Dismantling & removal of equipments in Attack Plant
E-Tender (Public) No.	IREL/Udyogamandal /20-21/ ET/48	IREL/Udyogamandal /20-21/ ET/49
Transaction Fee to MSTC	₹ 15,000/- (Excluding GST)	₹ 3,500/- (Excluding GST)
TDC to IREL	₹ 1,680/- (Inclusive of taxes)	₹ 1,120/- (Inclusive of taxes)
EMO to IREL	₹ 3,88,000/-	₹ 70,000/-
Tender starting date & time	19/10/2020 - 15.00 hrs	19/10/2020 - 15.00 hrs
Tender closing date & time	16/11/2020 - 17.00 hrs	16/11/2020 - 17.00 hrs
Tender opening start date & time	17/11/2020 - 10.00 hrs	17/11/2020 - 10.00 hrs
Validity of tender in days	90	90

विद्युत के लिए वेबसाइट देखें For details, visit websites <http://www.mstce.commerce.com> [eprocure.gov.in](http://eprocure.gov.in), <http://irel.co.in>. परिसिद्धि / शुद्धि केवल वेबसाइटों में होट करी जाएगी. Addendum/Corrigendum shall be hoisted in the websites only. स्पष्टीकरण के लिए For clarification contact 0484 2545199, purchase-red@irel.co.in में संपर्क करें।

महाराष्ट्र एवं प्रधान (आरईई) G.M & HEAD (RED)

Phone/Fax No: 0194-2443031/2443032 (Sgr)  
0191-2459029/2459255 (Jmu)

Website: [www.jkpolice.gov.in](http://www.jkpolice.gov.in)  
E-mail: [phqjk@nic.in](mailto:phqjk@nic.in)

**JAMMU & KASHMIR POLICE HEADQUARTERS**  
(Provision Section)

**Extension Notice**

In view of administrative reasons the last date for receiving of bids and date for opening of technical bids of e-NIT No 35 of 2020 dated 27.08.2020 floated by this Hqrs for the installation of CCTV Surveillance system in Police Stations and Police Posts are re-scheduled as under:-

1. Laste date of receipt of tenders = 23.10.2020 upto 1800 hours

2. Date of opening of technical bids = 27.10.2020 at 1100 hours

The other terms and conditions of the NIT shall remain the same.

SD/- (Rayees Mohammad Bhat) IPS  
(AIG (Provision/Transport)  
For Director General of Police, J&K, Srinagar.

Dipk-nb-7544

**MORE FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2020**

**In order to clear extra rush of passengers during forthcoming Festival Season, Railways have decided to run the following Festival Special Trains as per details given below:-**

09717/09718 Jaipur - Daulatpur Chowk - Jaipur Special Train (Tri-Weekly)						36 Trips
Train No. 09717		STATIONS		Train No. 09718		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	19:30		JAIPUR		06:40	----
12:15	----		DAULATPUR CHOWK	----	14:05	

**DAYS OF RUN: 09717 Ex Jaipur** from 20.10.20 to 29.11.20 on every Tuesday, Friday & Sunday and **09718 Ex Daulatpur Chowk** from 21.10.20 to 30.11.20 on every Wednesday, Saturday & Monday.

**STOPPAGES:** Gandhinagar Jaipur, Dausa, Bandikui Jn, Raigarh, Alwar Jn, Khairthal, Rewari, Jhajjar, Rohtak Jn, Julana, Jind Jn, Uchana, Narwana Jn, Kailthal, Kurukshetra Jn, Ambala Cant Jn, Chandigarh, Sahibzada Aijt Singh Nagar (Mohali), Morinda, Rupnagar, Anandpur Sahib, Nangal Dam, Una Himachal & Amb Andaura stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

04888/04887 Barmer - Rishikesh - Barmer Special Train (Daily)						84 Trips
Train No. 04888		STATIONS		Train No. 04887		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	06:45		BARMER		20:30	----
10:30	----		RISHIKESH	----	18:05	

**DAYS OF RUN: 04888 Ex Barmer** from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily and **04887 Ex Rishikesh** from 21.10.20 to 01.12.20 on Daily.

**STOPPAGES:** Baytu, Balotra, Samdari Jn, Jodhpur Jn, Pipar Road Jn, Merta Road Jn, Nagaur, Nokha, Bikaner Jn, Lalgarh Jn, Lunkaransar, Mahajan, Suratgarh Jn, PiliBanga, Hanumangarh Jn, Sangaria, Mandi Dabwali, Bathinda Jn, Bathinda Cantt, Bhuchchu, Rampura Phul, Barnala, Dhuri Jn, Nabha, Patiala, Rajpura Jn, Ambala City, Ambala Cantt Jn, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur Jn, Roorkee, Jwalapur, Haridwar, Motichur & Raiwala Jn Stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

04519/04520 Delhi Jn. - Bathinda Jn. - Delhi Jn. Special Train (Daily)						84 Trips
Train No. 04519		STATIONS		Train No. 04520		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	14:00		DELHI JN.		12:15	----
21:15	----		BATHINDA JN.	----	05:00	

**DAYS OF RUN: 04519 Ex Delhi Jn.** and **04520 Ex Bathinda Jn.** from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily.

**STOPPAGES:** Delhi Kishanganj, Shakurbasti, Nangloi, Bahadurgarh, Sampla, Rohtak Jn, Kalanaur Kalan, Bhiwani, Bawani Khara, Hansi, Satala, Hisar, Mandi Adampur, Bhattu, Ding, Sirsa, Kalanwali & Raman stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** AC 3 Tier, AC Chair Car, Chair Car & Second Seating (Reserved).

02471/02472 Shri Ganganagar - Delhi Jn. - Shri Ganganagar Superfast Special Train (Daily)						84 Trips
Train No. 02471		STATIONS		Train No. 02472		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	05:55		SHRI GANGANAGAR		20:35	----
13:35	----		DELHI JN.	----	13:05	

**DAYS OF RUN: 02471 Ex Shri Ganganagar** and **02472 Ex Delhi Jn.** from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily.

**STOPPAGES:** Abohar, Malout, Giddarbaha, Bhatinda Jn, Maur, Mansa, Budhlada, Jakhel Jn, Narwana Jn, Jind Jn, Rohtak Jn, Sampla, Bahadurgarh & Shakurbasti stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** AC 3 Tier, AC Chair Car, Chair Car & Second Seating (Reserved).

02331/02332 Howrah Jn. - Jammu Tawi - Howrah Jn. Superfast Special Train (Tri-Weekly) (Via Dankuni)						36 Trips
Train No. 02331		STATIONS		Train No. 02332		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	23:55		HOWRAH JN.		11:30	----
13:10	----		JAMMU TAWI	----	22:45	

**DAYS OF RUN: 02331 Ex Howrah Jn.** from 20.10.20 to 28.11.20 on every Tuesday, Friday & Saturday and **02332 Ex Jammu Tawi** from 22.10.20 to 30.11.20 on every Thursday, Sunday & Monday.

**STOPPAGES:** Asansol Jn, Chittaranjan, Madhupur Jn, Jasidih Jn, Jhajha, Jamui, Kiul Jn, Mokameh Jn, Bakhtyarpur Jn, Patna Saheb, Patna Jn, Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn, Varanasi Jn, Jaunpur City, Sultanpur, Nihalgarh, Lucknow, Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Ambala Cant Jn, Ludhiana Jn, Phagwara Jn, Jalandhar Cant, Pathankot Cantt, & Kathua stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

02549/02550 Kamakhya - Anand Vihar - Kamakhya Superfast Express Train (Daily)						84 Trips
Train No. 02549		STATIONS		Train No. 02550		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	10:00		KAMAKHYA		16:35	----
19:20	----		ANAND VIHAR (T)	----	06:45	

**DAYS OF RUN: 02549 Ex Kamakhya** from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily and **02550 Ex Anand Vihar (T)** from 22.10.20 to 02.12.20 on Daily.

**STOPPAGES:** Rangiya Jn, Bargaeta Road, New Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, New Alipurduar, New Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri Road, New Jalpaiguri, Kishanganj, Barsol Jn, Katihar Jn, Naugachia, Mansi Jn, Khagaria Jn, Begu Sarai, Barauni Jn, Patliputra, Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn, Prayagraj Junction, Fatehpur, Kanpur Central, Etawah, Tundla Jn, Aligarh Jn & Ghaziabad stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

02422/02421 Jammu Tawi - Ajmer Jn. - Jammu Tawi Superfast Special Train (Daily)						84 Trips
Train No. 02422		STATIONS		Train No. 02421		
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.	
----	18:10		JAMMU TAWI		08:15	----
12:20	----		AJMER JN.	----	14:05	

**DAYS OF RUN: 02422 Ex Jammu Tawi** from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily and **02421 Ex Ajmer Jn.** from 21.10.20 to 01.12.20 on Daily.

**STOPPAGES:** Jaunpur City, Sultanpur, Nihalgarh, Lucknow, Shahjehanpur, Moradabad, Saharanpur Jn., Ambala Cantt., Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar Cantt., Pathankot Cantt., & Kathua stations.

**ACCOMMODATION:** 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

02237/02238 Varanasi - Jammu Tawi - Varanasi Superfast Special Train (Daily)						Trips	
Train No. 02237		↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No. 02238	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.			
----	12:40		VARANASI			12:30	----
11:05	—		JAMMU TAWI			14:00	



## Punjab farm fires send smog signal to Delhi; hope in panchayat action

**ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA**  
JALANDHAR, OCTOBER 18

LATE ON Saturday afternoon, farmer Bheera Singh and his brother walked out to their adjacent fields in Jandiala Guru of Amritsar district with a box of matches. Sowing of the early variety wheat will begin in the last week of October, and the brothers had only a little more than a week to get their fields ready for the rabi crop.

Soon, the dry golden stubble on the entire 15 acres owned by the brothers was ablaze with leaping flames, and giant plumes of thick black smoke rose high in

the air. Farmers can be fined heavily for setting their fields on fire, but the brothers had decided to do it anyway.

"We had a delayed (kharif) crop due to a shortage of labour (because of the Covid-19 lockdown) at the time of sowing in June. Now with just 10 days left for sowing wheat, we can't wait in queue for a stubble management machine," shrugged Bheera. "This (burning the stubble) is the only way."

Despite a statewide ban on burning straw, fields have been on fire every 100-200 metres in Jandiala Guru, Tarsikka, Tarn Taran, Khadur Sahib, and Ajnala

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Stubble on fire near Amritsar on Saturday. Rana Simranjit Singh



## A COVID TEST

An entrance exam being held for recruitment to the BSF and CISF, at Humhama near Srinagar, Sunday. Over 5,000 youth across Kashmir appeared for the test. *Shuaib Masoodi*

## Redeem your constitutional oath: Governor tells Mamata

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 18

WEST BENGAL Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar has said it is "high time" Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee kept her "constitutional oath". In a letter to the CM on Sunday over the alleged custodial death of a BJP worker, Dhankhar said, "Madam Chief Minister, high time you redeem your constitutional oath and enforce rule of law, ensure democratic govern-

nance in the state, make police and administration politically neutral and accountable."

The Governor's letter came a day after Union Home Minister Amit Shah said in an interview to CNN-News 18 that the demand for President's rule in Bengal by BJP workers was "wa-jib (just)", given the law and order situation, while adding that any action by the Centre would be as per the Constitution.

Dhankhar said what

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

### THE EDITORIAL PAGE

#### HATHRAS AND THE TRUTH MACHINE

**BY JINEE LOKANEETA**  
**PAGE 10**

## DECISION 2020

**B I H A R**

'YES, ECONOMIC DISTRESS... BUT NOT POLL ISSUE' **PAGE 12**

FULL COVERAGE, VISIT  
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

### FINDINGS OF GOVT COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

## India went past peak in Sept, Covid may run its course by Feb: panel

'Timely lockdown flattened curve; sticking to masks, distancing is key'

**AMITABH SINHA**  
GAYA, OCTOBER 18

THE CORONAVIRUS epidemic in India may have already peaked and, if the usage of masks and physical distancing measures continue at the current level, the disease will likely "run its course" by February next year, a government-appointed committee of scientists has said.

The committee, headed by Prof M Vidyasagar of IIT Hyderabad, used a new model to map the trajectory of the epidemic in the country. Its key finding is that the disease seems to have peaked in the middle of

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## No explanation, but panel experts indicate reasons for both hope and caution

**AMITABH SINHA**  
GAYA, OCTOBER 18

THE REASONS for the continuous decline in coronavirus infection numbers since last month have not been clear. The numbers have fallen sharply – even though travel restrictions have eased, economic and other activities have resumed and, to a large extent, normalcy has returned.

There has also been no reduction in the number of tests, nor has the disease prevalence in the population reached a stage where 'herd immunity' would have to be factored in. The use of face masks, and physical distancing are far from being universal.

The government-appointed scientific committee has not spelt out the possible reasons for the decline in coronavirus

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4****EXPLAINED**

## Learn from Onam surge in Kerala: Harsh Vardhan

**KAUNAIN SHERIFF M & SHAJU PHILIP**

NEW DELHI,  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
OCTOBER 18

REITERATING THAT people should avoid large gatherings during the festival season that is coming up, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan Sunday pointed to Kerala, which had controlled the spread of Covid initially to be tagged as a model state but then "paid the

### IDEA EXCHANGE

**CHALLENGE IS TO BUILD AN ADULT VACCINATION SYSTEM: NILEKANI**  
**PAGE 14**

price for its gross negligence" during the week-long festivities to mark Onam in the end of August.

During his weekly interaction

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

### EXPERT EXPLAINS

**AMITABH MATTOO**

From The Indian Express panel of specialists, exclusive insight

## TRUMP, BIDEN, & THE WORLD

How do the candidates for the White House see the world and issues of shared global concern? Part 2 of a series.

**EXPLAINED**  
**PAGE 13**

## Grocery store, restaurant, fans: Indian shuttlers play safe in Denmark bubble

**SHIVANI NAIK**  
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 18

THIS BIO-BUBBLE allowed shuttlers in Odense for the Denmark Open to step out to a grocery store or a restaurant – and up to 500 spectators inside the competition hall.

The unique arrangement was what four Indians – Kidambi Srikanth, Ajay Jayaram, Lakshya Sen and Subhankar Dey – settled into last week as badminton cagily rebooted into action. And



The shuttlecock feeder at Denmark Open.

*BadmintonPhoto.com*

while it took a few days for them to adjust to this new abnormal, some changes served as constant reminders of the pandemic.

For one, India's support staff struggled to draw up game dossiers on opponents. Earlier, they would fan out around the arena and take notes on potential opponents' form and fitness, given the main coach was focused on the Indian on court. But this time, they stayed away from the stands for fear of exposure to untested spectators who

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

### BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



## Ed tech firms corner almost all \$100 mn bracket funds post Covid

**PRANAV MUKUL & SANDEEP SINGH**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

FROM SCHOOL students to working professionals, the pandemic has created a large addressable market for start-ups in education tech, or ed-tech, which saw a significant interest from private equity and venture capitalist investors over the last six months.

Among the eight funding rounds of \$100 million and above in Indian start-ups during April-September, five involved ed-tech companies like Byju's, Vedantu, Unacademy and Eruditus. According to data sourced from Venture Intelligence, one-third of the \$1.5 billion raised in these eight investment rounds was by Byju's.

Consider this:

■ Byju's Classes raised \$500 million in two rounds in June and September from investors,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

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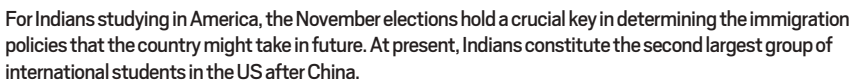
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**Har Pal Apke Saath**



## Actor Harshita Gaur on the second season of the web show

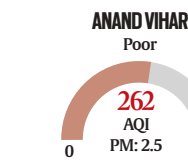
**The workshop was  
organised in Delhi's  
Greater Kailash**

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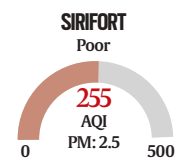
# 5 THE CITY



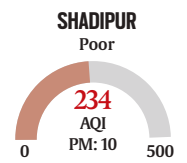
0-50 Good



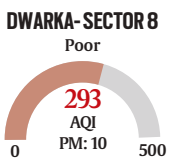
51-100 Satisfactory



101-200 Moderate



201-300 Poor



301-400 Very Poor

401-500 Severe

**'THIS IS AN AIRSHED COVERING WHOLE OF NCR'**

## Air pollution not only Delhi problem but pan-NCR one, need coordination: Javadekar

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

AIR POLLUTION is not a problem of Delhi and its corporations alone but that of a big airshed around it that includes the National Capital Region (NCR), Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said on Sunday. Speaking through a Facebook Live session, Javadekar said the Centre and the four NCR states have to work together to tackle the problem.

"The first time I took charge as environment minister, I held a meeting with all (NCR) states because this is not a problem of Delhi, corporations... This is an airshed and the airshed is big. It includes Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Noida, areas of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and even Alwar in Rajasthan," said Javadekar.

An airshed, in geography, is defined as a region in which the atmosphere shares common features with respect to dispersion of pollutants; in other words, a region sharing a common flow of air. Experts have



Near Mayur Vihar Extension, Sunday. The capital's air quality index improved within the 'poor' category, with a reading of 254. *Gajendra Yadav*

said the measures taken to reduce air pollution in Delhi need to be applied across NCR, which shares the same airshed as the capital.

Javadekar said the Centre has taken a number of steps to re-

duce air pollution levels in Delhi-NCR, including opening the peripheral expressway around the capital which diverts non-Delhi destined traffic away, and also bringing in rules for management of construction and demo-

lition waste, which can be a source of dust if not handled properly.

The minister said he holds a meeting with ministers from all NCR states once a year on pollution-related matters.

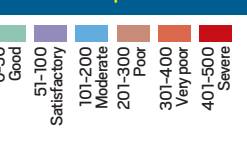
### THE DAYS AHEAD

**PM10 (µg/m3)**  
Oct 18 226  
Oct 19 203  
Oct 20 241

**PM2.5 (µg/m3)**  
Oct 18 111  
Oct 19 100  
Oct 20 119

Source-SAFAR

Acceptable 24 hour-average level  
PM2.5-60 | PM10-100



Additionally, he said, "Cabinet secretary holds a meeting once (a year), principal secretary also holds it once, environment secretary holds it twice, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) holds it three-four times every three months, a task-force (on air pollution) also holds meetings,"

he said.

Through several such meetings in the last five years, Javadekar said the Centre has drawn short-term, medium-term and long-term plans for controlling air pollution in Delhi-NCR.

A review meeting is also held on compliance to these plans and this year over winter, 50 teams of the CPCB will also inspect violations of pollution control measures in the NCR. "In 100 other cities, we will do the same work, which will result in the Prime Minister's promise becoming true and in the next three-four years, we will see a good improvement in our air quality," Javadekar said.

Air quality index (AQI) of Delhi improved on Sunday within the 'poor' category, with a reading of 254, lower than 287 recorded on Saturday. As per a forecast from the Central government's System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) the AQI is expected to stay in the higher end of 'poor' to the lower end of 'very poor' category for the next two days.

## 13 new Covid cases in capital prisons

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

FOUR INMATES and nine jail staffers in the three jail complexes of the capital have tested positive for Covid-19 the previous week, said officials Sunday.

The three jails, Mandoli, Tihar and Rohini, had earlier been declared Covid-free, but a few cases have emerged since last month. The number of active cases in the three jails is presently 13. All infected persons have been isolated and are being treated inside the jail complexes. DG (Prisons) Sandeep Goel said 88 inmates have tested positive in the three jails so far. Goel himself had tested positive, but has recovered and will rejoin work this week.

"In May, we had made special barracks for infected people and started testing inmates regularly. There are four active cases among the inmates. Over 82 inmates have recovered and two died," said Goel. Over 10,000 inmates are lodged in the jails now. After the lockdown, 4,491 inmates were either given interim bail or emergency parole to decongest the jails. Goel said over 215 staffers had tested positive, of whom 206 have recovered so far.

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

AS FARM fires continued to rise in Northwest India, Delhi recorded another day of 'poor' air quality but the percentage share of stubble burning in PM 2.5 dipped slightly to 17% on Sunday from 22% on Saturday. The AQI value was 256 on Sunday.

According to officials at SAFAR, the slight improvement in air quality over the past two days has been because of strong surface winds which have helped in the dispersal of pollutants.

For the next two days, AQI is expected to remain in the 'very poor' category.

"The forecast is for higher wind speed for the next two days, which will lead to better dispersion of pollutants. But because the input levels of pollution are not decreasing, air quality will remain in the higher-end of poor to the lower end of very poor for next two days," said an official.

The SAFAR model for fire counts around Haryana and Punjab said that between

## In CR Park, Covid dampens Pujo, sculptors hit hardest

**ASHNA BUTANI**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

EVERY YEAR, Govind Nath's workshop, located inside the Kali Mandir complex in Chittaranjan Park, would be filled with idols — each 20-30 feet tall — sculpted by him and his team of 12. This year, he sits alone in the middle of seven sets of idols, none taller than 5 feet.

His team, which travels from Bengal four months before Durga Puja every year, did not do so this time as Nath (48) didn't have work for them. "Why would I call them when I know I can't pay them?" he said, as he gave final touches to the smaller idols.

He began making the idols a month ago, by first creating the structure with bamboo, steady-ing it with straw, and sculpting with clay. Once the sculptures were dry, he painted them with organic colours made from *mul-tani mitti* and tamarind powder.

Besides the CR Park Kali Mandir, he receives orders for idols from areas such as Faridabad, Kalkaji Extension and Gurgaon. "In other years, idols would be taken out of India as well," said Nath.

While the price of the idols usually starts from Rs 40,000 — with orders for 40-50 idols every



Govind Nath at his workshop inside the Kali Mandir complex in Chittaranjan Park. *Tashi Tobgyal*

year — this year, the smaller idols are priced around Rs 20,000. "In a day or two, the idols will be finished," Nath said, as he added pleats to a red Banarasi saree donned by his biggest Durga idol this year for the CR Park pandal.

Even though the Delhi government relaxed the ban on public gatherings, Durga Puja will be low-key as there is a cap of 200 people in enclosed spaces. "That is why most idols are 4-5 feet tall this time," said Nath.

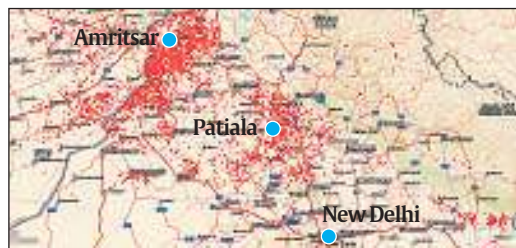
Hailing from Behala in Kolkata, Nath's family shifted to Delhi's Govindpuri when he was a child. He said he learned the art of sculpting from his father when he was 10. The third-generation

sculptor said, "I am the only one in my family who is still making idols. It's not easy as there is a great deal of responsibility."

Meanwhile, celebrations at CR Park are low-key with just one pandal instead of the usual nine. Sreebhash Bhattacharjee, secretary, CR Park Kali Mandir Society, said, "We used to have idols that were 18 feet tall. This year, it is just a Pujo, not a Pujo celebration."

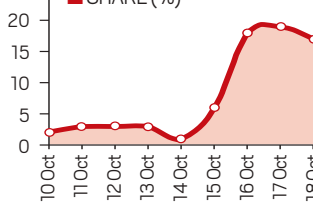
He added, "Bhog and prasad will be delivered to homes of those who register with the society; the Anjali will be streamed live on YouTube." Only six people will be allowed inside the pandal at a time, including the organisers and *dhaki* (drummer), he said.

### THE BURNING ISSUE

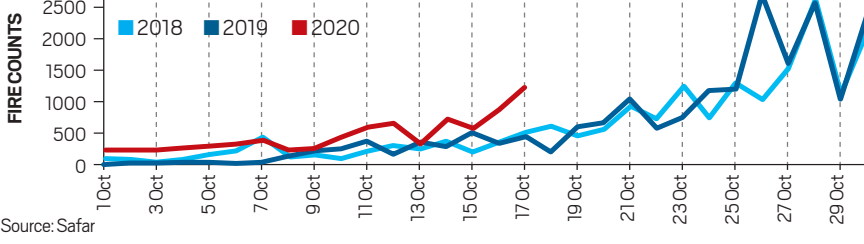


Source: NASA Fire Mapper

### DAILY SHARE



### THE LAST THREE YEARS



Source: Safar

Saturday and Sunday morning, over 1,230 fires were seen.

"Though fire emission has increased and transport-level wind direction is also favourable, an increase in transport level wind speed as well as local Delhi surface winds are

likely to maintain the stubble contribution in Delhi PM 2.5 around the same level. The SAFAR model estimate of stubble burning share in PM 2.5 is 17% for today. The percentage contribution shown is relative to the total concentration of PM

2.5 modelled for the day. Hence, on a less polluted day, percentage share may appear higher as compared to highly polluted day but in absolute terms value might be even same or less," the SAFAR forecast and analysis said.

## 10-year-old boy found dead at construction site in Noida

Noida: A 10-year-old boy was found dead in an under construction site in Noida's Sector 73 on Sunday.

According to police, the minor had been missing for the past week. His body has been sent for post mortem to determine the cause of death, police

said. "We received information from a local that a boy's body was found amidst rubble in an under construction house in Sarfabad... Once we ascertain the cause of death, we can investigate accordingly," said an official from Sector 49 police station. **ENS**

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## Govt order to use students funds to pay salaries 'illegal': DU principals' body

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

THE CONFLICT between the Delhi government and Delhi University colleges funded by it is on the rise, with the DU Principals' Association (DUPA) calling a recent order by the former — to release staff salaries from student society funds — "irrational, arbitrary and illegal".

There has been an extended impasse between the Delhi government and 12 DU colleges fully funded by it. The colleges have been unable to pay salaries to their staff for several months — many since May — and have attributed this to the government not releasing requisite funds.

In response, the government began a special audit in six colleges and accused them of misappropriating funds, stating the colleges have funds in their student society accounts.

On October 16, the government issued an order instructing the colleges to release all outstanding staff salaries from student society funds within two weeks. It went on to say it would only pay any amount of salary still pending after the student society funds are exhausted and a formal request is made.

The DUPA on Sunday said it was "outraged" and "dismayed" by the order, stating that asking colleges to exhaust their student society funds goes against students' interest. As the fund belongs to students and is accumulated over years, DUPA said it is

"meant for activities such as campus placements, skill enhancement, career counselling and gender sensitisation, meeting the expenditure of students with special needs, extracurricular activities, cultural functions and student exchange programmes, training women students for self-defence and maintenance of classroom infrastructure for which no grants are available".

The Delhi government refused to respond to queries on the matter.

DUPA added the order "will completely stop activities for ability enhancement, soft skills learning and promotion of cross-cultural understanding among the students so imperative for their comprehensive personality development". Another issue that has been brought up several times by colleges after the Delhi government began pointing at student society funds is that payment cannot be made from funds with a different purpose.

On Sunday, the DUPA stated the order is outside the government's jurisdiction: "UGC norms and guidelines mentioning sources of income and expenditure are binding on all institutions of higher learning. These norms stipulate that only approved items of fee collected from students can be taken into account while releasing grants to colleges. Any fund collected by the college other than these approved items of fee are treated as self-generated resources and are allowed to be utilised for the purpose for which they are collected."

## Water supply to be hit in East, South, Central Delhi this week

New Delhi: Water supply will be affected in parts of Delhi for the next four to five days due to the closure of the Upper Ganga canal for annual maintenance, the Delhi Jal Board said on Sunday.

The canal supplies around 270 million gallons of raw water a day to the city. The flow from the Upper Ganga Canal is reduc-

ing due to closure for its annual maintenance, the DJB said in a statement, and the production of the Bhagirathi and Sonia Vihar plants may get affected.

Areas that are likely to be affected include parts of South, East, Northeast and New Delhi Municipal Council areas, the statement added. **PTI**

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1. ECHS invites applications to engage following staff on contractual basis in ECHS Polyclinics noted against each for a period of 12 / 11 months, renewal for additional period.

ECHS POLYCLINICS	Medical Officer	Dental Officer	Dental A/T/H	Pharmacist	Safaiwala
Mathura	01	-	-	-	-
Aligarh	01	-	01	-	-
Hathras	01	01	01	01	01

\*Out of CTS Fund.

2. For terms and conditions Qualitative Requirement, application forms and remunerations kindly see the web site [www.echs.gov.in](http://www.echs.gov.in) For details please contact /approach ECHS Cell, Station Headquarters Mathura No 0565-2470041 and email id [echsmathura1@gmail.com](mailto:echsmathura1@gmail.com). Working knowledge of computers and choice of ECHS Polyclinic with reserve Polyclinics in order of priority is mandatory for consideration. Last date of receipt of application alongwith photograph contact fee / mob number /email and photocopy of testimonials, experience and medical fitness certificate is 02 November 2020. 3. Date of Interview of eligible applicants / verification of documents will be intimated later. Candidates will bring original certificates, degree, testimonials and experience certificate as applicable at the time of interview. (For Hindi version advt see Amar Ujala (Agra & Aligarh Edition) dated 19 October 2020.

## 6 THE CITY

3,299 CASES, 28 DEATHS ON SUNDAY

## Expecting Covid spike, hospitals start preparing to increase beds, manpower

ASTHA SAXENA  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

ANTICIPATING A surge in the number of Covid-19 cases in Delhi, hospitals have started preparations to boost infrastructure and hire manpower to accommodate patients. Earlier this month, a high-level expert committee led by NITI Aayog member Dr V K Paul had said city hospitals should prepare for 15,000 daily cases owing to a spike in respiratory illnesses with winter setting in along with Covid cases.

On Sunday, the city reported 3,299 new cases and 28 fatalities, taking the total count to 3,31,017 and the death toll to 6,009 in the capital. There are 23,292 active



Covid testing on at Ashok Nagar on Sunday. Abhinav Saha

cases in the city, out of which 5,034 are hospitalised and 13,742 under home isolation.

The city has 15,704 beds earmarked for Covid patients, out of which almost 68% are vacant.

At the Delhi government-run Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, work is on to augment bed capacity. "With the change in weather, we are expecting a surge in the number of daily admissions due to Covid-19 as well. We already have 500 beds, and the plan is to expand it to 650 within a fortnight. We have placed an order with the PWD to purchase more beds. We have also started the process of hiring more manpower," said hospital medical superintendent Dr BL Sherwal.

Dr R S Rautela, medical director of GTB hospital, said: "We already have 1,500 beds dedicated for Covid-19 patients. There are enough ICU beds, oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators at the institute. We will be requesting the government to add more

doctors and healthcare workers."

The expert committee, in its report submitted to the Delhi government, had listed three reasons which may lead to a surge in cases. "Winter months that make respiratory illnesses severe; patients may come from outside from Delhi in large numbers; patients coming from distant areas are likely to be get more serious. In addition, with festival gatherings, there could be a sudden rise in the cases," the report stated.

As per data uploaded on the government's Delhi Corona App, there are 1,261 ICU beds with ventilators, out of which 540 are vacant at the moment. There are 1,528 beds earmarked for non-Covid patients, out of which 1,129 are occupied.

## Dip in positivity rate, new cases, but testing falls too

ASTHA SAXENA  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

THE POSITIVITY rate in the capital has dipped over the last month, indicating a minor fall in daily Covid cases. Delhi saw an average positivity rate of 6.1% between September 19 and October 3, which fell to 5.6% between October 4 and October 17.

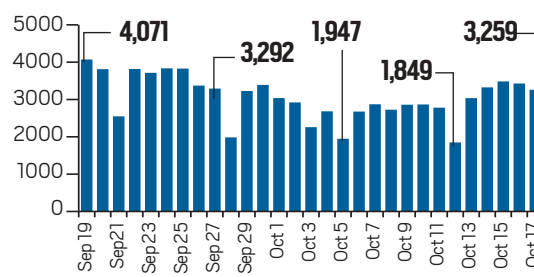
According to experts, the dip in positivity rate may be attributed to a significant reduction in the total number of tests done. "The spread of the disease can be gauged by the number of tests we are conducting, and the areas where the tests are being conducted. If we test on a population which has a less chance of turning out to be positive, then the positivity rate will be low, even if the number of tests conducted are on the higher side. If the positivity rate is below 5%, then we can say we are in a comfortable situation," said Dr Jugal Kishore, head of community medicine, Safdarjung Hospital and Vardhman Mahavir Medical College.

Authorities conducted 8,00,323 tests (RT-PCR and rapid antigen) between September 19 and October 3, out of which 49,102 people tested positive.

However, in the next two weeks, a total of 7,10,072 people were tested, out of which 39,788 tested positive.

Positivity rate is the percent-

## DAILY CASES OVER LAST MONTH



## CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

TOTAL CASES	HOSPITAL BEDS	Total	Vacant
3,31,017	15,704	15,704	10,597
VENTILATORS	1,261	1,261	539

	Daily cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Oct 17	3,259	3,154	35	55,725
Oct 18	3,299	2,863	28	49,414
Total	23,292*	3,01,716	6,009	39,90,438

\*Total active cases

age of people who have tested positive for the virus among those who have been tested.

It is the parameter which helps calculate the severity of the disease and can contribute towards taking the required containment measures for its prevention.

"Over the last few weeks, the number of cases, overall in the country, are going down and the recovery rate is also reaching around 80-90%. This shows the disease is receding," said Dr Kishore.

The number of fatalities

have also fallen over the last one month.

The average number of deaths recorded in the first two weeks was 38, which has dipped to 36 in the last two weeks.

Similarly, the average active number of cases in the city has also witnessed a dip in the last one month.

"If the positivity rate continues to dip further and comes down to 5%, and fatality rate is also dipping, then the graph of the disease will certainly move down," said Dr Kishore.

## BRIEFLY

## Doctors' body defers strike

**New Delhi:** The Municipal Corporation Doctors Association has deferred its strike in protest against non-payment of salaries that was to begin on Monday "to avoid inconvenience to patients and considering the appeal of the North MCD Mayor". The Association has stated that if salaries are not paid in a week they may be forced to reconsider decision.

## 98 Metro passengers challaned

**New Delhi:** Delhi Police has issued 98 challans to Metro passengers for violating Covid-19 guidelines on Sunday. Police said they conduct regular checks at Metro stations and catch passengers who don't wear face masks and violate social distancing norms. A senior police officer said that 1,903 Metro trains have been checked in the last four days.

## Hydrogen-CNG buses pilot run likely on Tue

**New Delhi:** The pilot run of 50 Hydrogen-CNG fuel-driven buses in Delhi is likely to be launched on Tuesday. The Indian Oil Corporation and the Delhi government had signed a pact to set up a gas compact reformer for this purpose. **ENS**

## CM thanks shopkeepers

**New Delhi:** Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday thanked shopkeepers from across Delhi for joining the government anti-dengue awareness campaign "10 hafte 10 baje 10 minute". **PTI**



## SPREADING AWARENESS

At a cyclothon to promote 'SMS' (social distancing, masks and sanitisation) at Connaught Place Sunday. Gajendra Yadav

## Vet arrested for creating fake online profiles for duping

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

A 49-YEAR-OLD veterinary doctor from Madhya Pradesh has been arrested by the Delhi Police for allegedly creating fake social media profiles of people, including IPS officers, and demanding money from their friends and relatives on the pretext of a medical emergency.

Police said the accused, Munnal Mavasi, was arrested from MP's Satna. He allegedly used two phones to make fake IDs on Facebook. Recently, police said he made a fake ID of Rajeev Rawal, a senior IPS officer posted in Nicobar, who he found on Facebook. He allegedly contacted Rawal's friends and told them he needs "money urgently for an emergency", and gave them his account details.

The officer filed a complaint at South Delhi's Lodhi Colony police station on September 26 about the cheating case.

DCP (South) Atul Kumar

Thakur said, "The accused was using the officer's name, photo and other details from his social media account to make it look real. Details of this fake account were verified and the location of the user was found in Satna."

The investigating team then found several bank accounts used by the accused for the transactions. Police said they have not been able to trace all his fake accounts as the doctor "used to format his mobile phone regularly". "We have found only one fake account but he confessed to making four at least. Other fake IDs and data have been deleted from the system," said a senior police officer.

DCP Thakur said, "As per his preliminary account statement, there are suspicious transactions worth Rs 44,000."

Police said the accused was saving up money to open a hotel and was working along with two-three others who helped to create fake IDs and cheat people. They allegedly started targeting random users before lockdown.

## Fake doc held for murdering woman, dumping her body

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NOIDA, OCTOBER 18

A GHAZIABAD resident pretending to be a doctor was arrested in connection with the murder of a 32-year-old woman on Saturday. Police said the woman was allegedly murdered on September 7 by the accused, Ismail, and her body was dumped in Haryana's Kurukshetra. The accused injected a poison to allegedly kill her after she insisted on staying with him, police said.

"Haryana Police found a body on September 8 near Kurukshetra. The woman could not be identified... The victim's family had reported her missing... and it was found to be the same case. We zeroed in on the accused and he confessed to killing her over relationship problems," said Neeraj Kumar Jadaun, SP Rural, Ghaziabad.

Ismail was running a clinic in Dasna area and lived in the same vicinity as the woman. Both were married and lived with

their families. In June, the woman approached the accused over a minor ailment. Police said they became acquainted and the two used to visit each other.

Over the following months, the victim insisted the two get married and start living together but Ismail kept stalling while giving her false assurances, said police.

In the first week of September, Ismail told the woman he would take her on a trip to Chandigarh. Police said the accused hired a car and checked into a hotel in Paharganj with the woman on September 6. However, he returned home and told the victim he would pick her up the next day, police said. "He went back to his house to build an alibi. When we later questioned hotel staff, we found the two had checked in under their own names," said Jadaun.

The following day, they headed to Chandigarh. Near Kurukshetra, he allegedly injected the victim with the poisonous substance.

MAHENDER SINGH  
MANRAL  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

MONTHS AFTER opening an "IT cell", by appointing contractual employees with a background in information technology and experience in handling social media, Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava has directed all DCPs to set up control rooms in each district with dedicated staff who will monitor messages related to their district and respond to them in 24 hours.

Delhi Police launched the "IT cell" in September as a pilot project for three months to keep tabs on unlawful content as well as to give a makeover to their image on social media.

A senior police officer said: "They ('IT Cell') have also been told to keep an eye on posts and media reports related to police, so they can flag it to the PRO in case there is something adverse. But it has been observed that district police sometimes are not responding on time and react only after they have been tagged by the Twitter handle of Delhi Police."

According to police, senior officers realised the importance of setting up a social media control team when they noticed some people trying to tarnish the image of the force.

"A few months ago, a 25-year-old man died after he was stabbed more than 28 times allegedly by three juveniles, who were warned by the man against performing bike stunts in his

## DCPs have been asked to set up control rooms in each district with staff who will monitor messages and respond to them in 24 hours

area. The incident took place on July 8 in West Delhi's Raghbir Nagar and police apprehended all the accused before the video went viral. Some people tried to give it a communal spin, but the issue was resolved after timely intervention of district police concerned," a senior officer said.

A senior police officer said the decision to set up a social media control room was recently taken by the police chief, following which JCP Devesh Srivastava and DCP Manishi Chandra were asked to execute it in coordination with the other DCPs.

"A few days ago, a video conference meeting was held where all DCPs and Additional DCPs were called by Shrivastava (check spelling) and Chandra. They were briefed about social media image impact through several examples. The objective of having a social media control room is to give responses in real time and to change the image of Delhi Police on social media. All DCPs have been asked to respond within 24 hours," an officer said.

Following the meeting, each district police has set up their own control room after appointing two or three police personnel.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

DELHI'S CAMPAIGN against drug and substance abuse will see counsellors reach out to homeless addicts where they stay.

AIIMS Professor Atul Ambekar introduced the project during the launch of the campaign by Delhi Women and Child Development Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam Sunday. The new project aims to enhance treatment and rehabilitation services for underprivileged homeless people who have been affected by drugs. Services for de-addiction and counselling will be provided to the affected people at their place of stay, he said.

In a separate project, a statement issued by the government said, the focus will be on professional cab drivers. "Professional cab drivers, who are among the prominent groups highly susceptible to alcohol misuse, will be sensitised on harms and consequences of misuse, repercussions of drunken driving and about the myths and facts related to alcohol consumption," the statement said.

Experts from IHBAS, AIIMS and the Regional Resource Training Centre should be utilised for capacity building, it added.

Representatives from different organisations, including Professor Ambekar, AIIMS, Dr Deepak from IHBAS, Gautam Manon, DSLSA, and Dr Rajesh, SPYM/ Regional Resource Training Centre presented a plan whereby counselling centres will be set up at the 11 districts courts by DSLSA.

'PEOPLE WHO ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE CITY ARE ALSO THE MOST OSTRACISED'

## In journey through India, artist hopes to paint with most marginalised

VANDANA KALRA  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

WHEN MOST of India was confined at home, artist Shilo Shiv Suleman was planning a road trip across the country to raise awareness on how street art could bring social change and draw attention to the communities most marginalised during the lockdown.

On August 24, she embarked on the trip in a red jeep from her hometown Bengaluru to Lucknow. When the 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly gangraped in UP's Hathras by upper

caste men, Suleman was conducting a workshop on "desire" with Muslim women in Lucknow.

The young woman became part of their discussion and was also on her mind when she was painting two women holding each other in an embrace at a busy street in old Lucknow.

"At a moment like now, when there is so much trauma and fear, for us to occupy public spaces is radical. In UP, where people were not even being allowed to protest, we were standing on the streets and painting," says the artist.

One of India's most prominent street artists, as Suleman

(31) paints the portrait of another Dalit girl who works as a waste-picker in Delhi on the façade of a Jor Bagh apartment building, she underscores the disparities.

"During the lockdown, segregation was not made an essential service, so all the waste went straight into the landfills and a lot of women lost their livelihoods. Several of them are migrants. The unfortunate fact is that the people who are literally holding the backbone of the city and protecting both the environment and cleaning our spaces, who are Muslim and Dalit, are also the most ostracised," says Suleman.



Shilo with her creation at a building in Jor Bagh. Amit Mehra

She carefully wields her brush to finish the picture that has a Dalit girl on one end and a Muslim waste-picker on the other — they have their palms outstretched, holding up the city. Covid might have reduced Suleman's spectators on the streets but curious bystanders still stop by.

Assisting her, meanwhile, are Dalit and Muslim women working with Chintan, an environmental research and action group.

With murals spread across Delhi — from Shaheen Bagh to Okhla — Suleman recalls how it was the 2012 gangrape case that was the trigger for her move-

ment, The Fearless Collective. "I was in Delhi when the protests broke out and all of us went out onto the street," she recalls.

The environment of insecurity led her to put up a poster on the Internet with the words 'I never ask for it', and she invited others to respond with an artwork.

The overwhelming response encouraged Suleman to take to the streets to paint her thoughts with the members of her collective, who are now spread across the world, as are murals painted by Suleman — which includes a portrait of Bubli Malik, a transgender riding a motorcycle in

Rawalpindi, and a mural of two gay men holding each other in Beirut.

Even as she completes the mural in Delhi, she notes how almost a decade since she began raising concerns through her work in public, not much has changed. "It's been eight years since the 2012 incident, but the question is when does this end, when will there be a shift in the narrative," says Suleman. Her next stop is Jaipur, where she will work with gay men, followed by Bengaluru, where she will once again be painting with essential workers.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020

# 7 GOVT & POLITICS

## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### PREPARING GROUND

AMID THE poll campaign in Bihar, the BJP is stepping up its activities in West Bengal, which goes to polls next year. Before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state later this month, party president J P Nadda will be on a daylong visit to Siliguri in north Bengal — where the party says it has achieved an edge — on Monday. He will start the day by garlanding the statue of Panchanan Barma, a reformer from Cooch Behar. From there, Nadda will go to offer prayers at the Anandamayee Kalibari Temple. He will address a press conference and then meet representatives of various communities. Nadda's visit, party leaders said, is expected to give a morale boost to workers to start an intense campaign.

### CONFLICTING IDEAS

THE OCCASION of the centenary of the formation of the Indian Communist party seems to have created yet another wedge between the CPM and CPI. In a conversation with Malayalam writer Paul Zachariah, CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury has said the decision to split from the CPI to form the CPM was "right and inevitable" without which the Communist movement wouldn't have survived post Emergency. Irked by this, CPI general secretary D Raja asked Yechury to "introspect" about what happened in West Bengal. "Do not think whatever CPI (M) does is right," Raja has said.

### QUESTION HOUR

AFTER ISSUING statements on the steps taken by the Centre on air pollution since the Narendra Modi government came to power, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has now taken to Facebook under #AskPrakashJavadekar — he answered questions on the issue of air pollution on the platform. Most of the discussion remained restricted to air pollution in Delhi NCR and reiteration of the steps his Ministry has taken.

## Confident Khadse will remain with BJP: Patil

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 18



Chandrakant Patil

THERE WAS intense speculation on Sunday over disgruntled BJP leader Eknath Khadse's decision to cut off ties with the party. Media reports and Khadse's interaction with NCP leaders, including Home Minister Anil Deshmukh in Jalgaon last week, forced state BJP president Chandrakant Patil to make a statement that he was hopeful that the senior leader would not leave the party.

"I am confident that Eknath Khadse, who is our senior leader, will remain with the BJP. Anyone resigning from the party sends

his resignation to me, as I am the president of the party in the state," he told mediapersons.

"Moreover, I am confident that Eknath Khadse will not do any such thing," he added.

Khadse has been disgruntled with the BJP after he was forced to resign as a minister in 2016 on corruption charges.

"I have not resigned from BJP," he told the media on Sunday. He refused to divulge his future plans.

## BJD MP accuses TV channel reporters of harassing her

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18



Chandrani Murmu

AGAINST THE backdrop of BJP vice-president Bajajayant Jay Panda alleging an attack on freedom of expression after Odisha police questioned a reporter of OTV, a channel owned by his family, BJD MP Chandrani Murmu has justified the police action.

The journalist, Ramesh Rath, was questioned and his mobile phone seized in connection with a case related to the alleged circulation of a morphed video of Murmu when she was contesting the general election.

In a video message, the tribal MP from Keonjhar said, "I am an unmarried tribal lady and the youngest MP in India who has been mentally harassed and tortured by OTV reporters and others who viraled a morphed, obscene video of mine, with the malicious intent to defame, harass and mentally torture me."

Accusing Panda of interfering in the police investigation, Murmu said, "After this tragic incident, the police during investigation arrested a junior reporter of OTV along with others. The OTV junior reporter named Ramesh Rath as the perpetrator of the crime. But

when the police questioned the perpetrator of the crime OTV reporter Ramesh Rath yesterday (October 15), OTV and their owners Jagi Panda and Jay Panda are trying to save him by claiming that this is an attack on OTV and its journalists by the government."

Panda had earlier alleged that the police action was prompted by a news report against the government. In a series of tweets he had stated, "Serious allegations by activists (with RTI accessed aviation documents) that Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik faked an August 31 helicopter aerial survey of flooded districts.... Reporter who broke news... arrested..."

In an official statement, Odisha police have denied the allegations and said their probe is legitimate. "Police arrested three persons including OTV reporter Simanchal Patra... Simanchal Patra has stated that it was under instructions of his then boss Mr Ramesh Rath that he forwarded the obscene video."

## Pawar meets farmers in flood-hit areas, says will seek PM help

MANOJ MORE  
PUNE, OCTOBER 18

NCP PRESIDENT Sharad Pawar on Sunday toured the flood-hit areas of Osmanabad and Latur districts.

Arriving around 10 am at Tuljapur in Osmanabad district in Marathwada area on a helicopter, Pawar wasted no time in visiting flood-ravaged farms in a handful of villages and interacting with farmers. After reviewing the situation in the district, Pawar said heavy rain has wreaked havoc in the fields and the farmers needed long-term help.

"Farmers have been hit badly by the heavy rain. The damage cannot be compensated in a day. There is need for long-term help. However, the state government has its limitations while extending financial assistance. We will have to approach the Central government for assistance," Pawar told reporters.

Consoling farmers who lost their entire standing crop in two talukas of Tuljapur and Lohara, Pawar said, "The floods have hit



NCP chief Sharad Pawar with farmers in Osmanabad. Express

farmers not only in Osmanabad district, but in several parts of Maharashtra the situation is similar. I will pursue the issue to get help for farmers as early as possible. In view of the enormity of the damage, the state government alone will not be able to shoulder the burden. We will need help from the Centre. I will lead a delegation of MPs to meet the Prime Minister to discuss the issue... The Prime

Minister has already expressed the view that floods have caused heavy damage in Maharashtra," he said. State minister Sanjay Bansode, MP Omraje Nimbalkar and other leaders were present.

Interacting with farmers in Lohara and Omerga talukas, Pawar said, "In 1993, thousands of lives were lost in these areas following an earthquake. People here battled severe odds to rebuild

their lives. I am confident they will overcome this situation," he said.

Aggrieved farmers urged him to ensure they get the compensation as early as possible. "We need at least Rs 25,000 compensation immediately to carry out rabi sowing. If the government is going to conduct panchanamas of the damaged farms, it will take at least six months... it will be difficult for us to survive if compensation is not given immediately," a farmer said — several others echoed the view.

Reacting to Pawar's announcement that he would lead a delegation of MPs to the PM, state BJP chief Chandrakant Patil said, "First, let them conduct a survey of the damaged caused, prepare a memorandum and then approach the Centre. They have nothing ready with them and are trying to place the demand."

Pravin Darekar, Opposition leader in Legislative Council, said, "When Shiv Sena was with BJP in government, Uddhav Thackeray used to make similar demands... he should act immediately rather than wait for panchamanas."

## Sonia: Indian democracy passing through its most difficult phase

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

IN A scathing attack on the government, Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Sunday said that Indian democracy was passing through its "most difficult phase".

She was addressing a meeting of AICC general secretaries and state-in-charges presided over by her. This was the first meeting of Congress general secretaries and state-in-charges that the party president chaired after a major organisational reshuffle last month.

Sonia said the BJP-led dispensation has attacked the foundation of India's agrarian economy by bringing in "three anti-agriculture black laws".

"A conspiracy has been hatched to defeat the gains of the green revolution. Lives and liveli-



'Conspiracy hatched to defeat the gains of the green revolution'

hoods of crores of farm labourers, leasehold farmers, small and marginal farmers, toiling labourers and small shopkeepers are under attack. It is our solemn duty to join hands to defeat this sinister conspiracy," she said.

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020 were recently passed by Parliament.

Subsequently, President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the Bills.

The Opposition led by the Congress, along with many farmers' organisations, have been vocal against the legislation, claiming that they will harm the interests of farmers and benefit corporates. The government has claimed the new laws would increase the income of farmers.

On the government's handling of the pandemic, Sonia said the country was pushed into the "abyss" by "sheer ineptitude" and "mismanagement".

The Congress president claimed that the government has simultaneously "demolished" the economy.

She also accused the government of failing to honour even its Constitutional responsibilities, saying the share of GST compensation is being denied to states.

## Nath refers to BJP nominee as 'item', BJP complains to EC

IRAM SIDDIQUE  
BHOPAL, OCTOBER 18

AMID THE campaigning for the bypolls to 28 Assembly seats in Madhya Pradesh, state Congress chief Kamal Nath on Sunday triggered a furore by referring to BJP leader Imarti Devi as an "item".

The ruling BJP has lodged a complaint with the Election Commission over Nath's remark, saying that it insulted the woman leader. The Congress has, meanwhile, said Nath did not name the BJP leader.

Addressing a gathering in Dabra in support of Congress candidate Suresh Raj, the former CM said Raj is a simple man who will carry out development work "unlike her..."

"Ye unke jaise nahi hai... kya hai uska naam" (He is not like her, what is her name)," Nath asked the crowd which responded by saying BJP candidate Imarti Devi's name. "You know her better than I do, you people should have warned me beforehand... ye kya



Kamal Nath at a rally in Gwalior district. PTI

item hai... kya item hai," said Nath.

"Suresh Raj and I will work together for the development of Gwalior-Chambal region, we will work for the youth of this region and chalk out a new policy for the farmers," he said.

Imarti Devi, state cabinet minister for Women and Child Development, was one of the 22 MLAs who resigned in March, bringing down the Kamal Nath-led government in Madhya Pradesh. She subsequently joined the BJP and is now a party candidate for the bypoll in Dabra,

a seat reserved for SC candidates.

Soon after Nath made the remark, the BJP approached the Election Commission, calling the remark an insult to women as well as the SC community.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan called Nath's comment on Imarti Devi an insult of a daughter and sister of the Gwalior-Chambal region.

Speaking at a gathering at Gwalior region, he said, "Imarti Devi has her roots in Gwalior and Chambal and belongs to a Scheduled caste. She has worked hard and risen from being a labourer to an MLA and then a minister. Who gave you the right to insult a person coming from a humble background?" Out of the 28 seats going to bypolls, 16 are in the Gwalior-Chambal region.

Congress spokesperson Narendra Saluja claimed that Nath has not taken Imarti Devi's name in any of the speeches he made. "He said 'kya item hai ye' and did not take Imarti Devi's name. It is the BJP who is adding Imarti Devi's name and insulting her," he said.

## Indian, Chinese officials attend SCO yoga event

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BEIJING, OCTOBER 18

SENIOR OFFICIALS from India and China as well as diplomats from various countries on Sunday took part in a yoga event organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which is also set to hold key meetings of the top leaders of the eight-member group.

The SCO comprises Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

Indian Ambassador to China Vikram Misri along with SCO Secretary-General Vladimir Norov, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with

Foreign Countries (CPAIFC) chairman Lin Songtian, and Deputy Chairman of SCO Committee for Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation Cui Li attended the event.

Diplomats from all the SCO countries, including Pakistan, took part in the cultural events which included a demonstration of Chinese martial art Tai Chi and cultural events of member countries besides yoga.

The SCO events are assuming significance as the virtual summit of the SCO Heads of the State being hosted by Russia is scheduled to be held on November 10 in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping is set to take part.

It will be followed by the SCO



SCO Secretary-General Vladimir Norov, in Beijing. PTI

Heads of the Government being hosted by India which is planned to be held on November 30.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang is scheduled to take part. It is yet to be decided if the meeting will be

## Punjab Cabinet authorises CM for any decision on farm laws

KANCHAN VASDEV  
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

AHEAD OF a two-day special Assembly session, beginning today, to discuss and counter the three central farm laws, the Punjab Cabinet Sunday authorised Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh to take any legislative or legal decision he may deem fit without "caring for the consequences".

The Cabinet meeting was held after a meeting of the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) in which the MLAs unanimously stressed the need to reject the farm laws even if Centre "dismisses" the state government. Sources said the during the two meetings, Cabinet ministers as well as the MLAs, asked Amarinder not to shy away from any confrontation with Centre.

"Amid total consensus among Punjab Congress MLAs on the need to reject the farm laws outright and not implement them in the state, Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Sunday called for a frontal attack against the legislations, even as he was authorised by his council of ministers to take any legislative/legal decision he may deem fit to protect the interests of the farmers," said a government statement.

A source, privy to the developments in the two meetings, said, "The narrative was to find a way to ensure that two types of mandis (private and government) should not exist in the state. The Centre's laws provide for setting up of private mandis. The ministers wanted the CM to ensure that a legislation is brought through which Punjab refuses to allow any private mandis to be set up in state."

The source added that the gov-



Congress not double-faced: Punjab CM ahead of special Assembly session

ernment was working on this line while trying to ensure that the farmers feel that the Congress dispensation is on their side. Several MLAs also suggested that the legislation should not allow any private trader to procure farmers' produce at rates below MSP and if anyone was caught doing so, they should be imprisoned for one year and fined Rs 5 lakh.

In the meetings, Congress leaders reminded Amarinder of the stand he took during his previous tenure on sharing water with neighbouring Haryana. "It was during his previous tenure that Punjab had annulled water sharing accords, creating history. He (Amarinder) can do the same (with the three central farm laws)," said a Congress leader, adding that the government had been working on the lead given by AICC president Sonia Gandhi to all party ruled states asking them to explore legal provision under Article 254(2) of the Constitution of India. The provision allows a state law to prevail over a conflicting central law in some circumstances.

Taking a dig at the SAD, the CM said the Congress was not "double faced" and had a clear stand on the issue. He said contrary to what the BJP and its leaders had been claiming, Punjab was never consulted on farm legislations.

## UP govt will act against those who are threat to women security: CM

MAULSHREE SETH  
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 18

FACING HEAT over incidents of crimes against women in the state, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said that his government will soon launch a special drive to take "legal action against all those who are a threat to women's security or those indulging in corruption in welfare schemes for women".

During a webinar on women security and empowerment, the Chief Minister said society needs to accept the challenge of safety of women. "Earlier, there used to be no such incidents as there was a belief in the village that 'gaon ki beti, sabki beti' (a daughter of the village is everyone's daughter). Aaj hum log kahin ja rahe hain? Kyun gaon ki beti ke sath gaon mein hi atyachar ho raha hai... yeh prashna ek sabhya samaj ke saamne ek challenge hai aur is chunauti ko hum sabko sweekar karna hoga (Where are we going today? Why atrocities are being commit-



Yogi Adityanath

ted on daughters of the village within the village? This question poses a challenge to our society, and everyone has to accept this challenge)," Adityanath said.

Appreciating the efforts of a gram pradhan from Barabanki district who told the CM that a special meeting is held every week in her village where men are sensitised about women's issues, Adityanath said that such moves should be encouraged. He called for installing CCTV cameras and playing bhajans and patriotic songs every morning and evening on public address systems in the villages.

The Education Department has been told to start a programme to link "shiksha" (education) with "sanskar" (good culture) as part of the Mission Shakti campaign that was launched on Saturday, he said.

virtual, officials said.

Addressing the gathering on Sunday, Misri said, "India is a new member of the SCO but our association with the countries of the SCO Family dates back centuries and even millennia in some cases." He said India has assumed the Chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of Government this year and is hosting the meeting of SCO premiers next month.

"We are playing a constructive role in enriching the agenda of the SCO and many initiatives proposed by India in the fields of economics and trade, start-ups, health care, S&T and culture have been supported by SCO members," Misri said. "Today's event is yet another indication of yoga's global appeal. It is a part of India's

contribution to strengthening cultural cooperation among SCO countries. I have been greatly impressed with the fervour with which Chinese people across the country practice yoga," he said.

In his address, Norov said despite the pandemic affecting the activities of the SCO, under the presidency of Russia, a lot of work has been done to implement the plans and priorities that were identified for this year. "In the absence of regular face-to-face meetings, the Organisation's activities quickly adapted to the new realities with the use of new formats and platforms of work, important meetings at the level of Ministers and heads of key agencies and departments were held in online format," he said.

## BRIEFLY



Actor is in hospital after testing positive

#### WEST BENGAL 'Soumitra's health condition improving'

**Kolkata:** Veteran actor Soumitra Chatterjee's health condition is improving gradually and the octogenarian is speaking a few words, opening his eyes as well as responding to verbal commands, doctors said on Sunday. The thespian's oxygen saturation has been consistent, his organs are functioning normally and all other parameters are fine, they said. The critically acclaimed actor was admitted to the hospital here on October 6 after he tested positive for Covid-19.

PTI

## MAHARASHTRA

#### Six held for lynching 'mobile phone thief'

**Thane:** Six people were arrested after an alleged mobile thief was lynched in Bhiwandi in Thane district on Sunday, police said. Bhiwandi Zone II DCP Rajkumar Shinde said the incident happened in a godown in Parasnath Complex in Wallpada area. "Around 4am, three people sneaked into the godown and stole mobile phones of three workers... While fleeing, one of them fell from a first floor canopy and was beaten by those present. They also called the police and together rushed him to hospital," said Shinde. The man, identified as Bharat Sai, later succumbed to his injuries.

ENS

## UTTARAKHAND

#### 8-year-old injured in leopard attack

**Pithoragarh:** An eight-year-old boy was injured after he was attacked by a leopard inside the compound of his house in Pithoragarh district, a forest official said on Sunday. The incident took place in Paur village of the district late on Saturday evening. Forest Range Officer Dinesh Joshi said. Devraj, who hails from Nepal, was walking in the compound of his house when he was attacked by the leopard. The animal fled after the boy's family members and other villagers raised an alarm, he said. Patrolling has been intensified in the area, he said.

PTI

# Ballia shooting main accused arrested in Lucknow: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 18

THREE DAYS after a 45-year-old farmer was shot dead in the presence of administrative and police officials at a village in Ballia during the allotment of a ration shop, the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) on Sunday said they arrested the main accused Dharendra Pratap Singh in Lucknow.

According to police sources, Dharendra, a close of aide BJP MLA Surendra Singh, was arrested at the Janeshwar Mishra Park in the state capital in the early hours of Sunday.

With Dharendra's arrest, a total of 10 people, including Dharendra's two brothers — Devendra and Narendra — have been arrested in connection with Thursday's incident.

"Dharendra will be brought to Ballia where he will be pre-



Main accused Dharendra Pratap Singh will be presented before a magistrate in Ballia. PTI

sented before a magistrate," said ADG (Varanasi Range) Braj Bhushan said.

"Of the 10 people arrested so far, five were named in the FIR. Five others, who were not

named in the FIR, have also been arrested based on evidence collected during the investigation. Three of the accused named in the FIR are still absconding," the ADG added.

Earlier, DIG (Azamgarh Range) Subhash Chandra Dubey had announced a reward of Rs 50,000 on each of the accused named in the FIR. Police sources said the accused — so far, booked under Gangster Act — could be also charged under the stringent National Security Act (NSA). However, senior police officials said a final decision on invoking NSA against the accused is yet to be taken.

The family members of the Jai Prakash Pal, the deceased, welcomed news of Dharendra's arrest.

"His arrest has come as a relief to us. But Dharendra is a 'dab-bang' (strongman). We fear for our security," the brother of Jai Prakash Pal said, as he de-

manded stringent punishment for those guilty.

The family has also demanded Rs 50 lakh in assistance and a government job.

Meanwhile, BJP MLA Surendra Singh, who had backed the main accused, saying that Dharendra fired in self-defence, said that he has been called to Lucknow by the BJP leadership. "I have been called by the party leadership in Lucknow and not summoned, as reported by some news channels. I will hand over all documents pertaining to the case, which are with me, to (UP BJP chief) Swatantra Dev Singh, and brief him about the entire matter," PTI quoted the Bairia MLA as saying.

The BJP legislator, known for making controversial remarks, had earlier accused the administration of acting in a partisan manner in the case and demanded a CB-CID probe.

-WITHPTIINPUTS

## MP liquor deaths: 1 cop suspended, 2 shifted

IRAM SIDDIQUE  
BHOPAL, OCTOBER 18

THE LIQUOR tragedy in in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain has triggered a shake-up at the top level of the district's police set-up.

While Ujjain Superintendent of Police (SP) Manoj Singh and Additional SP Rupesh Kumar Diwedi were transferred to Bhopal, City Superintendent of

Police (CSP) Rajnesh Kashyap was suspended on Sunday.

The action against the three police officers came after Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan called a high-level meeting to look into the deaths of at least 12 people, most of them labourers, after drinking illicit liquor.

A senior government official said the CSP was suspended after he failed to raid the dilapidated building of the municipal corporation from where the liquor was

being sold, despite six deaths being reported on Thursday.

"There were six deaths reported by 5:30 pm on Thursday but the place was only raided at 3 am with a delay of about 10 hours," said this official.

On Saturday, two constables, Shaikh Anwar and Nawaz Kharakaun, were also named as accused in the sale of spurious liquor, along with the three main accused — Yunus, Sikander and Gabbar — who worked as parking

contractors for the Ujjain Municipal Corporation. The police have booked the three bootleggers under the National Security Act. Their contract has now been suspended.

Deputy Municipal Commissioner Subodh Jain has also been transferred along with additional assistant commissioner KC Agnihotri. Besides, action has been taken against two constables of the excise department.

## SUSHANT DEATH CASE

## NCB arrests brother of Arjun Rampal's partner

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 18

THE NARCOTICS Control Bureau (NCB) has arrested a 30-year-old South African national Agisilaos Demetriades, who is the brother of actor Arjun Rampal's partner Gabriella Demetriades, in a drugs case lodged following actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death in June.

Demetriades was arrested late Saturday from a resort in Lonavala, said NCB officers. "On the basis of a tip-off, we laid a trap at the resort in which he was staying with his fiancée. He was arrested and 0.8 gm of charas was seized from him," said an of-

ficer. Later, a search was carried out at his residence in Mumbai's Khar from where Alprazolam, a banned tablet, was recovered, the officer added.

Demetriades, booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, was on Sunday remanded in police custody for two days. He was represented by lawyer Kushal Mor in Killa court.

The NCB said Demetriades is a part of a larger syndicate and supplied narcotics to peddlers who were in touch with actor and Sushant's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and her brother Showik.

This is the 23rd arrest made in the case, said NCB.

## Hindu outfit worker stabbed over stove price row in UP

**Meerut:** A 30-year-old member of the Hindu Jagran Manch (HJM), affiliated to the RSS, was allegedly stabbed by a local councillor and two unidentified others in Bulandshahr's Kakod town on Saturday night after an altercation over the price of a gas stove. Councillor Nafis has been arrested while others are at large.

The victim, identified as Rahul Kumar Jaiswal, was taken to a local hospital from where he was transferred to a Noida hospital. His condition is said to be stable.

Police said Jaiswal was accosted by a drunk Nafis and others while he was returning home in Kakod at night. The accused cornered Jaiswal near a bank, stabbed him 10 times and fled, said police.

"Nafis has been arrested while the hunt is on for two unidentified persons. Nafis and Jaiswal recently had a row over price of a gas stove which Nafis had bought from the shop," R B Singh, in charge of Kakod police station, told *The Indian Express*.

ENS

SUSHANT KULKARNI  
PUNE, OCTOBER 18

A NAVAL version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was successfully test-fired on Sunday from the Navy's indigenously-built stealth destroyer INS Chennai, hitting a target in the Arabian Sea, said the Ministry of Defence.

The missile hit the target with pin-point accuracy after performing high-level and extremely complex manoeuvres, the MoD said in its official statement on Sunday.

It also said the BrahMos as the "prime strike weapon" will ensure the warship's "invincibility" by engaging naval surface targets at long range and making the destroyer a lethal platform.

While versions of the missile have been in India's arsenal for long, the weapon system is continuously upgraded and updated with new hardware and software systems. These upgrades necessitate periodic tests.

Scientists from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) said in every such test of a specific variant of the BrahMos, different parameters were examined. For each test, additional hardware and software systems were examined based on inputs from the user, and against more complex targets under different atmospheric conditions, they added.



Last year, DRDO, Air Force and BrahMos Aerospace conducted two separate successful tests; one each from land, air platforms. File

Scientists also said test results and observations were crucial inputs not just for calibrating the system, but also for advancement and upgrade. The present supersonic version could reach a speed of 2.8 times that of sound (2.8 Mach) and hit a target at a range of around 450 km, and a hypersonic version of the missile, capable of reaching a speed of 5 Mach was being developed.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO, BrahMos and the Navy for the successful launch. Dr G Satheesh Reddy, chairperson of DRDO, congratulated scientists and all the personnel of DRDO, BrahMos, Navy and the industry. He said the BrahMos missile will add to the capabilities of the Armed Forces in many ways.

Commissioned in 2016, the indigenously-designed Kolkata-

## ELGAAR PARISHAD

## Stan Swamy moves special court for bail on medical grounds

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 18

STAN SWAMY, the 83-year old Jesuit priest and tribal rights activist, arrested by the NIA earlier this month in the Elgaar Parishad-Bhima Koregaon case, approached a special court last week seeking interim bail on medical grounds.

The plea referred to the guidelines by Maharashtra government's high-powered committee — appointed on the directions of the Supreme Court — recommending decongestion of jails during the Covid-19 pandemic. It also stated his susceptibility to the virus given his age and other health conditions.

The NIA, however, opposed the plea on Saturday. "Accused Stan Swamy, under the garb of the current situation on account of the global pandemic, is trying to take an undue benefit of the situation... in seeking bail..." it said in its reply to the bail plea.

It added that Swamy and 15 others booked in the case have been charged of serious offences, including the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, where punishment can extend to life in jail.

Claiming there was adequate evidence to prove the case against him, the agency has also submitted that while the committee's guidelines recommend considering grant of interim bail to undertrials above 60 years of age, the same cannot be granted mechanically. The court will hear Swamy's bail plea on Tuesday.

## TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

**230 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN**  
**CASES: 74,94,551**  
**RECOVERED: 65,97,209**  
**DEATHS: 1,14,031**  
**TESTS: 9,42,24,190** **DOUBLING RATE: 82.80\*\***



KEY STATES TO WATCH	TOTAL CASES	SURGE IN 24 HOURS	7-DAY AVG GROWTH*	DOUBLING TIME**
■ Maharashtra	15,86,321	10,259	0.64%	113.16
■ Karnataka	7,58,574	7,184	1.14%	63.25
■ Andhra	7,79,146	3,676	0.54%	134.27
■ Tamil Nadu	6,83,486	4,295	0.69%	104.36
■ Kerala	3,34,228	9,016	2.57%	28.03

\* Compounded Daily Growth Rate over last 7 days \*\* Calculated over 7-day growth

CASE FATALITY RATIO	POSITIVITY RATE	DAILY IN, DAILY OUT
7 DAYS EARLIER: <b>1.54</b> NOW: <b>1.52</b>	7 DAYS EARLIER: <b>8.12</b> NOW: <b>7.95</b>	DETECTED TODAY: <b>61,871</b> RECOVERED TODAY: <b>72,614</b>
Deaths as a ratio of positive cases (in %); indicator of progress in averting deaths	Positives against number tested (in %); indicator of the spread of disease	Becoming sick vs recovering; more recoveries for 14 days may signal the peak
Data as on October 17, released by Union Ministry of Health, ICMR and states. Often daily numbers include data from previous days. As such, trends based on daily numbers are indicative, not definitive		

## For first time in 4 months, no Covid death in Haryana

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

HARYANA REPORTED no coronavirus-related death on Sunday, the state's first zero Covid-19 fatality day in four-and-a-half months, even as its caseload increased by 952. The recovery rate of patients, meanwhile, reached 92.21 per cent, according to the health department's daily bulletin.

"The Haryana health department is happy to announce that no death due to Covid-19 has been reported today (24-hour period)," Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Rajeev Arora said. "Earlier, it was on June 6 that no death due to the virus was reported. While it is heartening, yet there is no room for complacency and the state health department

will remain proactive and alert till there is a solution," he added.

Meanwhile, with 952 fresh cases, the infection tally in the state rose to 1,50,033 Sunday. NCR districts Gurgaon (249 new cases) and Faridabad (177 new cases) led the tally of fresh infections in the last 24 hours, even as the remaining districts are witnessing a substantial decline in numbers. The recovery rate in Gurgaon and Faridabad is 89.82 per cent and 94.94 per cent, respectively.

According to the state's bulletin, there were 10,042 active Covid patients out of whom 9,829 were active for less than 11 days while 213 patients were active for longer duration. The number of critical patients in Haryana came down to 200 out of whom 169 were on oxygen support while 31 patients were on ventilator support.

## Bainsla, 33 others booked for Covid norms violation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
JAIPUR, OCTOBER 18

A DAY after the Gujarat mahapanchayat in Bayana in Rajasthan's Bharatpur, the Rajasthan Police have booked community leader Kirori Singh Bainsla and 33 others for not taking prior permission from the district administration for the large gathering amid the pandemic.

The FIR lodged at Bayana police station states that about 2,500-3,000 people had gathered for the mahapanchayat over their six demands related to reservation.

It states that the organisers neither took permission, nor provided any undertaking or request with the District Collector. It further states that only up to 100 people are allowed to gather after taking permission.

Ahead of the mahapanchayat, District Magistrate Nathal Dided had issued a notice stating that a meeting of up to 100 people may be held while following Covid guidelines after obtaining permission from the



Kirori Singh Bainsla

district collector.

The FIR has been lodged under IPC Sections 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (doing an act likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life) and 270 (malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) as well as sections of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and Rajasthan Epidemic Diseases Ordinance, 2020.

On Saturday, the community leaders gave an ultimatum to the Ashok Gehlot government in Rajasthan to either accede to their demands, including reservation for the community in recruitment, or face a large-scale agitation beginning November 1. Withdrawal of old cases against community leaders and members — lodged following their protests — is one the demands.

## LOCKDOWN-HIT SCHOOLS FIND WORKAROUNDS IN TECH, BUT CHALLENGES REMAIN

## Classes under trees; lessons on WhatsApp, TV as schools go on in MP

IRAM SIDDIQUE  
SEHORE, OCTOBER 18

UNDER A neem tree in Ambdo village in Sehore district about 90 km from Bhopal, 25 children sat on a bright red tarpaulin sheet spread on the ground on a recent Saturday, as 51-year-old primary school teacher Kamla Gaur hooked her cell phone up to a loudspeaker — which crackled to life with 'Ek chatur kauwe ki kahani'.

From a rope tied above the children's heads, hung drawings of the *chatur kauwa* — the cunning crow. "These stories are my favourite," said nine-year-old Deepika Korku, busily sketching the crow putting pebbles in the

vase of water.

With 91.56 lakh government school students of Classes 1 to 12 shut out of classrooms by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Madhya Pradesh government has reformatted the curriculum for all subjects into hour-long audio and video clips that are shared on WhatsApp, and broadcast on All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan. The video links have been designed and curated by a team at the Rajya Shiksha Kendra, the state's Education Department, and are sent in accordance with a time table — thus, Mondays are for math lessons, Tuesdays for science, and Wednesdays for languages.

Every teacher has been asked to create a WhatsApp group of

## LOCKDOWN LESSONS

their students at the village level. The links are sent to the teachers at 10 am, and the teachers share them with students on their WhatsApp group. The clips for older students of Classes 9-12 are aired on Doordarshan at 10 am; for younger children, there is the state government's Dakshata Unnayan program on AIR.

But in villages like Ambdo — with a total 125 households of mostly Korku and Barela tribals — mobile phones, radio or a TV set are not universally accessible.

Fifteen-year-old Neha Mehra who wants to be an IAS officer one



'Mohalla' class under a neem tree in Sehore's Ambdo village. Iram Siddique

day, said the single mobile phone at home has to be shared among four siblings — that too only on days their father does not have to go out of the village, taking the phone. Neha said she had heard

of the classes on TV, but could not find the channel. According to numbers provided by the state government, 50,000 WhatsApp groups have been created, connecting about 12 lakh students.

But daily views of the links sent over the messaging platform do not cross 6-7 lakh.

The numbers of those accessing the lessons on TV are lower. Santosh Dhanawde, a middle school teacher in Narsullahganj block under which Ambdo falls, said many children do not have a TV at home; also, power cuts are a problem. It is in this situation that the classes like the one under the neem have become popular. The loudspeaker mounted on the thickest branch of the tree was paid for by the panchayat, an initiative taken entirely by the villagers, Dhanawde said.

"Now," said primary school teacher Gaur, "the students have begun to enjoy the sessions so much that they often ask for a

story to be repeated. It is because of such programmes that the tribal children are comfortable in Hindi." In villages like Ambdo, teachers have been encouraged to hold "mohalla" classes for students in groups of 10, headed by a volunteer identified as a "Shikshadoot". The volunteers have their own cell phones to show students videos and clarify their doubts — however, one cell phone among 10 children often means the screens are too small and the lessons barely audible.

To solve the problem, Asaram Solanki, headmaster at Ambdo, tried to arrange equipment such as mics and portable Bluetooth speakers. And when that seemed too expensive, an innovative alternative was found with an old,

rigged-up DVD player.

Lokesh Jataw, Commissioner of Rashtriya Shiksha Kendra, conceded that nothing could replace in-person education in school. However, there has been an increased effort from parents to allow their cell phones to be used and open up their homes and temples to hold these mohalla classes, he said.

Many villagers like Dayaram Kalme have given their cell phones not only to their own children but also to others in the neighbourhood. "Jis tarah se bachche padh rahe hain, ummed hai ki kuch ban jayege. (The way the children are studying gives me hope for them)," said Kalme, whose two children go to these mohalla classes every day.

Four injured in clashes, Centre to hold video meeting with Chief Secys today, Assam CM dials PMO and Mizoram counterpart



# THE IDEAS PAGE

## How to Make You Wear a Mask

The concept of public goods can be experimentally put to use in the current pandemic for a social cause



Soumya Kanti Ghosh

THERE IS A direct linkage between the RBI governor's statement on October 9 and the Nobel Prize in economics that was awarded to Robert Wilson and Paul Milgrom on October 12. The statement by the governor that yield curve control and financial market stability are public goods is a stark reminder of the treatment of the same in game theory, where defection among individuals/market players is random, often resulting in least payoffs. Interestingly, Wilson and Milgrom are also proponents of game theory. It is an irony that the application of game theory in macroeconomics in India is minimal and, thus, it is always a matter of great elation whenever we can find a link.

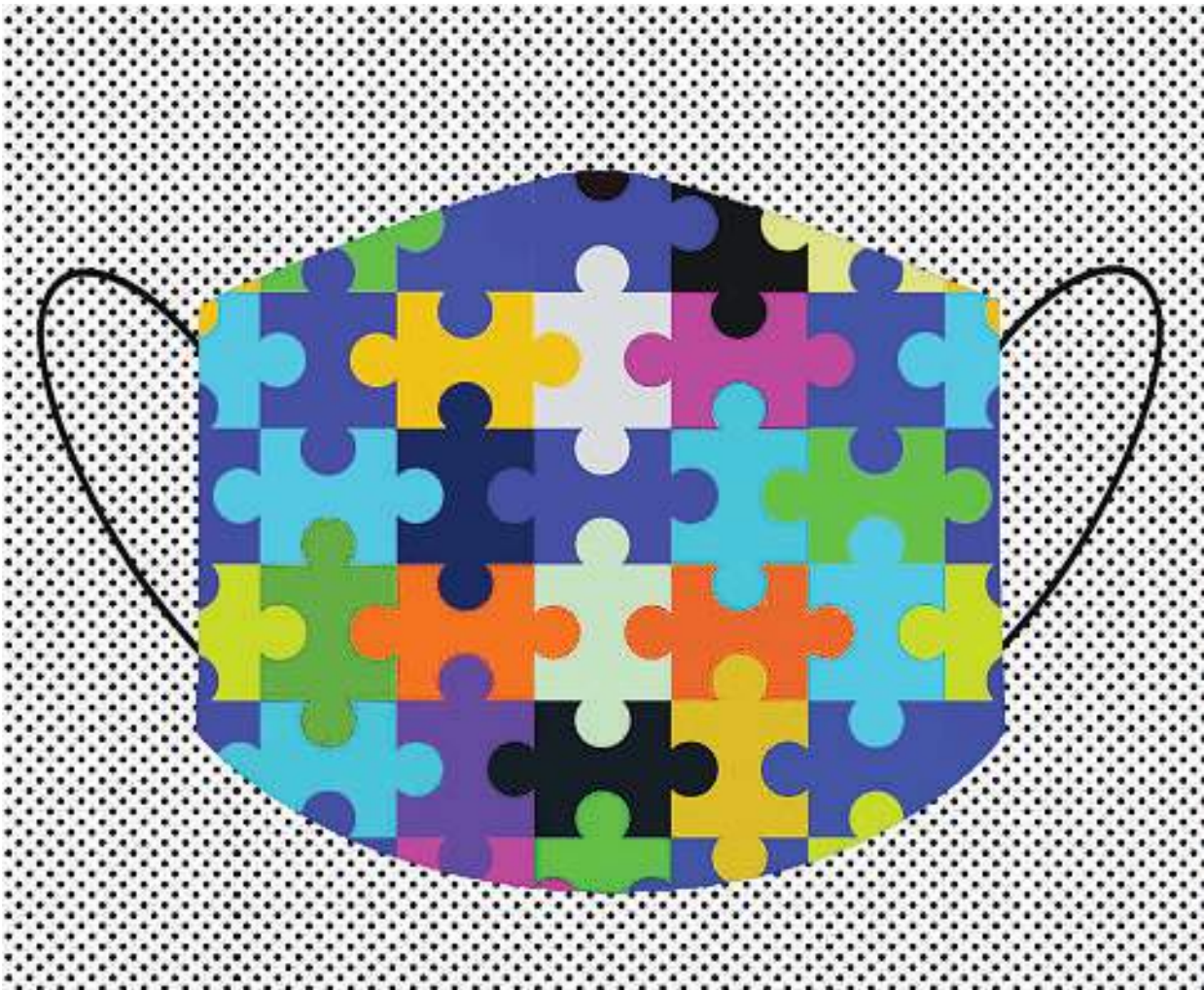
First, a little titbit from this year's Nobel prize award in economics. This is, perhaps, the fourth instance of a student and teacher getting the award in the same year. The first instance was in 2004, when Finn Kydland and Edward Prescott were chosen for the honour. Robert Wilson, besides being the winner of the economics Nobel this year, has three Nobel-winning PhD students — Alvin E. Roth, Bengt Holmstrom and Paul Milgrom.

In economic parlance, public goods are defined as non-excludable and non-rivalrous in nature, such as law enforcement. There is plenty of literature on the use of public good in financial markets — if agents cooperate well, all players have the opportunity to benefit; if agents work in isolation, all are likely to suffer. Hence, all should have a common interest in reforms that will improve the system for public benefit.

Garrett Hardin's famous essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons," published in Science magazine in 1968, was the earliest example of this argument. The farmer who added an extra cow gained an advantage over other farmers in his village, but it also led to an overgrazed pasture.

In the Indian context, let me provide an even earlier example to illustrate the idea of public goods. One day, Emperor Akbar told Birbal that he was planning to take a bath in milk and that all his ministers should cooperate and get milk to fill the bathtub. However, each minister decided that since milk was costly, he would get the water, while the others get milk. The end result was that all the ministers brought water. When this experiment was done subsequently with proviso of a punishment, everyone cooperated and got milk. In a similar vein, the RBI governor communicated through the policy that market players should always be competitive and not combative so as to get the best results. Central banks can only act to oversee the market.

Against this background, it is important to understand how the breakdown of trust across agents in the use of public goods often results in minimal payoffs. Both agents have two options between them — either cooperate or defect. Thus, we effectively have four policy options, and each of the options will have a particular benefit/payoff. Our endeavour is to find out which policy option can result in a Nash equilibrium,



CR Sasikumar

which occurs when neither of the agents can increase their payoff by unilaterally changing their actions. Thus there are four options — both Player 1 and Player 2 cooperate, both Player 1 and Player 2 defect, Player 1 cooperates while Player 2 defects, and, lastly, Player 1 defects while Player 2 cooperates.

The payoff scenarios are hypothesised as benefits accruing to Player 1 and Player 2 separately, when they are deciding on either of the policy options: Cooperate or defect. Specifically, both of them cooperating cannot be a Nash equilibrium, as both the players unilaterally will always have an incentive to defect because they will get a higher payoff in such an eventuality. Since the situation is the same for everyone, both the players will thus ultimately defect and receive a payoff of 0. This is the Nash equilibrium for this game. But this is sub-optimal as both players get zero payoffs because of uncoordinated behaviour. The bottomline is an outcome that the regulator will never want.

Let us now extend this analogy to the Indian debt markets. The Bank of Japan was, perhaps, the first central bank to proclaim that the yield curve is a public good and it is heartening to see the RBI echo the same.

In the Indian markets, it is common to find debt market players behaving differently. For example, if one set of players act pro-cyclically, selling government securities with the RBI's monetary policy stance, the other set of players act counter-cyclically, buying government securities — sometimes both the players are combative. While there is nothing wrong in taking two way positions in the market, the problem arises when such buying/selling far outstrips selling/buying that the RBI would prefer. This also results in a yield structure not in sync with macro fundamentals. For example, during

In economic parlance, public goods are defined as non-excludable and non-rivalrous in nature, such as law enforcement. There is plenty of literature on the use of public good in financial markets — if agents cooperate well, all players have the opportunity to benefit; if agents work in isolation, all are likely to suffer. The Bank of Japan was, perhaps, the first central bank to proclaim that the yield curve is a public good and it is heartening to see the RBI echo the same

2017-18, the spread between the overnight repo rate and the 10-year G-Sec yield had increased to 169 basis points in February. Till that time, such a large spread was seen only during a financial crisis.

Can we avoid such a problem of defection? The economist Elinor Ostrom had an answer (the only woman apart from Esther Duflo to have won a Nobel in economics). The only way groups can avoid such a breakdown is by adhering to conditions in the form of eight core design principles.

In a similar vein, the concept of public goods can be experimentally put to good use in the current pandemic for a social cause. Suppose the government were to frame a policy of incentivising well-off households (say, through a certification from the PM) to co-operate and support at least one poor household. Such incentives are extremely important as otherwise individual households can always defect unilaterally because it gives them a higher payoff and thus both could end up defecting. This is a clear example of Jan Bhagidhari.

Similarly, wearing masks is a perfect example of a public good, as there is always a proviso that the person not wearing a mask could benefit and hence, again, both defecting and not wearing masks could be an eventuality. In this case, we, however, need a harsh punishment for those not wearing masks. This is a clear example of Jan Chetna.

Clearly, adhering to Jan Bhagidhari and Jan Chetna, as the Prime Minister has been espousing, requires an intelligent application of game theory in policy making.

The writer, group chief economic advisor, State Bank of India, is thankful to Sudipta Sarangi and Indranil Bhattacharya for useful comments. Views are personal

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"We will be existing alongside this lethal virus for many months to come; the need for national unity in the face of its immense social, financial and health challenges has never been greater."  
— THE OBSERVER

## Socialism & the pandemic

Countries more successful in curbing COVID-19 are welfare states, ruled by left-of-centre parties. There is a lesson here



Shah Alam Khan

A PLEA HAS been filed before the Supreme Court, seeking to remove the words "socialist" and "secular" from the Preamble of the Constitution. But despite a persistent erosion over the last couple of decades, both principles were central to the type of republic our political forefathers had imagined. With the embrace of neoliberal policies in the Nineties, socialism was pushed aside. With the ongoing pandemic, however, socialism has become relevant not only for India but also the world. As the world grapples to find a vaccine for COVID-19, a closer inspection of the backwash of the pandemic reveals that socialist ideals have turned out to be a life-saver. This needs further corroboration and evaluation.

In the neoliberal world, hardly any country can be bracketed as a purely socialist nation. Countries which provide socialised medicine are the ones which have evolved the model of what is called a welfare state — the closest cousin of yesterday's socialist state.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of governments, healthcare models and political ideologies. It is thus important to see which countries have done better in this pandemic both in terms of COVID-related morbidity and mortality and the political ideology which governs them.

It is no rocket science to imagine that those nations with good health infrastructure would do better during a pandemic. Having said this, the response and outcome parameters of the pandemic have not shown such simple trends. Besides healthcare management, it also involves political response and will.

The conceptualisation and application of a good public health system, which is an important component of any form of socialism, appears to have had a better outcome during the current pandemic. Capitalist systems with privatised healthcare have fared the worst, despite a good health infrastructure in terms of the availability of state-of-art healthcare technology. The US is a classic example of the latter.

In terms of good response to the ongoing pandemic, one country which stands out in the Australasia region is New Zealand. With around 1,757 cases and a low death rate of 4.56 per million cases, New Zealand has one of the best COVID-19 figures in the world. The country is at present governed by the Labour party, which has left-of-centre leanings. The total expenditure on health as a percentage of the GDP for New Zealand is around 11 per cent. For India, despite having "socialism" in its Preamble, the figure is a dismal one per cent.

Most European nations that have performed well in the current pandemic are thorough welfare states with socialist tilts or left coalitions in power. Germany had a

rapid outburst of the pandemic but was able to contain deaths very quickly. Till date, Germany reported a total of 2,47,000 cases with a death rate of 108 per million cases. Germany's total expenditure on health is about 11 per cent of its GDP and this is about one per cent more than the average spent by other countries of the European Union on health. Portugal, which has had a coalition left-wing government for the last few years, has contained the pandemic well. Its democratically-planned lockdown was eased off earlier than many other European countries. It had a total of around 58,000 cases with 1,827 deaths. This was in stark contrast to next-door neighbour Spain, which was devastated by the virus causing 4,80,000 cases and 29,194 deaths. Portugal's total expenditure on health is 9.5 per cent of its GDP. Yet another European nation which has done well in tackling the pandemic is Iceland, with a total of 2,121 cases and 10 deaths. Interestingly, Icelanders voted for a majority left-wing government in the general elections in 2017.

Even among the Latin American countries, those who spend more on health have performed better than those who are prudent in spending on people-centric programmes. Argentina is a classic example. With 40,000 COVID-19 cases and 8,00 deaths, it has fared far better than most of its neighbours. The country is ruled by the Peronists, who subscribe to more leftist economic policies. Argentina's population is comparable in many respects to its neighbouring Brazil, which has a right-wing government and has been devastated by the virus, with 3.96 million cases and around 1.23 lakh deaths. Venezuela, which has been under socialist regimes for the last two decades, on the other hand, showed promising outcomes during the current pandemic. It reported 47,756 cases with only 400 deaths.

An argument against this hypothesis would be that it is difficult to compare the Indian situation with either New Zealand, Germany, Iceland or even Argentina because our population surpasses the combined population of these countries. The problem with the supporters of the market economy is that they lay all problems at the doorstep of population growth. Kerala, the best performing Indian state in the current pandemic, is also the most densely populated. Concerns of population growth have always been part of a populist agenda in which the population of the poor is the main concern. We fail to understand that the path to population stabilisation passes through the overall socio-economic development of the people, and this the COVID-19 pandemic has handsomely revealed.

To conclude, a quick glance shows that socialism is not an odd contraption ready to fall apart. Even in its most deactivated, metamorphosed, desultory form, it has been a handy weapon in successfully fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. India's quest for a socialist system may have been waylaid but socialist principles provide a semblance of hope concerning issues pertaining to peoples' health even in a country like ours.

The writer is professor, department of orthopaedics, All India Institute of Medical Sciences



Sidharth Nath Singh

## Numbers don't lie

Opposition noise cannot hide fact: UP government is committed to women's safety

THE SAFETY OF women has been the top priority of the Uttar Pradesh government ever since Yogi Adityanath assumed the office as chief minister in 2017. The UP government, under his supervision, has not only taken appropriate steps to protect women from all kinds of crimes but has also ensured strict punishment to the perpetrators so that potential criminals mend their ways. This approach bore results and ensured that UP led the way in controlling rape and other heinous crimes against women.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau's report in 2019, the rate of rape cases in UP was 2.8 per one lakh whereas in 2016 and 2017 the rate was around 4.6 to 4.0. In 2019, UP ranked 26th among the total of 36 states and union territories in rape cases. This data is a vindication of the fact that UP is ahead of other states in terms of controlling rape cases.

In the figures in "Crime in India 2018 and 2019" published by the NCRB, UP ranks far behind several other states in terms of registered cases of crimes. In other words, it is ahead of many states in terms of controlling crime. The percentage of registered crimes in UP is 10.92 while the percentage of its population in the country is 16.85. Apart from this, in 2020 (till September) UP has been able to bring about a 42.24 per cent reduction in rape cases and about a 39 per cent reduction in the cases of

abduction of women as compared to 2016. As compared to 2019, there has been a decrease of 27.32 per cent in the incidents of rape. The accused booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act have been given harsh punishment. As many as five accused have been given the death penalty and 193 accused have been given life imprisonment, while 721 have been awarded other punishments under the POCSO Act.

CM Adityanath's "zero tolerance" towards crime is showing results. This can be gauged from the fact that according to the crime rate per one lakh population, the national average is 58.8, while UP's average is below that at 55.7, with Assam being the highest at 166. States like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh also stand above the national average. Further, according to "Crime in India 2019" report, the conviction rate for crimes against women was the highest in UP with 15,579 convictions in 2019, and more than 55 per cent of the cases registered for crimes against women and minors led to the sentencing of the accused, which is a huge deterrent for anti-social elements.

Despite this track record, some political parties and those with an alleged anti-national frame of mind tried to instigate communal and caste-based riots on the pretext

of the Hathras incident.

In a democratic setup, we often come across debates about what should we expect for India — a stable government or a strong Opposition. The answer by any political leader is that we need both.

Yes, we do need a strong Opposition but certainly not like the current lot. Do we need an Opposition which is more inclined towards rumour-mongering, has a pessimistic approach and a destructive mindset and divisive thought process? No.

What we experienced in the wake of the Hathras incident was more shock than a disappointment. The manner in which the entire fake narrative was built to mislead the masses is disappointing and unacceptable. This was, in fact, an exploitation of the emotions of millions of Indians. The political compulsion and desperation of the Opposition can be understood but an attempt to pollute the psyche of the masses was nothing short of a crime.

A good government is expected to take prompt action in cases of crime against women. This was done in the Hathras case. An FIR was lodged promptly and subsequent action was also taken and senior district officials supervised the entire probe. CM Adityanath has already issued directives to act swiftly in cases related to women. In this case, too, he immediately set up a Special Investigation Team to probe the incident and

later recommended a CBI probe to ensure justice. Now, since the case has been referred for a higher probe and is pending in court, the truth will come out soon. But it is also imperative to expose the evil designs of some individuals who have a vested interest in disturbing law and order in the state.

After having spent many years in public life, I find no parallel to the acts of irresponsibility that the Opposition resorted to in the Hathras incident. Besides their attempt to spur communal flare-up, and caste-based riots, the irresponsible approach shown by the Opposition is deplorable. The deliberate attempt to create a totally wrong perception about any ideology, belief or thought process is dishonesty if not blasphemy vis-à-vis the wisdom of the people of this country.

As an age-old dictum says, "Falsehood is invariably the child of fear in one form or another." This signifies the state of mind of the Opposition.

A piece of advice to the Opposition — be positive and work for the best interest of the people, if not the government in power. Also remember, among the other duties of the government, one is to insulate the people from false propaganda and thwart the threat of nefarious rumour-mongering.

The writer is Cabinet minister in the Uttar Pradesh government

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### CHILDREN SUFFER

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Children in distress' (IE, October 16). So far, the government closure of schools has added to the plight of students from economically weaker sections. Many of them might never head back to school again. The state governments have been dragging their feet yet again as the future of these hapless children hangs in the balance.

Varun Das, Zirakpur

### CENTRE'S BURDEN

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Centre gives in, says will borrow to make up for states' GST shortfall' (IE, October 16). The Centre tried to pass the buck to the states, infringing on its commitment to fulfilling the GST compensation. Economic logic suggests that the Centre is best positioned to raise additional resources to bridge the GST compensation gap.

SS Paul, Nadia

### PER CAPITA MESS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Best way out' (IE, October 16). So far, the government has given catchy slogans and punch lines with no tangible outcomes. It is regrettable that while we like to be compared with developed economies, we are lagging behind small nations like Bangladesh in per capita GDP.

Deepak Singhal, Chennai

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● A BAND-AID FOR A BULLET HOLE: VEERA MAHULI

● ANTI-FARMER, PRO-CORPORATE: VARUN VERMA

www.indianexpress.com

### FIGHT THE MOB

THIS REFERS TO the article "I'm the unborn baby..." (IE, October 15). I share the writer's sentiments on the gentle, kind and touching advertisement by Tanishq which, unfortunately, had to be withdrawn. There was nothing objectionable in the advertisement, which promotes unity amongst our diversity — India's biggest strength. The issue at hand is more ominous and reflects the increasingly polarised society that we have become. We have to fight such faceless mobs and not capitulate.

Subhabrata Basu, Mumbai



## BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



## I HEREBY DECLARE

SHREYASI SINGH  
BJP candidate, Jamui

## TOTAL ASSETS

₹7.23 CRORE

\*\*Contesting election for the first time

## MOVABLE ASSETS

₹1.57 CRORE

Assets	2015	2020
Cash in hand	-	1.9 lakh
Bank balance	-	83.48 lakh
Stocks & bonds	-	34.16 lakh
Other Investment	-	34.3 lakh
Jewellery	-	-
Other	-	4 lakh
TOTAL	-	1.57 cr

## IMMOVABLE ASSETS

₹5.65 CRORE

Assets	2015	2020
Agriland	-	1.15 cr
Non-agri land	-	3 cr
Commercial	-	50 lakh
Residential	-	1 cr
Total	-	5.65 cr

\*All of the above are inherited assets

## LIABILITIES NIL

## CRIMINAL CASES

No pending criminal cases

# ‘Economic distress there but pan-India... not a poll issue; anger has subsided’

A close Nitish Kumar aide, Minister SANJAY KUMAR JHA tells DIPANKAR GHOSE the CM averted a bigger economic crisis, and says skill mapping will create jobs

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has been at the helm for 15 years. The Opposition says there is anti-incumbency. Do you see it?

I do not think so. Nitish Kumar has changed the narrative of Bihar politics... He raised expectations. Fifteen years is a long time. Some people may think that more work could have been done but what we are seeing on the field is different. If they think more should be done, they also believe that only Kumar can do it.

The JD(U) leaders, including the CM, often compare Bihar with what it was during (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad's regime (1990-2005). Isn't this an admission that the last five years haven't been good enough?

We say this because this was not a field where you could come and start battling. This was a hole. What had they (then RJD government) left in the state? Rampant corruption, a failed bureaucracy. The Central Public Works Department, which makes buildings in Delhi, used to come here and build roads. No contractor would come, no businessman was left. Every day there was kidnapping. You have to see from where Kumar started. Biharis used to be a laughing stock... In a caste-based society like the one in Bihar, if he did not have commitment, we would not be able to build the Bihar pride.

But hasn't Kumar created sub-castes and a loyal vote base for himself?

He is the first CM in the country to give 50% reservation to women in panchayats. Three elections have happened. Talk to the women mukhiyas and the zila parishads. There is now a women force in politics. Nobody thought what a woman in Bihar thinks about politics.

In the early days of the pandemic, Kumar had said that migrants should not return to Bihar. Was there anger against the government's stand?

He never said, 'Don't come back.' He only said that the Centre has made guidelines that no movement should take place... When the



“That (Tej Pratap) has had to change seat shows their (RJD) core vote is shifting.” FB

pandemic hit, people thought Bihar would be worst affected. They thought the migrants would return and spread the virus in their villages... That narrative is not spoken of anymore. The recovery rate in Bihar is 94%. Testing is among the highest. The people broke the chain by staying in quarantine centres.

But what about the economic distress?

Abhijit Banerjee (Nobel laureate for economics) said if direct cash was transferred to people, and if they spent that money, the economy will start moving. Kumar transferred Rs 2,000 crore into people's bank accounts in different forms. Old age pension of three months was paid in advance, Rs 1,000 was given to each migrant and money was allotted for scholarships for girls. I am not saying that the problem was solved. But he was aware that only when he gives the money, the economy will start moving... Yes, there is economic distress but the entire country is facing it.

So, has the anger subsided?

Yes, the anger has subsided. We never had conducted skill mapping before. So, we now have data of all the people who stayed in quarantine centres. In places like Bettiah (Champaran), Supaul, Purnea, Darbhanga, people are making masks with Mithila paintings and selling them on Amazon and Flipkart...

A lot of migrants, who were facing economic difficulties, have now returned from where they came. If their earnings fell, will they still vote for the government?

Economic distress is a pan-India problem. I will not say that it does not have an impact. But largely, the handling of Covid-19 in Bihar was done well. About 22 lakh migrants were given Rs 1,000 each. People trust that when the CM talks about skilling, it will happen.

With the BJP seen as propping up the IJP in some quarters to push the JD(U) down, are party cadres finding it difficult to work together on the ground?

Barring a few years, the BJP-JD(U) alliance has been there since 1996. The cadre, leaders and workers know each other very well. Whether it is the Prime Minister, or Amit Shah (Union Home Minister), or the BJP party president (JP Nadda), they have all said that Nitish Kumar will lead the election campaign. Seat distribution is already completed and the VIP (Vikasheel Insaan Party) and HAM (Hindustani Awam Morcha) are our allies. The people of Bihar will give a decisive mandate... The Opposition is not serious.

What about (RJD leader) Tejashwi Yadav?

He was not there during the floods or when there was an illness (the acute encephalitis syndrome outbreak in 2019) in Muzaffarpur. When the state faces major issues, he is never there. That one of the brothers (Tej Pratap Yadav, Lalu Prasad's elder son) has had to change constituency shows that even their core vote is shifting.

Is the IJP's action bothering the JD(U)?

Which way are the Paswan votes going? I don't want to talk about caste. But I think people in Bihar vote one way. Even in 2010 (Assembly polls), we (the JD-U and BJP) fought the election together and won 206 seats out of 243. That result is a matter of record.

## LOOKING FOR: PRASHANT KISHOR

### He promised ‘Baat Bihar Ki’, is now making more noise for his silence

THIS WAS supposed to be the election where Prashant Kishor made his way from the back room to the frontlines. Appointed straight at the top as JD(U) vice-president by Nitish Kumar after the 2015 polls, the election strategist had seemed set for another leap.

One-and-a-half years later, Kishor is out of favour — and out of sight. After falling out with Nitish, he had started an apolitical forum called “Baat Bihar Ki”, promising to develop leadership from the grass-roots.

But now, the man who built his reputation on adapting disparate parties for the digital age, has not even tweeted on the Bihar polls so far. His last tweet was in July, over the Covid scare.

However, Patna is abuzz with reports that Kishor is on the move again, meeting leaders of smaller parties like the RLSP, after trying his luck with the Mahagathbandhan. The

JD(U) sees Kishor's hand in IJP chief Chirag Paswan's decision to leave the NDA.

A senior JD(U) leader said Kishor had impressed upon Chirag that this was the last election where the older generation of socialists would hold sway in the state, and hence he should gamble big. IJP spokesperson Ashraf Ansari dismissed this as a figment of imagination.

There are those who say Kishor's success lies in picking winning side, and that he has failed in redeeming parties that were down in the dumps, like the Congress and Samajwadi Party in the 2017 UP polls. Yet others say it is far too early to rule Kishor out, and are watching for 2025.

A source close to Kishor denied he was out of the picture. “Because of Covid we haven't started the on-ground part but digitally *Baat Bihar Ki* is the biggest political page, with more than 20 lakh followers.”



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A source close to Kishor denied he was out of the picture. “Because of Covid we haven't started the on-ground part but digitally *Baat Bihar Ki* is the biggest political page, with more than 20 lakh followers.”



Deputy CM Sushil Modi with CM Nitish Kumar, at one of their four joint rallies on Sunday. Modi had underlined BJP's “respect” for EBCs while announcing seat deal with the VIP. PTI

Muzaffarpur, Khagaria and Madhubani — led by the RJD may appear ceding too much

ground. Sahani had himself lost to the LJP's Mehboob Ali Kaisar by a margin of 2.5 lakh

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## ● KEY PLAYERS



**TEJ PRATAP YADAV:**  
THE NOT SO BIG BROTHER

**EXPRESS**  
**explained.**

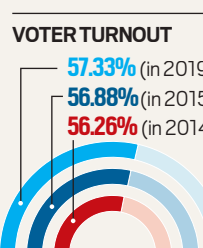
WHAT IS M-Y FORMULA?

## ● WHO'S WHERE TODAY

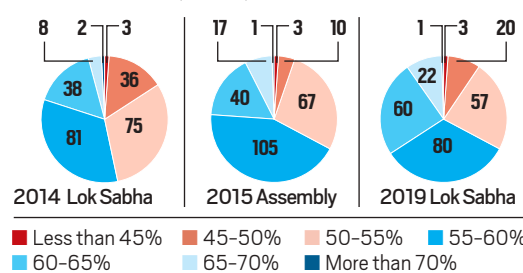
SUBHASHINI SHARAD YADAV WILL BE IN BIHARANJ; SUSHIL MODI WILL BE IN FORBESGANJ, KATIHAR, PURNEA

## BIHAR'S VOTER TURNOUT

**243** Total Number of Assembly Constituencies



## VOTER TURNOUT (SEATS)



## KEY PLAYERS

## Old hand, trusted by both Rahul, Ahmed Patel, is Cong choice for Bihar

Shaktisinh Gohil has his task cut out as party in-charge for state, but there are many reasons he may be the man for the job



Illustration: Sujvjit Dey

## MANOJ CG

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

SHAKTISINH Gohil may seem an odd choice as the Congress in-charge of Bihar, particularly given the uphill battle the party faces in a state where it has been now out of power since 1990. However, there are two things that make the 60-year-old uniquely placed for the job: the fact that he is a veteran of many political battles against Narendra Modi-led BJP in native Gujarat; and that he is among the few Congress leaders considered close to both Ahmed Patel and Rahul Gandhi.

In his over three-decade political career, it is the first time Gohil will be overseeing a state election as an AICC pointsman. His hand is seen in the hard bargaining by the Congress to secure 70 seats in the Mahagathbandhan, a huge jump from the 41 the party had contested in Bihar in 2015.

A veteran in Gujarat politics, Gohil first entered the national stage in 2014, when he was made a Congress spokesperson. He was elevated as in-charge of Bihar in 2018, given additional charge of Delhi earlier this year, and made a Rajya Sabha MP in June this year.

Often described as Ahmed Patel's “right-hand man”, Gohil was the Congress veteran's poll agent in the closely fought 2017 Rajya Sabha election that Patel had won, outmanoeuvring the BJP.

Gohil started his political career in the early 1980s while still in college. In the mid-1980s, as Youth Congress office-

bearer, he had been spotted by then prime minister Rajiv Gandhi at a national function.

He won the Bhavnagar South Assembly seat in Gujarat at the age of 30 in 1990, and became the minister of state for health at the age of 32 under Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel. He was then the youngest minister in Gujarat's history.

Two years later though, Gohil took everyone by surprise by resigning over the demand for a medical college for Bhavnagar. The medical college was allocated eventually and Gohil won the seat again in 1995.

Gohil did not contest the 1998 election and lost the one in 2002 that marked Modi's first electoral win. In the next election in 2007, he returned to the Assembly from Bhavnagar and was made the Leader of the Opposition, emerging as one of the most vocal critics of Modi. However, Gohil lost the 2012 Assembly elections, and while he eventually returned to the Assembly in a by-election from the Abdasa constituency, in the 2017 polls too he couldn't win. Since then, Gohil has been focusing on national politics.

The Congress veteran had wanted the Grand Alliance in Bihar to be broad-based, involving parties like Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Samata Party (RLSP), Mukesh Sahani's Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) and the Left, but could not convince RJD chief Tejashwi Yadav about the utility of the RLSP and VIP.

However, he managed to bring the CPI, CPM and CPI (M-L) into the fold.

# 11 seats for Mukesh ‘Mallah’ Sahani, why BJP is treating him as VIP

## DEEPTIMAN TIWARY

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

IN THE coming Bihar polls, where the BJP is seen as positioning itself to win more seats than its ally the JD(U), the party has left as many as 11 seats for the Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP). This has left the BJP with 110 seats, against the JD(U)'s 115. The reason for the BJP's accommodation of the political greenhorn is the votes the VIP commands.

Led by Bollywood set decorator from Darbhanga Mukesh Sahani, the VIP came up only two years ago, even though Sahani has been active since 2013. Championing the cause of the Nishad (Mallah) caste bouquet — Sahani officially calls himself “Son of Mallah” — the party claims considerable influence among the boatmen and fishermen communities populating the riverine belts of North Bihar.

There is no recent official data to estimate the strength of Nishad votes in Bihar. The

community has multiple subcastes and the VIP has often claimed a command over almost 10% of the votes. Estimates of various political parties, however, are 6-7%.

Still, in a closely fought election, the consolidation of such votes can significantly impact elections in certain seats. Nishad votes are said to be influential in Muzaffarpur, East Champaran, Madhubani, Khagaria, Vaishali and other North Bihar districts. In this belt, the vote share of Nishads is said to be over 6%.

Nishad voters have traditionally aligned with social justice parties in the post-JP Movement era. Former Union minister Captain Jai Narayan Prasad Nishad, who passed away in 2018, represented the Muzaffarpur constituency multiple times on RJD and JD(U) tickets before switching to the BJP. His son Ajay Nishad fought and won on a BJP ticket from the constituency in the 2019 polls.

Still, giving 11 seats to a party that had lost miserably in the 2019 polls as part of the Grand Alliance — the VIP had then contested



Deputy CM Sushil Modi with CM Nitish Kumar, at one of their four joint rallies on Sunday. Modi had underlined BJP's “respect” for EBCs while announcing seat deal with the VIP. PTI

Muzaffarpur, Khagaria and Madhubani — led by the RJD may appear ceding too much

ground. Sahani had himself lost to the LJP's Mehboob Ali Kaisar by a margin of 2.5 lakh

votes from Khagaria. Despite the RJD's vote bank behind him, Sahani had got only 27% of the votes — almost the same as the RJD when it fought on its own in 2014.

The 11 seats are also testament to Sahani's skills as a negotiator, even while jumping ship to ship. Before the 2014 polls, he had rallied the support of Nishads behind Narendra Modi. However, after the BJP's landslide victory, he had opened channels with Nitish, only to become the BJP's “star campaigner” just before the 2015 Assembly elections. When the BJP lost the polls, Sahani had drifted again and, in 2019, a year after floating his own party, joined hands with the RJD. With his demand for 30 seats in the Assembly elections rejected by the RJD, he has found his way back to the BJP.

“We are looking at the VIP as a significant partner. It has considerable influence not just among Mallahs but also among some other extremely backward classes. In the rural belts of North Bihar, Mallahs are seen as an assertive caste. Politically unrepresented communities

may associate themselves with a dynamic Mallah leader,” said a source close to the BJP's Bihar in-charge Devendra Fadnavis.

Sources say the BJP's indulgence of the VIP also has to do with sending a political message and expanding its social base in Bihar. The BJP has traditionally been identified as an upper caste party in the state. Under Amit Shah, the party has been trying to expand its social base by sharing political space with EBCs. It also cuts into Nitish's carefully constituted vote bank of multiple non-Yadav backward classes and his own image of the undisputed leader of disparate EBCs, which has kept him in power for three terms.

At the press conference announcing the seat sharing deal with the VIP, senior BJP leader Sushil Modi underlined this: “The BJP has always respected people from Extremely Backward Classes... It was the NDA government that came up with 20% reservation for EBCs in panchayat polls and today over 1,600 mukhias in Bihar are from these classes.”



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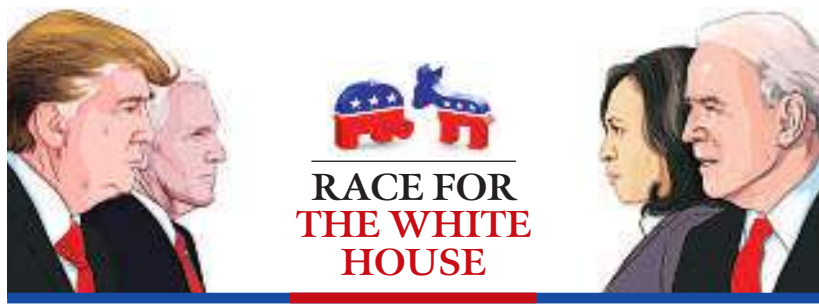
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EXPLAINED GLOBAL

# Trump vs Biden: how it affects the world

How do the two candidates for the White House see the world and the issues of shared global concern — and how do other countries of the world see the US under Trump? How should the rivalry between China and America in various spheres be understood? This is Part 2 of a three-part weekly series on the US Presidential election.



EXPERT EXPLAINS

AMITABH MATTOO

From The Indian Express panel of specialists, exclusive insight

PART 2

**In the last four years, President Donald Trump has reviewed and, many argue, irretrievably weakened the international commitments of the United States. Under the circumstances, should the American elections matter to the world, when the US itself seems to be turning inwards?**

In many ways, the US elections matter much more than perhaps at any time since World War II. With just over two weeks to go, and with the most rancorous campaign in contemporary history, the elections are gripping global attention. We could, as a consequence of the result, see a gradual renewal of the American global imprimatur, or a speedy erasure of Washington's international footprint.

The "promise" of four more years of Trump is one of the US retreating into an isolationist shell, and becoming even less engaged internationally. The US could also become more protectionist, opportunistic, and unilateralist in the advancement of its narrow self-interest. Not surprisingly, Trump's leadership invites very low levels of global support. The irony is that this would happen at a time when the world needs a more globally engaged America.

Isolationism is not a new tendency in itself — the narrative of isolationism is part of any 101 course on American history; from the farewell address by George Washington, in September 1976 ("It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world.") to the 7th President Andrew Jackson (let the world be, but respond with overwhelming force to a threat), there is a mixed legacy of quarantining the US from the outside world.

It was this strand of thinking that prevented Woodrow Wilson's internationalism from sustaining itself, and America's failure to join the League of Nations after World War I. Trump has, of course, customised isolationism in his own image: a combination of victimhood, exceptionalism and entitlement; blaming the outside world for all the ills of the unique United States; and his slogan of

America First — and often alone — aimed at providing a quick unilateral fix to deep and complex problems that need considered global solutions.

The last four years have, for instance, witnessed an American unilateral withdrawal from the Paris climate accord, Iran nuclear deal, Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, UNESCO, UN Human Rights Council, World Health Organization (WHO), Open Skies Treaty, and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and a weakening of many multilateral institutions and relationships with long-standing allies, including those in Europe.

All of this has happened at a time when the world needs much greater global robustness from a calmer United States, and indeed many more multilateral arrangements (which are backed by Washington's long-term commitment) on a range of critical issues from climate change to arms control, to trade negotiations to the fight against Covid-19. With Joe Biden, were he to be elected, we could see a slow return of the US to its more engaged, multilateral posture, but it would take a full term (and more) before we could expect a return to *status quo ante*, after the inscrutable ferocity of the Trump years.

**Are we on the cusp of a new cold war, and could we witness a strategic decoupling between China and the US? How would a Trump or a Biden administration respond to a more belligerent Beijing?**

The American financier and advisor to several Presidents, Bernard Baruch, coined the term "cold war" to describe the tensions between the United States and Soviet Union after World War II. But the present-day international system hardly mimics that period; even the most parsimonious analysis would reveal the complex levels of interdependence that continue to exist between China and the US. But while the Soviet Union and the US never used force against each other directly, on present evidence there is a real possibility of a clash between Beijing and Washington in the Indo-Pacific — today, the centre of economic gravity as well as the cradle of primordial instincts.

What is clear is that American domination is being seriously challenged, for the first time since 1990, by another state, China. This is firmly and finally the end of the "End of History" thesis. And China's assertion is one issue on which Biden and Trump are closer in their views than is often recognised. While Trump has publicly berated Beijing, Biden's aide Anthony Blinken has explicitly stated: "China poses a growing challenge. It's ar-

## SURVEY: WORLD LOOKS UP TO U.S., NOT TRUMP

TRUMP'S MAJOR FOREIGN POLICIES ARE UNPOPULAR GLOBALLY

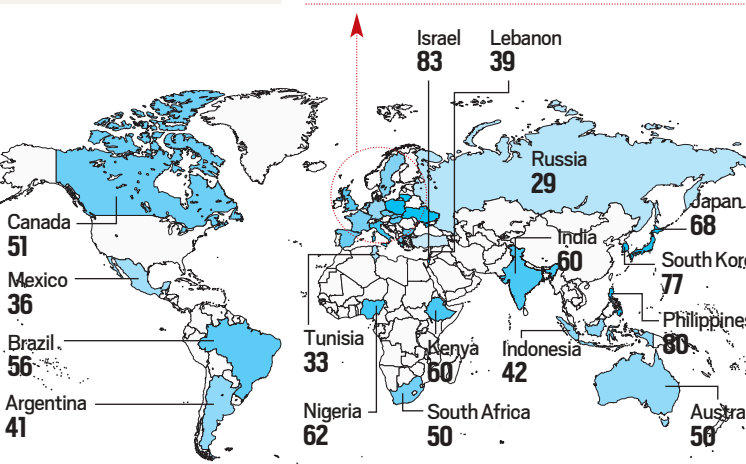
% who approve/disapprove of each policy of US President Trump ■ Approve ■ Disapprove

US increasing tariffs or fees on imported goods from others countries	18%	68%
US withdrawal from international climate change agreements	14%	66%
Building a wall on the border between the US and Mexico	24%	60%
Allowing fewer immigrants into the US	34%	55%
US withdrawal from the Iran nuclear weapons agreement	29%	52%
US negotiations with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un about the country's nuclear weapons programme	41%	36%

Note: % are medians based on 33 countries. Don't know responses not shown.

US IMAGE IS GENERALLY FAVOURABLE GLOBALLY, WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS

% who have a favourable opinion of the US



## TRUMP GETS MOST NEGATIVE MARKS AMONG 5 WORLD LEADERS

% who have confidence/no confidence in each leader to do the right thing regarding world affairs

	Confidence	No Confidence	Don't know
Angela Merkel	46	29	12
Emmanuel Macron	41	36	19
Vladimir Putin	33	57	8
Donald Trump	29	64	7
Xi Jinping	28	43	23

Note: Lithuania is excluded from the confidence-in-Donald-Trump calculation due to a processing error. Percentages for confidence in Donald Trump are medians based on 32 countries. All other percentages are medians based on 33 countries.

Source for all data: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey

"Trump Ratings Remain Low Around Globe, while views of US stay mostly favorable" (Pew Research Center)

guably the biggest challenge we face from another nation state."

In sum, whether it is a Republican administration or a Democratic one, we are looking at a period of profound uncertainty, economically and strategically. What, however, is revealed by most economic models is that given the huge costs of economic decoupling, it is unlikely that most supply chains (built on extremely competitive Chinese manufacturing capacities) will be able to transition out of the mainland even within the life of the next Presidency, in any significant manner.

The danger is that this rivalry, this "new cold war", is built on two "myths": a growing perception that American domination is in deep decline, and that China has arrived as a challenger. It is precisely these kinds of misperceptions that have historically led to major wars in the international system.

Domination or hegemony here refers to the overwhelming capacity that was enjoyed by the US through the first decade after the end of the Cold War to shape the international system through a combination of sanctions, incentives, and even soft power.

While the US may not enjoy the same degree of unfettered influence, its decline seems to be vastly exaggerated — and often so by China's decision makers. Remember that on almost every measurable index, the US, as an economic or military or technological power, is ahead of China, and is likely to remain the leader until about 2050.

On the contrary, the weaknesses of China are often underestimated. In the erratic behaviour displayed by Xi Jinping, China's most authoritarian leader since Mao, we find the abandonment of Deng's prudent 24-character strategy, "Conceal your strengths, bide your time".

On present evidence, Xi believes that China's time has come, and that it needs to assert itself across the continent and in the oceans. China no longer seems sensitive to its reputation being scarred as a Wolf Warrior. The Chinese leadership is ostensibly not recognising deep internal weaknesses as impediments to China's assertiveness externally. An erratic and impetuous Xi, faced with an impulsive and equally erratic Trump, could potentially go to war based on misperceptions. In contrast, Biden may give negotiations and diplomatic engagement a good chance to arrive at a peaceful outcome even on issues that seem zero sum.

**How do Biden and Trump differ on pressing global issues like trade and climate change?**

**ON TRADE.** Biden will bring greater consistency of policy and more cooperation with other countries. But the persistence of structural tensions in international trade will prevent an early reversal of Trumpian unilateralism. First, the relative free-trader Biden is perhaps more deeply committed than Trump to reversing the decline of American industry and the working class — recall the Biden-Obama bailout of the American car industry during the great recession. Biden too has a "Made in America" plan, although he may rely more on subsidies and preferential procurement than on tariffs.

Second, Democrats share Republican concerns about the Chinese threat and the perception of China's recourse to unfair trade practices — ranging from stealthy protection, state support and industrial espionage — which may make the reversal of Trump's tariffs on China difficult unless China undertakes significant reforms.

Third, even with allies like the EU, long festering disputes, such as the one on subsidies to Airbus and Boeing, will not be easily resolved without greater mutual acceptance, if not greater mutual concessions.

Finally, the weakening of the WTO by the Trump administration, especially by undermining its dispute settlement mechanism, too has its roots in durable US aversion to multilateral disciplines and the perceived overreach by the WTO Appellate body.

In all these areas, Biden may find it hard to rapidly roll back Trump's measures and abandon his tactics. But he is likely to favour a gentler, negotiated route to resolution that is more conducive to building alliances and preserving institutions.

**ON CLIMATE CHANGE.** a collective action problem that needs immediate attention, the differences between Biden and Trump seem stark. Biden wants to return to the Paris climate accord and move toward net zero carbon emissions by 2050, with the interim objective of decarbonising the power sector by 2035. Biden also wants to invest \$2 trillion in green areas, including infrastructure, transportation and auto industries, housing and construction practices, nature conservation efforts, and work in environmental justice, creating one million jobs in the process.

Trump has emphasised clean water and air as his goals and earmarked \$38 billion towards "clean water infrastructure". The President has remained a sceptic on climate change, and his administration wants greater US production of oil and natural gas.

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE: POOJA ARORA

## THE EXPERT

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**NEXT MONDAY, OCT 26:** Part 3: Why the election matters to India



Read Part 1 of this series online <https://bit.ly/31e12ir>

# Why Delhi air pollution rises in Oct

MALLICA JOSHI  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

EVERY YEAR in October, Delhi's air quality starts to dip and a war of words breaks out among various governments.

On October 15, when the Air Quality Index (AQI) touched very poor for the first time this season, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said the contribution of stubble burning was only 4% that day. In response, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asked if stubble burning was not the cause, then why air pollution had risen in the city over the past few days. Since then, the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's pollution has risen to 22% on Saturday and 17% on Sunday.

Air pollution in Delhi and the entire Indo-Gangetic Plains is a complex phenomenon, dependent on a variety of factors. The first is the input of pollutants, followed by weather and local conditions.

## What are these weather factors?

October usually marks the withdrawal of the monsoon in northwest India. During this season, the prevalent direction of winds is easterly. These winds, which travel from over the Bay of Bengal, carry moisture and bring rain to this part of the country. Once the monsoon withdraws, the predominant direction of winds changes to north-westerly. During summers, too, the direction of wind is north-westerly and storms carrying dust arrive from Rajasthan and sometimes Pakistan and Afghanistan. According to a peer-reviewed study conducted by scientists at the National Physical Laboratory, 72% of Delhi's wind in winters comes from the northwest, and the remaining 28% comes from the Indo-Gangetic plains. In 2017, a



Delhi October haze is the result of many factors, some of them natural. Tashi Tobgyal

storm that originated in Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait led to a drastic dip in Delhi's air quality in a couple of days.

Along with the change in wind direction, the dip in temperature is also behind the increased pollution levels. When the temperature dips, it lowers the inversion height, which is the layer beyond which pollutants cannot disperse into the upper layer of the atmosphere. The concentration of pollutants in the air increases when this happens.

Also, high-speed winds are very effective at dispersing pollutants, but winters bring a dip in wind speed overall as compared to summers. The combination of these meteorological factors makes the region prone to pollution. When factors such as farm fires and dust storms are added to the already high base pollution levels in the city, air quality dips further.

## What is the role of farm fires?

Farm fires have long been an easy way to

get rid of paddy stubble quickly and at low cost. The practice has become more widespread since 2009, when the governments of Punjab and Haryana passed laws delaying the sowing of paddy. The objective of this law was to conserve groundwater by ensuring the new sowing cycle would coincide with the monsoon. This, however, left very little time for farmers to harvest paddy, clear the fields and sow wheat for the next cycle. The easiest way to get rid of it is to set it on fire.

Over the past 11 years, the practice has thrived despite efforts by the Centre and state governments, primarily because alternatives such as the happy seeder machine, which helps mulch the residue, are seen as unavailable, and money- and time-consuming by smaller farmers.

A 2015 source-apportionment study on Delhi's air pollution conducted by IIT-Kanpur found that 17-26% of all particulate matter in Delhi in winters is because of biomass

burning. Over the years, the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) has developed a system to calculate the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's pollution.

Last year, during peak stubble burning incidents, its contribution rose to 40%. Over the last one week, it slowly rose from around 2% on Tuesday to 22% on Saturday, when the AQI was poor. The day air quality was in the very poor category, stubble burning's share was at 4%, indicating that a variety of other factors, too, are responsible for the dip in quality.

The stubble burning season is around 45 days long. Air in Delhi, however, remains polluted till February.

## What are the other big sources of poor air quality in winter?

Dust and vehicular pollution are the two biggest causes. Cold, dry weather means dust is prevalent in the entire region, which has very few rainy days between October and June. The IIT Kanpur study found that dust pollution contributes to 56% of the PM10 and PM2.5 load at 59 tonnes/day, and that vehicular pollution contributes to 20% of PM2.5 in winters.

Over the years, governments have taken several steps to address pollution from vehicles, such as the introduction of BS VI fuel, a push for electric vehicles, Odd-Even as an emergency measure, and construction of the Eastern and Western Peripheral Expressways. During the lockdown, this year, Delhi saw among the cleanest air since compilation of comprehensive records began in 2015. It also saw temperatures above average in September, which meant air remained cleaner for longer.

With vehicles back on the road, temperature dipping and stubble burning starting, Delhi's air is set to get worse.

14

IDEA EXCHANGE

NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

NANDAN NILEKANI, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION AUTHORITY OF INDIA (UIDAI)

The challenge is we don't have adult vaccination system... Must build it from scratch for Covid-19

Nilekani explains his three-phase Covid -19 vaccination process, says he doesn't see an advertising global giant like Facebook, Google coming out of India, asserts Indian IT is more than "back-end", and believes technology will become part of global geo-politics. The session was moderated by Executive Editor (National Affairs) P Vaidyanathan Iyer

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** What are some of the gaps in our system that need to be plugged before the Covid-19 vaccine arrives?

I can speak for what I am proposing. I think the vaccination is going to be a huge mission. We developed the Aadhaar enrolment system to do one-and-a-half million enrolments a day, and it took five-and-a-half years for India to reach a billion people with an Aadhaar number. Here, we have to vaccinate the entire population in two years, which means we have to reach 1.3 billion people in two years, and assuming that it is a dual dose vaccine, that's 2.6 billion vaccinations, or 1.3 billion vaccinations a year. That's more than a 100 million vaccinations a month and more than three million a day. So, this is a scale challenge that is unprecedented in our history, and therefore, thinking through the infrastructure and architecture of doing that is very important. Which is why I have been recommending that we should design a system that can do 10 million vaccinations a day across the length and breadth of the country, but all unified by a common digital backbone, so that every person gets the same experience and the same information is recorded. It is basically bringing population scale approach that we used in Aadhaar to a new issue (vaccination) which is, in fact, much more complicated.

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** Given the state of our public health infrastructure, which the government has tried to ramp up in the past six months because of the pandemic, will there be a need for private sector participation on a large scale for the vaccination model that you are proposing?

First of all, India has a terrific record in vaccination for children and pregnant mothers. We have a child immunisation programme, we have done a great job with polio, but we have really no experience of adult vaccination and that is the bulk of what we have to do with the Covid-19 vaccination. In America, for example, flu vaccines are very common. About half the population of the US takes a flu vaccine every year. They have 330 million people and they do about 165 million flu vaccinations, and this year they are planning 200 million flu vaccinations. They do it through offices, pharmacies or doctors. So, they already have infrastructure for adult vaccination at scale. So for them to roll out a Covid-19 vaccine on top of that is not so difficult.

Our challenge is we don't have an adult vaccination system at all. We will have to build it from scratch. If you load the Covid-19 vaccination on our existing infrastructure, not only will it be a huge overload, it will end up at a point where a baby is not getting immunised because people responsible for it have been diverted for Covid-19. My recommendation is that we build a completely new vaccination channel with 200,000 people who do vaccinations. Some of the current people can also participate but we will have to invest in creating a new infrastructure for vaccination at scale.

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** So can you summarise your proposal for us?

My suggestion is that we create a platform to do eight-10 million vaccinations a day by authorised vaccinators. We will have a training system to train 200,000 people who will know how to vaccinate, explain to people the side-effects, they will know how to make people comfortable with the vaccination. Only certified vaccinators can participate in this. There will be a network of public and private vaccination centres. So it could be government-sponsored, or it could be a hospital or a corporate or a pharmacy, it doesn't matter, but all of them use the same application technology. There will be an app on a PC or a smartphone, and one can take an appointment for vaccination. I will give my name, do an Aadhaar authentication... The name of the person, the name of the vaccinator, which vaccine was used, what time, date, location, will be recorded. The information could then be sent in real time to a cloud location, and it will send back a digital certificate to me, saying that I have been vaccinated. Because in the Covid-19 vaccine system, it is not only important that I am vaccinated, it is also important that you know that I am vaccinated. The digital certificate can then be shown at a job interview, airport, railway station, bus stand etc. If it is a two-dose vaccine, then you generate a provisional

My recommendation is we build a completely new infrastructure with 200,000 people for vaccination at scale. Some of the current people can participate

the project get remuneration? Obviously, a large part of the population will have to be vaccinated by the government. It will be a free vaccine or covered by something like an Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme. Today, there are 100 million families, about 500 million people covered by Ayushman Bharat, so technically all those people could be eligible for free vaccine from the government. But the private companies should pay for their own employees. I don't see why the government should fund that... We will have to divide things. Government funding for the vulnerable and those already covered by government insurance programmes, private sector funding for their employees and associates, and perhaps philanthropic funding for the rest from



WHY  
NANDAN NILEKANI

As India, and the world, await a credible Covid-19 vaccine, Nilekani has proposed a massive digital platform on the lines of the Aadhaar model to ensure the administration of the vaccine to 1.3 bn Indians. The Infosys co-founder and architect of Aadhaar believes the cost of setting up the infrastructure for the system will be well worth it

digital certificate the first time, and after three weeks or whatever is the time duration, you send a reminder by email or message for that person to come and get the vaccine, and then give them a final certificate.

If the immunisation is going to be limited, because we don't know how long is the immunity of these vaccines, six months or two years, then you also need to send a reminder to that person at the end of that period to come back and get their vaccine refreshed. All this requires sophisticated technology because things have to be done for over a billion people.

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** The cost of vaccination for the poor will have to be borne by the government. In such a scenario, how will private players linked with

the project get remuneration?

Obviously, a large part of the population will have to be vaccinated by the government. It will be a free vaccine or covered by something like an Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme. Today, there are 100 million families, about 500 million people covered by Ayushman Bharat, so technically all those people could be eligible for free vaccine from the government. But the private companies should pay for their own employees. I don't see why the government should fund that... We will have to divide things. Government funding for the vulnerable and those already covered by government insurance programmes, private sector funding for their employees and associates, and perhaps philanthropic funding for the rest from

CSR etc. We have to think through the three models.

There are going to be three phases for the vaccine. The first phase is that there will be a vaccine shortage. I assume it would be in the first half of 2021. At this point the government will rightfully say that we will allocate the vaccine based on priority for people who are vulnerable, old, health workers, the police... In the second phase you will have vaccine adequacy, which means you can start bringing in the private sector to start vaccinating. And, in the third phase, by 2022 I believe, we will have a vaccine surplus... And whatever we design, should be designed for this kind of situation. Also, what I am proposing is a vaccine-agnostic system, that is I am not anticipating which vaccine will work.

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** Has the government been in touch with you about taking the proposal forward? Also, if like Aadhaar you are given the opportunity to take charge of this project, will you do that?

I did make a presentation to a set of senior officials and they appreciated the ideas, and hopefully they will implement whatever they feel is fit.

I am happy, I am in Bengaluru, I am not looking for a job actually... There are enough people who actually worked with me on Aadhaar in government, who are now at Secretary level, and perhaps they could be roped in for this.

**P RABHA RAGHAVAN:** For the infrastructure that you are proposing, what sort of investment would be required?

It is not going to cost that much. Look, every month that we don't come back to normal, the economy is taking a hit of hundreds of thousands of crores. The biggest cost actually will be the vaccines themselves. Vaccines cost \$3-5 in the be-

ginning, and it is a dual dose vaccine, that's \$10 per person. That means \$13 billion for vaccinating the whole population which will be funded by the government, the private sector and philanthropy... It is not going to be that expensive. Given that we are looking for life to return to normal, the cost will be well worth it. But it is not a cost issue at all. The technology will cost a few hundred crores at best.

**P VAIDYANTHAN IYER:** Do you see a shift in the global delivery models post the pandemic?

There are two things that are going to happen. One is that most companies are localising, which means they are hiring local people. You would have noticed recently Infosys announced that they are going to hire 12,000 more people in the US in the next two-three years, on top of the 13,000 they have hired already. So local hiring is going to be a big thing. Secondly, there is going to be a lot of offshoring happening at the same time. So there will be a combination of more offshoring and local hiring.

**NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN:** The Health ID that is going to be rolled out next year will be modelled on the Aadhaar card, and there are some concerns about privacy. Does it duplicate some of what Aadhaar is, and is it necessary?

I think the proposal is to have a Unique Digital Health ID, and that is different from Aadhaar. It is for electronic health records. The whole idea will be to have electronic health records which the person can pull

up whenever they want... It is a very powerful thing and obviously all the necessary safeguards on privacy, security, encryption need to be followed.

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** The Indian IT Industry is at least four decades old, but we are yet to see a Facebook or a Google come out of India. In fact, some of the big initiatives such as Aadhaar have been backed by the government. Is it because the Indian private sector is risk-averse?

If you look at Facebook and Google, the bulk of their revenue is advertising. The US is a few hundred billion dollar advertising market. India is just a \$10 billion advertising market, of which digital advertising is about \$3 billion. You can't build a global company on those kind of revenues. We should look at the context. If you want to build a global company, you need a domestic market on which you build scale and then go out. Chinese companies such as Alibaba and Tencent have

We must divide things. Government funding for the vulnerable, private sector funding for their staff, and philanthropic funding for the rest

that Google has too much power, Facebook has too much power. What is your opinion on this?

My view is that we have to use technology to handle technology. And in some sense what we have done in India is exactly that by creating a neutral ID... like Aadhaar or a UPI platform, which allows multiple big tech companies and banks to participate. We have to democratise access to identity and payments. Similarly, with the account aggregator approach which empowers people with their own data whether it's to get loans for lending or for healthcare records, we have democratised data for everybody.

**PRANAV MUKUL:** A lot of players in the industry are trying to look at population scale problems in the education and health sectors. But without a data protection framework, is there uncertainty over these projects?

Laws evolve as things happen. If you look at the Aadhaar story, today we have a privacy framework because of Aadhaar. We began Aadhaar in 2009. In 2010, I wrote to then prime minister Manmohan Singh saying we need a data protection and privacy law. And then multiple versions of that law happened and then there was the Supreme Court judgment which said that Indians have a fundamental right to privacy but it could be constrained in certain situations. Then the Aadhaar law was tested against that. So that's how societies evolve.

I think we are ready for a data protection law. And I do know that there is a law in Parliament. I don't know its status. I think we need something like that as we depend more on technology and data.

**SANDEEP SINGH:** On the vaccination model that you have proposed, how do you see the preparedness of states on that?

Well I am only suggesting the digital infrastructure. The states can use that, and so can other market players. So the vaccination could be done by state governments, or it can be done by private hospitals, corporates, philanthropists or anybody else. The key thing is whoever does it, it must be done in the same way. It's making sure that there is an identical approach.

**P VAIDYANATHAN IYER:** As a digital player, and as someone who believes in democratisation of platforms for larger public good, what do you make of such platforms being weaponised for spreading hate? What can governments and tech companies do about it?

The roots of it go back to the fact that the Internet companies did not have any consequential liability for what is on their platform because of Section 230 of the Communication Decency Act of 1996 in the US which essentially said that they would not be liable. In the US, they are now looking at whether they need to do something about it and bring in some kind of liabilities and perhaps we have to think about a framework where people are responsible for the content on their platforms... There is a delicate issue between free speech, censorship and making sure that we don't have bad stuff on the Net. I think we need to have some rules. Now whether the rules that are being proposed are the right ones, I don't know.

**RAVISH TIWARI:** India's ban on several Chinese apps has fragmented the Internet. How do you see it?

With the Internet becoming such an integral part of every society, the old model where there was one Internet for the whole world is now under threat. And I think you will see more of this where countries choose to have their own rules... We are going to see the 'splinternet', where every country has a different system. This is inevitable. The Chinese, for example, did not allow US companies to participate in their economy, and now the Americans are retaliating... Technology has become so critical to nations that it is going to become part of global geo-politics.

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

## TOP OF THE WORLD



Former British PM Tony Blair

## BRITAIN

## Blair accused of breaking quarantine rules after US trip

FORMER BRITISH Prime Minister Tony Blair has been accused of breaking UK Covid-19 restrictions after failing to self-isolate for two weeks following a two-day trip to the US, the *Sunday Telegraph* reported. The newspaper said it had obtained pictures showing Blair, who served as PM from 1997 to 2007, leaving a London restaurant 10 days after his return from the US last month. The paper said it understood that Blair appealed to Whitehall officials for special dispensation from the Covid-19 rules, but he was not issued with the formal exemption letter he would have needed to avoid a 14-day isolation period. **REUTERS**

## SOUTH AMERICA

## Bolivians vote in hope of political stability

BOLIVIANS BEGAN voting on Sunday in a presidential election many hope can restore stability to a nation that was plunged into turmoil after a fraught and eventually voided vote last year, leaving the country in the hands of an interim president. Frontrunners in the election are Luis Arce, who champions a return to the socialist and pro-indigenous policies of former President Evo Morales, and Carlos Mesa, a centrist who served as president in the early 2000s. Polls show Arce ahead, but not enough to avoid a runoff. **REUTERS**

## BELARUS

## Thousands march in Minsk

TENS OF thousands of people marched through the streets of the Belarusian capital Minsk on Sunday to demand the resignation of veteran President Alexander Lukashenko, despite a threat by officials to use firearms against protesters. Belarus, a former Soviet republic closely allied with Russia, has been rocked by strikes and weekly street protests since authorities announced that Lukashenko, who has ruled in authoritarian fashion since 1994, had secured re-election on August 9 with 80% of votes. **REUTERS**

## Trump sets out on campaign blitz in bid to close polling gap with Biden

President set to hold rallies every day until Thursday's debate; both candidates try to woo early voters

JARRETT RENSHAW  
OCTOBER 18

US PRESIDENTIAL rivals Donald Trump and Joe Biden will court early voters on Sunday as their campaigns step up events ahead of their final debate this week.

Trump on Sunday will head to Nevada, a battleground state where more than 100,000 voters have already cast ballots, according to state data. Trump will campaign every day leading up to Thursday's debate in Florida, including stops in Arizona and North Carolina, campaign spokesman Tim Murtaugh said.

Biden on Sunday heads to North Carolina, where 1.2 million voters have cast their ballots, according to state data. Biden's running mate, Kamala Harris, will return to the campaign trail on Monday with a visit to Florida to mark that state's first day of early, in-person voting.

Thus far, 25.83 million people have already cast a ballot in



the November 3 presidential election, according to the US Elections Project, shattering records. Much early voting is due to safety concerns about the pandemic that has killed more than 218,000 Americans and infected 8.1 million others.

Democrats hold a significant advantage in early voting, largely driven by mail balloting. Of the 10.6 million mail ballots cast, 5.8 million have been cast by Democrats, according to the US Election Project, run by the University of Florida.

Trump lags in national and battleground opinion polls and



Trump at a rally in Norton Shores, Michigan, Saturday, AP

the latest figures from his campaign show he also trails in fundraising as the race intensifies.

In a memo sent to donors over the weekend, Biden campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon said the national figures are misleading because must-win states are close.

"We cannot become complacent because the very searing truth is that Donald Trump can

still win this race, and every indication we have shows that this thing is going to come down to the wire," she wrote.

On Saturday, Trump campaigned in Michigan and Wisconsin, two battleground states he narrowly won in the 2016 election.

At Saturday's rally in Muskegon, Mich., Trump targeted Michigan Governor

## EARLY BALLOTS CAST

25.83 mn

■ Thus far, 25.83 million people have already cast a ballot in the presidential election, according to the US Elections Project, shattering records.

Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, several times. He blasted state rules to stop the spread of coronavirus, calling her "dishonest," and made light of a right-wing plot uncovered by the FBI to kidnap her.

"Hopefully you'll be sending her packing pretty soon," Trump said, prompting the crowd to yell back "Lock her up!" several times.

Whitmer responded on Twitter to the chants. "This is exactly the rhetoric that has put me, my family, and other government officials' lives in danger while we try to save the lives of our fellow Americans," she wrote. **REUTERS**



A neighbour comforts a home owner after her house was destroyed by shelling in Stepanakert, in the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh, Saturday, AP

## Armenia &amp; Azerbaijan agree new truce, but it falls apart hours later

NVAR DHOVHANNISYAN & NAILIA BAGIROVA  
YEREVAN, BAKU, OCTOBER 18

ARMENIA AND Azerbaijan accused each other on Sunday of violating a new humanitarian ceasefire in fighting over the mountain enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, hours after it was agreed.

The truce agreed on Saturday came into force at midnight (2000 GMT) after a week-old Russian-brokered ceasefire failed to halt the worst fighting in the South Caucasus since the 1990s. At least 750 people have been killed since fighting began on Sept. 27.

At 1010 GMT, the Azeri defence ministry said the Aghdam region, adjacent Nagorno-Karabakh, was under Armenian shelling. It said overnight Armenian military units opened fire from large-caliber weapons along the border, which Armenia denied.

Armenia said the Azeri army had fired twice during the night and used artillery and accused Baku of rejecting its request to

withdraw the wounded soldiers from the battlefield.

"This step... was categorically rejected by Baku," the foreign ministry said. Baku called the statement misinformation.

The Azeri defence ministry said: "The enemy fired at the vicinity of the Jabrail city, as well as the villages of this region... using mortars and artillery". It added that the Azeri army "took adequate retaliatory measures".

The ministry said that Azeri military units downed Armenian Su-25 warplane, "which was attempting to inflict airstrikes on the positions of the Azeri army in Jabrail region." Yerevan swiftly denied that.

Officials in Nagorno-Karabakh said Azeri forces had launched an attack on the enclave's military positions and there were casualties on both sides.

Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountain territory that is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but populated and governed by ethnic Armenians. **REUTERS**



Israeli NSA Meir Ben-Shabbat and US Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin arrive in Muharraq, Bahrain, Reuters

## Israel sends treaty delegation to Bahrain with Trump aides

DAN WILLIAMS  
MANAMA, OCTOBER 18

AN ISRAELI delegation accompanied by the US treasury secretary arrived in Bahrain on Sunday to formalise nascent relations and broaden Gulf cooperation that Washington has promoted as an anti-Iran bulwark and potential economic bonanza.

Bahrain followed the United Arab Emirates in agreeing last month to normalise ties with Israel, stunning Palestinians who had demanded statehood before any such regional rapprochement.

The breakthrough, overseen by US President Donald Trump, is a foreign policy flourish ahead of his re-election bid next month. For the US allies, it is a chance to close ranks on Iran more overtly.

The Israeli delegation, which flew on an El Al Israel Airlines charter flight from Tel Aviv, was accompanied by US Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in public remarks to his cabinet, said the delegations would work on co-operation agreements and "establishing the peace treaty".

Israel and Bahrain signed a "Declaration of Peace, Cooperation, and Constructive Diplomatic and Friendly Relations" at a White House ceremony last month, but that was not a formal treaty. **REUTERS**



## FRANCE PAYS TRIBUTE TO KILLED TEACHER

People gather at the Place de la Republique in Paris on Sunday to pay tribute to Samuel Paty, the teacher who was beheaded on the streets of the Paris suburb of Conflans-Sainte-Honorine. From Paris to Lyon, Marseille and Lille large crowds gathered quietly, pausing regularly to applaud, hold minutes of silence or sing the national anthem. Paty, 47, was killed outside his school on Friday by an 18-year-old attacker. Prosecutors said the attacker wanted to punish the teacher for showing his pupils cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad in a civics class on freedom of expression earlier this month. **Reuters**

## Thousands defy protest ban again in Bangkok, PM seeks talks

REUTERS  
BANGKOK, OCTOBER 18

THOUSANDS OF anti-government protesters took over key intersections in Bangkok on Sunday, defying a ban on protests for the fourth day with chants of "down with dictatorship" and "reform the monarchy".

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a former junta leader the protesters seek to oust, is concerned about the spreading protests and the government wants to talk, his spokesman said.

Demonstrations have persisted despite the arrest of dozens of protesters and their leaders, the use of water cannon and shut-downs on much of Bangkok's



At a protest in Bangkok on Sunday, AP

metro rail system in a bid to quell over three months of street action.

"Free our friends", the protesters called out as they stood in a rain, a mass of colourful ponchos and umbrellas. Some held up pictures of detained protest leaders.

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights said at least 80 protesters had been arrested since Oct. 13 with 27 still being held. Police have not

given an overall number.

"The government wants to talk to find a way out together," Prayuth's spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri told Reuters. He did not specify with whom the government hoped to speak.

After the arrest of many of the protest leaders, previously unknown figures have emerged to lead crowds.

## Egypt releases comedian after over 2 yrs in jail

Cairo: Egyptian authorities released a comedian, who was working for a popular satirical television programme, after more than two years in prison without trial, a rights lawyer said Sunday.

Attorney Mokhtar Mounir said Shady Abu Zaid was released from a Cairo police station late Saturday, but as part of his terms of release must report to a police station twice a week.

His sister, Roula Abu Zaid, confirmed the news in a Facebook post and shared a photo of his at home.

Police arrested Abu Zaid in May 2018. He was charged with joining an outlawed group, a reference to the banned Muslim Brotherhood, and disseminating false news. **AP**

NASSER KARIMI  
TEHRAN, OCTOBER 18

A DECADE-LONG UN arms embargo on Iran that barred it from purchasing foreign weapons like tanks and fighter jets expired Sunday as planned under its nuclear deal with world powers, despite objections from the United States.

While insisting it planned no "buying spree," Iran in theory can purchase weapons to upgrade military armament dating back to before its 1979 Islamic Revolution and sell its own locally produced gear abroad.

The Islamic Republic heralded the end of the arms embargo as "a momentous day for the international community... in defiance of the US regime's effort." The Trump administration, meanwhile, has insisted it has re-invoked all UN sanctions on Iran via a clause in the nuclear deal it withdrew from in 2018, a claim ignored by the rest of the world.

The UN banned Iran from buying major foreign weapons in 2010 amid tensions over its nuclear programme.

The US Defence Intelligence Agency predicted in 2019 that if the embargo ended, Iran likely would try to purchase Russian Su-30 fighter jets, Yak-130 trainer aircraft and T-90 tanks. Tehran also may try to buy Russia's S-400 anti-aircraft mis-

**EXPLAINED** Big arms deals unlikely

ALTHOUGH THE ban on buying weapons from abroad has been lifted, Iran said it won't go on a "buying spree" and it is unlikely that the country will immediately agree big arms deals with foreign powers. Crippling US sanctions had already wreaked havoc on Iran's economy before the Covid-19 pandemic made things even worse. This will make it difficult for Iran to buy weapons in massive, high-profile deals. It will also find it difficult to sell its own domestically produced weapons to bolster its economy, as many countries will avoid trading with Iran for fear of US financial retaliation.

site system and its Bastian coastal defence missile system, the DIA said. China also could sell Iran arms.

Iran long has been out-matched by US-backed Gulf nations like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which have purchased billions of dollars of advanced American weaponry. In response, Tehran turned toward developing locally made ballistic missiles. **AP**

## THE UTAH SCHOOL SAW AT LEAST 90 CASES IN 2 WEEKS SINCE OPENING, ONE OF THE WORST OUTBREAKS IN A SCHOOL IN THE US

## ‘Out of Control’: When schools opened in a US coronavirus hotspot

KATE TAYLOR  
OCTOBER 18

ON A Friday in mid-September, Sunny Washington got a text from another mother at her daughter's high school in an affluent suburb of Salt Lake City, Utah. Three weeks into the school year, the number of coronavirus cases at the school was rising, and the district was considering shifting to online instruction. The text urged parents to beg the school board to keep classrooms open.

Washington ignored the text — she thought the school should be taking advice from public health experts, not parents. But

other parents flooded the board with messages, and the school stayed open. Within a week, the number of cases had nearly quadrupled. A teacher was hospitalised and put on a ventilator. When the board finally closed the school temporarily, 77 students and staff members, including Washington's daughter, had tested positive.

"We're talking 30 days in, and it went completely out of control," Washington said.

Her daughter's school, Corner Canyon High School, experienced one of the biggest coronavirus outbreaks at a school in Utah, and possibly the country, with 90 cases within two weeks — most

likely an undercount, since not all students and staff who were exposed or symptomatic got tested.

And Corner Canyon was not the only school in the district to have an outbreak. By Sept 28, Canyons School District, with roughly 33,000 students, had temporarily closed three high schools and a middle school, telling about 8,000 students to learn from home.

The story of Canyons is an object lesson in what can happen when schools reopen in communities that are failing to contain the virus. In the two weeks before the district reopened, Salt Lake County had roughly 187 new cases per 100,000 people, a



Corner Canyon High School in Utah. NYT

level at which some experts have advised against high schools opening in person; that level is

two and a half times higher than the standard Washington State uses to recommend distance

learning for all students.

Since then, with schools and colleges open, things have only worsened, as both the county and Utah have become hot spots. In the two weeks that ended Thursday, Salt Lake County had nearly 617 cases per 100,000 people. Over the last week, Utah had the sixth-highest rate of new cases per 100,000 people of any state and set a new state record for the number of people hospitalised with the virus.

On Tuesday, Governor Gary Herbert ordered stricter restrictions on social gatherings and mask wearing in Salt Lake County and other hard-hit counties, calling Utah's outbreak "one

of the worst" in the country and "unacceptable".

Yet despite the conditions at the start of the school year, Canyons School District took only modest steps to prevent the virus from spreading in its buildings.

The state had mandated that students and staff members wear masks in school, allowing unmasked sports practice and competition. But with nearly 80 per cent of Canyons students opting for in-person school, the district seems to have made few adjustments to accommodate social distancing in classrooms. The district also did not make coronavirus testing part of its reopening plan, leaving those decisions to families.

Canyons is also an example of how the nation's 13,000 school districts are struggling to find workable policies in the absence of clear standards from the federal government and many state governments. The result has been a patchwork of policies varying from state to state and often district to district.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which have faced pressure from the White House to avoid discouraging school districts from reopening, have declined to provide specific guidance on what districts should do when infections rise in a school or the surrounding community. **NYT**

# 16 ECONOMY

## POLICY WATCH JOB CREATION

### Stakeholders still divided, govt starts process to form rules for labour codes

AANCHAL MAGAZINE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

WITH THE government kick-starting the rule-framing process for the four labour codes to enable their implementation from April 1 next year, a move towards higher short-term and contractual employment and less regulations are being flagged as some of the main concerns. On the other hand, the industry is citing the possibility of a shift towards bigger-sized establishments along with ease of doing business and a major churn in the labour market as the favourable outcomes.

Labour economists state that the new labour codes — Industrial Relations Code, Code on Social Security and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code — along with the Code on Wages, approved last year by the Parliament, are likely to result in a higher number of jobs, though precarious and of lower quality. Also, the actual benefits accruing from an expected increase in investment flows due to the relaxation in compliance and regulation criteria under the new labour codes are unlikely to be immediate and need to be seen over at least the next five years.

"The liberalisations provided in the labour codes would definitely create a number of jobs which are of low quality, that is, of short term, with no employment security, and probably other related securities will also be diluted. So, we will witness a labour market in the post-code scenario, preponderance of precarious but rising jobs. And these jobs would be designed in such a manner to lower the labour cost. Together, these two, according to the research evidence, will not result in productive, benevolent economic outcomes," XLRI professor and labour economist KR Shyam Sundar said.

Incentives for greater contractual and fixed-term employment is a concern that trade unions have also flagged. "In the private sector, these codes will help in replacing regular employment with fixed-term employment. Fixed-term employment means contract employment and no job security, no situation of continuity of job later on. You don't have rights of social security, cannot struggle for wage increase or allowance increase. This whole process will lead to more contract employment, casualisation and outsourcing. They are changing the limit for contractors from 20 to 50, which means, say, in a family of four, each supplying 48 or 49 workers means no workers under that system will be protected either for wages or for job security or for social security or for occupational safety," Amarjeet Kaur, the general secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) said.

Government officials, however, see fixed-term employment as a game changer, and state that no cap on fixed-term employment would give a boost to seasonal employment. "Say, for festive season, more workers are needed, then earlier they couldn't be hired later on but now that will change. Seasonal employment will get a boost and it will make a huge difference," a senior Labour Ministry official said.

The official also told *The Indian Express* that concerns about conversion of existing permanent jobs to contractual employment or retrenchment will not happen as mass-scale layoffs still require government permission.

Industry voices state that the greater flexibility for hiring and firing will result in more investments in sectors which would benefit blue and grey collar workers. "Law after law basically prevented entrepreneurs to look at India as a destination for investment. Overseas investment has been coming mostly in white collar economy. But the minute it was for jobs for blue collar and grey collar workers, all the entrepreneurs were very scared to invest in the Indian market," Lohit Bhatia, president, Indian Staffing Federation, a body of staffing companies, said.

In times of economic uncertainty, especially amid the pandemic, industry is of the view that businesses might not be able to survive and that should not be viewed as an anti-labour outcome. "Life becomes normal post pandemic, then capacities will get used a lot more and as the capacities are going to be evolving, India will find a better development in these new labour codes. Government has provided for greater social security benefits," MS Umikrishnan, chairman, CII National Committee on Industrial Relations said.

Full report on [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## VARYING VIEWPOINTS

■ **A move towards higher short-term and contractual employment and less regulations are being flagged as some of the concerns by some**

■ **Industry, on the other hand, is citing the possibility of a shift towards ease of doing business and a churn in the labour market**

## A MONTH SINCE ANNOUNCEMENT, CABLE LAID IN 4,347 VILLAGES

### ‘Ghar Tak Fibre’: Slow progress in plan to connect Bihar villages

AASHISH ARYAN  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

THE GOVERNMENT'S ambitious 'Ghar Tak Fibre' scheme — which aims to connect all the villages with high-speed internet — is off to a slow start in poll-bound Bihar, the first state that aims to connect all its 45,945 villages by March 31, government data obtained by *The Indian Express* showed.

To connect all villages by March 31, the state would need to dig trenches, lay cables, and provide connectivity to an average of 257 villages daily, or a monthly average of over 7,500 villages. However, nearly a month after the scheme was inaugurated, optical fibre cable has been laid only in 4,347 villages as of October 14, or at the rate of 181 villages per day.

"Our present capacity is laying down between 80,000-100,000 km of optical fibre per year. To connect all the villages by March 31, 2021, we will need to lay down at least 200,000-225,000 km of optical fibre, which is a tough task," an official said.

On September 21, while inaugurating the 'Ghar Tak Fibre' scheme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said all 45,945 Bihar villages would be connected through the high-speed optical fibre.

## EXPLAINED Lesson for future planning

THE LEARNINGS from the implementation of the 'Ghar Tak Fibre' scheme in Bihar could also be a lesson for future, as the Centre plans to connect all 6.5 lakh villages to high speed optical fibre internet over the next 1,000 days.

ugh the high-speed optical fibre.

The tender for providing connections and 'lighting' up these villages has not been floated so far and is likely to be floated only in the first week of November, senior government officials said. A village or a gram panchayat (GP) is considered 'lit up' under BharatNet when it consistently has internet connection and users at the end to verify the same. Of the 8,745 GPs in Bihar, 5,889 were connected to the state's main internet grid under BharatNet phase one, while the remaining 2,856 were connected under phase two.

However, of all the GPs connected under phase one, about 60 per cent or 3,591 gram panchayats

were non-operational as of October 15, while the status of another 200 was unclear.

In as many as 13 districts — including Jehanabad, Darbhanga, Purnia, Kishanganj, Vaishali, Araria, Saran and Jamuni — less than 25 per cent of the GPs connected to the internet under BharatNet phase one were operational. The main problems, an official said, were lack of power and related equipment failure, equipment theft, and faulty or lossy leased fibre.

"There are three main problems. One is that the lossy, old cables that were laid under phase one have to be replaced. So far, that work has been done in about 4,500 gram panchayats connected under phase one. Then the problem of right-of-way in laying cables from panchayats or blocks to individual villages. The third is power equipment failure and its theft," the official added.

Around 42 per cent of 3,660 GPs reported to be non-operational in the state had been facing these problems, the data showed. While optical fibre cable has been laid to connect nearly all the 8,745 GPs, lack of users in these areas has resulted in minimal or zero follow-ups on repair and maintenance work, an official of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) said.

Telecommunications (DoT) said.

"The first casualty of any construction work done by state or private agencies is the cable laid underground. Since there is near-zero communication between various agencies of the state government itself, most of these cables have been damaged. Now since there are no users to complain about the snapped connections, no one ever comes to know if the cables have been damaged," the official said.

Under the Ghar Tak Fibre scheme, Bihar has to provide at least five fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) connections per village, while there should also be at least one WiFi hotspot per village. However, as of October 14, only 30,768 FTTH connections had been given, while only 2,531 WiFi hotspots had been installed so far under BharatNet phase one.

The BharatNet project, which initially began as the National Optical Fibre Network in October 2011, has been delayed for over 92 months now. The new deadline is set at August 2021. However, on August 15 this year, the PM said all villages in the country would be connected to the internet over the next 1,000 days, which means that the project is now likely to be completed only by 2024.

## OFFICIALS CITE 'BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS'

### FinMin turns down proposal to cut cess on crude output

KARUNJIT SINGH  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

IN A blow to domestic crude oil producers, the Finance Ministry has rejected a proposal by the Petroleum Ministry to reduce cess on domestic crude production, according to government officials.

Currently, all domestic oil producers pay an oil cess of 20 per cent on all crude oil output. Upstream companies had sought relief on oil cess noting that low international crude prices had made it difficult for them to even meet operational expenses. The price of Brent crude fell to a low of \$19.33 per barrel in April on the back of low demand due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a price war between oil-producing countries. The pride of Brent crude has since recovered and stabilised at between \$40-45 per barrel over the past three months.

"The Finance Ministry has rejected the proposal citing budgetary constraints," said a government official who did not wish to be quoted. According to the official, the proposal sent by the Petroleum Ministry had pitched for 2-3 different rates of oil cess from 10-20 per cent based on the prevailing price of crude oil in the international market. The union

government has budgeted inflows of Rs 16,500 crore from oil cess for the current fiscal.

Experts noted that given the recovery in the price of Brent crude, oil-producing companies were not expecting any relief on oil cess from the government.

An industry analyst, who did not wish to be quoted, said that ONGC had in its analyst call mentioned that it was not expecting any fiscal relief from the Centre in the current pricing scenario considering the fiscal pressure on the government due to low revenues.

Debasish Mishra, partner at Deloitte India, noted that the upstream oil and gas sector needed fiscal relief in the current pricing situation. "To achieve the Prime Minister's vision of reducing import dependency by 10 per cent, upstream players in India would need fiscal incentive to survive the pricing situation in the global crude market due to Covid."

The Centre has hiked the excise duty on petrol by Rs 13 per litre and on diesel by Rs 16 per litre since the beginning of the year to shore up flagging revenues due to economic slowdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Central excise duty currently accounts for 45 per cent of the the price of diesel and 40 per cent of the price of petrol in the national Capital.

## INTERVIEW WITH MD & CEO, MAX LIFE INSURANCE

### ‘Not good to say Covid has been good for life insurance ... but it has created awareness’

PREDOMINANTLY SAVINGS-ORIENTED in India, the life insurance industry has seen a sudden shift of focus towards protection not only by the industry players but also by customers. PRASHANT TRIPATHY, MD and CEO, Max Life Insurance, told SANDEEP SINGH that over the last six months, there has been a massive rise in awareness and demand for protection products. He said going forward, the industry will come out with universal protection designs for masses who can't afford expensive products. Edited excerpts:



Prashant Tripathy

So there has been a big jump and it is leading to higher level of protection across the industry. I think moving towards protection is the right direction.

Even in the health insurance space, some standalone health insurance companies have seen 30 per cent growth and that too is a reflection of fear leading to right decisions being made. It will create a quantum shift with respect to where the market has been and there is higher level of acceptance for protection plan. Equally for providers like us it will be much easier to convince the customer.

If you see awareness and fear converting into outcomes, it is happening. However, the level of fear has subsided quite significantly over the last couple of months. Even as numbers are increasing, as people realised that mortality is moderate at around 1.2 per cent, the fear is going down and Google searches are subsiding.

**In the past there have been SARS and Ebola, but Covid has hit the way nobody ever thought. How do you see this will shape the industry in terms of innovation and customer orientation?**

There are shifts that are taking place. Some are more tactical or short-term and some long-term. Both the regulator and ministry have been very conscious and driving things that cater to Covid needs. We launched Covid riders that can go with our products and where customers get a part of the sum assured if they test positive.

Irdai has been pushing general and life insurance companies to come up with Covid plans and that is going to remain for at least

18 months. Also, there has been a shift towards selling more non-participating kind of offering which is savings-oriented — guaranteed savings benefit — because interest rates have come down. Life insurance companies have unique advantage of leveraging the longer term interest rate.

#### What in the long term?

Protection as a need is becoming more and more prevalent. Slowly, regulatory and other bodies are realising that protection is not only the need of the top of the strata, it is the need of everyone.

Hence, there will be push towards universal protection designs — simplified products that may have same features but will cater to segments that can't afford expensive product designs. I think life insurance companies will also slowly start venturing into health. There is (a) committee which has been set up to review that. Even if the committee doesn't (allow) life insurance companies to operate in indemnity space, I think they will have the riders space. Also, because of social security concerns, immediate annuity or annuity related plans will become prevalent. While a life insurance license allows companies to operate in multiple zones, but because of legacy reasons etc, we have operated only in equity and savings. I think that will get expanded further and will become much sharper.

**Do you think there should be focus on the retirement aspect too?**

We have been lobbying for some bit of change around regulation, the tax treatment of annuity, we have also made request on treatment of commission with our own regulator. So there are some structural issues that we are working through. Also, the level of awareness on these products is low. My sense is that there has been supply side constraints too. So there are issues on all fronts — structural, demand and supply side and as things evolve, all of that will start getting fixed.

## AMID COVID-19

### ‘India sees eight IPOs worth \$850 mn in Sept quarter’

Eight Indian companies came out with \$850 million of IPOs in the September quarter and the second half of the year could be "significantly better", an EY report said

**12** Number of initial public offerings (IPOs) recorded September 2019 quarter, worth \$651.98 million

**₹ 6,200 crore:** Worth of the eight IPOs, at current exchange rates

**\$602 million:** IPO with largest issue size in September quarter, by Mindspace Business Park REIT

**33%** Rise in IPOs in the main markets (BSE and NSE); from three in Q3 2019 to four in Q3 2020

**4:** Number of IPOs in the third quarter of 2020, falling from nine in the year-ago period

**872:** Number of IPOs across globe so far this year, with: ■ 14% rise in total number ■ 43% rise in proceeds at \$165.3 billion

## Most active sectors with two IPOs launched in each

- Real estate
- Hospitality
- Construction
- Technology and telecommunications



**Why is it important:** The EY India IPO Trends Report Q3 2020 noted that under-performance on account of Covid-19 — was seen in the first half of 2020. IPO attraction might continue to allure investors in the primary market after successful IPO subscriptions in recent times

Source:EY/PTI

## Strong demand for blue-collar workers, full-time jobs on offer

SHUBHRA TANDON  
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 18

BUSINESS ACTIVITY may not have recovered to pre-pandemic levels but, at 0.5 million, openings for blue collar workers in the July-September period were reasonably strong. Some of this relates to the upcoming festive season but a large part of this demand is for permanent jobs.

Experts say it is likely 2020

## Experts say 2020 could end with 1.4 million vacancies being filled

could end with 1.4 million vacancies being filled. Data sourced from Betterplace, a technology platform for managing the lifecycle of informal and semi-formal workforce, shows nine million interviews have been targeted. The

demand in segments like delivery and healthcare segment is likely to surpass January 2020 levels.

The good news is that nearly 80 per cent of the jobs on offer are for full-time employment, Pravin Agarwala, co-founder and CEO, Betterplace said. "The demand during the festive season stems mainly from the retail sector so some of these is for temporary jobs. But demand for full-time jobs is expected to sustain post the festive season." FE

## BRIEFLY

### P-notes investment falls

**New Delhi:** Investments via participatory notes (P-notes) in the Indian capital market dropped to Rs 69,821 crore at September-end.

### DLF arm raises ₹2,400 crore

**New Delhi:** DLF's rental arm DCCDL has raised Rs 2,400 crore debt from State Bank of India to refinance existing debt and to plan expansion.

### ‘Four bidders for DHFL’

**New Delhi:** Adani Group and Piramal Enterprises are among the four entities that have placed bids for DHFL, according to sources. PTI

## Amid rising tensions with US, China passes law restricting sensitive exports

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
BEIJING, OCTOBER 18

CHINA HAS passed a new law restricting sensitive exports to protect national security, allowing it to reciprocate against the US as tensions mount between the two over trade and technology.

The law, which will apply to all companies in China, was passed Saturday by the National People's Congress Standing Committee and will take effect on December 1. Under the law, China can take "reciprocal measures" toward countries or regions that abuse export controls and threaten its national security and interests.

Export controls under the law will apply to civilian, military and nuclear products, as well as goods, technologies and services related to national security. A list of con-



**Export controls under the law will apply to civilian, military and nuclear products, as well as goods, technologies and services related to national security. Reuters**

trolled items will be published "in a timely manner" in conjunction with relevant departments, according to the law.

The new law allows Beijing to retaliate against the US, which in recent months has tried to block Chinese technology firms such as telecommunications gear sup-

plier Huawei, Bytedance's TikTok app and Tencent's messaging app WeChat on grounds of posing a national security threat, including the data they may possess from operating in the country.

Companies and individuals who endanger national security by breaching the new export con-

trol law, including those outside of China, could face criminal charges. Violations of the law, such as exporting items without a permit, could result in fines of 5 million yuan (\$746,500), or up to 20 times the business value of the illegal transaction.

The new law adds to the growing uncertainty of Bytedance's deal to sell its video app TikTok to US firm Oracle Corp. In August, China added technologies including voice recognition, text analysis and content recommendation to its list of regulated exports.

President Donald Trump had earlier ordered Bytedance to sell its US operations of TikTok to an American firm or face a block in the country. The new export control laws adds to China's growing regulatory toolkit that allows it to take action against countries such as the US.

## ‘High incidence of NPAs hinder monetary policy transmission’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

HIGH INCIDENCE of non-performing assets (NPAs) in banks acts as a major roadblock in transmission of monetary policy actions of the Reserve Bank, a working paper prepared by the officials

of the central bank said.

The working paper also made a strong case for capital injection in state-owned banks, arguing that such a move would increase the credit flow to the real sector in addition to ensuring smoother transmission of monetary policy.

"Presence of non-performing assets in a bank also weakens

monetary policy transmission and lowers the loan growth rate," said the working paper co-authored by Silu Muduli and Harendra Behera, Department of Economic and Policy Research (DEPR), RBI. The RBI said the views expressed in the paper are those of authors and not of the Reserve Bank of India.

# In ISL, ‘S’ also means Spain now

## With 20-plus players & 7 coaches coming this season, India is 2nd-most preferred nation for football giants

MIHIR VASAVDA  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

BETWEEN MAY 2019 and September 2020, 409 Spanish footballers played outside their country. The largest number of them, 49, headed to England. The second most popular destination? India. Thirty-eight Spanish players, according to CIES Football Observatory's Atlas of Migration, came to India during this period. This season, almost one-third of the foreign players and seven out of 11 team managers are from Spain.

Since the first season of the ISL in 2014, 84 players from Spain have played in the league which took over from I-League as the country's premier championship last year.

Chances are that a team managed by a Spaniard will become champions, not just because they are more in number and thus automatically tilting the odds in their favour but also because that has been the trend. In ISL's short history, only twice have non-Spanish coaches won the league – former Italy international Marco Materazzi (2015) and Englishman John Gregory (2017-18), both with Chennaiyin.

It wasn't always like this. In the pre-ISL era, when players from Africa were in such high demand, those who ran football clubs half-joked that Europeans would not be able to survive in the heat, conveniently ignoring the fact that it was difficult for any player to be at their best during games which started at 3 pm. "I believe Spain is one of the hottest European countries so they adapt better," Hyderabad FC's director of football Sujay Sharma says.

The winds of change, as is the case often in Indian football, first blew across Goa, where this season of the ISL will be held in a bio-secure environment. In December 2012, Sporting Clube de Goa appointed Oscar Bruzon, who worked as an academy coach in different Indian cities, as their manager in a bid to rescue their I-League season. Bruzon got with him a couple of Spanish players, marking a first in the Indian league, and they turned around Sporting Clube's fortunes, not drastically but enough to earn respect across the board.

Little would have Sporting Clube known back then that their move, rooted in desperation, would mark a paradigm shift in the domestic game. When the ISL was launched in 2014, the focus in terms of recruitment shifted to players from Europe and South America. And as Spanish coaches entered the fray, doors opened for players from the region.

It took time, however, for the Spanish pros to take India seriously. "Some years ago, when you talked about Indian football in Spain and other parts of Europe, people did not take it seriously. They thought it was a very exotic league where you go when you are old and want to earn easy money," says Bengaluru FC manager Carles Cuadrat. "This is the information we got and in general, people were thinking only old players go and it's not real football. Now, seven



Bengaluru FC manager Carles Cuadrat is one of the seven Spanish coaches in the Indian Super League this season.

Some years ago, when you talked about Indian football in Spain and other parts of Europe, people did not take it seriously. They thought it was a very exotic league where you go when you are old and want to earn easy money. This is the information we got and in general, people were thinking only old players go and it's not real football. Now, seven years later, there is a lot of respect for the players who are coming here."

CARLES CUADRAT  
MANAGER, BENGALURU FC

years later, there is a lot of respect for the players who are coming here."

It took a few years to change the outlook. As the clubs did away with the marquee signing – a famous player who was looking for one last paycheck before hanging his boots – they began looking at young players who were not necessarily known names. "The teams learned how to streamline to the (recruitment) process and looked at how success was achieved in the previous years," Sharma says.

As more and more Spaniards started having a profound impact on their respective clubs, the executives began to focus more and more on the second and third tier of Spanish football, where they could get good players within their budget. From 10 in the first season to 24 last term, the number of players with experience of playing in Spain began to increase every year.

This season, except Chennaiyin and East Bengal (both with non-Spanish coaches), each team has at least one player with experience of playing in Spain – some like FC Goa and

409

Number of Spanish players who've played abroad between May 2019 & Sept 2020.

38

Number of Spanish players who play in India, making it the second-most preferred destination for them after England (49 players).

84

Number of Spanish players who have played in the Indian Super League till date, most among foreign players followed by Brazil (51).

Hyderabad have all six foreigners who have played there (each team has to follow the '6+1' rule, the plus-one being a player from Asia).

Cuatrat says a typical player from Segunda and Segunda Division B would be well-trained in decision-making, technical abilities apart from being taught to be 'respectful'. "We are producing a huge amount of professional players and coaches but there is not space for all of them," Cuadrat, who led Bengaluru to the title in 2018-19, says. "There are limited teams in the first and second divisions. In the third division, Segunda B, you can find many professional teams but they give low salaries to players because they don't have enough money coming in."

India spotted that gap and began to aggressively poach not just Spanish but even players of other nationalities playing there. They have lured quality players like Ferran Corominas (FC Goa), Miku, Dimas Delgado (both Bengaluru), Edu Bedia, Igor Angulo (FC Goa), Aridane Santana (Hyderabad) and Victor Gomez (Kerala

Blasters), among others.

They have played under the likes of Jose Francisco Molina (ATK) and Alberto Roca (Bengaluru), who got bigger and better opportunities back home after spending time in India and other parts of Asia. Molina is now the sporting director of Spanish football federation and Roca, who was appointed as Hyderabad's manager this season, got a call from Barcelona manager Ronald Koeman to join his coaching staff.

"All these players and coaches have a lot of respect in Spain so now everybody is thinking, something is happening in India and they are getting serious about football," Cuadrat says. "I can definitely say that it was more difficult to get (good) players in 2017 than to get now. Now it's full of players that want to come."

The word spread in the Spanish football circles and players became more open to the offers. FC Goa's new signing, Alberto Noguera, says he decided to come to India after getting good reviews from former FC Goa left-back Carlos Pena and Bedia. "They said a lot of good things. I trust them and that was enough for me to come," Noguera says. "I know there are a lot of Spanish players, so that helped me to come as well as there will be better chemistry and make it easier to get used to everything."

It's still too early to judge if the players from the second and third tier of Spanish football and the coaches can substantially raise the standard of India's domestic league. One way to understand the impact will be by seeing how well the teams fare in the continental competitions – ATK Mohun Bagan (coached by Antonio Habas) and Cuadrat's Bengaluru will play in the AFC Cup while Juan Ferrando's FC Goa, who have filled their foreign players' quota with Spaniards, will become the first Indian side to play in the AFC Champions League.

It is also likely that before they get a chance to influence the Indian game, the clubs will find newer, cheaper catchment areas, with countries like Argentina already on the radar of a few.

For now, though, Indian football's Spanish connection remains firm. So much so, that even if 'S' in the ISL could well be substituted for Spain, it won't feel too out of place.

### East Bengal strengthen squad

*PTI adds:* SC East Bengal on Sunday announced the signing of national team striker Jeje Lalpheklu ahead of the upcoming Indian Super League season. Jeje has scored 94 goals in 251 matches in Indian club football. East Bengal also announced the signing of Scottish defender Danny Fox and German midfielder Ville Matti Steinmann. Fox, 34, is a veteran defender who has played for Burnley and Southampton in the English Premier League. A Coventry City star, Fox joins SC East Bengal from Wigan Athletic. German midfielder Matti Steinmann also joins the red and gold brigade from A-League side Wellington Phoenix FC. The 25-year-old defensive midfielder has played in Bundesliga for Hamburger SV in the 2018-19 season.

# Barca, Madrid lose ahead of Champions League openers

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
BARCELONA, OCTOBER 18

BARCELONA AND Real Madrid lost for the first time this season against modest Spanish league opposition, increasing the doubts over their stalled attacks ahead of Champions League openers and their own "clasico" clash.

Barcelona had its first defeat under Ronald Koeman when it lost 1-0 at Getafe on Saturday, right after Madrid was beaten 1-0 at home by recently promoted Cadiz.

The star-powered attacks of the European powerhouses appeared shackled by their opponents. While Getafe lived up to its reputation as one of Spain's top defensive sides by shutting down Barcelona, Madrid was sloppy and sluggish against an inspired Cadiz that is back in the top flight after 15 seasons.

Sevilla also lost before it visits Chelsea in the Champions League on Tuesday, leaving Atletico Madrid as the only one of Spain's top teams to celebrate a victory. It faces Bayern Munich on Wednesday.

Barcelona didn't have many chances, but they were good ones. Lionel Messi hit the upright in the 20th and Antoine Griezmann wasted a great opportunity on the half-hour mark. After that, Getafe tightened its marking and Barcelona didn't threaten again until Djene Dakonam almost scored an own-goal late when he cleared a cross onto the crossbar. Jaime Mata converted a penalty kick for Getafe in the 56th minute after Frenkie de Jong fouled Dakonam on the edge of the area while trying to clear a loose ball. "We knew it was going to be a hard match," Barcelona midfielder Sergio Busquets said. "We wanted to play at a faster pace, and we tried, but once they went ahead it became even tougher. We have to keep working to improve. This has just started." Barcelona hosts Hungarian club Ferencvaros in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Griezmann's struggles continued for another game. France coach Didier Deschamps said last week that he didn't understand why Koeman played Griezmann on the right side instead of the middle of attack. Koeman tried moving Griezmann into a striker role at Getafe but Griezmann did little to help his cause with a glaring miss. He remained scoreless this season. Zinedine Zidane was at a loss for his team's performance against Cadiz. Led by 35-year-old striker Alvaro Negredo, Cadiz proved more dangerous than Madrid.

### West Ham hold Spurs 3-3

Gareth Bale made his first appearance for Tottenham Hotspur for more than seven years but his return was overshadowed as West Ham United scored three times late on to earn a 3-3 draw.

With Bale on the substitutes bench, Tottenham started in sensational fashion as Son Heung-min scored inside a minute and



Lionel Messi during Barca's defeat. AP

**Lionel Messi hit the upright in the 20th and Antoine Griezmann wasted a great opportunity on the half-hour mark. After that, Getafe tightened its marking and Barcelona didn't threaten again**

Harry Kane scored twice as the hosts led 3-0 after 16 minutes. Welshman Bale, on loan from Real Madrid, came off the bench in the 71st minute, but instead of a glorious introduction, West Ham ripped up the script with a stupendous fight back.

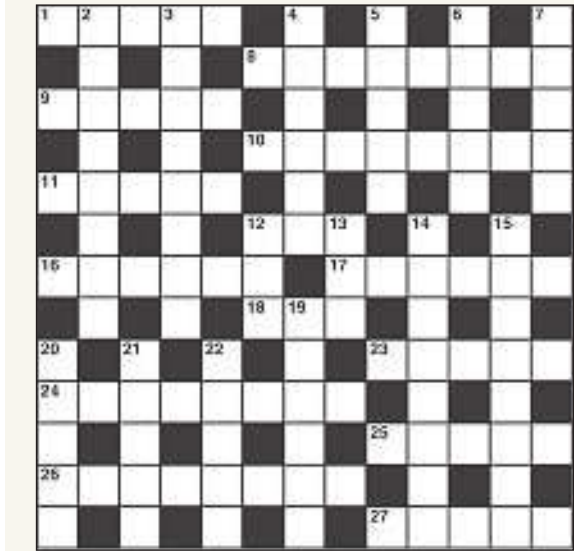
Fabian Balbuena's 82nd minute header and Davinson Sanchez's own goal gave West Ham hope. Bale almost scored his side's fourth but West Ham's Manuel Lanzini struck a wonder-goal deep in stoppage time to earn his side an unlikely point. (Reporting by Martyn Herman, editing by Pritha Sarkar)

Meanwhile, Manchester United needed a longer pre-season to prepare for the Premier League campaign but Saturday's 4-1 win over Newcastle United is a sign that they are firing on all cylinders again, manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said. The Red Devils recovered from an early own-goal by Luke Shaw to secure a comfortable victory with late strikes from Bruno Fernandes, Aaron Wan-Bissaka and Marcus Rashford after under-fire skipper Harry Maguire levelled the contest at 1-1.

### Van Dijk to undergo surgery

Liverpool centre back Virgil van Dijk has damaged knee ligaments and is set to undergo surgery after he was injured in Saturday's Merseyside derby draw against Everton, the Premier League club confirmed on Sunday. The Dutch defender was substituted early in the game when Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford made a reckless challenge in the box, which left Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp fuming. The club did not specify a timescale for the 29-year-old defender's return to action.

## CROSSWORD 4253



- ACROSS**  
1 They're devoted to order (5)  
8 X-ray unit (8)  
9 Is making a comeback with fresh strength (5)  
10 It is done wrongly in certain issues (8)  
11 Try to put it in writing (5)  
12 Suitable resort for a spring holiday? (3)  
16 Rummage about for some time (6)  
17 Cut down chesty complications (6)  
18 Rescue ship of a peculiar kind (3)  
23 High church feature (5)  
24 Ship's biscuits not so easy for the yachtman (4,4)  
25 Impressive sign of temper (5)  
26 Frighten over mistakes and bloomers (8)  
27 He is involved with any wild carnivore (5)
- DOWN**  
2 Neglect nothing on a job (8)  
3 Not only don't come but prevent others coming (4,4)  
4 Kind of robbery most likely to occur during rush hours (4-2)  
5 Can turn into American fighting formations (5)  
6 Radiant girl goes up west (5)  
7 Hangs about and shows a sign of anger perhaps (5)  
12 One side of the coast (3)  
13 Presumably people don't know when they do so (3)  
14 Fellow feeling pity perhaps (8)  
15 Abel may get a bronze medal (5,3)  
19 Price change has a point in cookery instruction (6)  
20 Examine the accuracy of a restaurant bill (5)  
21 Tied as illustrated (5)  
22 Stop working in the stables? (5)

**Solutions Crossword 4252:** Across: 1 Snail's pace, 6 Disc, 10 Stern, 11 Strategem, 12 Macaroni, 13 Nitro, 15 Endmost, 17 Frights, 19 Scratch, 21 Pageant, 22 Nylon, 24 Crescents, 27 Bagatelle, 28 Crete, 29 Eats, 30 Freeboater, Down: 1 Sash, 2 Alexander, 3 Linda, 4 Pass out, 5 Cardiff, 7 Ingot, 8 Compensate, 9 Standing, 14 Personable, 16 Ostinato, 18 Heartbeat, 20 Heckler, 21 Precede, 23 Light, 25 Secco, 26 Peer.

## JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

The idea of having a \_\_\_\_\_ is appealing. – Robin Williams (6,3)

TVAEO

AILRDY

EGUST

ELMUBJ

ANSWER: OYATE, GUEST, ARIDLY, JUMBLE  
The idea of having a steady guest appeal is appealing. – Robin Williams

## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



## CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## SUDOKU 4267

**Difficulty Level 5s**  
**Instructions**  
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

**Difficulty Level**  
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



## SOLUTION SUDOKU 4266



## DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

**ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)**  
The fact that Mercury and Venus are loosely challenging your sign should be positive for your plans and partnerships, and amazing gains are promised to Arians who thrive on challenge. You must stick with practical responsibilities, even if your first instinct is to run away.

**TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)**  
Today's Moon is deeply favourable, which is bound to help you in almost any venture. There's a golden rule though, and that's to be as diplomatic as you possibly can. Travel plans should go well, and you can afford to indulge your heart's desire in love. Don't hold back.

**GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)**  
Cash plans require a little extra scrutiny, although there is good news on the way. If you're involved in the property market, or otherwise making large domestic purchases, you should be on the right course. But keep a close eye on changing conditions or you might be caught out.

**CANCER (June 22 - July 23)**  
You always tend to make mountains out of molehills. However, sometimes that is a good thing, for only if you exaggerate small events will you conjure up the grand ambitions which are necessary for a truly fulfilled life. A little imagination can go a long way.

**LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)**  
Financial conditions still look decidedly positive and will continue to do so for some time. Meanwhile, it will do you good to check practical details and uncover inefficiency. Romantic plans take a turn for the better, and you will soon find that you were right about a particular person.

**VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)**  
The Sun, Mercury and Jupiter are now flying through your chart like a flock of exotic birds, revealing wisdom, good fortune and pressure for change, although not necessarily in that order. Let yourself go, and investigate prospects which once seemed beyond your grasp.

**LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)**  
If you are confused, it's because you are trying too hard to understand a world which is completely irrational. Do yourself a favour, lie back and let your dreams carry you to new lands. You never know - you might come up with some utterly brilliant ideas.

**SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)**  
You are still inclined to keep your feelings to yourself, much as you may wish to brag and bluster about other areas of your life. Actually, it would do you good to show off a bit, rather than always being so humble. I mean, if you don't blow your own trumpet, nobody else will.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)**  
A remarkable line, up of planets indicates that career interests are becoming more important, although you'll have difficulty combining existing domestic commitments with new working responsibilities. You need to be noticed. But then, why not?

**CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)**  
Are you sure you want to accept what is on offer, or do you want to hold out for the best? There could be a third option, and if you are extremely fleet of foot you may actually be able to have your cake and eat it. Sometimes you get what you deserve.

**AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)**  
You have a few private fears and secret worries, as you are only too aware. Today's planets highlight your inner insecurity, but give you the chance to overcome your lack of confidence and lay foundations for the future. A little courage will come in handy.

**PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**  
Partners seem to be in a triumphant mood. It isn't important whether they have anything to be pleased about or not. Your only concern should be to put your own doubts to one side and be happy for them. You might just find that they take you more seriously in future.

BRIEFLY

Narine cleared of suspect action

Abu Dhabi: Kolkata Knight Riders' West Indian spinner Sunil Narine was on Sunday cleared by the Indian Premier League's suspect bowling action committee after being reported last week. Narine was reported for a suspect action during his team's clash against Kings XI Punjab last Saturday and another such instance could have led him to being barred from bowling in the league. But, in a relief for the player as well as for his franchise, the IPL committee found his bowling action to be clean.

Bagan fans flout norms during parade

Kolkata: The victory parade following the handing over of I-League trophy to Mohun Bagan on Sunday witnessed gross violation of Covid-19 safety guidelines as more than 50,000 frenzied fans were seen celebrating on the city streets without any visible sign of social distancing norms. The video of parade was also uploaded on the club's Twitter handle. Incidentally, Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju tweeted on the video: "This is that famous festive football frenzy of Kolkata I like the most about!..." Bagan general secretary Srinjoy Bose said he was "concerned" but to stop the passionate fans from thronging the parade "was not in his hands".

Zverev ends title wait, wins Cologne Indoors

Cologne: Alexander Zverev ended his 17-month wait for a title by drawing on the pain of his U.S. Open final defeat to beat Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-3, 6-3 and win the Cologne Indoors on Sunday. Zverev has had a breakthrough year in Grand Slam tournaments with his first semifinal at the Australian Open in January and first final at the U.S. Open last month, when he lost to Dominic Thiem. Zverev has said he thinks almost constantly about that final, and he credited it with raising his game in Cologne. "I had a very tough final in New York and, the next final I played here, I wanted to come out and play my best tennis," he said.

AGENCIES

# Ferguson Locks out Sunrisers

Kiwi speedster announces his IPL arrival in stupendous fashion as KKR prevail in Super Over

**SYNOPSIS**  
Fergie's time in Abu Dhabi, despite David's heroics

**SANDIP G**  
OCTOBER 18

SELDOM HAS a fast bowler ever influenced an IPL game as tellingly as Kolkata Knight Riders' Lockie Ferguson against Sunrisers Hyderabad. As if his four astounding overs in regular time were inadequate, he delivered the perfect Super Over to enable his side to sneak in a victory that seemed distant before his intervention. Knight Riders had no hesitation in letting Ferguson, playing his first IPL match of the season, bowl the Super Over, and he killed the contest in three balls. The first, a good-length ball at pace, disarrayed David Warner's stumps. The second, a short-of-length ball, was miscued for a brace. The third, a slightly fuller off-cutter, thumped Abdul Samad's middle stump. The target of three was too measly for KKR to mess it up. Only Warner seemed capable of spoiling Ferguson's dreamy evening, but in the inky skies of Abu Dhabi, Ferguson's name was written in bold.

**Fergie's time**  
In the deafening silence of the Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Zayed Stadium, Ferguson rediscovered his rhythm. Playing his first IPL game of the season and only the 10th in three years, the Kiwi was always daunted by the IPL massive crowds in the pre-pandemic years. "I couldn't get over the noise," he said in an interview on the KKR website recently. He offers the logic too: "I think it was difficult to measure for a Kiwi because for the Black Caps, a crowd of 20,000 is a big crowd." Bereft of a crowd, on a relatively sluggish surface, Ferguson's searing pace was hotter than the blazing sun. Manish Pandey would admit, The Sunrisers batsman thought he had sized up the delivery and offered the likeliest stroke to avert the looming danger. He tried to dig out a flat and flaming yorker, dipping and tailing into his off-stump. But even before his hands could execute the orders of his body, the ball had blasted the off-stump. Pandey was Ferguson's third wicket of the evening, and he had nearly single-handedly pulled his team back from the jaws of a certain defeat. Hyderabad were 58 in six overs,



Lockie Ferguson celebrates after dismissing David Warner. BCCI/IPL

chasing 164 for victory, when he took out his national team captain Kane Williamson. Next over, after a pace barrage, he deceived Priyam Garg with change of pace. The side-of-the-hand off-cutter barely nudged 120 kmh, as the young Indian batsman swiped at thin air. As much as his pace and the mastery in changing pace, Ferguson's accuracy of length and line stood out. He mostly peddled back of length, angling into the right-hander and pitching in the corridor. The IPL in the desert has been something of an oasis for fast bowlers, the out-and-out ones, and Ferguson's rise has further bolstered the narrative. His match figures - 4.3-0-17-5 - tell a vivid tale.

**David's heroics**  
It might have been by sheer default that Warner ended up batting down the order - to enable the injured Williamson the freedom of Powerplay field restrictions. For someone who has batted most of his career

at the top of the batting order, Warner hardly struggled in his new role. He nearly orchestrated a calculated chase, in the face of a proper fast-bowling assault by Ferguson. It was the evening he appropriated Dhoni, guarding his wicket, running hard, keeping the chase alive and bringing it down the wire. Sunrisers required 18 from the last over, bowled by Andre Russell. When Warner got the strike, they needed 16 off five. The next three deliveries thundered to the ropes in typical Warner fashion. All shoulders and forearms. But off the last two, he managed just three, taking the match to the Super Over. His side was beaten, but the chase shed another dimension of Warner's batting. **BRIEF SCORES:** KKR 163/5 in 20 overs (S Gill 36, E Morgan 34, N Rana 29; T Natarajan 2/40) bt SRK 163/6 in 20 overs (D Warner 47\*, J Bairstow 36, K Williamson 29, L Ferguson 3/15) via Super Over  
*Playing tonight: CSK vs RR, 7.30pm*

## THE SUPER OVER

**SRH: 2/2**

- 0.1:** Ferguson bowls a good length ball pitching at the middle stump. Warner misses, gets bowled
- 0.2:** Samad hits towards long-on, runs two
- 0.3:** Samad does not read a slower ball, goes for a slog, misses it and gets bowled

**KKR: 3/0**

- 0.1:** Rashid Khan to Morgan, no run
- 0.2:** Morgan sweeps one towards midwicket, runs a single
- 0.3:** Khan to Karthik, dot ball
- 0.4:** Googly gets deflected off thigh guard, batsmen run two.

## Kings XI beat Mumbai after two Super Overs

**SYNOPSIS**  
Sublime Rahul outshines MI's heavy metal finish in a thriller

**SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY**  
OCTOBER 18

ONE SUPER Over was not enough to separate the two sides. In the first one, Jasprit Bumrah took two wickets for Mumbai Indians and conceded just five runs. Mohammed Shami matched the effort to ensure Kings XI Punjab stayed alive. Players involved in the first Super Over couldn't take part in the second. KXIP knocked off the target of 12 with Chris Gayle hitting Trent Boult for a six first ball and Mayank Agarwal sealing the deal with two boundaries.

**Sublime Rahul**  
In the regulation chase, Agarwal departed early. Nicholas Pooran was done in by a Bumrah bouncer at a crucial moment. But KL Rahul's sublime 55-ball 77 kept KXIP in the game. And although the excellent Bumrah cleaned up Rahul with a 149kph yorker, the latter had done just enough to keep his team in the contest.

**MI's heavy metal finish**  
Even losing early wickets represented an opportunity to MI. Their undercooked lower-middle order, Kieron Pollard to be precise, got some batting minutes. The team's top and middle order have been doing the job all this while. On Sunday, Pollard got 12 balls and scored 34 not out, hitting four sixes. Nathan Coulter-Nile, in his second match of the tournament, remained unbeaten on 24 off 12 deliveries. Together they added 57 runs for the seventh wicket without being separated, as MI's heavy metal finish unfurled the good work of the KXIP bowlers upfront. Fifty-four runs in the last three overs took the defending champions to 176/6. They were 38/3 in the sixth over and 119/6 in the 17th. KXIP lost the toss but responded brilliantly. Young Arshdeep Singh dismissed Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan inside the Powerplay. Mohammed Shami removed Suryakumar Yadav. But Krunal Pandya's 58-run partnership with Quinton de Kock steadied the ship for MI. **BRIEF SCORES:** Mumbai Indians 176/6 in 20 overs (Q de Kock 53; M Shami 2/30) lost to KXIP 176/6 in 20 overs (KL Rahul 77; J Bumrah 3/24) via Super Over  
**Super Over 1:** KXIP 5/2; MI 5/2  
**Super Over 2:** MI 11/1; KXIP 15/0

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