JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 14 PAGES

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A video grab of the incident in Jashpur district of Chhattisgarh on Friday. Two men have been arrested

JASHPUR, CHHATTISGARH

Car ploughs through Durga Puja procession: One killed, 16 critical

GARGIVERMA RAIPUR. OCTOBER 15

IN SCENES reminiscent of the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, a man was killed and 16 others critically injured after a speeding car ploughed through a procession in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district Friday. People were on their way to immerse a Durga idol when

the incident took place. Jashpur police said two men, Babloo Vishwakarma (21) and Shishupal Sahu (26), residents of Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh, were arrested after the incident in Pathalgaon, 113 km from the

district headquarters. Their vehicle was damaged by local residents who chased it, police said.

A video clip that did the rounds of social media showed the car mowing down people and speeding away. Others in the procession chased and stopped the vehicle, before damaging its windshield and windows.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, in a Twitter post, called the incident "sad and heartrending"

"The accused have been immediately arrested. Action has also been taken against police officers found prima facie guilty. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

BANGLADESH TEMPLE ATTACKS

Delhi calls up; Hasina asks India to guard against any reaction

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

NEW DELHI has exchanged notes with Dhaka on the attacks on Hindu temples and Durga Puja venues in Bangladesh on Thursday, including the possibility of extremist elements trying to stir up communal tension. In a speech on the occasion of Durga Puja Thursday, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hoped that India would take

Indian High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami as well as the four consulates in Bangladesh have been in touch with officials, sources said.

steps against any reaction at

home, as it could have a fallout



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

According to officials, there was an alleged blasphemous incident at a Durga Puja pandal in Cumilla, about 100 km southeast of Dhaka, which has led to attacks on temples and pandals. In the resultant violence, four people have died and several have been left injured, including

Associated Press reported that on Friday, thousands of people protesting against the alleged blasphemy clashed with police CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Chennai Super Kings

MS Dhoni led Chennai Super Kings to their fourth IPL title on Friday, defeating Kolkata Knight Riders by 27 runs in Dubai. PTI

ASSAILANTS ACCUSED MAN OF DESECRATION, POLICE SAY ONLY A CLAIM

Nihangs key suspects after Dalit Sikh man tortured, lynched at site of farm protests

Detentions made, police file murder FIR; Khattar orders 'strictest possible action'

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA, AMIL BHATNAGAR, KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR & VARINDER BHATIA

SINGHU BORDER, TARN TARAN SAHIB. CHANDIGARH. OCT 15

IN A macabre incident that cast a shadow on the ongoing farmer protest at Singhu on the Delhi-Haryana border, a man's hand was chopped off before he was killed and the body tied to a metal barricade, allegedly by a group of Nihangs, at the protest site early Friday.

Police said a preliminary probe suggested that the Nihangs killed 35-year-old Lakhbir Singh, a Dalit Sikh resident of Cheema Kalan village in Punjab's Tarn Taran district, because they suspected him of desecrating the Guru Granth Sahib -- a claim the police said had not yet been corroborated.

As video clips of the grisly incident did the rounds of social media and outrage mounted, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, which has been spearheading the protest ever since farmers first showed up at the border site last November, sought to distance itself from the incident. Condemning the killing, the SKM promised to cooperate with police and said it had "no relation" with the attackers or

> Haryana Chief Minister CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

DAYLIGHT LYNCHING Those who killed a Dalit Sikh at site of farmers' protests must face the law. Thugs can't hijack Punjab's hard-won peace



Police near the site where the body was found at the Singhu border on Friday. Amit Mehra

RELATED REPORT, PAGE 3

Murdered man was daily wager from Tarn caste simmer; wary Taran, father of three

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR AMRITSAR, OCTOBER 15

LAKHBIR SINGH, the 35-year-old man who was killed at Delhi's Singhu border Friday allegedly by a group of Nihang Sikhs, was a daily wage labourer in Punjab's Tarn Taran district and never involved with the farm protests, according to a family member and the sarpanch of his village.

They said Lakhbir was separated from his wife and children for the past five years and stayed with his sister in Cheema Kalan village. He was last seen in the village on Tuesday.

"Around five years ago, we



Lakhbir Singh

had started Lakhbir's treatment for drug addiction at the Government hospital in Tarn Taran. His family was very disturbed due to this. We fear that he might have been lured into

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Lynching as religion, political leaders silent

MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 15

political establishment, in both Punjab and Haryana, over the lynching of a Dalit Sikh by a group of Nihangs at the Singhu

about the fault lines it exposes and hardens.

Assembly polls in Punjab, religion has become a hot potato along with caste. Only last week,

Harpreet Singh, had warned against what he called were the dangers of forced conversions by Christian missionaries in the

desecration of the holy Guru Granth Sahib to the political CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SKM calls for police probe and action, seeks to distance itself

RAAKHIJAGGA LUDHIANA, OCTOBER 15

SEEKING TO distance itself from the "gruesome killing" of a man allegedly by "a Nihang group" at the Singhu border of Delhi, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, which is spearheading the farmers' protests at the site, condemned the incident, promised to cooperate with the police, and said that it has "no relation" with the attackers or the victim.

In a statement, the SKM said: "A Nihang group at the scene has claimed responsibility, saying that the incident took place because of the deceased's attempt to commit sacrilege...SKM condemns this gruesome killing and wants to make it clear that both the parties — the Nihang group and the deceased - have no relation with SKM.'

It said: "The Morcha is against sacrilege of any religious text or symbol, but that does not give anyone the right to take the law into their own hands. We demand that the culprits be punished according to law after investigating the allegation of murder and conspiracy behind sacrilege. SKM will cooperate with the police and administration."

Although SKM members claimed that Nihang Sikhs are not part of their protest, members of the group have often been seen near the main stage of the agitation and at food pandals in Singhu. Several farm union leaders told The Indian Express that the Nihangs "stay near the

Sukdarshan Natt, an SKM member from Punjab, said: "The CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Prashant Kishor should join Cong first, then give ideas, says Rawat

DEA

MANOJCG

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

AS SUSPENSE continues over strategist Prashant Kishor's plans regarding the Congress, senior party leader and **CWC** member Harish Rawat has

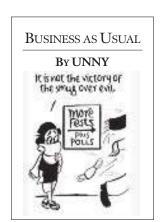
said he is welcome to join "as a worker" but cannot insist that the party should function in a particular manner after joining. The party cannot be "mortgaged" to a certain person or certain individual, however capable



TMC not helping Opp unity in any way: Rawat

he is, Rawat said. Speaking at an Idea Exchange session of The Indian Express, Rawat, an AICC general secretary, also expressed CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CWC MEETING TODAY



THEIDEAS PAGE PAGE 9



PANDORA PAPERS - PART 12

AN INVESTIGATION BY THE INDIAN EXPRESS WITH INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISTS

Held for fraud, DHFL promoters Wadhawans bought business jet, floated offshore companies

My clients in custody, not in position to answer questions, says lawyer

RITU SARIN NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

THE PANDORA Papers contain fresh leads for Indian inves tigation agencies probing the scam involving Dewan Housing Finance Corporation

Limited (DHFL). DHFL promoters Kapil Wadhawan and his

brother Dheeraj Wadhawan

were put behind bars last year and owe Indian banks more than 88,000 crore. The Wadhawans are still in jail – Kapil Wadhawan had offered a settlement to lenders, say-

ing his personal and family assets are worth Rs 43.000 crore. But what the Wadhawans have not disclosed is that since

2006, they incorporated a string of offshore companies,



via the Trident Trust (BVI), registered mostly in Tortola, the British Virgin Islands, and one in the Bahamas.

The flagship BVI entity of Kapil Wadhawan and Dheeraj Wadhawan is V&M Aviation and records investigated by The Indian Express show that the brothers were in business with the Trident Trust at least until February 2017.

A majority of payments/annual charges/agreements have been settled for the Trident Trust by Dubai-based Wadhawan International Investments. There **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

THE DEAFENING silence of the border belt. Dalit activists had blamed it on the poor representation of SCs and STs in the Sikh clergy. This concern was raised just weeks after border for the alleged the elevation of desecration of their holy Charanjit Singh Channi text speaks volumes as the first SC chief minister of the state It was in April that PPCC president Navjot Singh Sidhu brought In the run-up to the protest site".

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SCIENCE



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TECH

Nihangs key suspects after Dalit Sikh man

EXPRESS AUDIO

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elite Rapid Action Battalion and

Prashant Kishor

should join Cong

ideas, says Rawat

armed police on alert.

before giving

"any way", he said.

Asked about Kishor, Rawat

said: "Anybody who is an

Indian citizen and who has faith

in certain values of the freedom

movement and the Congress

can become a member (of the

party). So can Prashant Kishor.

We are always open to new

ideas. But the party cannot be

mortgaged to a certain person

or certain individual... He may

be a very, very capable person,

but we cannot say that, 'Baba,

now you do some work on our

behalf, we will stop working'.

The Congress has a very demo-

cratic method of working...

everybody has a role to play. If

Prashant Kishor feels he can

play an important role through

the Congress, he is always wel-

come. But he will abide by our

constitution, our tradition... that

is also very clear in our mind."

Kishor should join primarily as

a member. Rawat said Kishor

was known and had expertise,

and the party could gain from

this. "But there is a method in

the Congress and he has to

adopt that. He has to come

Asked whether he meant

FROM PAGE ONE

Lynching as religion, caste simmer; wary politicians silent

centrestage when he blamed Capt Amarinder Singh for failing to defend the Guru. He was referring to the 2015 sacrilege incident at Bargari village where pages of the holy Guru Granth Sahib were found strewn outside the village gurudwara.

On September 28, he tweeted his resignation in protest against the appointment of two officials, an advocate general and the DGP, given their past record, the former in allegedly protecting an accused and the latter for not doing enough to solve the case. He had claimed that the government must take some tangible action to assuage the widespread public anger against sacrilege which, he said, led to the ouster of the previous SAD-BJP govern-

On Friday, when a group of Nihangs lynched a man and accused him of desecration, the Punjab Congress was strangely silent on the issue, with no comments from Sidhu, the chief minister, past and present. Even the Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal maintained a stud-

Congress MP Partap Singh Bajwa, when contacted, said that on the face of it, the act he saw on videos is against the ethos and spirit of Sikhism, "But I don't want to comment on the incident until we get to the bottom of the case. It's a very sensitive issue." he said.

This event threatens to cast a shadow on the heated political narrative in Punjab, which increasingly centres on sacrilege and caste and the farmers' protest against the three laws, the longest in the recent history

Though the SKM was quick to condemn the gruesome killing, it cannot wash its hands of the incident. As BJP state general secretary Dr Subhash Sharma, while condemning the barbaric killing, put it: "They have been condoning the violence, be it on BIP leaders in Punjab and Haryana, or in other protests by farmers. This is a natural corollary. The SKM cannot dissociate themselves from the Nihangs, for they were part

Farmer unions have had a very uncomfortable relationship with the Nihangs, with Balbir Singh Rajewal, president of BKU (Rajewal), urging them to go home when they joined the agitation at Singhu with their horses in January. "We will call you when needed," he had said. Off the record, some leaders griped they could fuel trouble given their "peculiar lifestyle.'

Still, there is an attempt by a fringe to paint the Nihangs as the saviours of the holy book. The Nihangs claim the alleged victim desecrated their 'Sarbloh Granth'. The Nihang order which follows this granth says that whereas Guru Granth Sahib is embodiment of Shaant Ras (Essence of peace), the Dasam granth and Sarbloh granths are embodiments of Bir Ras (Essence of war).

On the street, the common voter is appalled by the barbarity of the act. As Bhupinder Singh Baath, a student leader and AAP member, said, "There is no way you can condone this action, no matter what the

But the fringe on the social media claims this action of the Nihangs will act as a deterrent to desecration for all times to come. It's this polarity that is a cause for concern, that has forced everyone, for now, on the backfoot. How the law takes it course in the case will be keenly watched by all.

SKM calls for police probe and action, seeks to distance itself

state's farm unions are meeting over this incident. Police should take the strictest possible action against the culprits and SKM will fully cooperate. The Nihang Singhs had their tents away from Singhu's main stage. This is not the first violent incident involving them, though earlier there was no loss of life. They are not associated with us."

Several farm union leaders involved in the protests condemned the incident and sought a "thorough" investiga-

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Balbir Singh Rajewal, president of BKU (Rajewal), said: "We have spoken with police officials and the law should take its own course."

committee member of All India

Jagmohan Singh Patiala, general secretary of BKU (Dakaunda), said: "Police are free to take any action against them (the Nihang Sikhs). Earlier, too, we had indicated that they should leave the place, but they continued to stay near the morcha site. Ours is a farmers' movement and not connected to any religion."

Harmeet Singh Kadian, president of BKU (Kadian), said: "We have differences in ideology with the Nihangs. They are not part of the SKM but they are giving a bad name to the move-

Buta Singh Burjgill, president of BKU (Dakaunda), described the incident as "a murthat "needs to be investigated" while Sarwan Singh Pandher, general secretary of the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee, demanded another probe into why the victim was at the bor-

Wadhawans bought executive jet, floated

are documents to show that at least one board meeting of V&M Aviation was held in Mumbai.

company entered into an agree-

million (Rs 170 crore). Trident Trust during 2015-2016 mention the purchase of the Bombardier aircraft and the fact that by this time, the charge and mortgage with Credit Suisse had been settled. A new Power of Attorney was also signed on February 9, 2017 through the Trident Trust, mentioning the

Bombardier aircraft purchase. Records show that after purchasing the aircraft, through a mortgage with Credit Suisse using their offshore vehicles, all mortgages were paid and the directors of V&M Aviation had

In the bouquet of offshore companies incorporated by the Wadhawans, records show V&M Aviation itself was registered in the BVI in July 2006 with 50,000 shares and Kapil Wadhawan and Dheerai Wadhawan as directors. Two other firms were linked to them: Zarara Leisure Limited of BVI, Deblin International

The Bahamas company, incidentally, is also shown as the shareholder in the aircraft purchase agreement signed with

Records also reveal the pattern of cross-holdings between the offshore companies of the

Krishna Prasad, working

Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee, said: "Nihang Singhs are not part of the SKM, though they are near the Singhu border. Police should thoroughly investigate the matter and punish the culprits. It was a cold-blooded murder. However, cops also need to investigate why such incidents are happening near farmers' protest sites -Lakhimpur Kheri and now this... this conspiracy should be

offshore firms

The Trident Trust papers on the DHFL promoters show that months after registering V&M Aviation in November 2006, the ment for the registration of a charge (loan) from Credit Suisse, Switzerland, for purchase of a Bombardier Challenger aircraft. The purchase agreement documents for V&M Aviation, filed in the BVI registry, state that the price of the aircraft was \$22.65

E-mails exchanged between

direct ownership of their "as-

Limited, Bahamas. Credit Suisse.

tortured, lynched at site of farm protests Police said they received indents said they last saw him on formation around 5 am that a Tuesday. DSP Sucha Singh said: man was tied to a barricade

Manohar Lal Khattar chaired a meeting at his residence where Home Minister Anil Vij, ACS (Home) Rajeev Arora, Haryana DGP PK Agrawal and ADGP (Law and Order) Navdeep Singh Virk were present. The Chief Minister has di-

rected officers to thoroughly investigate the matter and take the strictest possible action against the culprits. Police have identified the main accused and we hope to make arrests soon," a senior Haryana government officer told The Indian Police said a few suspects

have already been detained. A video clip that did the

rounds showed the man seriously injured, lying in a pool of blood with his chopped left hand next to his face. Men can be seen standing around and questioning him.

near the protest site, following which a team from the Kundli police station rushed to the

Sonipat SP Jashandeep Singh Randhawa said: "The injured person was rushed to the civil hospital, where he was declared dead. We have registered a case of murder against unknown persons. There are several videos circulating where some Nihangs have claimed that the man disrespected the holy book. It is suspected he was beaten up and killed by some Nihangs. This is a matter of investigation."

In Tarn Taran, Cheema Kalan village sarpanch Avan Kumar said Lakhbir Singh lived with his sister, and their parents are no more. Village resi-

"He was the only person from the village to go to Singhu." In the afternoon, ADGP

(Rohtak range) Sandeep Khirwar chaired a meeting of Sonipat police officers and district administration. The crime spot was also inspected by police after they took Lakhbir's body to the civil hospital for a post-mortem examination. "It is bizarre what has hap-

pened. It certainly cannot be tolerated. It is not yet known if the man was actually involved in any sort of disrespect of the Guru Granth Sahib as is being claimed. Even if the man actually did it, who gave anybody the right to lynch him? The culprits will not be spared," another senior officer told The Indian Express.

FIR, invoking sections relating to murder and common intention against unidentified per-

has been lodged at Kundli police station in connection with murder of a person near the protest site at the Singhu border in Sonipat district. On October 15, 2021, police in Kundli got information that near the protest site at the Singhu border, the Nihangs had hanged and tied a person to a barricade and his hand was chopped off... police reached there, the person had died. Some people were standing there. When the police tried to take the body away, the people at the spot protested. After some efforts, the body was brought to the civil hospital

Police have registered an

apprehension that the In a statement, police said: Trinamool Congress was 'First Information Report (FIR) 'weakening" the Congress in election-going states by poaching its leaders. Mamata Banerjee's moves are not going to help "Opposition unity" in

Sonipat for post-mortem.'

Murdered man was daily wager from Tarn Taran

committing some misguided act(atSinghu)," Avan Kumar, the village sarpanch, said. There should be an investi-

gation into whether someone took him to the Singhu border and put him in a situation where he got murdered," Lakhbir's brother-in-law, Sukhchain Singh, said. Local residents said Lakhbir

and his sister Raj Kaur, whose husband died a few years ago, were the adopted children of exserviceman Darshan Singh and his wife, who were "respected in the village".

Wadhawans. In 2016, docu-

ments show, the shareholder of

V&M Aviation was changed

from Zarara Leisure Limited to

another company called Future

eral years ago. Lakhbir got married 15 years ago. He had three daughters and one physically disabled son, who died two years ago. His wife has been staving with her brother for the past five years due to a matrimonial dispute," Kumar, the sarpanch, said.

"The foster parents died sev-

Brother-in-law Sukhchain Singh said: "His drug addiction was the reason for the dispute. He had not seen his three daughters for the past two years. He lived a low-profile life. He wasn't in touch with many peo-

But the big question now, say Lakhbir's family and local to reach Singhu. Taran Taran DySP Sucha Singh said Lakhbir "was the only person from the village to go to the Singhu border" at this time. "We know that he had no

money. On Tuesday, he had demanded Rs 50 from his sister. who borrowed the amount from neighbours. We also know that Lakhbir went to the local grain market for work. Nobody saw him after that. Today morning, we saw his brutally mutilated body on TV," Kumar, the sarpanch said. "He's never been to the Delhi

border since the start of the farmers' agitation. I had taken two jathas (protest marches) to Singhu. But he never accompanied us. People in the village used to avoid him," Kumar said.

Referring to TV footage of Friday's incident, Lakhbir's brother-in-law said: "He (Lakhbir) never wore the religious attire of Nihangs, How did he get those clothes that were seen on his body?'

through that. First, he has to become the a member... then things will start rolling and we will find a suitable position for him, suitable task... because a man like Prashant Kishor... we will not keep him waiting for some job... But he should first The PM added that her govjoin the Congress, then he should try to inject his views or

> Recently, amidst talk of his joining the party and his meetings with Rahul Gandhi and Privanka Gandhi Vadra, Kishor had in a cryptic tweet said that hoping for the Congress's revival based simply on its Lakhimpur Kheri intervention were "setting themselves up for a big disappointment".

inject how he wants the

Congress to work."

party was pushing back against him, Rawat said he was not privy to Kishor's meetings with

The government has deployed Border Guards Bangladesh troops in 22 of the

"Unfortunately, there are no quick fix solutions to the deeprooted problems and structural weakness of the GOP," Kishor had tweeted. Asked if Kishor's tweet meant the old guard of the

the leadership. On the Trinamool's bid to expand beyond West Bengal,

and its successful wooing of Congress leaders like Sushmita Dev in Assam and Luizinho Felerio in Goa. Rawat said this "eagerness" was "weakening the democratic forces opposed Expressing affection and respect for Mamata Banerjee, he

said, "We were together in the Youth Congress and in Parliament for a long time... The way she gave a fight to (Narendra) Modi and Amit Shah in (the West Bengal) elections, I have respect for that... (But) she should understand that in certain states where her party has no presence, she should not, during election time, take away some persons from the Congress and give her or him some position. By doing that you are weakening the Congress in Goa and the Northeast. It is not going to help Opposition unity in any way. This is my personal feel-

Max Holdings Ltd, registered in Singh said two previous ofthe Jebel Ali Free Zone in 2007. fences, one of domestic violence The shareholder of this comand the other of diesel theft, had been lodged against Sahu in Rs 25 lakh," he said. pany is Excel Way Investment Block medical officer James Delhi calls up; Minj said one person was

Limited, a BVI company with 50,000 shares and Kapil Wadhawan as its sole director. Later, in 2010, both Kapil brought dead while 16 others Wadhawan and Dheeraj were injured. Two among the Wadhawan are shown as its injured were referred to other $share holders\,with\,5,\!000\,shares$

Yet another offshore BVI company with Wadhawans, also registered with the Trident Trust is Team Fortune Investment Limited, It was registered in 2010 with Kapil Wadhawan as its first director.

Responding to queries from The Indian Express, Rohan Dakshini, lawyer for the Wadhawans, said: "My clients are presently in custody and are not in a position to answer any questions considering their circumstances right now.'

Car ploughs through Durga Puja procession: 1 killed, 16 critical

Have ordered an investigation, no one will be spared. Justice will be done," he said while offering his condolences.

Eyewitnesses claimed the car was carrying what appeared to be an illegal consignment in brown packets and was trying to evade police checkposts. Police did not have any immediate comment on the claim of the eyewitnesses.

"Both accused are residents of Madhva Pradesh and the car registration is also from Madhya Pradesh. They were passing through Chhattisgarh when the incident occurred. We are investigating further," a police officer Singrauli SP Virendra Pratap

hospitals while 14 were being treated at the district hospital. According to police, the situation in Pathalgaon area was tense with people protesting on the streets, demanding action against the guilty. District offi-

cials were at the spot, trying to control the situation. In the evening, the state government, in a statement, said that a police ASI was suspended after the incident. The Home department sent Bilaspur IG Ratan

Lal Dangi to Jashpur. UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in a Twitter post, called the incident "very sad".

"The Chhattisgarh government is expected to make arrangements for proper treatment of the injured and provide all possible help to the victims," he said.

Incidentally, Baghel had gone to UP after the Lakhimpur Kheri incident and had criticised Yogi Adityanath. Chhattisgarh BJP leader and

farmer Chief Minister Raman Singh also tweeted a video clip of the incident, calling it "very painful". "The spirits of drug mafia

have increased in Chhattisgarh. Now will those who take out religious processions be crushed like this? Jashpur SP should be removed immediately. 50 lakh compensation to the kin of the dead and immediate arrangements should be made for the

BJP leader Vishnudev Sai, in a statement, called for a Jashpur

treatment of the injured," he

bandh on Saturday. "We want the SP suspended. Family of deceased should get compensation of Rs 1 crore and the injured

Hasina asks India to guard against any reaction

in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka. Police said the protests began after the main Friday prayers. Dhaka Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Sajjad Hossain said several people were injured as police used lathicharge and tear gas to disperse the crowd.

The protesters shouted anti-India slogans and accused Hasina of "being close with New A preliminary assessment

indicates the role of homegrown elements, with external support, in the attacks on the temples and Durga Puja pandals, given how the attacks these were carried out in a coordinated manner and at multiple locations. "The Bangladesh authorities are looking at the Jamaat-e-Islami's involvement," an official told The Indian Express.

In a speech delivered virtually to devotees at Dhakeshwari National Temple Thursday, Hasina said: "We expect that nothing happens there (in India) which could influence any situation in Bangladesh, affecting our Hindu community here... The incidents... are being thoroughly investigated. Nobody will be spared. It doesn't matter which religion they belong to. They will be hunted down and

in the future.'

ernment had never dithered from taking action against criminal elements irrespective of religion. "They must be found out. We did so in the past and will do it in the future as well. They must face appropriate punishment. We want such a punishment that no one dares do this

Calling upon people to be vigilant against such elements, she said: "If we all work together, they will not be able to cause any harm.' Hasina has reassured repre-

sentatives of the Hindu community -- who form about 10% of Bangladesh's 169 million population -- that they were taking all precautions to ensure there was no violence during immersion of idols of Goddess The PM has asked Hindu community leaders, particularly

those of the Bangladesh Puja

Committee, for details regard-

ing the Puja mandaps across the

(Celebration)

Udjapon

country "keeping in mind the constraint of security personnel to ensure their safety and secu-She urged the community to not consider themselves a minority and to perform their religious rituals with the same freedom as the others, saying they had fought as hard for the

country's liberation in 1971. "We believe that those who are born on the soil of this country and who are its children should practise their religion freely," Hasina said, adding that she was determined to build Bangladesh as a peaceful country with no room for militancy or terrorism.

64 administrative districts across the country, and put the

3 THE CITY





				iulai	Vacalit	
OTAL CAS		HOSP	ITAL BEDS	17,150	16,923	
14,39,	337	ICU B	EDS	3,854	3,792	
	Cas	es	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests	
Oct 14	28	3	29	0	61,012	•
Oct 15	26	6	36	0	59,653	-
Total	327	7*	14,13,921	25,089	2,85,59,291	Ę

HC SAYS VENDORS EXCEED LIMIT

'No more than 80 vendors at Sarojini Nagar'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

OBSERVING THAT its order directing the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Delhi Police to ensure removal of illegal encroachers from Sarojini Nagar Market has not been complied with, the Delhi High Court has issued a contempt notice to the local **Executive Engineer and further** directed the authorities to ensure that no goods are left at the place at the end of the day.

"The Delhi Police shall seize all such articles and goods which are found lying in Market area on a daily basis with the assistance of the officers of the NDMC," said the division bench of Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Jasmeet Singh in an order.

The court said that not more than 3-4 informal vendors are to be permitted for every 10 shops in a market under the Master Plan but the number of vendors in the market has exceeded the limit, "Since there are 200 shops in the Sarojini Nagar Market, 60-80 vendors may be permitted," it said.

NDMC and Delhi Police on September 13 were directed by the court to ensure that illegal encroachments are cleared from the market and that they



The court observed its order directing removal of illegal encroachers from Sarojini Nagar Market has not been complied with, Abhinav Saha

Since the order has not been complied with, the court asked the Executive Engineer M.L Toppo to show cause as to why action against him under the Contempt of Courts Act should not be taken.

"Reply to the show-cause notice be filed within 10 days. On the next date, Mr M.L. Toppo should remain personally present during the hearing," said the court, while also directing the NDMC to file a status report within two weeks on Sarojini

To counter namaz in open, Gurgaon residents show up with mic, sing bhajans

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE GURGAON, OCTOBER 15

FOR THE fourth consecutive week, a group of residents Friday objected to namaz being offered in the open at Gurgaon's Sector 47 as police shifted the prayer site by 100 metres from its original spot.

Prayers were offered amid heavy police presence as at least 70-80 people, carrying placards, raised slogans and tried to march towards the site. Police created a security cordon and stopped

Police had earlier asked members of the Muslim community to reach the site from the Subhash Chowk side to avoid a confrontation. Aman Yadav, ACP Sadar, said, "Prayers were offered peacefully. In the last week, we have held meetings with representatives of both communities and we are working towards re-

solving the issue." At 12.40 pm, residents gathered near the site and sang reli-

gious songs and bhajans using a mic and a portable speaker. They also raised slogans against the government for failing to stop namaz in public places.

The Sector 47 site is among the list of 37 designated sites where prayers could be offered in the open, that was 'negotiated' by the administration after consultations with representatives of two communities, after several disruptions were reported in 2018. Residents claimed the arrangement was not permanent and permission was granted only for a day.

Taufiq, who has been coming to the site for three years, said, "This has only become an issue in the past few weeks. Some people who are trying to gain political mileage from this are creating a ruckus.'

In a letter to the police commissioner earlier this month, the Gurgaon Nagrik Ekta Manch (GNEM), a citizens' forum. claimed that prayer sites in three sectors have been shut in the last



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WIND ENERGY

(Under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India) Velachery - Tambaram Main Road, Pallikaranai, Chennai - 600 100.

National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) is the technical arm of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Govt. of India in the field of Wind Energy. NIWE plays a proactive role in the development of Wind Energy especially in Wind Resources Assessment, Testing/Type Certification of Wind Turbine Generators, Research & Development and Information &

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I.De	putation failing which by Direct F	Recruitm	ent			
SI. No	Name of the Post, Post Code, Level of Pay Matrix in 7th CPC	No. of Posts	Reservation for Direct Recruitment			
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2	Executive Assistant – EA Level 6 of 7th CPC	1 Post	EWS			
II.D	II.Direct Recruitment					

SI. Name of the Post, Post Code, No Level of Pay Matrix in 7th CPC Reservation 1 Junior Executive Assistant-JEA OBC

available in the website: https://niwe.res.in It is noted that the post will be on project mode basis, not a regular one, till approved by Ministry of Finance and the Recruitment Rules (RRs) of NIWE is under revision.

Further details regarding qualification, experience, age limit,

other terms & conditions and the format of applications are

Last date for submission of application is 21 days from the date of publication in the Employment News (Deputation and Direct Recruitment).

Division Head (Finance & Administration) Additional Charge

Lynching leaves Singhu site on edge: 'There was commotion... when crowd thinned, we saw the body'

AMIL BHATNAGAR& **PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA**

SINGHU, OCTOBER 15

THE EARLY morning lynching of a man at Singhu border put the protest site on edge, with people spending the day piecing together what had led to the brutal

When The Indian Express visited on Friday, a large number of people had gathered outside Gurdwara Moyan di Mandi, situated roughly 100 metres from the main stage towards Sonepat. Several farmers sat on cots and chairs discussing what had transpired, as police teams investigated the scene of the

Farmers said the victim, Lakhbir Singh, came to the protest site "three-four days ago" and had told people he was here

"He would sleep near the main stage and, during the day, do sewa at the gurdwara. He also prayed there and managed to gain the trust of people," said Sukhjeet Singh, who claimed to be an eyewitness.

He claimed that Lakhbir went to the gurdwara around 3.30 am. It was when he was





Friday, People spent the day piecing together what had led to the brutal murder.

walking away that dozens of people gathered on the narrow stretch and caught hold of him.

"There was a lot of commotion and when the crowd thinned out, we could see his body with brutal injuries. It all happened very fast," said Karam Singh, a protester from

Through the day, discussions ranged from the brutality of the incident to whether there was a "conspiracy to create disharmony". But many acknowledged that the incident could snowball and prove to be a setback for the movement, particularly at Singhu, where protesters have stayed put since November last year.

The Nihang Sikhs initially re-fused to hand over the body to the police and insisted on cremating him. After parleys and conversations with a Nihang leader from Fatehgarh district that lasted close to an hour, protesters allowed police to take

The Nihangs had arrived weeks after the farmers first began protesting at Singhu in November last year. They claim to be the first line of "defense" among protesters, and have placed their horses, tents and a gurdwara right next to security establishments on the Delhi border.

On SKM's statements distancing themselves from Nihang Sikhs and the incident, a Nihang leader said, "They can say what they want. We are not governed

Delhi girl is topper among women in JEE Advanced

ARANYA SHANKAR NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

DELHI GIRL Kavya Chopra (17) emerged as the female topper in the IIT-JEE (Advanced) results announced Friday. She had earlier secured full marks (300) in the IIT-JEE Main exam held in March. In JEE (Advanced), she scored 286 out of 360 marks, with an overall rank of 98. However, she holds the top rank among women.

An alumna of Delhi Public School, Vasant Kunj, Chopra said she wants to pursue Computer Science from IIT-Delhi. "I live in Delhi, so I think location-wise IIT-Delhi will be convenient for me. Also, it is one of the best IITs in the country. And as far as Computer Science goes, I have been very inclined towards Maths since childhood. So I want to continue in that direction and Computer Science came closest to it," said Chopra, who lives in Rajouri Garden.

Chopra's interest in Maths stems in part from the influence of her mother, a Maths teacher at DPS Vasant Kuni. Her father works as a Project Manager at IBM. She also has a younger

brother who studies in Class IX. Chopra scored 97.6% in the CBSE Class X exams and partici-



Kavya Chopra (17) said she wants to pursue Computer Science from IIT-Delhi

pated in several maths and science Olympiads while in school. Despite having consistently

performed well in academics, Chopra said she never overexerted herself while preparing for exams and believes those who didn't clear should not get bogged down.

"I don't think one needs to study all day. It doesn't work. One should study as much as they can but do it efficiently. It becomes counterproductive if you study for a longer number of hours because then efficiency is reduced as you go on. I used to study between $\bar{7}$ and 8 hours a day, not more than that," she

"I'm still trying to figure out

what I will do after studying Computer Science. I think it's okay to take time and figure things out. Everyone in their life, at some point or the other, faces this roadblock that you are at a total loss of what you want to do. That is okay. Even if you haven't cleared JEE, it's not the end of the world. There are a lot of opportunities waiting. You can always do well in college," she said.

Chopra had joined BITS Pilani, her backup plan, in case she didn't clear JEE (Advanced).

For many of her age, social media can be a distraction, but Chopra said she was never "drawn much to it". She also said Covid didn't affect her preparation. "My teachers at the Allen career institute made sure I didn't experience any loss during the online preparation. Nothing

Besides academics, Chopra is interested in books and music. Mystery novels by Agatha Christie and the Nancy drew series are among her favourites.

A total of 41,862 candidates have qualified for JEE (Advanced) 2021, of which 6,452 are women. Mridul Agarwal from Jaipur emerged as the overall topper with Rank 1 in the common rank list by scoring 348 out of 360 marks.

MORE REPORTS ON P7

2 held for cheating retd labour ministry officer, wife of Rs 5 cr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

THE ECONOMIC Offences Wing of the Delhi Police arrested two men for allegedly cheating a retired Labour Ministry officer and his wife of Rs 5.24 crore in Dwarka.

Police said the men own a firm called Ecounsellor Webtech Private Limited and promised the couple that they would get high returns on their investments, but allegedly fled with the money

The retired officer is aged around 80 and is visually impaired. Police said he and his wife had sold all their property in Delhi and wanted to shift to the US to settle with their children. They came in contact with the two accused, Ankit Thakur Police said the elderly couple had sold all their property and wanted to shift to the US to settle with their children. They came in contact with the accused, who asked the couple to invest in their firm

(29) and Vinod Arya (28), who told the couple that they should invest their money in the company, which is into website development, and promised high returns.

According to police, the accused took advantage of the fact that the old man was visually impaired and didn't know much

Ten years of

giving truth

the standing

RK Singh, Additional Commissioner of Police (EOW), said, "The couple wanted to sell all their properties and move in with their children who are already working in the US. They pulled in their life savings and the money they got after selling their properties. During this time, they met the accused who offered to help the couple by investing the money. They also promised easy high returns. But the couple were cheated."

They received cheques from the two men and later found these were bogus. During investigation, mobile

details and bank accounts of the victim and accused were analysed. Thakur and Arya, both college dropouts, were traced in Delhi and arrested, said police.

KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS!

CANCELLATION & DIVERSION OF TRAINS

In order to upgrade the infrastructure, Railways will undertake the Pre-Non-Interlocking & Non-Interlocking work at Degana-Phulera section of Jodhpur Division in connection with commissioning of Doubling work between Degana-Borawar stations. To execute this work suitable traffic blocks of different durations will be taken upto 28.10.2021. During this period following trains will be affected on the dates shown against each:-

CANCELL	ATION OF TRAINS	
Train No. & Name		Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
04740 Bikaner-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Superfast	Special	19.10.2021 & 26.10.2021
04812/04811 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Sikar JnDe	elhi Sarai Rohilla Exp. Special	20, 22, 27 & 29.10.2021
04739 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Bikaner Superfast	Special	22.10.2021 & 29.10.2021
02463 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Jodhpur Express S	Special	20.10.2021 & 27.10.2021
02464 Jodhpur-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express S	Special	21.10.2021 & 28.10.2021
DIVERS	SION OF TRAINS	
Turis No. 0 No.	Discoute d Vie	Date (from the

DIVERSION OF TRAINS						
Train No. & Name	Diverted Via	Date (from the Originating Station)				
04853 Varanasi-Jodhpur Express Spl.	Phulera JnAjmer JnMarwar-	18, 20, 23, 25 & 27.10.2021				
04854 Jodhpur-Varanasi Express Special	Jodhpur Jn.	21, 23, 25 & 28.10.2021				
04863/04864 Varanasi-Jodhpur-Varanasi Express Special	Phulera JnAjmer JnMarwar- Jodhpur Jn.	19, 22, 24 & 26.10.2021				
04865 Varanasi-Jodhpur Express Spl.	Phulera JnAjmer JnMarwar-	21.10.2021				
04866 Jodhpur-Varanasi Express Spl.	Jodhpur Jn.	20.10.2021 & 27.10.2021				
04739 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Bikaner Exp. Spl.	Jaipur-Ringas-Sikar JnChuru-	24.10.2021				
04740 Bikaner-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Exp. Spl.	Bikner Jn.	23.10.2021				

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be ollowed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensure

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New Delhi

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IN INDIAN JOURNALISM

BRIEFLY –

Doctor

by senior

doctor

alleges rape

New Delhi: A doctor from

a central government

hospital was allegedly

raped by a senior resi-

dent doctor during a

birthday party last

month. Police said the ac-

cused is absconding and

teams have been sent to

arrest him. According to

police, the incident took

place on September 29

when the doctor went to

her senior's house to at-

tend a party. DCP(South)

Benita Mary Jaiker said,

"We received a call on

Monday regarding sex-

ual harassment of the

doctor from a central

government hospital. We

went to the hospital and

found that the victim got

her medical examination

done. She told the inves-

tigating officer that on

September 29, she went

to attend a birthday party

of her colleague when

her senior allegedly

raped her inside his

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I Savita W/O, Late Dashrath Prasad R/o C-218 Pul Prahlad Pur,m.b Road,new Delhi-110044 have changed my name to Savita Devi for all purposes.

0040588106-

I. Jvoti, D/o Prem Pal, R/o House No- 1B/1 MS, M.S Block, Rana ji Enclave Part-3, Delhi-110043, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Jyoti Kadian. 0070757594-1

I,Yogita Rani Sharma, w/o-Manoi Anand resident of L-72. near jagat Ram Park, Laxmi Nagar Delhi-110092,have changed name Yogita Rani Sharma to Yogita Anand.

0040588226-1

I, Vishwajeet Singh S/O Dharmendra Pratap Singh, R/o Gram- Rampur, Padraua, Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh-274304. Declare that Name of My Father has been wrongly written as Dharmenra Pratap Singh in my 10th Class Certificate No- 1733257, that name of my father has been wrongly written as Dharmendra Singh in my 12th Class Certificate No- 0345381. The actual name of My Father is Dharmendra Pratap Singh, which may be amended 0070757597-1 accordingly.

I.Walinder kaur, W/O-Kultar singh, Mother of Chanmeet kaur,R/O-NO.97,First-Floor,Narang Colony,Janak Puri,New Delhi-110058, Chanmeet kaur, DOB-26.4.2007. 1 Kultar singh Bhatia and Kultar singh both are same person. 2 Varinder kaur Bhatia and Walinder kaur both are same person. 3. Chanmeet kaur Bhatia and Chanmeet kaur both are same person. 0040588226-3

I.Shashi Bala w/o Sushil Kumar Aggarwal resident of A-115 Kamla Nagar Delhi 11007 have changed name Shashi Aggarwal for future.

0040588226-2

I, Shuja Abbas S/O Azam Abbas, R/o Flat No-83, AIIMS Appartment, Mayur Kunj Mayur Vihar Phase- 1, Delhi-110096. I have changed the name of my minor Son Zamin Abbas aged about 4 Months and He shall hereafter be known as Faris Abbas

I, Prakash Sarkar S/o Madhav Sarakar R/o House No 271. Govind Nagar, Shakti Farm, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand-263151, have changed my name from Prakash Sarkar to Deevan Sarakar for all future purposes. 0040588210-1

I, Kumar Mastram, S/o Jai Pal Singh, R/o A-189, Sector-12, Pratap Vihar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201009, have changed be known as Dinesh Pal.

0070757596-1

LOST & FOUND

I/we Harender Singh & Anita have lost our original sale deed registration No.4981 dated 26.12.2017 along with chain of original sale deeds for our property No.219, Ground Floor, Pocket-8, Sector-24, Rohini, Delhi, if anybody finds, kindly contact on 9829004208. This publication is for notify & avoid misuse of lost documents.

0040588221-1

Lost builder buyer agreement and allotment letter of D2 408,summer palms sec 86 Faridabad on 30/09/21 near sec 22 Dwarka.please contact 8383015438, If found.

0050185448-1

PUBLIC NOTICE

BE IT KNOWN TO ALL THAT my client Mr. Samit Gambhir, S/o Late Shri Dinesh Gambhir, R/o G-215, Naraina Vihar, New Delhi is the lawful and sole owner of the property and house bearing no. G-215, Naraina Vihar, New Delhi-110028 and is in lawful possession 110028 and is in lawful possession of the said property living with his family and is the rightful person to deal with the said property. Mr. Samit Gambhir has all the right, title and interest to re-construct, sell and enter into any agreement with any party in regard to his said property. If any person has any objection may contact on below mentioned address within next ten days.

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any manner whatsoever.

'POTENT IN CAUSING COVID REINFECTIONS, BREAKTHROUGH INFECTIONS'

Delhi's deadly second wave shows why herd immunity against Delta variant difficult: Study

ANURADHA **MASCARENHAS** PUNE, OCTOBER 15

THE HUGE spike in Covid-19 cases in Delhi during the second wave in April-May was due to the fact that the Delta variant was able to infect people who had been infected previously as well as those who had been vaccinated, a new study has found.

The study by researchers from India and other countries has been published in Science. Based on samples from Delhi, the study presents genomic and epidemiological data to establish that the Delta variant was much more potent in causing both reinfections and breakthrough infections compared to other variants of the virus.

The study noted that before the second wave, more than 56% of the population in Delhi was already known to be infected, according to results of a serosurvey in February this year. Still, the daily case count in Delhi in April and May had jumped to as high



The daily case count in Delhi in April and May had jumped to as high as 20,000. Archive

as 20,000. This was possible only because of a large number of reinfections and breakthrough infections.

The study was led by the National Centre of Disease Control and the CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, with collaborators from the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London, and the University of Copenhagen,

The team sequenced and analysed viral samples from Delhi from the previous outbreak in November 2020 until June 2021, Dr Anurag Agarwal, Director CSIR IGIB said. The researchers found that the multiple surges in Delhi in 2020 were not due to any 'variants of concern'. The Alpha variant had become widespread in Delhi only by March 2021 before being rapidly replaced by the Delta

measures

The study suggests that

reliance on herd immunity could be extremely deceptive. This is becoming evident in Kerala as well where more than 80% of the population is now estimated to have been infected at least once, and still a significant number of new cases are emerging on a daily basis. The ability of new variants to cause reinfections or breakthrough infections means that preventive and precautionary measures must continue to be adopted.

Researchers found that the Delta variant was 30-70% more transmissible than previous SARS-CoV-2 lineages in Delhi, in-

Importantly, the study also suggested that prior infection provided only 50-90% protection against Delta variant as compared to other lineages. Also, amongst a small cohort of people that the researchers followed, the Delta variant was found to be seven times more likely than other lineages to cause a breakthrough infection.

This work helps understand the global outbreaks of Delta, including in highly vaccinated populations, because the Delta variant can transmit through vaccinated or previously infected people to reach those who are susceptible. Thus, herd immunity is harder to reach. Importantly, none of the vaccination breakthroughs or reinfections in our study led to severe disease. Thus, with India poised to cross 1 billion vaccine doses next week, we are well prepared for future variants," Dr Agarwal said.

Professor Ravindra Gupta from the Cambridge Institute of Therapeutic Immunology and

Infectious Disease at the University of Cambridge, UK, said: "The concept of herd immunity is critical in ending outbreaks, but the situation in Delhi shows that infection with previous coronavirus variants will be insufficient for reaching herd immunity against Delta. The only way of ending or preventing outbreaks of Delta is either by infection with this variant or by using vaccine boosters that raise antibody levels high enough to overcome Delta's ability to evade neutralisation."

Dr Shekhar C Mande, Director-General of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, said "These are very valuable insights and this understanding gained will help to plan for the future. This was possible in a short time frame due to multi-institutional collaborations, which highlight the importance of partnerships with complementary and diverse groups especially in such emergencies such as the Covid-19 pandemic and these must be

Manipuri woman found dead in Gurgaon

room."

New Delhi: A24-year-old woman from Manipur was found dead inside her house in Gurgaon. Police said the woman was taken from her home to a private hospital in Delhi where doctors declared her dead on arrival. According to police, the woman worked at a spa. ACP, Sadar, Aman Yadav said, "We didn't receive a PCR call or other information about the death. Delhi Police told us that the woman might have died inside her home in Gurgaon. A team was sent to Delhi. An autopsy will be conducted to ascertain the cause of death. There were no injuries on her body. No FIR has been registered yet." ENS

Jindal Global University postpones reopening

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

O P Jindal Global University (JGU) which was set to open its campus in a phased manner from October 22. Friday said it would not be doing so in light of a notification from the Haryana gov-

"As you are aware, we were planning to physically reopen the University in a phased manner with effect from Friday, October 22, 2021, for which we have received a substantial response from students. However, in a notification dated Friday. October 15, 2021, the Government of Haryana ex-

UBN No.: JDA2122WLOB00353

Raj. Samwad/C/2021-22/7257

To participate in the bid, bidder has to be :-

tended the lockdown for fully residential universities and directed all fully residential Universities in Haryana to conduct online classes," JGU Registrar Dabiru Sridhar Patnaik wrote in a communication to parents and guardians Friday.

"... under these circumstances, it is not feasible to physically reopen campus. There is hardly any time left in the Fall Semester of 2021 considering our Academic Calendar and the forthcoming winter break. Therefore, we will continue with the Fall Semester 2021 coursework in an ONLINE MODE...." he wrote.

Patnaik said JGU hoped to open the university in February.

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING BID

NIB No.: EE-(ROB/RUB)/03/2021-22

Online Bids are invited up to 6.00 PM of 25.10.2021 for "Procurement, installation

commissioning and testing of oxygen plant within one month turnkey basis

(Supply, installation, Civil/Mechanical/Electrical Work) with one year O&M and

two years warrantee as defect liability period at designated places (14) of the

state." estimated cost of Rs. 10.50 Crore. The last date of for applying bid and

Details may be seen in the Bidding Doucment at our office or the State Public

Procurement Portal website <u>www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in</u>,

1. Registered on JDA website www.jda.urban.rajasthan.gov.in For Participating in

the bid, the bidder has to apply for the bid and pay the Bidding Document Fee, RISL

Processing Fee online only and Bid Security can be Deposit online or through BG.

2. Registered on e-Procurement Portal of Government of Rajasthan

City Engineering Department

Corrigendum

Tender Notice No. NMMC/ C.E /147/2021-2022

Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation had invited tenders for the

following works as per the above tender notification number. The

date for sale, acceptance and opening of tender applications for

Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation

making online payment on JDA portal is up to 6.00 PM of 25.10.2021.

<u>www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in</u> and <u>www.jda.urban.rajasthan.gov.in</u>

www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in for online e-Bid submission.

technical reasons is being extended as follows

ASHNA BUTANI NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15 POINTING OUT how the Red Fort

grounds used to be packed on Dusshera and how it is almost empty today due to Covid restrictions, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said he hopes that the country "gets freedom from the Corona form of Ravana". He was speaking at the Ravan Dahan programme Friday where he was invited as a chief guest. He was felicitated by organis-

ers and members of the Luv Kush Ramlila Committee. He also watched the Ramlila and participated in the Aarti of Lord



May country be free from Corona form of

Kejriwal was the chief guest of the Ravan Dahan programme at Red Fort, Friday. Praveen Khanna

Ram, Laxman and Hanuman. In his address, he said, "All of us have seen Ramlila and how Lord Shri Ramchandra ji killed

Ravana. It is not the killing of any particular person. It is in a way the victory of Dharma over Adharma and the destruction of Adharma. As we have also

read in the Gita that whenever Adharma increases, then God destrovs Adharma in his own way.'

He said he used to attend the Ramlila every other year and pointed out the decrease in numbers. "I pray to Lord Shri Ram on this occasion that our entire country gets freedom

It has been one and a half-two years that we are battling this disease. If we all pray together today, then our collective prayer will have a great effect. I pray to God that everyone in our country remains healthy and all diseases are eradicated...' Viewers who used to earlier

from this Corona form of Ravana.

flock to the grounds to watch the Ramlila and the Ravan Dhavan watched the programme on YouTube and Facebook instead. Almost all live performances that took place in the city were being screened on social media. The Lav Kush Ramlila

Committee had made arrangements to ensure that viewers who could not attend, can watch the show online. The director, Naveen Chella, said, "At least 8-10 cameras have been set up and we have received good feedback online and live.

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION U.T., CHANDIGARH

First Floor, New Deluxe Building, Sector 17-E, Chandigarh Telephone No.: 0172-5025108, 5003206 E-mail ID: secchandigarh@gmail.com **E-TENDER NOTICE**

The State Election Commission, U.T. Chandigarh invites E-Tenders

for Providing Digital Videography / Photography Cameras. Tenders can be downloaded from https://etenders.chd.nic.in OFFICER ON SPECIAL DUTY

State Election Commission, U.T., Chandigarh

Date 13.10.202

09-11-2021

New Delhi

K.M.

K.M.

349.5



NORT

TENDER NOTICE No: S/2020/60

50211274

50210004

संत लौंगोवाल अभियांत्रिकी एवं प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology (Deemed to be University under MoE) Longowal–148106, Distt. Sangrur, Punjab

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-Tenders in two Bid System, i.e. Technical and Financial Bid are invited for the following works: (1) Repair/Up-gradation of Girls PG Hostel (27 Qtrs.) (Interior & Exterior) at SLIET

Longowal (2) Provision of Park Cum Play Ground Lights in Type-III & Type-V area at SLIET

Longowal. (3) SITC of street lights pole alongwith LED luminaries around the newly

constructed road between old & new EIE/ECE Block at SLIET Longowal. For detailed, terms & conditions, please visit www.sliet.ac.in

(भारत सरकार के अधीन सम विश्वविद्यालय

ITEMS

The Principal Chief Material Manager, North Western Railway, headquarter 4th floor

H WESTERN BAILWAY	SUPPLY OF STORES

H WESTERN RAILWAY	SUPPLY OF STO

SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS UGH E-PROCUREMENT TENDERS"

Nea of I	ar Jawahar cir	cle, Malviya Nagar, Jaipur-302017 for a ben E-tenders on www.ireps.gov.in sit 4.25 hrs.	and on be	ehalf of tl	he President
No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty	Unit	Due date
1.	50215197	SUPPLY AND COMMISSIONING OF SMPS BASED (IPS) SYSTEM SUITABLE FOR MID-SECTION INTERLOCKED LC GATES	14	Nos	02-11-2021
2.	30211966A	NARROW JAW ADAPTER	17131	Nos	05-11-2021
3.	30212138	POLY RING	12174	Nos	09-11-2021
		0.0114.0.1/0.0.144.014			

UNDERGROUND JELLY

PVC INSULATED CABLE

FILLED CABLE

		OLLE ET COTTE X TO CO ITIN					
6.	30211963	POH KIT FOR KEO TYPE DISTRIBUTOR VALVE	1478 Set			Set	16-11-2021
7.	70211822	PVC FLOORING (VINYL) FO NAC COACHES & AC COACH		2863 &55		SQM	17-11-2021
8.	70212225	PU PAINTING KIT		762		Set	25-11-2021
		CORRIGEND	UM				
No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Tend Notice			ting Due e & Qty	
1.	81211030	INDUSTRIAL COMPRESSED OXYGEN GAS FOR INDUSTRIAL USE	S/2020/58 Date: 20-09-2021		08-	10-2021	19-10-2021
2.	50210018	RELAY, AC IMMUNE, PLUG IN TYPE, STYLE QNA1	S/2020 Date: 04-10-		16-1	11-2021	12-11-2021
3.	50215093	SUPPLY INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF HIGH AVAILABILITY SINGLE SECTION DIGITAL AXLE COUNTERS (HASSDAC)			30-1	11-2021	To be Withdrawn
4.	60215043A	ARTHOSCOPIC SET & CAMC	1		02 S	et & Nos	1 Set

signatures and get them registered on above site and quote electronically only. (2) For viewing and participating in other tenders such as open tender costing below Rs. 25 Lakh, limited tenders, special limited tenders and low value tenders, please visit Please join us on 🧗 📘 /NWRailways

Husband bound to compensate wife for spending on major son: HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

IN A matrimonial dispute, the Delhi High Court has said that a father cannot be absolved of all the responsibilities to meet the education expenses of his son just because he may have attained the age of majority.

Iustice Subramonium Prasad said that the court cannot shut its eyes to the reality that simply attaining the age of a major does not translate into an understanding that the son is earning sufficiently. It added that at the age of 18, it can be safely assumed that the son is either graduating from Class XII or is in his first year of college.

"More often than not, it does not place him in a position wherein he can earn to sustain or maintain himself. It further places the entire burden on the mother to bear the expenses of educating the children without any contribution from the father, and this court cannot countenance such a situation," said Justice Prasad. The court said that the pur-

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY Open Tender through E-Tendering 2021-22 IIT-08-LWS-OPN-GCR-2021 Date: 14.10.202

1. Name of Work: RECERTIFICATION OF GREEN CO RATING OF DIESEL LOCO AND WAGON WORKSHOP AJMER (AS PER SCOPE OF WORK), 2 Estimated cost of work ,37,200.00/-3. Last Date and time fo submission and opening of E-tender : 08.11.2021 up to 15.00 PM E-Tender will be opened at 15.15 PM on same day. Due to indispensable reasons bic opening schedule may change. 4. Website particular where complete details of e-tender can be seen and participated :www.ireps.gov.in. (Note-This is E-tender so tenderer can participate through e-tendering process only on mentioned website within bidding

pose of CrPC section 125 is to ensure that the wife and children of the husband are not left in a state of destitution after the di-

"The husband must also carry the financial burden of making certain that his children are capable of attaining a position in society wherein they can sufficiently maintain themselves," it said.

The court further said that a father is bound to compensate the wife who, after spending on children, may "hardly be left with anything to maintain herself". The court made the observations in an order on an application seeking review of the order passed in June 2021 in which the husband was directed to pay Rs 15,000 per month as interim maintenance to his wife till their son completes his graduation or starts earning.

It was argued by the man that the Supreme Court has held that maintenance for children can be granted only if the children have not attained majority. In the case before the High Court, the son had attained majority in August 2018. The court was also told that the wife is a gazetted officer who earns more than Rs 70,000 per month and also gets education expenses from her employer.

The court said that in the majority of households, women are unable to work due to socio-cultural and structural impediments and thus cannot financially support themselves. However, in households where women are working and earning sufficiently to maintain themselves, the husband does not automatically stand absolved,

Tender Notice No. Tender application for sale and opening E-TENDER NOTICE Tender acceptance date E-Tender Notice No 62 to 68-21-22 Divl. Rly. Manager, N.W.Rly. Bikaner for period Dated 07/09/2021.

Executive Engineer-(ROB/RUB-I)

Tender Notice Dated No.NMMC/CE/147/ 29/10/2021 at from 10.00 am To 2021-22 Dated 29/10/2021, 4.00 pm till 3.00 pm (if Possible) Detailed new information about this tender has been published

on the website of Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation https://nmmc.gov.in and https://nmmc.etenders.in

CITY ENGINEER Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation NMMC PR Adv no./896/2021

WESTERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM TO e-AUCTION SALE PROGRAMME

Additional e-auction Sale program during OCT, 2021 for P. WAY & Other various Scrap
Please refer to this ofce e-Auction Sale Program No. SIII/Auction Programme-1/OCT-2021 dt.13/09/2021, following additional E-auction program for disposal of P. Way scrap & other various scrap material will also be held in OCT, 2021 in addition to existing for following depot and

aivisions:			
Depot/ Divisions	Additional e-Auction program of OCT, 2021	Depot Officer in charge	Contact No.
BVP	25/10/2021	Deputy Chief Materials Manager-BVP	02782444360 09724097750
RTM	28/10/2021	Sr. Divisional Materials Manager-RTM	07412230080 09752492750
BRC	29/10/2021	Sr. Divisional Materials Manager-BRC	02652641592 9724091750

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged. Please visit Western Railway Website of material Management Department i.e. www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in as well as on

www.ireps.gov.in e-auction portal for further information. (SIII/Auction Programme-2/OCT-2021-22 Dt.14/10/2021)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, DLF Limited has applied t Director, Town & Country Planning Haryana, Chandigarh (DTCP), for revisio of layout plan of plotted colony, namely, DLF measuring 1.773 acres, in Sectors 27, 28 & 43. Gurugram.

Vide this public notice objections if any, are hereby invited from any of the existing allottees who have purchased/booked plots. A copy of the earlier approved layout plans bearing Drawing no. DTCP-1735 dated 11.11.2008 and the layout plans now proposed to be revised bearing memo no. LC-1838/AD(RA)/ 2021/26475 dated 14.10.21 is available for perusal on our website (www.dlf.in). The said layout plans can also be perused in the office of undersigned at DLF Limited, 1st Floor, DLF Gateway Tower, DLF City, Phase III, Gurugram 122002.

Any existing allottee having any objection on the revised layout plans, may file their objection in the office of the Senior Town Planner, Gurugram, Sector 14, Gurugram within 30 days of publication of this notice failing which it shall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed revision i

the layout plans Neelu Goel For M/s DLF Limited 3rd Floor, Shopping Mall, Arjun Marg, DLF City Phase I, Gurugram CIN No. L70101HR1963PLC002484

Date: 16.10.2021

Place: Gurugram

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

and on behalf of President of India invite open E-Tender for the following works up to 15.00 hours on 08.11.2021 as below: Tender No. 62. Name of Work with its Location: TFR of GRSP - 148.061 km 117.634 km under ADEN/SDLP. Approx Cost of work : ₹26055780.09 Tende No. 63. Name of Work with its Locati : Renewal of GRSP - 203.961 km, GFN Liner - 52.638 km & Metal Liner - 129.26 km in the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN/East under control of ADEN/Bhiwani. **Approx**. Cost of work: ₹33810045.14 Tender No 64. Name of Work with its Location TFR of GRSP - 220.859 km, GFN Liner 41.559 km & Metal Liner -160.76 km ir the jurisdiction of DEN/North under control of ADEN-II/HMH. Approx. Cost of work: ₹ 35481440.80 Tender No.-6 Name of Work with its Location Supply of drinking Water to Gang huts, L kings, gate lodges, stations and labou working in the section of ADEN/Bhiwani (For 22 months) Approx. Cost of work ₹3432261.56 Tender No. 66. Name of Work with its Location: Supply of drinking water at various locations over Ratangarh sub-division under ADEN N.W.Rly-RTGH (For two year). Approx Cost of work: ₹3233228.40 Tender No. Name of Work with its Location Cleaning and disinfection by pumping method of various water storages infrastructure at various stations in the urisdiction, of DEN/South - N.W.RLY Bikaner under control of ADEN/RTGH N.W.Rly. (For two years). Approx. Cos of work: ₹1121640.00. Tender No. 68 Name of Work with its Location: TFR of GRSP - 163.162 km, GFN Liner - 16.199 km & Metal Liner-133.254 km under ADEN/RTGH. Approx. Cost of work: ₹23441408.37 Note: Other terms & conditions will be shown on the website

Please join us on 🕴 📘 /NWRailways

GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



EYE ON UP POLLS

THERE HAS been much speculation on whether Imran Masood, a prominent minority face of the Congress in western Uttar Pradesh, will leave the party. For he had earlier this month said that Samajwadi Party was the only option to defeat the BJP in the state and that all parties should "come along with it". He had argued that despite all the hard work, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is "failing to consolidate votes or get votes" in favour of the party. Amid all this, Masood was on Friday named as one of the members of the Election campaign committee announced by the Congress. It appears the party leadership believes he will not switch sides.

BEYOND BOUNDARIES

DURGA PUJA knows no boundaries. Not just in India, the festival is celebrated overseas as well. In Russia, Indian Ambassador D B Venkatesh Verma along with the Moscow Durga Puja Committee released a book on the auspicious occasion of Vijaya Dashmi, chronicling 30 years of Durga Puja in Russia. The Indian envoy was impressed by the scale of festivities in Moscow that have been taking place for the past three

WEAPON WORSHIP

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Friday attended the Ayudh Puja organised on the occasion of Vijaya Dashami. On this occasion, Singh himself worshiped and inspected weapons. "There is a long tradition in India of 'Ayudha Puja' on the occasion of Vijayadashami," he tweeted, tagging photographs of him holding guns.

Badal Sr urges all parties to fight Centre's BSF move

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 15

SAD PATRIARCH and former Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal on Friday called upon all political parties in the state to "stop fighting among themselves and wage a united fight against the Centre's move to turn Punjab into a Union Territory through the back door by handing it over to the Central security forces

In a written statement, Badal said, "This move will fur-

Cong announces UP committees,

LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 15

THE ALL India Congress Pradesh.

has been given charge of the

nounced the formation of an election manifesto committee under former Union minister Salman Khursheed. It also decided to form a "chargesheet" committee under Acharya Pramod Krishnam, who had contested last poll as Congress candidate but was recently seen riding with Pragatisheel Singh Yadav during the latter's rath yatra.

leaving the party and others showing signs of resentment, the Congress has also expanded the state unit by giving approval to the appointment of three new vice-presidents, 12 general secretaries and 31 secretaries, among others.

The 20-member election campaign committee, which would be chaired by Punia, would have former Union minister Pradeep Jain Aditya as its convenor, along with a mix of veteran and new faces within the

CWC meets today, Cong leaders say this is no time for party polls

MANOJCG NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

AHEAD of the first meeting of the **Congress Working Committee** (CWC) in five months on Saturday, the chances of the party announcing organisational elections, including to the post of party president, seemed bleak. On the eve of the meeting, several Congress leaders, including members of the Group of 23 who have been seeking sweeping changes in the party structure, argued that the party should not go in for polls now and should focus on the forthcoming Assembly elections in five states.

The G-23 leaders also indicated that they would not oppose if the high-powered body decides to put off organisational elections once again in view of the elections. Many members of the CWC whom The Indian Express spoke to favoured the continuation of Sonia Gandhi as interim president.

"There will be continuously elections in one or the other state or group of states till 2024. I think the party's priority should be to win these elections or consolidating our position, instead of thinking of these issues...there are bigger challenges before the nation... But any-

KANCHAN VASDEV

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 15

NAVJOT SINGH Sidhu has with-

drawn his resignation as Punjab

Congress chief and will soon re-

sume his duties, party general sec-

retary in-charge Harish Rawat

said Friday after the cricketer-

turned-politician met Rahul

Gandhi in Delhi and was "as-

sured" that whatever concerns he

came a day after he met AICC gen-

eral secretary (organisation) KC

Venugopal and Rawat at the AICC

headquarters. Rawat was also

present during Sidhu's meeting

with Gandhi, which stretched on

the media: "Whatever concerns I

had, I shared those with Rahul ji.

All those concerns are sorted out".

He refused to speak anything

tweeted: "I have shared my con-

about his resignation. He later

After the meeting, Sidhu told

for one-and-a-half hours.

Sidhu's meeting with Gandhi

had will be sorted out.



Preparations for the CWC meeting in Delhi. Anil Sharma

way, if the party feels there should be elections, we are ready for elections also," CWC member Harish Rawat told The Indian Express.

Some of the leaders of the G-23, however, added that the CWC can decide the timeline for holding the membership drive, which was last held in 2016-17, in the run up to the organisational elections. "We have not had a member-

ship drive for five-six years. So how can we hold organisational elections?...But the coming Assembly elections are the priority," a G-23 leader said.

"It's useless to hold elections at this point, who will hold the party together? Till the point Sonia Gandhi is there, the party is on

Sidhu meets Rahul; Rawat says

he will stay Punjab Cong chief

Sidhu's meeting with Rahul

leaders K C Venugopal and

Harish Rawat

came a day after he met Cong

cerns with @RahulGandhi Ji, was

assured they will be sorted out."

the media that Sidhu told Gandhi

that he has withdrawn his resig-

nation. "Sidhu shared his concerns

with Rahul Gandhi and he was

told that those would be taken

care of. He assured Rahul Gandhi

that he has withdrawn his resig-

nation and will resume his dutie

as the PPCC chief," Rawat told the

Rawat, on the other hand, told

track, functioning. When she steps down, even that will stop. Right now, in every state, there is confusion...So at such a time, everybody has faith in Sonia Gandhi, she is a unifying force," another senior leader, who is considered loyal to the family, said, on the question of electing a new president.

The CWC is expected to adopt a couple of resolutions, and many leaders felt the lead taken by Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in the Lakhimpur Kheri incident will come in for wholesome praise.

An AICC office-bearer wondered if anything would emerge from the meeting apart from this. With permanent invitees, special

Sidhu had stepped down as as

Punjab Congress chief on

September 28 and posted his res-

ignation letter on Twitter. The

party leadership had not decided

Sources in the AICC said that

It is learnt that Sidhu was told

Sidhu was kept waiting at Punjab

Bhawan for the meeting which

that he would have to deal with

general secretary in-charge Rawat

and would not have a direct line

to Gandhi siblings. The party top

leadership, it is learnt, was miffed

with Sidhu for tweeting his resig-

nation and hitting out at Punjab

CM Charanjit Singh Channi's gov-

waiting for Sidhu to announce a

withdrawal of his resignation. At

least three rapprochement meet-

ings took place with Sidhu — first

in presence of AICC observer

Venugopal and Rawat, and on

Friday with Gandhi and Rawat.

The party leadership had been

ernment on social media.

on his resignation yet.

took place at 8 pm.

2 years of uncertainty

IT'S been two years since Rahul Gandhi resigned as Congress president and Sonia Gandhi was brought back to the helm as an interim arrangement, Many leaders believe she should continue while a large section is hoping for the return of Rahul. Whatever the decision, it is time the grand old party put its house in order as another set of crucial elections loom.

invitees, CMs, all speaking, the refrain "will be over-repetitive". the leader said. "Evervone will be keen to impress Sonia Gandhi, Rahul and Priyanka... I don't know what constructive thing will come out'

Another leader said that it would be the resolutions that are adopted which would be the most significant thing at the meeting, apart from "the stand we take on

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Manmohan at **AIIMS: Cong** slams Mandaviya for 'photo-op'

New Delhi: The Congress on Friday slammed Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya for allegedly taking a photographer along while visiting former prime minister Manmohan Singh at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, saying that for the BJP everything is about a "photo-op".

The party also demanded that the Health Minister apologise.

The Congress's attack came after the former PM's daughter. Daman Singh, accused the minister of getting a photographer against the wishes of the family.

Congress' chief spokesperson Randeen Suriewala said for the BIP people everything is a "photo-op".

Singh was admitted to the AI-IMS here on Wednesday evening after he complained of weakness following fever. The 89-year-old leader has been admitted to a private ward in the cardincentre and is under the care of a team of cardiologists.

the states in the country to decide

Thackeray further said that

and called for a debate on Centrestate relations He said the threat to Hindutva was from "neo-Hindus" who have "used Hindutva to come to power

Thackeray was speaking at the

"What are the rights of the

state affairs," said Thackeray. "If the Centre interferes in the discussion on the federal strucnot happen and cannot be toler-

VISHWAS WAGHMODE MUMBAI. OCTOBER 15

MAHARASHTRA CHIEF Minister and Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray on Friday said the BJP was behaving "like a jilted lover throwing acid on Maharashtra",

Uddhav at Shiv Sena's Dussehra rally in Mumbai. Express

Uddhav: Threat

'neo-Hindus'

to Hindutva from

Calls for debate on federal structure

but are now adopting Britishers' divide and rule policy".

party's annual Dussehra rally.

Centre and of the states? At the time of making the Constitution, questions were raised...asking whether the states will have to bow down to the Centre. Babasaheb Ambedkar had firmly said that like the Centre, the states too have sovereign rights and will not have to bow down to the Centre. In three scenarios such as an emergency, foreign affairs and invasion by foreign powers, the Centre has powers to interfere in

working of the state, it will be unconstitutional. Let there be an open ture... I want the opinions of intellectuals and constitutional experts on this issue... But if the Constitution has given us sovereign rights as the Centre, then the

on this." the Shiv Sena chief added.

Hindutya is under threat from the "neo-Hindus". "The threat to Hindutva is not from others but from the 'neo-Hindus'...Those who have used the ladder of Hindutva to come to power. They are now adopting the strategy of the British of divide and rule to retain power and enjoy the fruits of power," he added.

He hit out at the BJP, alleging that they were defaming Maharashtra by showing that drugs are only caught in Maharashtra. The court has directed officials to probe the Mundra port where drugs worth crores of rupees were found. You merely find a pinch of ganja while my police bust drugs worth Rs 150 crore... You catch a celebrity and beat drums over it,

click pictures," said the CM. "At a time when companies are leaving China, Maharashtra is trying to attract them and take the state forward...They (BJP) are throwing acid on us like jilted lovers," said Thackeray.

Taking a dig at the BJP over the recent statements of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on V D Savarkar, the Sena chief said the BIP hasn't understood Savarkar and Gandhi both. "We are celebrating the Amrut Mahotsav...but these people were not part of the Independence movement.'

He asked the BIP not to hide behind Central investigative agen-

> **FULL REPORT ON** www.indianexpress.com

campaign panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

Committee has announced poll panels for the upcoming Assembly elections in Uttar While former MP P L Punia

election campaign committee, Rajesh Mishra will head the election strategy committee to Rajesh Mishra and former MP and former state party chief Nirmal Khatri will lead the election co-ordination committee. The Congress has rean-

Samajwadi Party chief Shivpal

With some office-bearers

PM: New CM a silent worker... Gujarat PL Punia to head will see all-round development under him

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE VADODARA OCTOBER 15

ther weaken the already en-

dangered federal structure of

the country and will reduce the

state government to the status

of municipality. This will be a

severe blow to the pride and

dignity of Punjabis...If we don't

stop our mutual fights for petty

stakes, the Centre will merrily

take advantage of our weak-

He said that "there is also

strong ground to believe that the

Centre might be preparing to rob

on its river waters to crush the

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday praised Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and expressed confidence that under him, Gujarat would see "all round development at top speed", referring to the newlyappointed CM as a "silent worker" who has held public offices for over 25 years.

Modi was virtually addressing a gathering at an event organised by the Saurashtra Patel Seva Samai for the foundation stonelaying ceremony of the first phase of a hostel - that will accommodate 1,500 students in Surat.

"I am acquainted with Patel for over 25 years as a party worker. It is a matter of pride that he is a CM who is as technology savvy as much as he is connected to his roots. His

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AHEAD OF the Goa assembly elec-

tions early next year, the

Trinamool Congress (TMC)

opened its office in the state on

Friday and inducted women lead-

ers even as state Chief Minister

Pramod Sawant said the Congress

was the main Opposition for the

arena that already has, apart from

BIP and Congress, parties such as

AAP, Goa Forward Party (GFP) and

Maharashtrawadi Gomantak

"I would say the Congress

TMC is the latest entrant in the

PANAJI, OCTOBER 15

BIP in the state.



CM Bhupendra Patel addresses the event in Surat, with PM Narendra Modi virtually present. Hanif Malek

As TMC opens office, Goa CM says Cong main Opp

experience will help Gujarat in development...In these 25 years, he has grown from the ground. His experience will drive Gujarat's development in top speed..."

Referring to Patel's family as being "spiritual", Modi said that

Sawant marks the RSS

Dussehra in Bicholim. ANI

foundation day and

it was a matter of pride that Patel had an unblemished track record. "Gujaratis should feel proud that even after being in public life and holding high positions for 25 years, there has not been a single controversy or alle-

party is our Opposition. It is a na-

tional party and it has been in the

state," Sawant told a news chan-

nel on Friday. Taking a potshot at

the TMC that entered the state

with the slogan 'Goenchi navi

sakal (Goa's new dawn)' and the

GFP, Sawant said, "Let anyone's

dawn come, let anyone's dusk

come, let anyone go forward or

backward. A lot of parties are com-

Sawant also said that the anti-

incumbency factor did not worry

him because he has served as the

CM only for three years though

fice in Panaji on the occasion of

Dussehra. It also announced the

The TMC opened the party of-

the BJP rule has lasted a decade.

ing here. Let them come."

gation against him... He doesn't speak much...his father was deeply connected to spiritual teachings. Being a man of such values, Gujarat will make all round progress under his leadership... It is my request to all of you to undertake a pledge to contribute in some way to Gujarat as part of the ongoing Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav..."

Expressing confidence that India would soon emerge as the strongest economy, the PM said, "The speed at which our economy has revived after the Covid-19 crisis, the world has a lot of expectations from India. An international organisation has recently said that India will become the world's fastest growing economy. I am confident Gujarat, as always, will do its best and contribute to the nation **FULL REPORT ON** building."

www.indianexpress.com

induction of women leaders, in-

cluding Diskshan Talavanekar, for-

mer executive committee mem-

ber of the BIP Goa Mahila Morcha,

and social activist Swati Kerkar.

earlier associated with the AAP

and the Congress. The party also

inducted activist Jayesh

Shetgaonkar who runs the 'Goa Against Coal' campaign.

Modi is expected to interact with beneficiaries and stakeholders in

the state government-run

Swayampurna Goa scheme on

October 23. The Chief Minister is

expected to review the scheme

and interact with its beneficiaries,

for "identification and selection"

for the interaction with the PM.

Prime Minister Narendra

'Distressing... have some shame': Shah targets Savarkar critics **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

DAYS AFTER Defence Minister Rainath Singh said the demonization of Vinavak Damodar Savarkar would not be tolerated any more, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said it was distressing to see people questioning the patriotism of the Hindutva icon. He said the title of Veer was bestowed upon Savarkar by 130 crore Indians to acknowledge his courage and patriotism.

"Veer Savarkar was not given the title of Veer by any government but by the 130 crore Indians to acknowledge his courage and patriotism. Some people are raising questions on his life today. It is very distressing," Shah said in his address to a gathering at Port Blair cellular iail in Andaman and Nicobar.

"You are questioning the patriotism of the person who was sentenced to two life imprisonments. You are questioning the courage of the man who jumped from a steamer and decided to fight for India's freedom and go to France... the man who endured the tyranny of manually pressing



Home Minister Amit Shah pays tribute to V D Savarkar at Cellular Jail in Andaman and Nicobar on Friday. Twitter

out 30 pounds of oil [a day]. Have some shame. Come here and you will not ask these questions any more," Shah said.

According to Shah, when he visited the jail last time there was an Amar Jyoti (a continuously burning lamp) from where Savarkar's name had been removed. He said he got it placed there again. "Savarkar made this jail a pilgrimage. He gave a message to the whole of India that no

matter how much tyranny you unleash, you cannot deprive me of my rights and my country of its freedom," he said. The Home Minister said Savarkar had all facilities to lead a good life but dedicated his life to the nation. "He wrote a book on 1857 and perhaps it is the only book that was banned before it could be published," Shah said. "Such a thinker, littérateur, a man of such courage is being subjected to controversies.

Seeking to spread wings, JJP asks EC to reserve party symbol in 6 states

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 15

SEEKING TO spread wings in states outside Haryana, the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) has written to the Election Commission of India requesting

polls in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Gujarat. The party has also made the same request for municipal polls in the Union Territory of Chandigarh.

Currently, the JJP, led by Dushyant Chautala has 10 MLAs in the 90-member Haryana

Party president Ajay Chautala, said, "JJP has asked EC to reserve our party symbol for Assembly polls in six states. We have apprised EC that our party fulfils all the requisite norms for the upcoming Assembly polls and thus demand that our symbol - the key - should be allotted to us."

$key-in\,the\,up coming\,Assembly$ **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

to reserve its party symbol — the

UTTAR PRADESH 11 die after tractor-trolley overturns

Ihansi: At least 11 people, including four children, were killed on Friday after their tractor-trolley overturned when the driver suddenly applied the brakes to avoid an animal, police said. Six people were also injured in the accident that occurred in Chirgaon area. A senior policeman said around 30 families from Madhya Pradesh's Pandokhar were going to a temple in Erach in the tractor-trolley. The injured people have been hospitalised, he said. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in a statement, expressed grief over the mishap and directed officials to provide

Students force teacher to kneel over fee hike

adequate medical treat-

ment to the injured. PTI

Jhansi: ATinsukia: A teacher was allegedly forced to kneel and apologise before her students who were protesting against a fee hike in Assam's Tinsukia district. The district administration has ordered a magisterial-level enquiry into the incident, which took place on October 11. A video of the woman kneeling with folded hands has been shared widely on social media. It has sparked condemnation by the opposition Congress, A senior leader of the All Assam Students Union, who was among the protestors, has been expelled from the organisation. He allegedly instigated the students of Philobari Secondary School. PTI

RAJASTHAN

Cop son 'drives car off road'; 1 dead, 2 hurt

Indhnur: One per killed and two others were injured when a speeding car allegedly hit multiple vehicles in Jodhpur, police said Friday. The incident took place late Thursday night on Chopasni Road. The deceased was identified as Sadakat Ali, who was sitting on a scooter parked off road, police said. The car was allegedly being driven by the son of a police inspector at a very high speed, they said. Zaid Ali (18) had borrowed the car from his neighbour and had gone on a drive with his friends, said police. On his way back home, he lost balance as he jumped speed breakers near a private hospital, they said. "The car hit a street-side vendor, then a scooter, and finally a motorcycle," said an officer.

PM push to Atmanirbhar Bharat: Goal is to make India major military power

KRISHN KAUSHIK

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

THE GOAL of the Atmanirbhar Bharat, or self-reliant India campaign is to make India one of the biggest military powers in the world by developing a modern military industry in the country, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday as he inaugurated seven new Defence Public Sector Units (DPSUs). The units have been carved out of the erstwhile Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) which became defunct at the end of September.

"Atmanirbhar Bharat abhiyaan ke tahat desh ka lakshya bharat ko apne dum par duniya ki badi sainya taakat banana ka hai. bharat mein aadhunik sainya institute ke vikaas ka hai. (Under the self-reliant India campaign, country's goal is to make India a major military power on its own, and to develop a modern military industry)," he said.

The seven new DPSUs, that commenced business from October 1, are: Munitions India

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE POLICE in Uttar Pradesh's

Lalitpur district have arrested

seven people who allegedly raped

a 17-year-old girl over the last five

years. Those arrested include the

victim's father and district presi-

dents of the Samajwadi Party and

cused 28 people of allegedly rap-

ing her. Besides the father and the

political leaders, the victim's relatives and local residents are

The police have got the girl

"We have so far arrested seven

medically examined. They have

also recorded her statement be-

persons including the girl's father

Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan

Samaj Party," said a police officer.

girl's mother had accused her hus-

SANJANA BHALERAO

AN ADULT female leopard was

trapped early Friday morning in

a cage set up by the state forest

department in Mumbai's Aarey

Milk Colony. Traps had been set

up after a spate of leopard at-

tacks in the city since August 31.

Friday is not the one behind the

attacks and will be released into

the wild, the forest department

stated. This is the second leop-

ardess that the forest depart-

Sunil Limaye, principal chief

conservator of forests (wildlife),

ment has caught.

However, the leopard caught

MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

This officer added that the

Mumbai: 2nd leopard caught,

not the one behind attacks

The student of class XI had ac-

Bahujan Samaj Party.

among the accused.

LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 15

UP TEEN ALLEGES RAPE BY 28

7 held for 17-yr-old's rape;

among them, local SP, BSP

leaders and victim's father



PM Narendra Modi inaugurates seven new defence companies via videoconference Friday. ANI

Limited (MIL); Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (AVANI); Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited (AWE India); Troop Comforts Limited (TCL) (Troop Comfort Items): Yantra India Limited (YIL); India Optel Limited (IOL) and Gliders India Limited (GIL).

The PM said that as India entered its 75th year of Independence, the country is making "new resolutions to build a new future".

"The decision to revamp 41 Ordnance Factories and the

band of sexually assaulting their

curity to the victim and her family.

victim, along with her mother, vis-

ited a police station in Lalitpur on

October 12 and alleged that she

was gangraped over the last five

was in class VI, her father raped her

after forcibly showing her porno-

hotels in the town where multi-

ple people raped her. She had re-

mained silent in the face of threats

from her father. Later, she con-

fided in her mother, said the po-

lice. The police have registered an

FIR on multiple charges, including

gang rape, against 25 named and

Police Nikhil Pathak said the po-

lice are collecting records and

CCTVs footage from the hotels

said, "On Friday morning, a fe-

male leopard got trapped in one

of the trap cages. The rosette pat-

tern was matched with the cam-

era trap picture of the suspected

leopard that we have. (But) the

animal that was trapped is not

five cage traps and 19 camera

traps in the area earlier this

month. The suspected leopard

has been recorded near the cage

trap. Since August 31, eight peo-

ple in Aarey Colony, including a

68-year-old woman and a four-

year-old child, sustained injuries

after they were attacked by a

leopard. A sub-adult leopard was

captured on October 1.

The forest department put

the suspected animal."

where the teen was assaulted.

three unidentified people.

graphic videos, said the police.

The girl alleged that when she

Later, he took her to different

The police have provided se-

According to the police, the

10-year-old son as well.

Need for innovation

> WHILE THE goal of self-reliance in defence is noble, making these seven new DPSUs as the Atmanirbhar engine in defence will require more that just restructuring of the now defunct OFB. They would need to instill a culture of innovation to meet the needs of future, something that has eluded the existing DPSUs.

launch of seven new companies is a part of this resolution journey of the country. This decision was pending for the last 15-20 years...the ordnance factories, with over 150 years of experience, were once counted among the most powerful institutions in the world"

"After Independence, we needed to upgrade these facto-

ries, adopt new age technology. But they were not given much attention, and over time, India became dependent on foreign countries for its strategic needs.' he said.

Today, he said there is "more transparency, trust, and technology driven approach in the defence sector of the country than ever before" and added that "many major reforms have happened in the defence sector".

He urged the new companies to focus on innovation and research, saying, "you not only have to match the world's biggest companies, but also take the lead in future technology. So, it is important that you think new, and give maximum opportunity to research oriented

Modi said that the seven new DPSUs have been given orders worth Rs 65,000 crore. All of these are indents pending with the OFB which have been converted to more accountable con-

Trying to placate the employees of these companies as

many unions opposed the corporatisation of OFB, Modi said under the new arrangement "the talent that we have in our ordnance factories, who want to innovate, will get complete freedom to showcase their talent.. With your expertise, the products that you will show by making them will not only increase the capacity of India's defence sector, but will also remove the gap that had come after

Independence."

Speaking before Modi's video message was played, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the idea behind corporatisation of the OFB by dividing its 41 factories among the seven new DPSUs is "to promote self-reliance in order to improve the functioning, and defence preparedness of the armed forces". He said the "objective of this restructuring is to transform ordnance factories into productive, and profitable assets; improve expertise in the product range; increase in competitiveness; and enhance the quality and cost-ef-

Searches at firms linked to Ajit Pawar: I-T says Rs 184 cr in unaccounted income

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

THE INCOME Tax (I-T) Department on Friday said it unearthed unaccounted income worth Rs 184 crore after its searches on October 7 at premises of two real estate groups in Mumbai linked to the family of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

Without naming Pawar or his kin, the tax authority said the evidence gathered by it during the searches carried out at about 70 premises spread across Mumbai, Pune, Baramati, Goa and Jaipur revealed "several prima-facie unaccounted and enami transactions".

"Incriminating documents evidencing unaccounted income of about Rs 184 crore of the two groups have been found," said the tax agency in a statement on Friday.

On October 7, the tax department had carried out searches on a firm where Pawar's son, Parth, is a director; a few firms owned by Pawar's sisters; two real estate firms linked to Pawar; and premises of directors of four sugar mills across the state reportedly indirectly linked to the Pawar family.

At the time, Pawar had said he had no problem with the searches against him but was upset that his sisters were being involved. "We pay taxes every year. Since I am the finance minister, I am aware of fiscal discipline. All entities linked to me have paid taxes," he had said.

"I am upset because (premises of) my sisters, who got married 35-40 years ago, have been raided. If they were raided as Ajit Pawar's relatives, then people must think about it... the way the agencies are being used," he said, adding that the tax department was in a better position to



to the searches.

The I-T department said in its statement Friday that the two real estate companies infused unaccounted funds across several companies through "suspicious" transactions with the "involvement of an influential family of Maharashtra".

"The search action has led to identification of transactions by these business groups with a web of companies which, prima facie, appear to be suspicious. A preliminary analysis of the flow of funds indicates that there has been an introduction of unaccounted funds in the group by way of various dubious methods like introduction of bogus share premium, suspicious unsecured loans, receipt of unsubstantiated advance for certain services, collusive arbitration deals out of non-existent disputes, etc. It has been observed that such suspicious flow of funds has taken place with the involvement of an influential family of Maharashtra," said the

According to the agency, the unaccounted funds have been used for "acquisition of various assets such as an office building at a prime locality in Mumbai, flat in posh locality in Delhi, resort in Goa, agricultural lands in Maharashtra and investments in sugar mills".

"The book value of these assets aggregates to about Rs 170 crore," said the tax authority.

Apart from this, the department seized unaccounted cash worth Rs 2.13 crore and jewellery worth Rs 4.32 crore from the two companies during the

Into The Sunset

An idol of Durga is immersed in the sea off Mumbai on Friday evening. Amit Chakravarty

Man-eater that killed four in Nilgiris trapped

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA UDHAGAMANDALAM

(TAMIL NADU), OCTOBER 15

AN ELUSIVE man-eating tiger that killed four people in Tamil Nadu's Nilgiris district has been trapped after being shot with tranquilizer darts twice in the last 14 hours, forest officials said on Friday

The tiger had been a menace to residents of Gudalur and Masinagudi areas. Its most recent victim was an 85-year-old man. It had also killed over 20 head of cattle and goats, said the officials, who have been trying to trap it since September 25.

Though there were reports of forest officials receiving orders to shoot the tiger, code named T23, wildlife activists approached the Madras High Court which directed the officials to trap the animal without killing it. The court, passing interim orders last week, asked the officials to see to it that few people enter the forest to capture the big cat.

Top Maoist leader RK dies; wife says suffered from kidney ailment

SREENIVAS JANYALA HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 15

TOP MAOIST leader Akkiraju Haragopal, alias RK, died in the forests of south Bastar in Chhattisgarh on Wednesday, his wife said on Friday. A. Sirisha attributed his death to renal failure.

Sirisha, who resides in Tangutur town of Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam district, said: "I received information from a party member that he died on Wednesday and his last rites were performed on Thursday. He was suffering from kidney disease but he could not consult a doctor as police kept hospitals under surveillance. He died because he was denied treatment this way."

Maoist Central Committee spokesperson Abhay said in a statement that RK died in the early hours of October 14.

Special Intelligence Branch officials say the CPI-Maoist Central Committee Member and in-charge of Andhra Orissa



Akkiraju Haragopal alias RK died in Bastar. File

Border Special Zonal Committee was an Arts graduate who worked as a teacher for a short while before joining the erstwhile People's War Group (PWG) about 30 years ago.

He rose through the ranks, operating first in Guntur district and then moving to the Nallamala forests.

He was involved in several attacks on police stations, looting arms and ammunition and went underground.

He was also allegedly involved in the March 2000 killing of Telegu Desam Party minister A Madhav Reddy whose vehicle was blown up on the Ghatkesar overbridge in his native Bhongir in Nalgonda. RK was later appointed secretary of Andhra erstwhile CPI (ML).

RK was active in the Nallamala forests till September 2004 despite major setbacks against Andhra Police's anti-Maoist force and Greyhound commandos

When the then Chief Minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy offered to hold peace talks, RK and 10 other Manist leaders walked out of the forests on October 11, 2004 after years of being on the run. The talks, however, didn't go well and the Maoist leaders went back into the forests, and RK was never was seen again.

Sirisha, alias Padma, is herself a former Maoist. She was arrested by the Odisha Police from Dudhari in Koraput District on November 13, 2010, when she was on her way to meet RK and their son Prithvi in the forests of Koraput, Sirisha had last met them in October 2005 when she surrendered and was rehabilitated by the then Andhra Pradesh government.

Court rejects plea to cancel 'look-out' against ex-CFO of firm linked to Nirav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

A SPECIAL court on Thursday rejected an application seeking to cancel a look-out circular (LOC) issued against the former chief financial officer of a firm linked to fugitive jeweller Nirav Modi.

Ravi Gupta, who was named as an accused in the Punjab National Bank (PNB) 'fraud' case. had sought to cancel the LOC against him, stating that it was preventing him from traveling abroad for his work.

Gupta said that he had cooperated with the CBI probe and had appeared before the agency 31 times. He pointed out that he had neither been arrested in connection with the case nor chargesheeted. Gupta said he was shocked to learn of the LOC and had requested CBI to cancel

it, but it was not done. CBI opposed Gupta's plea, stating that Firestar International Ltd and Firestar Diamond International Pvt Ltd, linked to Modi. had cheated PNB of Rs 321.88 crore. The agency pointed out that Gupta had held a key position in the first company. It said that the investigation was still on and there was a likelihood of him

fleeing the country. The CBI also said that the court did not have the jurisdiction to cancel the LOC. The court agreed with the CBI's contention, stating that the LOC was not issued by the court but by an investigating

officer during investigation. "...issuance of the LOC is purely action with the object of securing the presence of suspect/accused as it is an executive action...In my opinion, this court is not having any inherent jurisdiction to cancel the same. No doubt, the LOC can be cancelled by the court but only when it has been issued by the court. Herein. the LOC under challenge is not issued by this court," said Special Judge AS Sayyad.

Govts should return temple property; need population policy: RSS chief

At annual Dussehra address, Bhagwat flags 'unregulated' streaming content, 'clandestine' Bitcoin and drug trade

VIVEK DESHPANDE NAGPUR, OCTOBER 15

RASHTRIYA Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat Friday called upon governments to return all temple property under their control to "Hindu society" and repeated the organisation's demand for a population policy to tackle what it claims is a "demo-

graphic imbalance". Addressing RSS volunteers at the annual Vijaya Dashami programme in Nagpur, Bhagwat said most Hindu temples in south India are controlled by the government, "Many temples in India are also run by trusts. In both cases, we find instances of good

and bad management," he said. "It is necessary and only

reasonable that the operating rights of Hindu temples be handed over to the Hindu devotees and the wealth of the Hindu temples is utilised for the worship of the deities and the welfare of the Hindu community only." he demanded. Bhagwat did not speak about

the Lakhimpur Kheri incident where a motorcade allegedly led by a Union Minister's son mowed down four farmers. He said, without mentioning any particular incident, "Different kinds of topsy-turvy (ulte-sidhe) incidents happen in a vast country like ours. But we should adopt a language that will unite the people and not divide them."

The RSS chief called for a population policy that could be used for the next 50 years. "We will have to be sure of the needs



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat during his Dussehra speech in Nagpur on Friday. ANI

of the population then and the requirements of the young population necessary to take care of the older ones. But along with the balance of population, we will also have to take care of the

growing demographic imbalance being observed over the last few years," Bhagwat said.

Reminding the government of the RSS resolution of 2015 in this regard, Bhagwat said: "In the

present circumstances, news of persecution of native Hindus, growing criminalisation and a mounting pressure on them to escape their areas where an imbalanced population growth have surfaced. The violence that broke out following the elections of West Bengal and the pitiable condition of the Hindu people there can also be attributed to the appeasement of barbarous elements by the government and population imbalance."

"A policy that is applicable to all groups in the same fashion is imperative. 'Infiltrators' must be deprived of citizenship," he said.

The RSS chief also claimed Iammu and Kashmir has begun reaping the benefits of the repeal of Article 370. "But extremists have started targeted violence to disturb peace and lower the public morale. Government must efficiently deal with them," Bhagwat said. He, however, emphasised: "Efforts must be made to win the hearts of the people.' Without explicitly referring

to the Aryan Khan case, Bhagwat called for strict curbs on the drug trade. "We know to which countries the money from the drug trade can be traced. We must deal with it firmly." The RSS chief also expressed concern on the contents on streaming platforms, saying: "Nobody has any control on it. Our children are watching it."

On Bitcoin, he said: "No country has control over Bitcoin. Clandestine, uncontrolled currency like Bitcoin has the potential to destablise the economy of all countries and pose a serious challenge.'

New Delhi

DRAWS TEMPLE LINK TO OLYMPIC MEDALS Nagpur: RSS chief Mohan

Bhagwat sought to connect

the success of Indians in the Olympics and Paralympics to the elation sparked by the Ram temple construction. "The sense of self appears to be on the rise. Recently, it was seen when volunteers went about collecting donations for Ram temple. That elation is finding expression," Bhagwat said, and went on to discuss the Olympics and Paralympics success in the same vein. Bhagwat asked: "Where has the enthusiasm behind this success come from? Clearly, they have now developed a sense of doing something for the country.'

Assembly panel to order survey on Christian missionary work

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU, OCTOBER 15

A HOUSE committee of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly on backward classes and minorities has decided to order a survey on Christian missionary work in the state to identify "unauthorised" people involved in the work.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the House committee on October 13 chaired by BIPMLA Goolihatti Shekar, who had raised the issue of religious conversions in the Assembly on September 21 and alleged that his 72-year-old mother had converted to Christianity in Chitradurga district.

"We want to find out the number of authorised and unauthorised people engaged in church work." he said.

The BJP government in Karnataka is known to be testing the ground for the introduction of an anti-conversion Bill. "We are

MAHARASHTRA

Be sensitive to

conditions of

OMKAR GOKHALE

MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

shelter homes for

children, says HC

THE AURANGABAD bench of the

Bombay High Court recently

asked Maharashtra government

to be sensitive towards conditions

of observation homes, where chil-

dren in conflict with law are

lodged, as well as of state-run

shelter homes for special children.

the concerned department of

strict coercive action in case they

fail to collect and provide dataand

the state of affairs of such institu-

tions across Maharashtra, as di-

rected in its September 23 order.

Sanjay V Gangapurwala and

Justice Rajesh N Laddha was on

October 7 hearing a suo motu PIL

it had initiated last year, in which

amicus curiae Akshay Kulkarni,

assisting the court, had informed

the HC that those in charge of

shelter homes for special children

in Jalna were "turning a blind eye"

to observations made by the

District Legal Services Authority

(DLSA) in regard to unhygienic

On August 20, the HC asked

sistant government pleader

AR Kale to take instructions from

concerned law enforcement ma-

chinery on whether Ialna Police

has probed financial illegalities

and irregularities in such homes.

while it had not merely sought a

number of Shishugruhas and

Balgruhas in the state, inspection

reports are also expected to be

placed on record and that infor-

It added, "If we find that the of-

ficers concerned are avoiding to

place on record the information

as sought, we would not hesitate

to take action against those offi-

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE MINISTRY of Women and

Child Development said on

Friday that the Global Hunger

Index (GHI), which dropped

India to the 101st position from

the 94th in 2020, was "shocking"

and "devoid of ground reality".

this week. GHI said India trails

behind neighbours Pakistan,

Bangladesh and Nepal. Of the

116 countries ranked this year,

eighteen countries, including

China, Brazil and Kuwait, share

the top rank with a GHI score of

less than five. The report, pre-

pared jointly by Irish aid agency

Concern Worldwide and

German organisation Welt

Hunger Hilfe, termed the level of

Global Hunger Report 2021 has

"It is shocking to find that the

hunger in India "alarming".

In its findings released earlier

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

Govt rubbishes Global

Hunger Index ranking,

questions methodology

mation is not being provided.

The court also noted that

A division bench of Justice

The court warned officers of



Decision was taken at a meet chaired by BJP MLA Goolihatti Shekar

serious about bringing in an anticonversion law. We are looking at similar laws in other states and will decide," Chief Minister Basavarai Bommai said during a recent visit to the communally polarised Mangaluru region.

Over the past two months, there have been several incidents of right-wing groups disrupting prayer meetings organised by small Christian groups - especially in Dakshina Kannada region on the basis of allegations of conversions being carried out at

the meetings. Police cases have been filed in this regard in Dakshina Kannada in recent weeks. According to Shekhar, who is from Hosadurga region of Chitradurga district, directions have been issued to authorities in three backward districts of the state — Yadgir, Chidradurga and Vijayapura districts — to check on

"conversion activity". "Officials have been asked to check along with the police on conversion activity in these districts. Officials have been asked to initiate stringent action when reports of conversion activity are received," he said.

The committee is also looking at ways of preventing Scheduled Caste persons who convert to Christianity from availing reservation benefits, Shekhar said.

On September 21, Shekhar had moved a motion in the State Legislature against alleged widespread conversions in the state and stated in the Assembly that his 72-year-old mother had contown. He sought curbs on conversions. A few days before the meeting of the House committee, Shekhar reported that 10 persons in his village, including his mother, had reverted to Hinduism.

Besides prevention of cow slaughter, inter-religious relationships and protection of Hindu culture, the BJP's agenda includes prevention of conversions. In 2008, when the BIP was in power in Karnataka for the first time. Bajrang Dal activists carried out coordinated attacks on some churches in Mangaluru region, alleging that conversions were being carried out.

"There is an economic and social backdrop against which conversions occur. Many places where conversions are being alleged, like Chitradurga, are backward regions with a large SC population. The way to address the issue is through development, creation of jobs..." said a senior



Security personnel during an encounter at Bemina area in Srinagar on Friday. PTI

J&K: Two militants killed in separate encounters

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 15

THE JAMMU and Kashmir (J&K) Police said two militants were killed in separate encounters in Pulwama and Srinagar on Friday. Police said they were both affiliated with The Resistance Front (TRF).

The militants have been identified as Shahid Bashir Sheikh and Tanzeel Ahmed, both residents of Srinagar

Inspector General of Police Kashmir) Vijay Kumar said that besides two specific killings, the two militants "were also collaborators in recent killings of one chemist and two teachers in Srinagar city.

On October 5, a prominent chemist, M L Bindroo, and a street vendor from Bihar, Virendar Paswan, were killed in separate attacks. Two days later, Supinder Kour, a Sikh principal of a government higher second-

suffers from serious method-

ological issues. The publishing

agencies...have not done their

due diligence before releasing

the report," said the Ministry,

calling the methodology used by

sessment on the results of a 'four

question' opinion poll, which

was conducted telephonically by

Gallup. The scientific measure-

ment of undernourishment would require measurement of

weight and height...The report

Government's massive effort to

ensure food security of the en-

tire population during the Covid

period, verifiable data on which

are available. The opinion poll

does not have a single question

on whether the respondent re-

ceived any food support from the

Government or other sources,"

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal

and Sri Lanka, which seem to be

unaffected by the Covid-19 pan-

It also raised questions on

rankings of

disregards

completely

improved

"They have based their as-

the agencies unscientific.

GUNFIGHT IN POONCH STILL GOING ON

Jammu: The gunfight in Poonch district, in which two Army personnel were killed. was still ongoing on Friday night. When last reports came in, the operation was still on in the Mendhar sub-division. "In an ongoing counter-terrorism operation in the general area of Nar Khas forest in Mendhar sub-division, there was an exchange of fire... during the evening hours of Thursday," a defence public relation officer (PRO) said. Riflemen Vikram Singh Negi (26) and Yogambar Singh (27) were killed in the exchange

ary school, and her colleague Deepak Chand, a resident of Jammu, were killed inside their school in Srinagar.

"Since October 8, eight antiterrorist operations were successfully carried out in Kashmir Valley, resulting in elimination of 11 terrorists," the IG said.

Shahid Bashir Sheikh was killed in the first encounter in Wahibug area of Pulwama, IGF Kumar said Sheikh was behind the killing of Mohd Shafi Dar, a government employee, on October 2. "One AK rifle along with ammunition was recovered from him," he said.

Tanzeel Ahmed was killed in the second encounter in Bemina area of Srinagar. Police said he was "given the opportunity to surrender", but he "fired indiscriminately on the joint search party" instead. He was killed in the retaliatory fire.

Police said the militant's body was later retrieved from the encounter site. According to police, he was involved in the killing of PSI Arshid Ashraf at Khanyar area of Srinagar on September 12.

Police: Woman killed husband, tried to pass it off as heart attack

Ahmedabad: The Ahmedabad Police's Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) arrested two people for alegedly killing a 40-year-old man.

Police said Bipin Patel was declared brought dead at the LG Hospital on August 20. They said his wife Deepti (35) claimed her husband suffered a heart attack at home, following which, he was rushed to the hospital.

"...his body was cremated by his wife. The police got suspicious and an investigation was launched. Probe revealed that Deepti and her neighbour Saurabh were in a relationship since 2018 and six months ago, Bipin found out about the affair and threatened the two. The accused then made a plan... Suthar contacted a colleague, whose wife is a nurse... and asked for sleeping pills...On August 19, Deepti added four sleeping pills in milk and gave it to her husband. Around 1:30 am, Saurabh came to the house and the accused first made the victim wear a face mask and then pasted cellotape over it. The accused then closed the nostrils of the victim, due to which he died... We have arrested both for murder," said a police official. ENS

Over 29% candidates clear JEE Advanced

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

IOINT ENTRANCE Exam (IEE) Advanced, the entrance test for admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), has been cleared by 41,862 candidates this year, which translates to 29.54 per cent of the total candidates who took the exam.

Mridul Agarwal from the IIT Delhi zone was the all-India topper this time. Kavya Chopra (rank 98) was the all-India female topper. Agarwal scored 348 out of 360, while Chopra scored 286.

The second and third ranks in the exam have been bagged by Delhi's Dhananjay Raman and Anant Lunia.

This year, 1,41,699 candidates appeared for the entrance examination, held on October 3. Last year 43,204 (28.64 per cent) of the 1,50,838 candidates had qualified. them, 16,061 were offered seats.

A look at figures from 2019 and 2018 shows that the share of qualified candidates was 23.99 per cent and 20.62 per cent, respectively. This year, IIT Delhi and IIT Bombay zones account for 28 qualified candidates each in the top 100. IIT Hyderabad zone has 27. IIT Roorkee zone 13. IIT Kanpur zone 3, and IIT Kharagpur zone 1. IIT Guwahati zone has none.

While the maximum aggregate was 396 in the case of JEE-advanced 2020, this year it was 360. The qualifying marks in the exam. organised by IIT Kharagpur, was the same as last year at 5 per cent in each subject and 17.5 per cent aggregate. Candidates have to satisfy both subject-wise and aggregate qualifying marks to be included in the rank list. The organising chairman of the exam, IIT Kharagpur's Debashish Chakraborty, said that of the qualified candidates, 6,452 are women. As many as 32,285 women took the exam.

The numbers show that 32.36 per cent male and 19.98 per cent female candidates who appeared in the exam qualified. as against 30.93 per cent and 20.42 per cent in 2020. One transgender candidate qualified, as did 375 candidates with disabilities, 169 (overseas citizens of India/persons of Indian origin) and seven foreign nationals.

Seats to the qualified candidates will be offered on the basis of counselling by the Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSAA) from

TRACKING THE SECOND SURGE

TOTAL VACCINATION: 97,14,38,553

TOTAL DEATHS | WEEKLY CFR

NEW CASES: 15,549

ACTIVE CASES: 2,01,702

TESTS TODAY: 12,28,688 | TOTAL TESTS: 59,00,73,361

STATES REPORTING MOST CASES

8.867

2,149

1,245

901

586

STATES REPORTING MOST DEATHS

TODAY'S

DEATHS

29

16

9

■ Kerala

■ Maharashtra

■ Tamil Nadu

Andhra Pradesh

■ Mizoram

■ Kerala

■ Maharashtra

■ Tamil Nadu

■ Karnataka

■ Andhra Pradesh

WEEKLY POSITIVITY: 1.34% OVERALL POSITIVITY: 5.77%

ACTIVE

CASES

95,270

29,782

15,238

12,388

6,453

TOTAL

DEATHS

26.813

1,43,331

35,8690

14,295

37,931

Note: Data as on Oct 15: vaccination numbers as of Oct 14. Deaths include those from previous days

POSITIVITY

14.47%%

11.04%

1.71%

0.68%

1.66%

1.00%

0.80%

1.37%



Mridul Agarwal secured 348 marks out of 360. Rohit Jain Paras

Rajasthan teen tops exam with highest score ever

HAMZAKHAN JAIPUR, OCTOBER 15

MRIDUL AGARWAL, an 18-yearold from Jaipur, has topped the JEE (Advanced) this year by scoring the highest marks ever - 348 out of 360. Dhananjay Raman and Anant Lunia, both from Delhi, have bagged the second and third ranks respectively.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Agarwal said the Covid-19 lockdown gave him "extra time" to study. "Lockdown helped in giving me extra time. All the time spent in going to and fro, from school to coaching classes to home, was saved. I utilised that extra time to go through study material, and practice more," he said.

There were other keys to his success. Closer to exams, he and his friends decided to discuss topics at the end of the day. "We would allot time for this. While this happened through the year, as the exams approached, we decided to study during the day, and discuss doubts at night," he said. But his "best friend", he said

was a "mistakes copy" which he maintained throughout the year. "You don't notice certain things while studying, but when you give mock tests, there are some silly mistakes. I used to lose 10-20 marks in such mistakes. That 'mistakes copy' was my best friend till a week or two before the exam. It helped me check all those mistakes in the exam." he said.

His next target is to pursue

TOTAL

VACCINATION

3,70,18,242

9,07,46,457

11,91,234

OVERALL

CFR

0.57%

2.19%

1.35%

0.70%

1.27%

0.93% 5,25,92,619

1.40% 4,63,33,943

BTech in computer science from IIT-Bombay. Subsequently, he said, he would like to go "to one of the world's top universities such as MIT". He said his long-term goal is to make a lasting contribution in the field of "tech development".

A student of St Xavier's School in Jainur, from where he cleared his Class XII this year with 98.2 per cent, Agarwal expressed gratitude to his parents, Pradeep and Pooja Agarwal, for his success.

"When we had offline classes, the entire schedule at home used to revolve around me, be it meals, family outings, or other activities. During the lockdown, when my schedule changed, my mother adjusted accordingly..." he said. "JEE is a long and stressful jour-

ney with many ups and downs. Sometimes, your rank is low and then up; other times, you don't understand a subject... At such times, I would sit with my mother for 5-10 minutes, and my stress would go away," he said. At other times, he said, his father would help him relieve stress, by taking him out for a drive or a walk. Agarwal said he cut down the

time spent on his cellphone. "In every student's life, there is some distraction at the beginning... I cut down on the time spent on social media, YouTube, and OTT platforms..." he said. Just two days before the ex-

ams, he and his friends decided to go on a trip after the exam. "This was quite a stress buster for me. Planning the trip helped to relieve my stress..." he said.

HMS Queen Elizabeth leads **UK Naval fleet** into Bay of Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

THE UK's Carrier Strike Group (CSG) led by its largest warship HMS Queen Elizabeth sailed into the Bay of Bengal on Friday for the second such voyage in the last three months, in a powerful demonstration of the growing strategic partnership between the two countries.

The British High Commission in India said the CSG will take part in the "most demanding exercise" ever between the UK and India, incorporating elements from all three military services.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and its strike task group had carried out a mega wargame with a number of Indian warships and submarines in the Bay of Bengal in July that featured a range of com-

"The deployment is a powerful demonstration of the UK's commitment to deepening its diplomatic, economic and security-based ties in the Indo-Pacific region. India is essential in ensuring a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific," the High

Commission said in a statement. A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega Naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other

British High Commissioner to India Alex Ellis said India is an "essential" partner for the UK in the Indo-Pacific region and that the CSG's visit demonstrates the deepening of the bilateral defence and security partnership. The envoy also referred to the

resolve by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to work towards shared security and prosperity. "This visit will boost the cooperation of our armed forces and show the living bridge connecting our people," he said. First Sea Lord Admiral Tony

Radakin said the CSG's engagement with India showcases the deepening comprehensive strategic partnership.

Both the Indian and the Royal Navy are blue-water, multi-carrier navies, which places us in a very exclusive club," he said.

"Our growing interactions are a testimony to the shared commitment to the rules-based international system, a belief in the values of open trade, and in the importance of the freedom of the high seas - a right conveyed on all nations," he added

TN schools will reopen Nov 1, CM Stalin tells Class 6 student

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHENNAI, OCTOBER 15

ACLASS 6 student in Hosur on the Tamil Nadu-Karnataka border got a pleasant surprise on Friday when Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin called her up to reassure her that schools across the state are set to re-open on November 1

'You can go to school again when it re-starts on November 1," he said after she sought to know when the schools would re-open. Praina of Titan Township, Hosur, wrote to the Chief Minister recently, seeking to know when she could return to school. She had mentioned her contact number in

off his hectic schedule, and called her up. It was then that he gave her the assurance, an official press release said here During the brief chat, Stalin

said, "Don't worry. Obey your teacher's instructions on maintaining Covid-19 safety protocols. Wear mask, maintain social distancing." And the parting words were: "Study well."

Prajna could not believe it was the Chief Minister himself speaking to her. "I wanted to know when my school will reopen. So, I wrote to the Chief Minister." she said.

Odisha schools to reopen for classes 8, 11; SOPs issued Classroom teaching for stu-

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BHUBANESWAR, OCTOBER 15

THE ODISHA government Friday announced the reopening of schools for students of classes 11 and 8 from October 21 and 25, respectively.

The School and Mass Education department also issued detailed SOPs for the resumption of physical classes.

No such incidents have been

dents of classes 9 and 12 is already underway with strict adherence to safety guidelines. Schools had been closed from

October 9 for Durga Puja and Kumar Purnima. "A notification will be issued soon," School and Mass

Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash told reporters. A decision on the reopening of schools for classes 1 to 7 is yet to be finalised.

Similarly, the major hotspots

Stubble burning dropped drastically this year: Ministry

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 14

PADDY RESIDUE burning incidents have dropped by 69.49 per cent in Punjab, 18.28 per cent in Haryana and 47.61 per cent in the eight NCR districts of Uttar Pradesh in the one-month period beginning September 15 from the same period last year, said the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

The data is the result of monitoring of paddy residue burning events from September 15 in the states of Punjab, Haryana and the NCR areas of UP by the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) to curb and abate air pollution during the ongoing harvest season. The CAQM has held a series of meetings with state government officials, including the District Collectors/District Magistrates of



The ministry is monitoring paddy residue burning from September15 in Puniab. Harvana and NCR areas. File

month period, the total reported residue burning events in Punjab are 1,286 as against 4,216 for the same period of last year. Similarly, in Haryana, the reported stubble burning incidents are 487 against 596 for the corresponding period last year. In the eight NCR districts of Uttar Pradesh, the total stubble fire incidents reported during this period are 22 as against 42 for the

corresponding period last year.

New Delhi

Punjab, Haryana and UP.

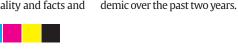
This year, during the one-

reported from Delhi and two NCR districts of Rajasthan. The first paddy residue burning this year in Punjab was reported on September 16, in Haryana on September 28, and in the NCR area of Uttar Pradesh on September 18. Punjab's hotspots of paddy residue burning are Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Patiala and Ludhiana which account for 72 per cent of such incidents in

in Haryana are Karnal, Kaithal and Kurukshetra, accounting for 80 per cent of the state's stubble burning incidents. Out of the 1,795 sites where stubble burning has been reported in Punjab, Haryana and

eight NCR districts of UP till Thursday, 663 fields have been inspected by the enforcement agencies, and environmental compensation has been imposed in 252 cases.

lowered the rank of India on the basis of FAO estimate on proportion of undernourished population, which is found to be devoid of ground reality and facts and













WORDLY WISE

OUR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MIDST OF VIOLENCE IS TO PREVENT IT FROM DESTROYING US.

— HENRI NOUWEN

The Indian **EXPRESS**

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Securing the states

Extension of BSF jurisdiction in border states is a national security imperative



DAYLIGHT LYNCHING

Those who killed a Dalit Sikh at site of farmers' protests must face the full force of law. Thugs can't hijack Punjab's hard-won peace

HE LYNCHING OF a man at Singhu, at the site of the farmers' protest on the Delhi-Haryana border Friday, the brutality of the hate crime captured and replayed on video, calls for the full force of the law to step in, to bring swift and sure punishment to the guilty. The victim, Lakhbir Singh, an SC labourer who belonged to a village in Tarn Taran, was reportedly accused of an act of *beadabi* or desecration by his killers, allegedly a group of Nihangs, who tortured him and tied the mutilated body to a police barricade. Any matter of desecration resonates widely and deeply in a state where the lines between religion and politics have always been molten and where it also stokes the caste fault lines. But the thugs and lumpens who purportedly filmed their victim's dying moments cannot seek, and they should not be allowed to find, any cover. They have played judge, jury, executioner, and the state must urgently identify them and bring them to book.

That's not going to be easy given the tangle of crossed wires. The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), the umbrella body of farmers' unions that is leading the protest in the states and at Delhi's borders, has condemned the killing and sought to distance itself from it — both the Nihang group and the deceased have no relation with the Kisan Morcha, it has said. That is not enough. The farmers' movement and its leadership must look the crime in the eye, and own up to the serious questions it raises. They are well aware that a mobilisation that lasts this long — the protests against the Centre's three farm laws began in Punjab last year in June, moving to Delhi's borders that November — always carries a risk of being distorted from within, as much as it courts the state's ire. It needs to be constantly alert and vigilant to the dangers of becoming the staging ground for extremists in search of relevance. It must be mindful of the possibilities of being discredited by those who seek to hijack its platform for their own irresponsible, even criminal, ends. A lesson should have been learnt from the outbreak of violence on January 26 this year, when a section of farmers broke away from the planned tractor rally and tried to storm the Red Fort. Clearly, that hasn't happened.

The onus, therefore, is also on the SKM. It will need to find ways of sending out the unequivocal message that the farmers' movement will not brook violence or countenance the weaponisation of religion. Pitching a wide tent may have been useful to it, amorphousness may have helped it to grow. But incidents such as the lynching on Friday demand the setting of boundaries that cannot be breached. Ahead of the assembly election, all sides, the farmers' movement, the political parties in Punjab and the governments in the state and the Centre have the responsibility of restraint. The 2015 Bargari sacrilege case continues to actively roil politics in the state. Punjab's hard-won peace is at stake, a bunch of thugs on camera should not be allowed to hijack it with their show of brutality.

CWC'S TASK

Congress Working Committee needs to regain its voice and address organisational disrepair at a crucial juncture for the party

OR THE CONGRESS, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting in Delhi today is a belated step in the right direction. Much has happened in Indian politics and within the Congress party since the CWC last met in August 2019. The party lost its government in Madhya Pradesh, it was forced to replace its chief minister in Punjab, nearly lost the government in Rajasthan, and is battling a power struggle in Chhattisgarh. It performed poorly in assembly elections in Bihar, West Bengal, Kerala, Haryana, Delhi and Puducherry. High-profile exits, among them Jyotiraditya Scindia, Sushmita Dev, Jitin Prasada and Luizinho Faleiro, have been a setback to the party and a group of senior leaders has openly expressed dissatisfaction over the manner in which the high command is running the show. These developments are especially significant since five states — UP, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur — are set for polls early next year, and later, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. In this backdrop, it is not sufficient that the CWC meets. The top decision-making body of the country's main opposition party must also look within in frank and honest ways.

The Congress has not had a full-time president since Rahul Gandhi stepped down after the 2019 general election defeat. An ailing Sonia Gandhi returned as interim chief because the party could not convince Rahul Gandhi to stay on or find a replacement for him. The adhoc nature of the arrangement has caused a communication breakdown within the party. It has contributed to the emergence of the G-23, a group of senior Congress leaders upset with the opaque functioning at the party's top. These leaders have not openly challenged the Gandhi family, but have indicated their preference for a more transparent and collective leadership. In the absence of regular meetings and a clear chain of command, the Congress has been making costly mistakes, resulting in a loss of direction for the party and the shrinking of its electoral footprint. One of the tasks before the CWC is to put in place an institutional mechanism for the party to respond quickly and collectively to political challenges.

One of the great legacies of the Congress party was the democratic nature of its organisation and decision-making. The All India Congress Committee used to hold elections at regular intervals and choose the CWC. The CWC was the party's main deliberative forum until Indira Gandhi purged it of independent voices. The Congress could use this crisis to revive the past tradition and re-energise the organisation. A fleet-footed opposition is necessary to keep the government on its toes.

GLASS HOUSE OF WINDSOR

Queen Elizabeth is upset at inaction on climate change. But inaction, thy name is royalty

ER HIGHNESS DOTH protest too much. Their earnestness and good intentions notwithstanding, it is important for the Windsors to realise that Buckingham Palace is, in fact, a glass house. Queen Elizabeth was overheard criticising world leaders during the opening of the Welsh Parliament on Thursday. She is, it seems, "irritated" by world leaders because when it comes to climate change, "they talk, but they don't do".

Elizabeth Windsor's statement is the latest in a series of outbursts from her family regarding climate change. Her grandson William has expressed chagrin at billionaires like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos for putting their efforts into space tourism instead of focusing on the environmental crisis on earth. And the Prince of Wales and Duke of Cambridge both preceded the family matriarch in blaming world leaders for their inaction ahead of the COP-26 summit in Glasgow, which starts on October 31. Climate change — and the global catastrophe that seems imminent in its wake — is certainly something that should worry governments into urgent, sweeping policy changes. But the Queen's "irritation" was triggered more by a lack of etiquette than action: It seems that many world leaders have not yet RSVP'd for the Glasgow summit.

For so-called "royals", dinner parties, meetings and a long weekend are what passes for official duties. And while billionaires on extra-terrestrial joy rides deserve to be called out, one of the richest unemployed perhaps isn't the best person to do it. Most of all, though, it is important for the royals to remember that their entire purpose is to be the symbol of an anachronistic institution in the modern world, a feat they achieve through pageantry and masterful inaction. So, before pointing out the inertia of others, they should put their privilege where their mouth is. Donating a part of their inherited wealth — the money from taxpayers and colonisation — to help create "green" jobs might be a good place to start.

THE MINISTRY OF Home Affairs recently issued a notification extending the jurisdiction of the Border Security Force from 15 km to a depth of 50 km along the international borders in three states — Punjab, Assam and West Bengal. This has led to a fresh round of controversy involving the Centre and states. The chief minister of Punjab has condemned what he called the Government of India's "unilateral decision" to give additional powers to the BSF as a "direct attack on federalism".

Let us first understand the facts to be able to assess the need and propriety of the government order. The last notification of the MHA (July 3, 2014), which defined the jurisdiction of the BSF, stated that the force could operate in the entire states of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya without any restrictions whatsoever. In Gujarat, it had jurisdiction up to a depth of 80 km and in Rajasthan up to 50 km. In Punjab, Assam and West Bengal, the BSF jurisdiction was up to a depth of 15 km only. Under the latest notification issued on October 11, 2021, there is no change in the northeastern states and Rajasthan. In Guiarat, jurisdiction has been reduced from 80 km to 50 km. The controversial change is in Assam, West Bengal and Punjab, where the BSF jurisdiction has been extended from 15 km to 50 km. It is this part of the notification which has generated controversy, though the criticism has been made by leaders of Punjab and West Bengal, both governed by non-BJP parties.

Assam, West Bengal and Punjab have international borders. The threat perception from across the international borders has undergone a sea change in the context of recent developments in the Af-Pak region. Radical groups of different shades are feeling emboldened and are going to make a determined attempt to destabilise Punjab, where

The home ministry's latest notification only seeks to reinforce the capabilities of the state police in securing the states under section 139 of the BSF Act, which empowers the members of the force to discharge certain powers and duties within local limits of the areas specified in the schedule. The jurisdiction of the state police has neither been curtailed nor its powers reduced in any manner.

there have been several attempts to drop weapons from drones. The seizure of 3,000 kg of heroin that originated from Afghanistan on September 12 and the killing of five army personnel in Surankote (Jammu and Kashmir) on October 11 are straws in the wind. Pakistan-sponsored terrorist groups, particularly the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad, will almost certainly renew their onslaught in the border states. West Bengal has already undergone a huge demographic change, thanks to its leaders' accommodative attitude towards illegal migrants. Assam faces multiple problems of ethnic insurgencies, smuggling, counterfeit currency, drug trafficking, etc.

Under normal circumstances, it should have been possible for the state police of border states to deal with these problems. However, the police across the country are in a state of atrophy and they need the assistance of central armed police forces even for maintaining normal law and order. As such, their effectiveness against the emerging trans-border threats is suspect.

It is in this context that the Government of India decided to extend the jurisdiction of the BSF in three states. Interestingly, the former chief minister of Punjab, Amarinder Singh, has endorsed the Centre's decision in the wake of incidents of weapons and drugs being pushed into Punjab by Pakbacked syndicates. The Assam chief minister has also welcomed the extension of BSF jurisdiction.

The home ministry's latest notification only seeks to reinforce the capabilities of the state police in securing the states under section 139 of the BSF Act, which empowers the members of the force to discharge certain powers and duties within local limits of the areas specified in the schedule. The jurisdiction of the state police has neither been curtailed nor its powers reduced in any manner.

It is just that the BSF will also be exercising powers of search, seizure and arrest in respect of only the Passport Act 1967, Passport (Entry into India) Act 1920 and specified sections of the Criminal Procedure code — in other words against those entering India illegally. It is merely an "enabling provision aimed at strengthening and complementing the efforts of the state police". The BSF would, in any case, be handing over the accused together with the seized contraband to the local police. The power to register an FIR and investigate the case remains with the state police. To say that half of Punjab will now fall under the BSF jurisdiction is an extremely misleading statement intended to arouse passions and generate anti-Centre feelings.

The hypocrisy of the Opposition is further exposed by the fact that in 2011, the UPA had brought a bill to vest the BSF with powers to search, seize and arrest in any part of the country where it was deployed. It had to be dropped in the face of concerted opposition to the proposed measure.

The Indian Constitution, no doubt, fulfils some conditions of a federation, but it leans towards a strong Centre. As stated by Sir Ivor Jennings, "India has a federation with a strong centralising tendency". In federations where police and public order are the responsibility of states (as in India), according to Rajeev Dhawan, "the Union may devise emergency regimes in its Constitution through legislation to override the exclusive autonomy of the states in respect of law and order and policy". National security is a paramount consideration. It is unfortunate that the BSF is being dragged into political controversy when it would actually be over-stretching itself to strengthen national security.

The writer was formerly Director-General, Border Security Force



An Unfair Test

Introduced to enhance equality of opportunity, NEET does the opposite

Sunny Jose and Satyam Sunkari

IS THE NATIONAL Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) a flawed, eccentric approach that causes injustice and goes against the spirit of the Constitution? The Justice A K Rajan committee, appointed by the state government of Tamil Nadu to examine whether NEET is an equitable method of selection, thinks so. Its report lends credence to the belief that NEET tends to give an advantage to students from privileged backgrounds. It also observed that NEET, in terms of orientation, is biased towards the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

Acting upon the committee's recommendation, the Tamil Nadu government has passed an Act seeking an exemption from treating NEET as the sole and mandatory requirement for medical admission in the state. The Act, which is yet to get approval from the President, may be an act of political expediency, triggered by the anger following students' suicides in the state. However, the committee and the Act raise substantive questions about equality of opportunity and distributive justice that call for careful scrutiny.

There are at least two important questions. First, does NEET help foster equality of opportunity for everyone without unduly advantaging or disadvantaging anyone? Second, is NEET's bias towards CBSE justifiable in an immensely diverse country like ours, where varied school curricula coexist with a highly unequal access to financial and educational resources and opportunities?

"If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." At the core of this quote, erroneously attributed to Albert Einstein, is the concept of "parity of participation" espoused by the political philosopher Nancy Fraser. In How can NEET promote parity of participation when aspiring first-generation students from marginalised and poor households participate from a highly unequal position in the first place? Instead, NEET promotes a kind of competitive equality which is socially insensitive: It disregards the fact that the terms and conditions of participation are highly unequal and biased.

the condition of being a peer, on a par with others, with an equal footing in a given activity. A significant impediment to this is the absence of objective condition, denoted by maldistribution of resources undermining the participant's independence and voice. Fraser's conceptualisation informs that the socio-economic inequalities are detrimental beyond their immediate adverse impacts. More importantly, socio-economic inequalities and absence of objective conditions are distributivity unfair because they decisively hinder the parity of participation.

The question here is: How can NEET promote parity of participation when aspiring first-generation students from marginalised and poor households participate from a highly unequal position in the first place? Instead, NEET promotes a kind of competitive equality which is socially insensitive: It disregards the fact that the terms and conditions of participation are highly unequal and biased. What's more, it pays scant attention to how success in NEET is attained, especially the regressive and exclusive process it sets in and how it intensifies the inequality of opportunity and parity of participation.

In the section titled 'Size of coaching market', the report brings out two poignant facts. One, by inadvertently creating a "market for coaching", NEET has helped to create an "extractive industry of coaching" as an essential condition for clearing it. Surprisingly, the socalled meritorious students have to undergo long-term and repeated coaching in coaching centres. Two, the coaching fees are not only high, but are beyond the reach of many, especially the poor and marginalised. Importantly, coaching centres create a strong

Fraser's conceptualisation, parity refers to the condition of being a peer, on a par with belief that it is impossible to clear NEET without long-term or repeated coaching.

The socio-economic and psychological consequences created by such coaching centres are serious and deep. They effectively crush the poor and marginalised students' "capacity to aspire", to deploy the term of anthropologist Arjun Appadurai. The dejection and the suicide of the students need to be viewed in this context. An educational intervention which was introduced as a solution to foster equality of opportunity has turned out to be the primary cause of deepening inequality of participation and opportunity. Thus, it seems to serve the exact opposite of what it was intended to do.

What needs to be done? Here, the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) becomes pertinent. It envisions a curriculum and pedagogy which will promote holistic learning, social responsibility and multilingualism, among other things. It emphasises education in the local language/mother tongue and claims that children learn best through their mother tongue. It is important, therefore, to significantly restructure the focus of NEET keeping in mind the spirit of NEP and varied school curricula in regional languages. A restructured NEET, which does not require intensive and repeated coaching as a prerequisite and is not biased towards any board, can go a long way in promoting the parity of participation and nourishing the capacity to aspire, especially of the poor and marginalised.

Jose is RBI Chair Professor and Sunkari is Assistant Professor, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad. Views expressed are personal



OCTOBER 16, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

BHINDRANWALE IS FREE

AFTER 26 DAYS of detention for interrogation in the Lala Jagat Narain murder case, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was released in Ferozepur. He was given a jubilant reception by his followers and supporters. Bhindranwale was released from judicial custody at 2.30 p.m. Judicial Magistrate G K Rai formally heard the counsels from the two sides and in a tactfully worded order allowed the release. No sureties or bonds were demanded. Leaders who were absent were Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, president Akali Dal (L), and Prakash Singh Badal, opposition leader in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha.

VISAS FOR CANADA

INDIAN NATIONALS WHO intend to visit Canada will have to now obtain a visa. However, there will not be any alteration in the procedures for seeking immigrant status in Canada. The Canadian government's decision was also announced in Ottawa by the Minister of Employment and Immigration, Lloyd Axworthy. Axworthy visited New Delhi earlier this month and held detailed discussions with the Indian government in the wake of reports that a large number of Sikhs have entered Canada seeking political asylum, alleging persecution for demanding Khalistan in India.

New Delhi

PM's Chagrin

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi has expressed her disapproval of the habit of Congress (I) chief ministers and other party men of flocking to Delhi every time she leaves for or returns from a trip abroad. The Congress (I) was embarrassed by a report in *The Indian Express* on October 10 pointing out that on the day of Mrs Gandhi's return from the Commonwealth conference in Melbourne, 10 out of 13 Congress (I) chief ministers had come to Delhi to be part of the welcome party, and that on the Prime Minister's departure an almost equal number of them had come to see her off.

_ THE GUARDIAN

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021

THE IDEAS PAGE

State, Siri and You

Not just big tech, even the state plans greater deployment of AI, intends to harvest our personal data. The lack of any rights paradigm in this context, or data protection law, is deeply unsettling



BY MENAKA GURUSWAMY

THE DUSSEHRA BREAK gave me a chance to head to the hills. Seven hours away from Delhi, in Uttarakhand, you are surrounded by lush foliage, hills, hiking trails and even rumours of a lurking leopard. It was in this setting that I started Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro's new book, Klara and the Sun, about a place in which children have AFs or artificial friends, machines with AI that were programmed to respond to human beings — as they observed more, they stored more information about their owners and knew how to respond to them.

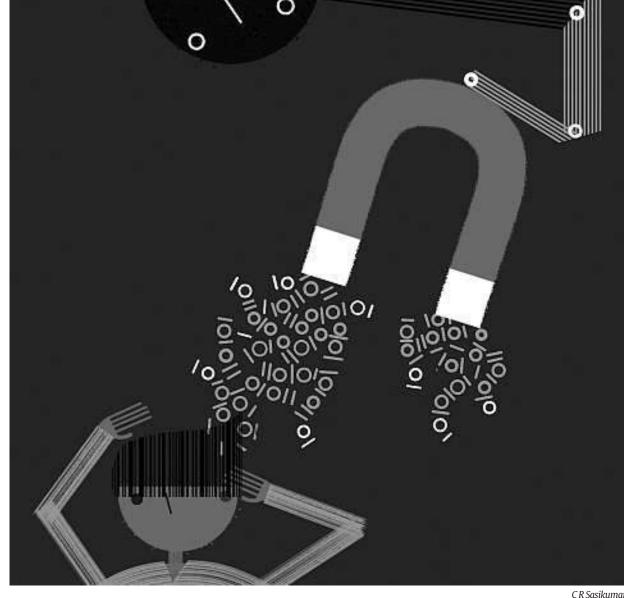
Klara, the AF, could soon mimic the behaviour, speech, walk and all manner of responses of the child she was bought for. The trouble began when the parent started finding Klara more perfect than her child. Ishiguro asks us a deep question: Is love substitutable? For our purposes, the book describes the process of "deep learning" where artificial intelligence programmes are able to absorb information and start demonstrating reasoning of the kind which distinguishes us as humans.

The scenario Ishiguro describes is not science fiction or a far-fetched rendition of the future. As India gingerly moves towards completing the second year of pandemic living, one trend is certain — we will rely more and more on artificial intelligence to get through our day. In 1956, John McCarthy wrote, "Artificial intelligence is allowing a machine to behave in such a way that it would be called intelligent if a human being behaved in such a way." Siri, which Apple consumers are dependent on, is an example of artificial intelligence. Yet for Siri to be intelligent, to recognise even a cat, Siri's creators said it needed to be fed almost 1,00,000 pictures of cats to spot one when you ask her.

We are now in an era, defined by a Covidinspired retreat into the digital or virtual world. In the world's largest democracy of 1.7 billion people, increasingly more and more citizens have vital information on themselves stored as part of state or private data platforms. The government collects information for Aadhaar, for vaccinations on CoWin, from our tax returns, from our driving licence and a host of other instruments that enable us to navigate the public world of citizenship.

Private platforms like Facebook and a host of others collect what makes us unique - our opinions, our likes and dislikes, our ideologies — on their platforms. Based on this data, algorithms drive news and information that aligns with our beliefs to our Twitter or Facebook selves. Meanwhile, we now consume popular culture on the privacy of our laptops through OTT platforms like Amazon Prime, Netflix or Hotstar, instead of going to the theatre. Algorithms on each of these platforms recommend movies or serials we like based on our prior viewing.

But the use of algorithms is not just re-



stricted to movie recommendations. It is being used in many parts of the United States to predict recidivism likelihood amongst prisoners and, therefore, to grant sentences based on machine predictions. With this come biases — after all, the data being fed to create the algorithms reflects the opinions of the programmers feeding the information. For nstance, is the zip code of where a person lives likely to indicate chances of committing fresh crimes? If you live in a white neighbourhood, are you less likely to commit a new crime? How does one make the algorithm fair and transparent?

In India, for all this data collection that is underway constantly, in a seemingly irreversible manner, citizens have no rights over their data or protection from its extraction and in general, against its misuse. There is no data protection law in place, even though a Bill is being discussed by the parliamentary committee on information technology. Our only protection at present is the Supreme Court's judgment in Puttaswamy, where it ruled that citizens have rights to informational privacy. Yet, in the absence of legislation, this proves difficult to implement.

While the state has unilateral rights to collect and use our data, it has also given itself the ability to regulate private parties. For instance, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 are used to mandate that WhatsApp, which uses end-to-end encrypIn India, for all this data collection that is underway constantly, in a seemingly irreversible manner, citizens have no rights over their data or protection from its extraction and in general, against its misuse. There is no data protection law in place, even though a Bill is being discussed by the parliamentary committee on information technology. Our only protection at present is the Supreme Court's judgment in Puttaswamy, where it ruled that citizens have rights to informational privacy. Yet, in the absence of legislation, this proves

tion, must enable the identification of the first originator of the information. At present, it is as if the state can have deep learning on its citizens. In turn, we the citizens have no remedies for the abuse of that learning. You can switch off Siri, but not the state.

Our government is thinking about the potential and inevitability of the greater use of AI. The 2018 Niti Aayog National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence points to the greater need for AI in sectors like education, healthcare and agriculture. Niti Aayog notes that impediments to the greater use of AI include the lack of access to data, concerns for privacy and security. While noting these concerns, the papers also make clear that the aims of state policy include creating a data marketplace – a "deployable model" in which it seeks to bring "buvers and sellers of data together".

Amid these plans for greater deployment AI and harvesting of our data, the lack of any rights paradigm provided by law is deeply unsettling. It violates a constitutional premise that citizens must have their speech, expression, intellectual property and liberty rights protected. In the absence of these protections, the state will continue its deep learning about us and harvest what makes us human and defines our personalities - our personal data

The writer is a Senior Advocate at the Supreme

Free to fly high

"To promise league tables, and the naming and shaming of practices that offer too many video appointments, is a transparent attempt to bully a hard-pressed

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

With Air India's sale, government can shake off allegations of protectionism, rid civil aviation market of distortions, foster fair competition



frontline medical service."

RAJIV PRATAP RUDY

ON OCTOBER 8, 2021, we achieved a monumental landmark, a culmination of the process that began in 2001 during the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led government. The Government of India has successfully disinvested 100 per cent of its stake in Air India, 100 per cent in the low-cost airline Air India Express Ltd and 50 per cent in the Air India SATS Airport Services Private Ltd. The resolve and conviction of the government in general, and the Prime Minister in particular, to revitalise India's loss-making PSUs by changing their governance model is reflected through this.

The airline was losing Rs 20 crore each day with its debt having mounted to Rs 65,562 crore by August, 2021. It has lost more than Rs 5,000 crore each year since 2016. Its accumulated losses of Rs 70,875.98 crore resulted in the complete erosion of the net worth of the company. Now, its net worth is a negative Rs 44,000 crore. Air India also has 12,085 employees, including 8,084 permanent employees, while Air India Express has 1,434 employees. It has outstanding employee dues of Rs 1,332 crore as per the Justice Dharmadhikari report with employee benefit expenses being above Rs 3,000 crore each year. Air India also has a fleet strength of 213 as of August, 2021, and incurs huge costs to maintain this fleet.

Covid-19 has had a dramatic impact on the aviation sector. A report by the International Civil Aviation Organisation notes that due to the pandemic, the financial losses of airlines across the world have been around \$370 billion, with airports and air navigation services providers losing a further \$115 billion and \$13 billion respectively. With Air India having to operate charters/Vande Bharat Mission flights, fixed costs had to be incurred even as its revenue stream was impacted due to the discontinuation of flights during the lockdown. The net loss incurred by Air India was about Rs 9,779 crore as per the provisional figures for the year 2020-21, a 22.5 per cent increase from the previous year. Clearly, despite the best efforts of governments over the years, the airline's financial condition continued to worsen in the absence of a competitive operational structure.

The airline's sale also sheds light on the vision of the government when it comes to maintaining competition in the aviation market. We are already seeing a hike in prices of air tickets and at such a point, it would be imprudent to allow any kind of monopolistic tendencies to set in the market. With an airline already commanding more than 50 per cent of the market share, the closure of Air India would have left a space, with a high probability of the already

leading airline taking up a major share of the market, leading to unfair competition.

In 2017-18, Jet Airways had the second highest market share (14.6 per cent), following Indigo (40.9 per cent). After Jet shut down, Indigo commanded a 47.8 per cent market share in 2019-20, which rose to 58.6 per cent as of June 2021. Another airline's exit would have further concentrated power in the market. Moreover, a debt-laden airline only adds burden on the industry, while stretching government finances. Thus, the sale of Air India, which is now to be managed by a more competition-conscious organisation, in a free aviation market, is a welcome move.

Tata Sons has a gargantuan task ahead of it with accumulated losses, non-operational fleets and the after-effects of Covid-19. It will take at least two years for the Tatas to stabilise its operations. We can hope for the airline to operate efficiently post this. There is also a possibility of this sale having an adverse impact on the whole of the Tatas' aviation ventures in the short term. However, synergies between the group's other aviation ventures, Vistara and AirAsia, could play an important role in the long run. The Tatas have a proven history of turning around ventures on the brink of collapse, like Jaguar Land Rover. We need to place our trust in the professional management that the company prides itself on.

There has been a lot of apprehension and anxiety amongst the employees of Air India. Leaving the airline without a viable continuity plan in place would have financially crippled their households. However, the fact that no employee can be retrenched for a year, and that any employee to be released in the second year will be offered a voluntary retirement scheme, along with the government promising to pay off all past dues, brings a sense of relief. With the economy only just starting to show real signs of growth post Covid-19, job security for individuals is an important consideration that cannot be ignored. It is the far-sightedness of the government that has resolved this longawaited question.

The government can now shed its tag of being the arbitrary protector of a bleeding enterprise, further burdening taxpayers who have put Rs 1,10,276 crore in the airline since 2009-10. From now, apart from the government-backed guarantees and the remainder of debt in the special purpose vehicle, Air India will not pose a further burden on the government's finances.

The government can now shake off the allegations of protectionism which it has carried for the last seven decades, foster fair competition, rid the civil aviation market of distortions, and enhance the opportunity for travel. This is a major step forward towards revitalising the limping tourism sector.

This is a chance for India to expand its aero footprint. Post this sale, we can envision a brighter future for not just the civil aviation market, the employees of Air India and the government, but for the common man

The writer, a Member of Parliament, was former minister of civil aviation

Court of India. 'Opening Argument' is a difficult to implement. fortnightly column

Weakening the forest shield

Proposed amendments to Forest Conservation Act might dilute safeguards

Arpitha Kodiveri

FORESTS ARE DIFFICULT geographies to regulate as they must meet the competing regulatory requirements of conservation, development, and recognition of forest rights. On October 2, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issued a letter documenting 14 aspects that it seeks to change in the key forest legislation, the Forest Conservation Act.1980. This law has been instrumental in reducing deforestation as it requires approval from the central government when forests have to be diverted for non-forestry purposes. The regulatory mechanism of forest clearances allows the ministry to deliberate on whether deforestation should be permitted or not and what the conditions should be if such a permit is granted.

An essential part of the forest clearance process is the requirement that forest rights be recognised and the consent of the gram sabha be obtained. The set of issues that the ministry seeks to use as the basis for changing the law are mostly in the direction of deregulation. They show some intent of giving the law more teeth, like the identification of forest areas which are to be maintained as pristine areas for a prescribed period of time.

The Narendra Modi government has been working towards amending, changing, and recrafting environmental laws in India since 2014. Some contentious attempts have been the draft Environment Impact Assessment notification, where it sought to create exemptions to the requirement of environmental

clearances for a set of industries. In 2019, it proposed amendments to the Indian Forest Act. 1927, with disastrous provisions that gave the forest department wide discretionary powers, including the power to shoot at sight. These amendments have been revoked because of sharp criticism from environmental movements across the country.

 $The \, amendments \, proposed \, to \, the \, Forest$ Conservation Act, 1980 cannot be seen in isolation of these other attempts to remake environmental laws in India. Environmental law has emerged as a space for the Modi government to reengineer the governance architecture to make it more conducive for doing business. The ease of doing business has signified a pathway towards deregulation. Deregulation in this context refers to undoing environmental safeguards and remaking laws in ways that constrain their ability to scrutinise anti-environmental decisions taken by the ministry.

The proposed amendments to the FCA, when seen in this light, work to restrict the scope of applicability of the Act. It does so by critiquing the current definition of forests, which includes land recognised as forest by the government as well as that which comes under the dictionary meaning of forest land based on the Supreme Court decision in the TN Godavarman case. It aims to implicitly define what does not constitute forests by creating a set of exceptions to the Act. These exceptions include forests in border areas where

strategic projects need to be built, private land where plantations are to be established, and forest land which was acquired before 1980 for the construction of railways and highways.

The emphasis is on creating an enabling regulatory environment for setting up plantations, as India needs to create a carbon sink. It argues that these plantations will not attract the provisions of the FCA. How then are plantations to be regulated when deforestation occurs? It does not define what the nature of these plantations should be and where they can take place.

The amendments seek to deregulate by reducing scrutiny over certain decisions to deforest like the use of extended oil drilling for the extraction of oil and gas, which the ministry says is environmental-friendly and thus qualifies for a legal exception. There have not been sufficient ecological studies to support this. Indeed, these exceptions enable deforestation as opposed to regulating it.

The proposed amendments are listed as a set of issues without detailing what the amendments are going to be. This makes it difficult for citizens and experts to partake in a public consultation process. The proposed amendments are not translated into other languages and provide a very short window of 15 days to providing comments. This tactic of limiting citizen participation prevents citizen oversight on these anti-en-

As I have previously stated, an integral part

of the forest clearance process is the requirement of consent of the gram sabha. This was a hard-won legal gain after many years of struggle by forest-dwelling communities that have been at the forefront of avoiding destructive development projects. The creation of exceptions to the requirement of forest clearances directly results in the cancellation of the application of this progressive legal provision. This will be a step towards undoing a democratic decision-making framework and tilting power towards the state.

The changes being proposed to the FCA need to be done in consultation with forestdwelling communities whose livelihoods and rights are likely to be affected by the remaking of this law. The ministry as of now has made no such attempts. It becomes imperative that decisions on the identification of forest/nonforest areas be made in consultation with the forest-dwelling communities to ensure that they do not violate any forest rights or that their views are adequately considered if it falls within a community conserved area. In conclusion, the deregulatory approach to changes being made to India's environmental laws needs to be scrutinised. As the climate crisis looms over us, limiting deforestation should guide regulatory decision-making, not compensating with plantations.

The writer is a postdoctoral research scholar, Climate Litigation Accelerator, NYU School of Law

TROUBLED VALLEY THIS IS WITH reference to the article

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'In Valley, no return to the '90s' (IE, October 15). The decision to revoke Articles 370 and 35A has opened a can of worms and the intentions of the government to stabilise Kashmir are far from being realised. The events unravelling in the valley and the emboldened militants are feeding upon the mistrust that has developed between the mainstream Kashmiri leaders and the local population. The situation is further obfuscated by fresh terror being ushered from across the border. Private investment hasn't been able to take roots, as was intended for the holistic development of the valley. As if it wasn't enough, the once vibrant economy of Kashmir is in shambles due to the double burden of Covid-19 and the frequent internet shutdowns in the Valley. There exists no solution to the Kashmir conundrum but a meaningful dialogue between Delhi and Srinagar embracing all the relevant stakeholders.

Vinay Saroha, Delhi

NEED FOR SPEED

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Speeding up' (IE, October 15). The PM Gatishakti National Master plan is as usual high on optics, but can only pick up gati (speed) if all concerned ministries show willingness to work together for the larger good. Having all departments under one platform is a great idea but we have seen that even the well-promoted single window clearance could not fetch the desired results. So we should only be cautiously hopeful that this mega scheme gives us the

desired results soon. Regular monitoring and course correction should be the core mantra. Having synergy on paper and in reality are two completely different ball games.

Bal Govind, Noida

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Speeding up' (IE, October 15). In the current scheme of things many projects are rendered financially unviable as there is an inordinate delay in obtaining clearances from a multitude of agencies under various ministries. Gati Shakti digital platform platform can be more effective if accountability along with time line is also stipulated. There are allegations of crony capitalism as many big players are able to reap the benefits of such initiatives and is a ploy to help government benefactors to secure big ticket projects. The scheme shall be only successful if it could create a mechanism where human intervention is minimum and all clearances and approvals are granted on merit of the case only. Deepak Singhal, Noida

STRENGTHEN FRAME

THIS REFERS TO the article 'A stronger and finer frame' (IE, October 15). Well laid out processes reduce the risk of errors and are necessary. The list of scams that happened because of a failure to adhere to processes is a reminder of the dangers of sidestepping them. Politicians, in their anxiety to get things done, can make mistakes and it is up to bureaucrats to point out the pitfalls if shortcuts are used. What the country needs is not just a nimble bureaucracy but a professional and impartial one which is not aligned too closely with the powers that be.

Hemant Contractor, Pune

10 THE WORLD



QUEEN ON CLIMATE: DON'T JUST TALK, ACT

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II said she was irritated by world leaders who talk about climate change but do nothing to address global warming, and added it was still unclear who would turn up at the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow. "We only know about people who are not coming... It's really irritating when they talk, but they don't do," the queen said.

British lawmaker

WORLD



Aung San Suu Kyi

MYANMAR Lawyer for Suu Kyi says he was

issued gag order

THE HEAD lawyer repre-Myanmar's ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi said on Friday authorities in the militaryruled country had imposed a gag order on him because they said his communications could instability. Myanmar's state media has not reported developments in Suu Kyi's multiple legal cases, filed after she was ousted in a February coup, and her lawyer, Khin Maung Zaw, has been the only source of public information on her trial and her wellbeing. He said in a Facebook post he had been barred from speaking to media, diplomats, international organisations and foreign governments and later

BRITAIN

Lab suspended over potentially 43,000 false negative tests

posted details of the order.

REUTERS

ACOVID-19 testing laboratory in England was suspended over concern it has been incorrectly giving negative PCR test results to people who are infected, the UK Health Security Agency said Friday, NHS Test and Trace launched an investigation into a lab in Wolverhampton after reports of people getting negative PCR test results after testing positive on rapid lateral flow devices. An estimated 43,000 people may have been given incorrect negative PCR test results, authorities said REUTERS

KENYA

Suspected serial killer believed killed by mob

A SUSPECTED Kenyan serial killer of children is believed to have been killed by a mob in his home town days after escaping custody, police said on Friday. Masten Milimo Wanjala, 20, was arrested in July in connection with the disappearance of two children, and police said he confessed to the murder of 10 children in parts of the East African country over the past five years. Wanjala was due to appear in court in Nairobi on Wednesday in connection with the murder of two children but did not appear for the morning roll call. REUTERS

US to lift curbs from Nov 8 for vaccinated foreign travellers

DAVID SHEPARDSON WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 15

THE WHITE House on Friday said it will lift Covid-19 travel restrictions for fully vaccinated foreign nationals effective November 8. ending historic restrictions that had barred much of the world from entering the United States.

Announcing the starting date for the new rules on travel into and out of the country, White House spokesman Kevin Munoz posted on Twitter that the polcy "is guided by public health, stringent, and consistent".

The White House had announced on September 20 that the US would lift restrictions on air travelers from 33 countries in early November. It did not specify the date at the time.

The unprecedented travel restrictions kept millions of visitors out of the United States from China, Canada, Mexico, India, Brazil, much of Europe and elsewhere; shrunk US tourism; and hurt border community economies. They prevented many loved ones and foreign workers from reuniting with families.

US allies had heavily lobbied the Biden administration to lift

Restrictions on non-US citizens were first imposed on air travellers from China in January 2020 by then-President Donald Trump and then extended to dozens of other countries, without any clear metrics for how and when to lift them.

Curbs on non-essential travellers at land borders with



The unprecedented travel restrictions kept millions of visitors out of the US. File

Mexico and Canada have been in place since March 2020 to address the Covid-19 pandemic.

US international air passenger traffic was down 43% in August and overall passenger air traffic was down 21% over pre-pandemic levels, the US Transportation Department said Friday.

Starting November 8, the United States will admit fully vaccinated foreign air travellers from the 26 so-called Schengen countries in Europe, including France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Greece, as well as Britain, Ireland, China, India, South Africa, Iran and Brazil. The unprecedented US restrictions have barred non-US citizens who were in those countries within the past 14 days.

The United States has allowed foreign air travellers from more than 150 countries throughout the pandemic, a policy that critics said made little sense because some countries with high infection rates were not on the restricted list, while some on the list had the pandemic more un-

Blast at Shia mosque in Afghanistan kills 47

Over 70 others injured in suicide attack in Kandahar

SAMYA KULLAB& TAMEEM AKHGAR

KABUL, OCTOBER 15

SUICIDE BOMBERS attacked a Shia mosque packed with worshippers attending Friday prayers in southern Afghanistan, killing at least 47 people and wounding 70, a Taliban official said. It was the deadliest day since the US military withdrawal

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the carnage at the Fatimiya mosque in Kandahar province. The attack came a week after a bombing claimed by the local Islamic State affiliate killed 46 people at a Shia mosque in northern Afghanistan.

The sectarian bloodletting has raised fears that IS - an enemy of both the Taliban and the West — is expanding its foothold in Afghanistan.

Hafiz Sayeed, the Taliban's chief for Kandahar's department of culture and information, said 47 people had been killed and at least 70 wounded in the attack.

Murtaza, who like many Afghans goes by one name, said he was inside the mosque during the attack and reported four explosions: two outside and two inside. He said Friday prayers at the mosque typically draw hundreds of people.

Another witness, also named Murtaza, was in charge of security at the mosque and said he saw two bombers. He said one detonated explosives outside the gate, and

Russia: Taliban confirm they will join Moscow talks next week

Moscow: Representatives of the Taliban have confirmed they will take part in talks on Afghanistan in Moscow next week, President Vladimir Putin's special representative on Afghanistan said on Friday.

The official, Zamir Kabulov, said in comments published by Russian news agencies that the Taliban had confirmed their attendance at the talks next Wednesday but had yet to announce the members of their delegation.

Moscow hosted an international conference on Afghanistan in March at which Russia, the United States, China and Pakistan released a joint statement calling on the thenwarring Afghan sides to reach a peace deal and curb violence.

the other was already among the worshippers inside the mosque.

He said the mosque's security personnel shot another suspected attacker outside.

Video footage showed bodies scattered across bloodstained carpets, with survivors walking around in a daze or crying out in anguish.

The Islamic State group, which like Afghanistan's ruling Taliban is made up of Sunni Muslims, views Shia Muslims as

JOSEPH KRAUSS

JERUSALEM, OCTOBER 15

ISRAEL IS quietly advancing

controversial settlement proj-

ects in and around Jerusalem

without making major an-

nouncements that could anger

On Wednesday, as Foreign

Minister Yair Lapid met with US

officials in Washington, a local

planning committee in Jerusalem

approved the expropriation of

public land for the especially con-

troversial Givat Hamatos settle-

ment, which would largely cut the

city off from Palestinian commu-

nities in the southern West Bank.

vanced plans for the construc-

tion of 470 homes in the existing

The same committee ad-

the Biden administration.



Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttagi in Ankara, Turkey, on Friday. Reuters

Since then, the US and its allies have withdrawn their troops after 20 years on the ground, the Taliban has seized power and the previous government has collapsed. Since the Taliban takeover, Moscow has held military exercises in Taiikistan and bolstered hardware at its military base there. REUTERS

apostates deserving of death.

IS has claimed a number of deadly bombings across the country since the Taliban seized power in August amid the withdrawal of US forces. The group has also targeted Taliban fighters in smaller attacks.

If the attack was carried out by IS, it would be the first major assault by the extremist group in southern Afghanistan since the US departure enabled the Taliban to seize control of the country. AP

stabbed to death as he met voters in church

GERHARD MEY & ANDREW COULDRIDGE LEIGH-ON-SEA (ENGLAND), OCTOBER 15

A BRITISH lawmaker was stabbed to death on Friday in a church by an assailant who lunged at him during a meeting with voters from his constituency, knifing him repeatedly in an attack which politicians described as an assault on democracy. David Amess, 69, from Prime

Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party, was attacked at about midday in the red-brick Belfairs Methodist Church in Leigh-on-Sea, east of London.

"David was a man who believed passionately in this country and in its future and we have lost today a fine public servant and a much loved friend and colleague," said Johnson, who rushed back to London from the west of England after the news broke.

There was no detail about a motive for the killing, the second fatal attack on a British lawmaker in their constituency in the last five years, which has prompted questions about the safety of politicians.

Armed police swooped on the church and paramedics fought to save his life on the floor of the church, but in vain.

"Sadly, he died at the scene, police said. "A 25-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of murder and is currently in custody. We have recovered a knife from the scene and are not looking for anyone else in connection with the incident.



David Amess was one of Britain's longest-serving lawmakers who held regular meetings with voters

John Lamb, a local councillor who was at the scene, said Amess had been stabbed several times.

Colleagues from across Parliament expressed their shock and paid tribute to Amess, one of Britain's longest-serving lawmakers who held regular meetings with voters on the first and third Friday of the month, saying he was diligent in his duties to his local area.

Flags in Downing Street and outside parliament were lowered in tribute.

Amess, married with five children, was first elected to Parliament to represent Basildon in 1983, and then stood for Southend West in 1997. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth for his public service in 2015.

His website listed his interests as "animal welfare and pro-life issues". He was known for his contributions to debates - often about issues relating his constituency or animal rights. In his last contribution in the House of Commons last month, he asked for a debate on

PROTESTS AS ITALY DEBUTS COVID PASS

At a protest against the Covid Green Pass in Bologna, Italy, on Friday. Protests erupted in Italy as one of the most stringent anti-Covid measures in Europe went into effect, requiring all workers, from magistrates to maids, to show a health pass to get into their place of employment. AP

Australian state to end quarantine for vaccinated passengers from abroad

ROD MCGUIRK CANBERRA, OCTOBER 15

SYDNEY WILL end hotel quarantine for vaccinated passengers when scheduled international flights restart in Australia within two weeks, officials said on Friday, while maintaining some restrictions on foreigners enter-

ing the country. Vaccinated travellers who test negative for Covid-19 before flying to Australia's largest city would be spared 14 days in ho-



New South Wales officials make the announcement in Sydney on Friday. AP

tel quarantine from November 1, New South Wales state Premier

Dominic Perrottet said.

The major relaxation of the state's pandemic restrictions, which makes entering Australia easier for some travellers, was announced four days after Sydney came out of a 106-day lockdown.

"We can't live here in a hermit kingdom. We've got to open up and this decision today is a big one, but it is the right one to get New South Wales connected globally," Perrottet said. "It's going to be great for our tourism industry, it's going to be great for tourist operators," he added. AP **PAULJ WEBER**

Friday it will turn next to the US Supreme Court in another attempt to halt a Texas law that has banned most abortions since September.

The move comes as the Texas clinics are running out of avenues to stop the GOP-engineered law that bans abortions once cardiac activity is detected, which is usually around six weeks. It amounts to the nation's biggest curb to

The latest defeat for clinics



abortion ban in Houston earlier this month. AF

federal appeals panel in New Orleans, in a 2-1 decision, allowed the restrictions to remain in place for a third time in the last several weeks alone

state solution being implemented. The two-state

solution, under which the

Israel advances settlements with little US pushback

Another blow to two-state solution

advance its settlement projects are being described by analysts as incremental moves that open the door for rapid growth in the future. The further expansion of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem could deal a major blow to the already

dwindling possibility of a two-

ISRAEL'S LATEST efforts to

Palestinians hope to establish a state of their own that encompasses the West Bank and East Jerusalem among other areas, alongside the state of Israel, is still seen by the international community as the only

Pisgat Zeev. Authorities have scheduled a December 6 hearing for another project in east Jerusalem to build 9,000 settler homes in the Atarot area, accord-

east Jerusalem settlement of ing to Ir Amim, an Israeli rights group that closely follows developments in the city.

realistic way to end the conflict.

A military body has meanwhile scheduled two meetings in the coming weeks to discuss a

the occupied West Bank, making it impossible to establish a viable Palestinian state alongside Israel. "The fact that simultaneously all of these very controversial

planned settlement of 3,400

homes on a barren hillside out-

side Jerusalem known as E1.

Critics say it would largely bisect

plans that have been longstanding international red lines have now been advancing ... is very indicative that the Israeli government intends to advance and ultimately approve these plans," said Amy Cohen of Ir Amim. Jerusalem's deputy mayor

eur Hassan-Nahoum downplayed the latest developments, noting that Givat Hamatos was approved years ago. "Nothing's changed over the last few years,'

US govt to ask top court Russia says it pushed US to halt Texas abortion law

AUSTIN, OCTOBER 15

THE BIDEN administration said

abortion in nearly 50 years.

came Thursday night when a



ship away from its waters

VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV MOSCOW, OCTOBER 15

RUSSIA'S DEFENCE Ministry said a Russian warship on Friday prevented a US Navy destroyer from what it described as an attempt to intrude into Russia's territorial waters in the Sea of Japan.

The incident came as Russia and China conducted joint naval drills in the area, and follows other dangerously close encounters involving Russian and Western warships. It appears to reflect Moscow's intention to raise the stakes in deterring the US from sending ships near Russian waters.



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Chafee. File

The ministry said the Russian navy's Admiral Tributs destroyer closely approached the USS Chafee to chase it out of the area near Russian waters.

DEATH OF A WOMAN IN S KOREA'S AIR FORCE REKINDLES OUTRAGE OVER TREATMENT OF WOMEN BY THE COUNTRY'S MILITARY

'The only exit': Where soldiers are dying after sexual assaults

CHOE SANG-HUN SEOUL, OCTOBER 15

THE SOLDIERS were driving back to the South Korean air force base after dinner and drinks on March 2. In the back seat, Master Sgt. Lee Ye-ram could be heard repeatedly begging her male colleague, Master Sgt. Chang Dong-hoon, to stop sexually assaulting her.

'Can you please stop it," she said, according to the conversation recorded by the car's dashboard camera. What came after was the latest example of South Korea's persistent struggle to rid its military of sex crimes, even as the country tries to recruit more women amid a shortage of male

When Lee reported that Chang kissed and groped her in the car that night, her superiors tried to bury the complaint, according to Defence Ministry investigators. The military did not bring formal charges against Chang until after Lee, 23, took her own life on May 21. Chang has since admit-

ted to the assault and is facing trial.

It has become what some say is a pattern in South Korea: One female soldier after another has taken her own life in recent years after they reported being sexually assaulted in the military. Hundreds of sexual assaults are reported every year. At least four

female victims have taken their own lives in the past eight years, including a navy chief petty officer who was found dead in her apartment in August.

The deaths have forced South Korea's military to accept some long-delayed reforms. In August, the public uproar incited by Lee's suicide prompted the National Assembly to revise a law stipulating that all sex crimes be investigated by the national police and tried in civilian courts as opposed to courts-martial. The move was meant to increase transparency and protect victims, but victims and their families say it is the military itself that needs to change.

"The moment a victim reports

"My daughter chose to die rather than succumb to their coercion," said the father of Master Sgt. Lee Ye-ram, who died by suicide in May after being sexually assaulted. NYT

the assault, her entire unit goes to work to persuade and coerce her

to bury the problem," said Kim Jong-dae, a former lawmaker

who sat on a civilian-military panel created to recommend solutions to the assaults. "The victim takes suicide as the only exit out of such a situation."

So far, 15 people have been indicted in connection with Lee's case, none of them high-ranking air force police officers or prosecutors accused of delaying the initial investigation. Her family has refused to bury her until the officials are punished, but Defence Ministry investigators have said there is not enough evidence. They wrapped up their work last week.

South Korean society has long understood the need to address widespread gender bias, but

women in the armed forces are seen as particularly vulnerable. The country's 550,000-member military is considered one of its most hierarchical, male-dominant and paternalistic institutions, and former soldiers say women are treated as playthings rather than colleagues.

The issue attracted national attention in 2013 when an army captain died by suicide after being abused by her boss. "Idon't want to die" were among her last words, said Kang Suk-min, the family's former lawyer. After the captain's death, her father said he hoped that South Korea would "never again have to see another female soldier die like my daughter."

making the same enraged appeal. "It's the male-dominant mil-

Eight years later, Lee's father is

itary culture that doesn't treat female soldiers as colleagues that $killed\ my\ daughter,"\ he\ said\ in\ an$ interview. "It's the military culture that ostracises the victim of sexual crime, not the predator, that killed my daughter." The day after her assault, two

couraged her from taking her case to the military police. Lee eventually asked to be transferred to another unit, where she said she was treated as a troublemaker. "I am not sure I can hold on,"

of Lee's immediate bosses dis-

she told her father in a desperate voice message on May 7. NYT

9 6 @ieExplained

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Connecting ministries for infrastructure projects

The newly launched PM GatiShakti — National Master Plan aims at multimodal connectivity and reducing costs. How does it seek to meet these objectives?

KARUNJIT SINGH

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday launched the "PM GatiShakti — National Master Plan" for infrastructure development aimed at boosting multimodal connectivity and driving down logistics costs.

What is the project?

PM GatiShakti is a digital platform that connects 16 ministries — including Roads and Highways, Railways, Shipping, Petroleum and Gas, Power, Telecom, Shipping, and Aviation with a view to ensuring holistic planning and execution of infrastructure projects.

The portal will offer 200 layers of geospatial data, including on existing infrastructure such as roads, highways, railways, and toll plazas, as well as geographic information about forests, rivers and district boundaries to aid in planning and obtaining clearances.

The portal will also allow various government departments to track, in real time and at one centralised place, the progress of various projects, especially those with multi-sectoral and multi-regional impact. The objective is to ensure that "each and every department now have visibility of each other's activities providing critical data while planning and execution of projects in a comprehensive manner. Through this, different departments will be able to prioritise their projects through cross-sectoral interactions'

The Prime Minister, while launching the project, said examples of poor infrastructure planning included newly-built roads being dug up by the water department to lay pipes. The GatiShakti platform aims to prevent such situations by addressing the issue of government departments working in silos.

The government expects the platform to enable various government departments to synchronise their efforts into a multi-modal network. It will also offer satellite imagery for monitoring of projects. It is also expected to help state governments give commitments to investors regarding timeframes for the creation of infrastructure.

How will the platform help bring down logistics costs?

Studies estimate that logistics costs in India are about 13-14% of GDP as against about 7-8% of GDP in developed economies. High logistics costs impact cost structures within the economy, and also make it more expensive for exporters to ship merchandise to buyers.

By incorporating infrastructure schemes under various ministries and state governments, including the Bharatmala and inland waterways schemes, and economic zones such as textile and pharmaceutical clusters and electronics parks, the GatiShakti platform aims to boosting last-mile connectivity and bringing down logistics costs with integrated planning and reducing implementation overlaps.

Currently, a number of economic zones and industrial parks are not able to reach their full productive potential due to inefficient multi-modal connectivity.

How will progress under the National Master Plan be monitored?

The National Master Plan has set targets

for all infrastructure ministries. India is targeting an increase in the total cargo handled at Indian ports to 1,759 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) by 2024-25, up from 1,282 MTPA in 2020 - as well as increasing cargo movement on national waterways to 95 million tonnes from about 74 million tonnes in the same period.

The PM said the government was aiming at adding over 200 airports, helipads, and water aerodromes over the next 4-5 years beside nearly doubling the existing natural gas pipeline network, which is about 19,000 km.

A project monitoring group under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) will monitor the progress of key projects in real time, and report any inter-ministerial issues to an empowered group of ministers, who will then aim to resolve these.

Are states on board for the GatiShakti

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said the

from almost all BJP- and NDA-ruled states about the GatiShakti portal. Goyal said the portal would help states avoid both cost and time overruns, and allow them to provide the benefit of valuable infrastructure to their residents sooner.

How will this impact coordination between ministries for projects?

Currently, any inter-ministerial issues that arise relating to a project are addressed in regular meetings of infrastructure-related ministries. These issues are raised in advance, and then taken up.

Goyal said that through the PM PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation) portal, many issues were resolved even prior to such meetings. He said the GatiShakti portal would help reduce the human intervention required as ministries will be in constant touch, and projects will be reviewed by the project monitoring group in

Citing the example of a tunnel, Goyal said that ordinarily, we may see one tunnel being made for roads and another for railways; however such a platform would allow the ministries to coordinate, and create one large tunnel which may serve both purposes, saving the taxpayer thousands of crores.

T P Singh, director of the Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N), which has built the portal, cited the example of a project to build a railway line, for which the path was changed slightly following a review of the data available on the portal — obviating the need for a forest clearance that may have been required otherwise.

The portal will also highlight all the clearances any new project would need, based on its location — and allow stakeholders to apply for these clearances from the relevant authority directly on the portal.

Goyal said if a railway line is being built, the Ministry of Road Transport may immediately give clearance for an overpass, and the Power Ministry can begin projects to ensure that trains can immediately have access to

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD TOTAL VACCINATED IN INDIA (at least one dose) 69,26,23,237 ■ First dose ■ Second dose 50,00000 34,39,091 25,00,000 LAST 10 DAYS (daily) **COVISHIELD COVAXIN TOTAL DOSES** 88.3% 11.5% 97,14,38,553 (Sputnik V's 10,25,435 doses not represented in pie) DOSES ON OCT 14 32,17,556 **OCT 13: 38,41,785** (1st dose: 17,83,601; 2nd: 20,58,184) 6,83,258 4,56,862 2,41,990 Number of doses Andhra Pradesh adminsistered in Maharashtra on 2,35,892 3,35,521 October 14, the highest **INDIA ACTIVE COVID CASES** 1,50,000 2,03,678 • 2,46,687 LAST 10 DAYS



Note: The October 14 figures in these graphs are based on the government updates on Oct 15

Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on October 15

Shillong's Dalit Sikhs, an old land dispute, and a relocation proposed and opposed

TORA AGARWALA GUWAHATI, OCTOBER 15

A MEGHALAYA Cabinet decision to relocate the Dalit Sikh residents of Shillong's Them lew Mawlong area, also called Punjabi Lane, is fac-

ing opposition. Sikh groups have called it "illegal" and "unjust", with Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa saying he would take the issue up with Union Home Minister Amit Shah. On Thursday, a Sikh delegation from Delhi met Meghalaya Governor Satya Pal Malik, seeking his intervention. At the heart of it is a simmering issue between the Sikh residents and the local Khasi community, centred on a decades-old land dispute.

Who are the Punjabi Sikhs of Shillong?

They were first brought to Shillong by the British as manual scavengers and sweepers more than a hundred years ago. Today, the community of about 300-odd families lives in Them lew Mawlong, located next to Shillong's commercial hub, Iewduh or Bara Bazaar.

Himadri Banerjee, former professor of Indian history at Jadavpur University, who has extensively researched the Sikh community in the Northeast, said the Mazhabis were brought first, with a British military contingent, to work as sweepers. They were followed by the Ramgarhias (carpenters, blacksmiths and masons), and then the Soniars or goldsmiths, who came after 1947.

Mazhabi Sikhs, the largest of the groups, were recruited by the Shillong Municipal Board (SMB), and many lived in Bara Bazaar. Over the years, their ranks swelled in the SMB, Banerjee said. "We have been staying here for generations," said Gurjit Singh, president of the Harijan Panchayat Committee (HPC), which represents members of the Sikh Dalit community in Shillong. "In the 1990s, more than 800 members of our community were employed by the SMB, but the numbers have reduced since then.'

Banerjee said younger generations have moved on to professions such as driving or setting up mobile repair shops. Some integration has also happened. "Some Mazhabis speak Khasi, enjoy Khasi food, and a few are even married to Khasis and have converted to Christianity," Banerjee said.

Why was the plan to relocate them made?

On October 7, the Cabinet approved the proposal, based on a recommendation by a high-level committee set up in June 2018 to find a solution to a decades-old land dispute, following violent clashes between Khasis and Sikh residents the previous month. While the



(Above) A Sikh delegation from Delhi calls on Meghalaya Governor Satya Pal Malik Thursday; (above right) the colony in Punjabi Lane following the violence in 2018.

immediate trigger was something else, the clashes were rooted in the old land dispute.

The government claims the land belongs to the Urban Affairs Department, while the Sikhs say it was "gifted" to them in the 1850s by the Syiem (chief) of Hima Mylliem - one of the chiefdoms in Khasi Hills. Punjabi Lane is part of Mylliem, one of the 54 traditional administrative territories under the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council today.

According to the Cabinet decision, the Urban Affairs Department would take possession of the land from the Syiem of Mylliem (the custodian of the land) within a week. Chief Minister Conrad Sangma said permanent employees of the SMB would be relocated to constructed quarters.

What is the land dispute?

For three decades, sections of society and political organisations have been demanding that residents be shifted out - the primary argument being that a prime commercial area shouldn't hold a residential locality.

Donald Thabah, general secretary of the powerful Khasi Students' Union (KSU), said Punjabi Lane was the site of a lot of traffic congestion and needed to be cleared for "public convenience". "The name Them lew Mawlong literally suggests that it is the valley area of a market - so it doesn't make sense for it to function as a residential area. It should be used for alternative constructive purposes such as a parking lot or a commercial space," he said.

to build a parking lot or shopping complexes. The Sikhs have often sought legal recourse against this, maintaining they have "full rights to" the land, and documents to prove it. In 2018, after the committee was formed,

Over the years, there have been proposals

the Sikh HPC filed a petition in the Meghalaya High Court. In February 2019, the court said it was a "civil" matter and needed to be addressed in the civil court. On April 9, 2021, it ordered that status quo be maintained.

$Has there \, been \, previous \, conflict \, between \,$ the Sikhs and Khasis?

With the main bone of contention is the 2.5-acre Punjabi Lane, brawls at a local level between residents and Khasis have been reported over the years.

Distrust of the "outsider" — a sentiment expressed among sections of many communities in the Northeast states — also adds to the friction. Banerjee said local Khasis were "initially less enthusiastic" about doing the work the Mazhabis did. "But over time, as Khasis found themselves being squeezed out of a part of the job market, their anxieties manifested themselves in suspicions, hostility, and a hardening awareness of dissimilar identities."

According to KSU's Thabah, there was a major clash in 1996 too, which led to the deaths of Khasi youths at the hands of the police.

What are the Sikhs being offered now? The state government has said those who



relocated to constructed quarters elsewhere in the city. For the other residents, the government was "exploring other locations". The government said that while a num-

ber of the Sikh residents worked with the SMB, there were many "settlers" in the colony. "We do not know where they came from and thus there is a need to make an inventory of those residing there," said Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong, who led the committee. Singh said now only about 20 people (who

are close to retirement) were currently permanent employees of the SMB. "The government claims the rest of the people are illegal or unauthorised settlers. But that is baseless... our children and grandchildren have moved into new professions — that does not mean they do not belong here," he said.

How have the Sikhs reacted? "We have lived here for 200 years. Time

and again, the government tries to move us and our people get scared," Singh said. The community, however, had not received any official intimation about relocation yet.

Manjinder Singh Sirsa, who had led the delegation from the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee that met the Governor, said the matter was sub judice, and the high-level committee had "no power to make such a decision". He said the relocation plan had "not granted the residents an opportunity to say anything" or taken in their view.

What is the government's stand?

CM Sangma had earlier said the government was ready to challenge the court order. Governor Malik on Thursday assured the Sikh delegation that "no injustice will be done and the residents will not be removed illegally".

Tynsong said the government had followed "due diligence". He the Sikh commu $nity\,should\,not\,"get\,confused"\,that\,they\,were$ being thrown out". "They are people of Meghalaya and we are here to help them," he said. "We request them to help us make an inventory.'

Air India's art collection: what's in it, and where does it go now?

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

THE TATA group has reclaimed Air India, but the priceless Air India art collection is not part of the deal and is likely to stay with the government. A look at what is in the collection, and why it is important:

Oct 5

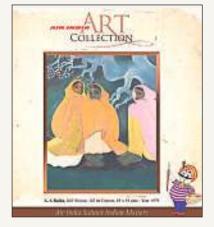
The collection

The 'Maharajah collection', as it is called, has over 4,000 works, including by Jatin Das, Anjolie Ela Menon, M F Husain and V S Gaitonde. These were on display across Air India offices, and on its calendars, posters and menu cards. There are posters by cartoonist Mario Miranda as well as ads designed by The New Yorker cartoonist Peter Arno, besides paintings, textiles, sculptures, and traditional wooden and bronze artwork. entire collection. As the airline expanded, so did the collection. But as computerised booking came in, some of the international booking offices were shut/streamlined, and the artworks were either sent back to Mumbai or stored elsewhere. Mumbaibased art historian and conservation architect Meera Dass, who is working on a book about the archive, said, "The airline always had the culture of being representative of the nation... The collection served that purpose - to present India as an ancient civilisation, but with a modern outlook."

Oct 14

The collector

Air India bought its first set of six paintings for Rs 87.50 in 1956, from a novice art school graduate, B Prabha. The collection was built over more than six decades after Independence, driven by JRD Tata's philos-



One of the paintings in Air India's collection. Twitter/@airindiair

ophy of "putting a little bit of India" in the booking offices of the erstwhile Tata Airlines.

"He (JRD Tata) was a great nationalist and he used the airline's booking offices outside India to expose the country's art and artists to the world," Dass said.

While some of the works were commissioned by the airline and some were bought for as low as Rs 50-500, others were bartered for air tickets to artists travelling abroad. In an interview, MF Husain had said: "They (Air India) would take the paintings and give free air tickets in return. As a result, the artists could travel to Czechoslovakia, Hong Kong, Paris. I did about four or five trips.'

There were other interesting ways of remunerating the artists. An ashtray - a porcelain shell surrounded by a serpent and supported by an elephant and swan - was commissioned to Salvador Dali, to be presented as a gift to first-class passengers. In return, Dali asked for a baby elephant, which was duly procured from the Bangalore zoo and sent to him.

State of the art

The works haven't been opened for decades, and it is believed some of them have been lost, stolen or damaged. In June 2017, Jatin Das learned that his 1991 oil painting Flying Apsara, acquired by Air India, was for sale on the open market for Rs 25 lakh. Following investigations, a complaint was filed against a former Air India executive for stealing government property. Subsequently, it was reported that the airline was "examining how many more former or serving Air India officials could be in

Last year, just before the pandemic hit, Air India organised a four-day exhibition of

possession of such paintings".

7,000 artefacts and memorabilia in

Dass said that since 2016, there have been serious efforts to create a detailed inventory of all art pieces owned by Air India. While a bulk of the collection is in Mumbai, some works are also in erstwhile Air India offices in New York, Washington, Perth, Rome, Tokyo, Paris, and London. The effort is now to get them back, a tedious process given that they were sent out 30 to 40 years ago.

There are, however, no plans to use the artworks to raise funds. The ministries of Civil Aviation and Culture are working out an agreement to transfer the collection to Delhi and display it at a prominent museum.

"Even though the nation couldn't afford the airline, we can surely create a dedicated museum to display this landmark collection, which unravels the India story, slice by slice," Dass said.

12 ECONOMY

ᢙ ₹61,926

SENSEX: 61,305.95 ▲ 568.90 (0.94%) NIFTY: 18,338.55 ▲ 176.80 (0.97%) NIKKEI: 29,068.63 ▲ 517.70 HANG SENG: 25,330.96 ▲ 368.37 FTSE: 7,224.50 ▲ 16.79 DAX: 15,521.42 ▲ 58.70

ERMAL POWER PLANTS FACING COAL SHORTAGE

Fuel supply from captive mines: 2 NTPC plants get excess coal of Talabira II-III

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

IN LIGHT of the country's thermal plants facing a coal shortage, the Coal Ministry said on Friday it had taken steps to boost supply to the power sector, including diverting supply from captive blocks.

Thermal power plants now have an average of 4 days of coal stock, as against a recommended level of 15-30 days, based on the distance of the plant from the source of coal. The Ministry said state-owned NLC India had begun supply of excess coal from its Talabira-II and -III captive coal blocks in Odisha to NTPC's Darlipali and Lara power plants.

The government had earlier this month notified rules permitting the sale of up to 50 per

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

PUBLIC SECTOR general insur-

ers have been losing ground to

private insurers, especially in

the motor segment, with their

share falling to 32.6 per cent in

August from 36.6 per cent a

year ago. On the other hand,

the private sector has im-

proved its share to 67.4 per cent

in the reporting month from

63.4 per cent in the year-ago

period, shows an analysis of

monthly data by Care Ratings.

ers held a market share of 46.5

per cent of the total motor seg-

ment premia, while private

for the public sector while it

jumped to 59.3 per cent for the

private players. The share of

public sector players declined

to 36.8 per cent in FY20 and

further dropped to 34.2 per

cent in FY21 while that of pri-

vate players rose to 63.2 per

cent in FY20 and further accel-

erated to 65.8 per cent in FY21,

lic sector had a market share of

37.5 per cent of the motor OD

(own damage) market, and the

private players had it 62.5 per

cent, which declined and in-

Similarly, in FY18, the pub-

according to Care report.

In FY19, the respective

players had 53.5 per cent.

In FY18, public sector play-

MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

SECTOR WATCH

INSURANCE

'Motor cover: Public

general insurers lose

30% biz since FY18'

EXPLAINE

Non-pithead plants see more crunch

AS MANY as 17 thermal power plants with a generation capacity of 17,050 MW (Megawatts) had zero days of coal stock on October 13, with another 47 plants with a capacity of 58,315 MW having only one or two days of coal inventory. The shortage is more acute at non-pithead plants or plants, which are not located close to coal mines with such plants accounting for 105 of the 112 plants seen to have critical levels of stock i.e. under 8 days.

cent of the coal output from captive coal mines after they met the requirement of the end-use plant linked to the mine. Prior to the notification of amended rules, captive coal mines were

PVT SECTOR GAINS

■ Private sector has

improved their

per cent in the

market pie to 67.4

reporting month

from 63.4 per cent

in the same period

last year, shows an

creased respectively to 32.5 per cent and 67.5 per cent in FY19

and further to 28.3 per cent

and 71.7 per cent, respectively

In FY21 the respective

analysis of the

Care Ratings

monthly data by

only permitted to supply coal to the end-use plants linked to the mine.

both the companies worked together to commence the supply of coal from Talabira

NTPC (Darlipali & Lara Power Plants), ," the Coal Ministry said in a release, adding deliveries have started within 24 hours of the companies receiving directives from the Ministry.

The Ministry has sought to increase the output of coal shipped to thermal power plants across the country as a number of states including Rajasthan and Punjab have faced blackouts due to inadequate power supply from thermal plants. Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi

said on Wednesday cumulative coal supplies to thermal power plants hit 2 million tonnes on that day, compared to a target of 1.9 million tonnes set by the Power Ministry. The Power Ministry has set a supply target of 2 million tonnes of coal from

said there is sufficient stock in the country to meet power requirements.

As many as 17 thermal power plants with a generation capacity of 17,050 MW (Megawatts) had zero days of coal stock on October 13, with another 47 plants with a capacity of 58,315 MW having only one or two days of coal inventory.

The shortage is more acute at non-pithead plants or plants, which are not located close to coal mines with such plants accounting for 105 of the 112 plants seen to have critical levels of stock i.e. under 8 days.

As much as 137.4 GW (Gigawatts) of the total 165 GW of capacity for which coal stocks are monitored daily is currently facing "critical" or "super critical" levels of coal inventory.

Sitharaman, Yellen for 'supportive policies' until firm recovery

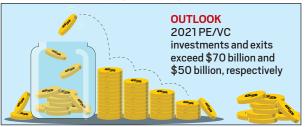


Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, along with officials, during the India-USA Economic and Financial Partnership meeting. via @FinMinIndia

'PE, VC investments more

Investments by private equity and venture capital funds in September more than halved to \$4.8 billion as compared to \$10.9 billion in August, but higher than the \$4.3 billion recorded in the year-ago period, a report by EY and IVCA said

than halve in Sept to \$4.8 bn'



investments in the July-September period surged 3.4 times to \$25.3 billion, with a sharp rebound in buyout investments and start-up investments accounting for 39 per cent of investments

On a quarterly basis,

Pure-play PE and VC investments, which exclude investments in real estate and infrastructure, recorded the highest-ever quarterly value at \$23 billion, 2.4 times the \$9.7 billion recorded in the year-ago period, and 63 per cent higher than the \$14.1 billion recorded in the June 2021 quarter

PIPE (private investment in public equity) investments recorded \$1.3 billion Source: across 23 deals in the reporting quarter as against \$1.8 billion across 18 deals in the year-ago period, and \$619 million across 18 deals in the June 2021 quarter

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

INDIA AND the US have underscored the need for maintaining "supportive policies" until a strong and inclusive economic recovery is "firmly entrenched".

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen acknowledged the devastation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and sought to bolster bilateral co-operation, at the eighth India-USA Economic and Financial Partnership meeting, held in Washington on Thursday. It was also attended by US Federal Reserve chairman Ierome Powell and Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das, among others.

The joint statement comes amid mounting anxiety globally overpotential taper tantrum once the US Federal Reserve begins to scale back its \$120-billion-amonth quantitative easing, with many analysts expecting it to be as early as in November.

In India, however, both the government and the central bank

India is witnessing a very ro-

bust economic recovery, but there

is still unevenness across sectors

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das

said in his address to the annual

meeting of the International

Monetary Fund and the World

Bank. Video of the excerpts of his

speech were posted and released

'Committed to bring economy on path of fiscal consolidation' ttee of the World Bank, she

LALITKJHA WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 15

THE GOVERNMENT remains committed to bring the economy on the path of fiscal consolidation in the near-tomedium term, setting the target to reduce fiscal deficit to 4.5 per cent by 2025-26, Union Finance Minister Nirmala

Sitharaman has told the IMF. Meanwhile, in her address to the Development Commi-

Okonjo Iweala here in the US amidst India's proposal for a temporary waiver of intellectual property rights on Covid vaccines and medicines worldwide. PTI

said India has not only faced

the COVID-19 crisis with great

resilience and fortitude but has

also played a major role and

"walked the talk" on the global

General of WTO Ngozi

She also met the Director

fight against the pandemic.

of growth-supporting interventions. Sitharaman and Yellen also pledged to boost cooperation in stemming illicit finance, money laundering and terror-funding, and highlighted the need for effective implementation of the standards stipulated by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

During the meeting, both India and the US also agreed on further engagements on financial-sector issues, including cross-border pay-

Will remain accommodative in

ments, payment systems and the development of the International Financial Services Centre.

Separately, at the plenary meeting of the International Monetary and Financial Committee of the Board of Governors of the IMF, Sitharaman expressed concern over the stark differences in vaccination coverage of low-income and advanced countries and

Settlement orders: Sebi forms high-powered advisory panel

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

shares were 25.5 per cent and 74.5 ner cent. In August 2020. the pie was 27.8 per cent and Board of India (Sebi) has constituted a four-member high-pow-72.2 per cent and which further declined to 24.3 per cent ered advisory committee on setand 75.7 per cent respectively. tlement orders and compounding of offences.

Its only in motor TP (thirdparty) segment that the public The committee will be chaired by Vijay C Daga, retired sector have some leeway as they had a market share of 52.7 judge of High Court of Bombay, per cent as against private playaccording to an update with the ers' 46.3 per cent in FY18, but Sebi on Tuesday.

The other members of the within a year they lost that too. panel are —former law secretary In FY19 it declined to 46.5 percent and to 42.2 percent in in Ministry of Law & Justice, PK FY20 while for private players Malhotra; ex-chairman of Deloitte the pie increased to 53.5 per Haskins & Sells LLPPR Ramesh and cent in FY19 and to 57.8 per DN Raval, partner at Raval & Raval cent in FY20. WITH PTI The panel will work as per the

Under the settlement mechanism, an alleged wrongdoer can settle a pending case with the regulator without admission or denial of guilt by paying a settlement fee

Settlement Proceedings Regulations, 2018 specified by the

Under the settlement mechanism, an alleged wrongdoer can settle a pending case with the regulator without admission or denial of guilt by paying a settle-

The settlement mechanism is

a tool for ensuring speedy and efficient resolution of disputes. In September, Sebi had proposed to overhaul the rule govern-

the system more effective. The time limit for filing settlement applications should be reduced from 180 to 60 days.

At present, entities are provided with a window of 180 days to apply for settlement after receipt of the show-cause

"On most occasions, the applicants apply for settlement towards the end of this timeframe. Such delays not only do not serve the purpose of the enforcement process but also impede the expeditious disposal of the enforcement proceedings," Sebi had said in its discussion paper. WITH PTI

monetary policy, says RBI Guv Washington: India, which is experiencing robust economic recovery which remains uneven across sectors, has decided to remain accommodative in its monetary policy, the Reserve Bank of India Governor told the international community on Thursday.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. File

"We have therefore decided to remain accommodative in our monetary policy, while being closely watchful of the evolving inflation scenario," Das said. PTI

data integrity Washington: The World Bank-International Monetary Fund Development Committee on Friday urged the bank to take addi-

Panel calls for

tional steps to "assure the integrity and credibility of data" in the wake of a data-rigging scandal involving its "Doing Business" report. The panel said in a commu-

nique that the multilateral development lender should take steps to create a culture where bank staff feel comfortable reporting wrongdoing. REUTERS

BRIEFLY —

Metropolis buy New Delhi: Metropolis

Healthcare on Friday said its board has approved the acquisition of Hitech Diagnostic Centre and its arm Centralab Healthcare Services for a cash consideration of Rs 636 crore.

Tala fundraise New Delhi: Tala said it has

raised \$145 million in Series-E funding round, led by Upstart with participation from the Stellar Development Foundation. PTI

US, crypto

Washington: Putting the crypto industry on alert, the USTreasury Department said the average amount of ransomware deals per month in 2021 was \$102.3 million. Meanwhile, Bitcoin hit a 6-month high above \$61,000, now up 7.59 per cent.

J&J talc

Boston: Johnson & Johnson put into bankruptcy thousands of legal claims alleging its talc-based products caused cancer. REUTERS

Second straight hike takes petrol, diesel to fresh record high

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

PETROL AND diesel prices on Friday rallied to their highest ever levels across the country, as fuel rates were hiked again by 35 paise a litre. The price of petrol in Delhi

rose to its highest-ever level of Rs 105.14 a litre and Rs 111.09 per litre in Mumbai, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. In Mumbai, diesel now comes for Rs 101.78 a litre; while in Delhi, it costs Rs 93.87. This is the second straight day

of 35 paise per litre increase in $petrol\,and\,diesel\,prices. There\,was$ no change in rates on October 12 and 13. Since the ending of a threeweek-long hiatus in rate revision in the last week of September, this is the 14th increase in petrol price and the 17th time that diesel rates have gone up. While petrol price in most of the country is already above Rs 100, diesel rates have crossed that level in a dozen states. including Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Andhra

Oil scales \$85

London: Oil prices jumped to a three-year high above \$85 a barrel on Friday, on forecasts of a supply deficit over the next few months, spurred by rising demand due to the easing of travel restrictions. Brent crude futures were up 77 cents, or 0.9 per cent, at \$84.77 a barrel at 11:48 a.m. EST (1548 GMT). US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures rose 87 cents, or 1.1 per cent, to \$82.19 a barrel. The contract is heading for a 3.5 per cent gain on the week. **REUTERS**

Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Bihar,

Kerala, Karnataka and Leh. Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes. Shedding the modest price change policy, state-owned fuel retailers have since October 6 started passing on larger incidence of cost to consumers. WITH PTI

Export curbs on diagnostic kits, reagents removed

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI. OCTOBER 15

WITH COVID-19 cases coming down in the country, the government on Friday removed export curbs on all diagnostic kits and reagents including instruments, which are used in detection of coronavirus infections. India logged 16,862 new coro-

 $navirus\,in fections, taking\,the\,total$ tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,40,37,592, while the active cases declined to 2,03,678, the lowest in 216 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Friday. The death toll climbed to 4,51,814 with 379 fresh fatalities.

The daily rise in new coronavirus infections has been below 30.000 for 21 straight days and less than 50,000 daily new cases have been reported for 110 consecutive days now. "The export policy of all diagnostic kits and reagents (including instruments / apparatus)... is being made free with immediate effect," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade said. WITH PTI

HONG KONG, OCTOBER 15 CHINESE STATE-OWNED Yue-

xiu Property has pulled out of a proposed \$1.7 billion deal to buy China Evergrande Group's Hong Kong headquarters build-

ing over worries about the de-

veloper's dire financial situa-

tion, two sources said. The collapse of the talks for the landmark building's sale is another setback for cashstrapped Evergrande which has



China Evergrande complex in Beijing. Reuters file

been scrambling to divest some

assets to repay creditors knocking on its doors. With more than \$300 billion in liabilities, it has already missed three rounds of interest payments on its international bonds. Yuexiu, based in the southern city of Guangzhou, was close to sealing a deal in August to acquire the China Evergrande Centre in Hong Kong's Wan Chai district that serves as Evergrande's lo-

cal headquarters, said sources. The spillover effect of China Evergrande Group's debt problems on the banking system is

month but Apple had told the

South Korean government that it

was already complying and did

not need to change its app store

policy, a Korea Communications

Commission (KCC) official in

charge of the matter told Reuters.

of the amended law," the official

said, requesting anonymity as the

"This goes against the purpose

nancial institutions' risk exposures are not big. Zou Lan, head of financial markets at the People's Bank of China, said.

The Swedish electric vehicle unit of China Evergrande Group is in talks with US and European venture capital firms and industrial partners to find new owners, chief executive Stefan Tilk said.

Meanwhile, Xinyuan Real Estate Co avoided a default on maturing dollar bond

such as a fact-finding probe as a

New Apple app store rule: S Korea may probe

'Evergrande's \$1.7 bn Hong Kong HQ sale flops'

REUTERS

SEOUL, OCTOBER 15

APPLE WAS on a collision course with South Korea on Friday over new requirements that it stop forcing app developers to use its payment systems, with a government official warning of a possible investigation into the iPhone maker's

The development comes after South Korea amended the Telecommunication Business Act in August to try to curb the tech majors' market dominance and

Source code exposed: Twitch

Bengaluru: Amazon-owned Twitch said Friday last week's data breach at the live streaming e-sports platform contained documents from its source code. **REUTERS**

such as Apple and Alphabet Inc's Google from charging commissions on in-app purchases. The law went into effect last

stop the big app store operators comply, would consider measures

New Delhi

KCC was still in talks with Apple on compliance. The regulator would ask Apple's South Korean unit for a new company policy giving greater autonomy in payment methods, and if Apple failed to

precursor to possible fines or other penalties. Apple did not immediately re-

ply to a request for comment. Google had informed the KCC that it planned to comply, including allowing third-party payment systems, and would discuss the matter with the regulator starting next week, the KCC official said. Google did not immediately reply to a Reuters' request for comment. Jung Jong-chae, a lawyer specialising in antitrust matters, said Apple had more to lose than Google from the Korean regulation.

Husband arrested after top Kenyan athlete's murder

Rotich was trying to flee Kenya after he allegedly murdered his wife Agnes Tirop

ASSOCIATED PRESS NAIROBI. OCTOBER 15

THE HUSBAND of Olympic runner Agnes Tirop has been arrested and will be charged with her murder after Kenyan police launched a nationwide manhunt and found him in the coastal city of Mombasa trying to flee the country, authorities said.

Ibrahim Rotich was arrested just before 9 p.m. Thursday, police said, but only after crashing his vehicle into a truck in a car chase with police and escaping a first attempt by officers to apprehend him about 460 kilometers (285 miles) from Mombasa. He was finally arrested hours later in the eastern city.

Rotich was detained a day after Tirop, a two-time world championship bronze medalist, was found stabbed to death at her home in the western town of Iten, more than 800 kilometers (500 miles) from Mombasa on the other side of the country. The 25-yearold Tirop's body was found in a pool of blood with stab wounds in the abdomen, police

Rotich was immediately identified as the prime suspect and police said he went on the run after making a tearful phone call to his family confessing he had done something terrible. Rotich was arrested alongside another man he was traveling with and had Tirop's cell phone with him, police said.

The Directorate for Criminal Investigations said Rotich was being questioned at a police station and would be charged with murder.

Rotich and Tirop were married in a traditional Kenyan ceremony but were estranged at the time of her killing. Their families had convinced them to try to reconcile and they had apparently met this week to do that.

Tirop was a rising star in Kenya after winning the 2015 world cross-country title at the age of 19, the second youngest athlete ever to win that event. She also claimed bronze medals in the 10.000 meters at the 2017 and 2019 world championships and finished fourth in the 5,000 meters at the Tokyo

Last month, she broke the world record for the women-only 10-kilometer road race. Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta was

one of many who expressed outrage at her killing. Kenyatta, who is on an official visit to the United States, said Tirop was a Kenyan hero and ordered police to find her killer.

The Kenyan track federation suspended all its events in the country for two weeks in a mark of respect for Tirop.



Tirop had broken the 10,000m Road world record last month. Reuters

Behind athlete's murder, a tale of a relationship gone wrong

LAST MONTH, Kenya's Agnes Jebet Tirop, 25, was found with multiple fatal stab wounds. Her husband Emmanuel Rotich, the prime suspect, was arrested a day later.

TIROP'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Tirop first burst onto the scene at the 2015 World Cross Country Championship, when the then 19-year-old became the youngest to win the event since South African Zola Budd claimed the title in 1985.

She was a two-time bronze medallist at the World Championships (2017 and 2019) in the 10,000 metres and she recently finished fourth in the 5,000m at the Tokyo Olympics.

RELATIONSHIP TROUBLES

Tirop had reportedly been in a relationship with Rotich for over five years. Her parents did not approve of the wedding since they allegedly eloped. The relationship started deteriorating though when Tirop caught Rotich having an extramarital affair two weeks before the Olympic trials in June, according to a neighbour quoted by People Daily.

According to the People Daily, none of the neighbours knew Rotich well as he kept to himself. Tirop's family have accused him of taking over her property. Allegedly, whenever Tirop invested in property – she was reportedly on the verge of starting a poultry farming business - Rotich ensured his name was also

"Manu(Rotich) was a selfish person. He had everything. He was pampered more than the family members," Tirop's brother Josephat Keter said to Citizen TV. There were also reports of domestic violence.

"She was beaten overnight on the day she landed from Tokyo, Her face was swollen." Tirop's sister Everlyne Chemwetich told Kenyan newspaper Daily Nation.

CONTROLLING HUSBANDS

Athletes being lured by "coaches" who become "spouses" and start to control the financial rewards earned by the runner is quite common in the country. Based on what Iten-based athletics coach Peter Bii asserted, it appears Tirop too had fallen for the trap.

'We have a crop of men whose job is to identify potential athletes and befriend them. Once the female athlete starts progressing, the men who masquerade as coaches and spouses control everything," he told People Daily.

ANOTHER GRUESOME MURDER

A day before Tirop's body was discovered, a local marathoner from Kirinyaga had alegedly been killed by her boyfriend.

News agency Kenyans.co.ke reported that Edith Muthoni, 27, was killed by her boyfriend of three years Kennedy Nyamu. She had allegedly been trying to search Nyamu's phone suspecting that he had been cheating on her. SHAHIDJUDGE

Neymar back in form in 4-1 win over Uruguay

ASSOCIATED PRESS SAO PAULO, OCTOBER 15

NEYMAR STARTED the week facing criticism after a poor performance in a World Cup qualifying match and his suggestion that the next tournament in Qatar might be his last.

But the striker helped erase many of those thoughts by providing key elements in all of the Brazil goals in Thursday's 4-1 win against Uruguay.

The 29-year-old Neymar, who had a disappointing performance in Sunday's 0-0 draw at Colombia in the previous round. arrived in the northwest Brazilian city of Manaus on Monday with dozens of fans in front of the team's hotel. That would be the usual, were it not for a wave of criticism he has faced at home for months.

Neymar scored the opening goal against Uruguay after dribbling past goalkeeper Fernando Muslera. He then took the shot that allowed Raphinha to add the second. And then he provided two assists; one in a through pass to Raphinha and a cross that landed on the head of Gabriel Barbosa.

Midfielder Fred, who assisted Neymar on his goal, said Brazil players felt the difference in atmosphere since they arrived in Manaus. And that includes the team's star.

These fans gave us support every day in the stadium, in the hotel. They bought all the tickets and it was an extra strength for us," he said, referring to the attendance of 12,500, the maximum allowed by COVID-19 protocols in Brazil. "We want them to be here supporting us, giving this great energy again in the next matches,' he added.

Raphinha praised Neymar's performance on Thursday. "Playing with Ney was very easy. I am a big fan of his, I take a lot of inspiration from him, in the way he plays and dribbles the opposition," Raphinha said. "I watch a lot of his videos. To have played alongside is a dream coming true." Neymar also showed his reinvigorated happiness on social media.

On Instagram, he posted pictures celebrating his goal with teammate Lucas Paquetá, a montage to mark his 70th goal for Brazil and also a video of himself hugging his friend and Uruguay striker Luis

"A giant by nature," Neymar said in the caption of a picture of himself celebrating.

The Brazil star, who has been overshadowed by Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi's arrival at his club Paris Saint-Germain, once again dribbled past defenders with a smile on his face. Before Neymar's showing against Uruguay, local fans were still accusing him of being in poor shape, failing in delivering the latest Copa America, focusing too much on his events off the pitch and, finally, of remaining mostly silent about the impact of the



Neymar was involved in all four of Brazil's goals in the 4-1 win. Reuters

RESULTS		
Bolivia	4 0	Paraguay
Colombia	0 0	Ecuador
Argentina	1 0	Peru
Chile	3 0	Venezuela
Brazil	4 1	Uruguay

COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil.

Brazil coach Tite agreed that the first match in front of home fans boosted the team's morale after two lackluster performances. Neymar did not play in the 3-1 win against Venezuela due to a suspension.

"Thank you, Manaus. You had extraordinary human warmth with us," Tite said at a conference. "With fans back in the stadium. . celebrating when our bus arrived. It was beautiful. Maybe today's showing had to do a little with all this love, being welcome here." Brazil leads qualifiers with 31 points in 11

matches, ahead of Argentina by six.

Argentina close to qualification

Argentina wasted two opportunities to score in the first two minutes of the match. And it appeared it would hammer Peru when Lautaro Martinez opened the scoring with a headed goal in the 43rd minute after a cross from the right by Nahuel

"Our game was more fluid against Uruguay, there were more gaps," Martinez said. "We had a few difficulties, but we managed to always find a solution. Today we did

BRIEFLY -

India to play Nepal for 8th SAFF Cup title

Male: Having endured a topsy-turvy beginning to their campaign before a fine turnaround, seven-time champions India will start title favourites when they take on firsttime finalists Nepal in the summit clash of the SAFF Championships on Saturday. The final will be the 12th for India in 13 editions which shows the domination of the Blue Tigers in this regional tournament. The thirdplace finish in 2003 was the worst performance for them. A win against Nepal will also be head coach Igor Stimac's first trophy after taking charge of the Indian team in 2019. Should the team come good, he will become the sixth coach to win the SAFF Championships title and third foreigner after Jiri Pesek (1993) and Stephen Constantine (2015). PTI

Vishy Anand to take up the mike

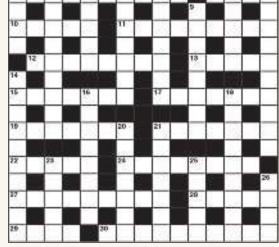
Chennai: Indian chess maestro Viswanathan Anand will be one of the official commentators for the FIDE World Chess Championship match between Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi in Dubai from November 24. "Looking forward to being in Dubai. What promises to be a great match. It's even better when you can say 'How come he didn't play the move' see you soon," the fivetime world champion tweeted. PTI

Khalin Joshi wins Jaipur Open

Jaipur: Khalin Joshi's final round of

three-under 67 was good enough for him to turn the tables on overnight leader M Dharma and emerge victorious at the Rs 40 lakh Jaipur Open golf tournament presented by Rajasthan Tourism on Friday. Joshi (61-66-64-67), who made a dramatic three-putt from four feet on the last hole to end the tournament with a bogey, won by one shot as he totalled 22-under 258 for the week. Khalin's fifth career trophy ended his threeyear long title drought. The 29-yearold Joshi, who hails from the Karnataka Golf Association (KGA) course, overcame the disappointment of his runner-up finish in Delhi last week as he bagged a winning cheque worth Rs. 6,46,600 to move up from fifth to third in the PGTI Order of Merit. He made six birdies and three bogeys on the last day. PTI

CROSSWORD 4562



ACROSS 1 Pound notes may be what it

means (10) 6 Chilly sort of cake? (4) 10 Bad organisation in cinema fiasco(5) 11 This means the end of one's best suit (4,5) 12 False story about the ringleader produces bad feeling (8)

13 Clean break or cut (5)

15 It ends a flight in two ways

17 To snub a girl may be wounding (7) 19 Looks for key weapons (7)

21 Italian dish Rex is to turn to (7) 22 Take advantage of a sailor needing employment (5) 24 Compellingly kind (8) $27\,Imperturbable\,admission\,of$ inertia (9) 28 The cream of the Carmelites

(5) 29 Biting a pastry (4) 30 Contracts producing mere $confusion\,in\,agents\,(10)$

DOWN 1 Celebrity retired from the

Mafia (4) 2 Votes the umpire possibly 3 Numberless Visa account for a patriarch (5) 4 Sediment of port? Sling it out (7) 5 Kind of lodge Monica's built (7) 7 Agitate a liquid container (5) 8 It causes rough weather and loss of trade (10)

9 Let heats decide those who run 14 Copywriter? (10)

16 What's more, it's a sincere 18 Command rigidly obeyed on the parade ground (9) 20 One covered by unusually strong stocking(7)21 Free of duty (7) 23 Such a cut may be seen in a ring

25 It won't throw much light on the subject (5) $26\,\text{Like things to eat}\,(4)$

Solutions Crossword 4561: Across: 1 Stowage, 5 Slump, 8 Offending, 9 Peg, 10 Tale, 12 Impaired, 14 Immure, 15 Floats, 17 Culde-sac, 18 Team, 21 Nag, 22 In the swim, 24 Extol, 25 Nomadic. Down: 1 Shoot, 2 Oaf, 3 Aunt, 4 Enigma, 5 Signally, 6 Upper case, 7 Pagodas, 11 Limelight, 13 Freewill, 14 Incense, 16 Wanton, 19 Mimic, 20 Term, 23 Wed.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson









MARVIN by Tom Armstrong

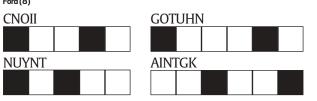






JUMBLED WORDS

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.



engage in it. - Henry Ford Answer:**Thinking** is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason why so few SOLUTION: IONIC, TUNNY, NOUGHT, TAKING Difficulty Level 3s Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9

SUDOKU

must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s =

	8	F		4		-	3
İ				9	5		2
		5	6				
)			4		94)	8	- 1
3	5						6
		7	5	2	37		9

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4625 3 4 6 7 8 1 5 2 5 4 3 1 6 5 9 9 5 5 8 2 6 7 9 1 4 1 7 9 8 3 4 5 2 6 6 4 1 7 8 5 2 3 9 5 9 3 4 2 6 8 7 1 8 7 3 1 9 4 6 5

DAY TODAY

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) Appropriately for the planetary picture remains optimistic.

determined to get your own way, especially where money is concerned. Pay off debts before relationships are soured. You see, money is a surprisingly emotional issue at the moment.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) You must be free to branch out in a new direction if that is what you want. It's neither fair nor reasonable for other people to hold you back, however noble their intentions. Colleagues are expecting more of vou than they should, but just for now, you might have to go

along with them.

your intentions.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Original ideas will fire your imagination, and you'll be ably assisted by the friendly presence of Mercury, encouraging you to come out into the open and put yourself on the line. At the very least you need to understand that partners have the right to know

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) You were born with creative talents but you've not always been diligent in

expressing them as they deserve. The result could be a rather frustrating period, but one filled opportunities. And that means that you'll come out of the present period with hope in your heart.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) You have the courage to live in the present even though it does seem inevitable that unfinished business from the past must now be cleared up. You'll manage your personal affairs with great personal tact and diplomacy, much more so than other people expect.

VIRGO(Aug 24 - Sep 23) Amid the confusion



New Delhi

you stand alone, able to think clearly and even come up with answers which have eluded

others. The key may lie in financial arrangements which may now have to be revised. On the other hand, when partners have made their intentions plain, you might be able to carry on

BY PETER VIDAL

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Statements attributed to a close

friend may have been an eye-opener Yet the truth is that you may have closed your mind to a major possibility for much too long. If ever there was a time to open up to new alternatives.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) Be wary of those who promise you the earth, but don't mislead other people with your own

outrageous claims, either. It's essential that you keep your feet planted firmly on the earth, even if this means you abandon an ideal or two. At least, just temporarily.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22) Although you may feel shaken after recent hurts and slights, you must now begin to reorganise your life. If you are totally honest with yourself, you'll realise that there is more than a grain

of truth in partners' criticisms of your behaviour. CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) You may still be in a state of shock or, at

least, mildly surprised. Ťhis is one of those times when people you trust and love are likely to land bombshells on you. However, if you try to play the little lost innocent, it won't work. So, you'd better play it straight and not take any risks.

This is a romantic time for many people, even if they don't have the courage to admit it. You, on the other hand, are frank and honest enough to be totally open about your feelings, a fact which will help put others at ease.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

great gifts. PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Everything that has occurred in the past

That, after all, is one of your



so trivial or insignificant that you can't learn something from it of lasting value. Your financial situation is about to shift, as well, so get ready.

Football's world governing body FIFA on Friday said it has evacuated almost 100 members of the "football family", including women players, from Afghanistan after "complex negotiations" and with support from Qatar. "FIFA can confirm, following complex negotiations, it has, with the support of Qatar, evacuated almost $100\,\mathrm{members}$ of the football family from Afghanistan, including female players," stated the world body

Good old CSK

MS Dhoni's side bounceback from last year's horror season to win fourth IPL title

SYNONYM: Jadeja, Shardul and Faf; class prevails in CSK's title win.

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY OCTOBER 15

MS DHONI's face hardly betrays emotion. Else, it would have had the mea culpa of a dropped catch writ large on it. Dropping Venkatesh Iyer, the man behind Kolkata Knight Riders' upsurge in UAE, on nought threatened to be a very costly mistake, irrespective of a victory target

And when Shubman Gill got a Spidercam-wire reprieve, with CSK desperately searching for a breakthrough, it felt like lady luck was with KKR in the IPL final.

But CSK had scoreboard pressure to fall back on. Once Iyer got out after scoring a blazing 50 off 32 balls, wickets rained. The 27-run victory to claim the IPL title for the fourth time was pretty comfortable in the end. This has been a story of a stirring comeback by the so-called 'Dad's Army' that were written off after last season.

Jadeja and Shardul

Against a massive total, the KKR openers, Iyer and Gill, were undaunted. Fifty came in the sixth over and KKR had raced to 88 for no

Then, Iyer tried to send a Shardul delivery into orbit but mistimed it.

All eyes were fixed on Jadeja, who couldn't afford to drop the skier. Under such pressure, overcoming a great degree of difficulty, the allrounder took one of the finest catches of the tournament.

Rahul Tripathi's hamstring injury forced KKR to alter their batting order. They were always up against a 10-plus asking rate and with their captain Eoin Morgan woefully out of form, promoting Sunil Narine was their only option.

Narine gave a mighty thud to a short one from Josh Hazlewood and it looked to have enough meat to go over the boundary. But Jadeja, who else, ran back, kept his eyes on the ball and timed his jump to perfection to pluck it out of thin air. Impact-fielding done, Jadeja provided his spin-punch. Dinesh Karthik was removed with a skiddy delivery followed by Shakib Al Hasan's scalp a wide ball later with sharp-spin.

After Iyer's scalp, Shardul dismissed Nitish Rana with a cross-seamer in the same over, a delivery that stopped a bit on the batsman. The key to chase down an imposing total is to take the game deep with enough wickets in hand. Once KKR started to lose wickets in a heap - eight wickets fell between 11 and 17 overs for 34 runs, Morgan's team was out of the game. Shardul finished with 3/38 to take his tournament tally to 21 wickets.

Class prevails

Until this game, during the second phase the tournament, three KKR spinners. Varun Chakravarthy, Narine and Shakib, had been going at an economy-rate of less than seven runs per over. In the title showdown, both Varun and Shakib were taken to the cleaners, and Narine's 2/26 was the only saving grace. Out of their Sharjah comfort zone, KKR bowlers searched for the right length, going all over the place in the process. Lockie Ferguson, 0/56, was the biggest struggler.

But this doesn't take the credit away from CSK batting. A missed stumping on two notwithstanding, du Plessis' 86 oozed class. Ruturaj Gaikwad, playing the role of an enforcer today, finished the tournament with 635 runs to claim the Orange Cap. Robin Uthappa and Moeen Ali made a mockery of KKR's famed middle-overs choke.

BRIEF SCORES: CSK 192/3 in 20 overs (Faf du Plessis 86, Moeen Ali 37 not out, Ruturaj Gaikwad 32, Robin Uthappa 31; Sunil Narine 2/26) beat KKR165 for 9 in 20 overs (Shubman Gill 51, Venkatesh Iyer 50; Shardul Thakur 3/38, Josh Hazlewood 2/29, Ravindra Jadeja 2/37) by 27 runs.



Chennai Super King's Faf du Plessis slammed seven boundaries and three hits over the fence for his 86 of 59 balls. ipIT20.com

Two catches, two wickets; Jadeja turns the Knight around, owns the big moments

SANDIP G OCTOBER 15

IT WAS not meant to be Ravindra Jadeja's night. Or so it seemed for the first two hours of the game; he wasn't required to bat, his first two overs were creamed for 25 runs, and a wicket was chalked off for the weirdest of reasons, the miscued ball hitting a near-invisible wire. Yet, it turned out to Jadeja's night in the end. In big games, in big moments, there tends to be his inevitable stamp.

But his first big impact moment itself could have been a heartbreak moment. Venkatesh Iyer's miscue hung in the air for an eternity, furnishing enough time for Jadeja to scamper from extra cover to wide long-off.

Then at the final moment, he seemed to misjudge the catch, the ball dropping shorter than he had judged. But he stretched his hands out, and though he lost his balance, his focus didn't waver. The ball bumbled out of his palms, but those fingers didn't quiver. He clung on though half the ball was out of his hands. Jadeja did well to prevent the body slipping fully, a head-on fall would have resulted in him dropping the catch due to the intensity of the body hitting the ground. When finally he fell over, he was in total control of the ball. To pause when one is diving intentionally is hard enough, to do so when one is not in control of the body is subliminal athleti-

It could have been so easy for him to sulk after that cancelled wicket and surrender to his lucklessness. But Jadeja is built of sturdier armoury. Had he dropped the catch, the match could have slipped out of CSK's grasp. Shardul Thakur seemed al-



Ravindra Jadeja took Dinesh Karthik and Shakib Al Hasan out of the game for CSK.

ready living on the edge, having seen edges fly off him and catches elude him. Instead, his persistence with the scrambled seam was rewarded, as he made one hold up after pitching and stop on the batsman without taking the pace of the ball. His scrambled-seam menace was even more noticeable when he had Nitish Rana splay a drive to mid-off. Rana was through the shot early, as the ball hung an eternity in the air after pitching. Suddenly, CSK had two wickets in the space of four balls. The match burst open like a monsoon cloud.

Timely intervention

Four balls later, they had a third, that of the potentially dangerous Sunil Narine. The

ball seemed soaring for a six before, invariably, Jadeja intervened at deep midwicket. This time, he did not require any lastminute adjustment or fingers performing emergency jugglery. The catch was measured to perfection - from his short sprint backwards to the one-leg pirouette at the edge of the fence. Had a muscle of his body rebelled, he would have lost balance and stumbled over the rope. But every sinew of his synchronised seamlessly to complete

Then the luck with the ball turned too. In his fourth over, Jadeja picked two wickets that effectively sealed the game for CSK. Here again, his unflustered character shone through. Many bowlers would have nursed the scars of the battering he had received (three overs for 34 runs), but Jadeja strutted in with the arrogance of a bowler on a hat-trick. Fifth ball, he ejected Dinesh Karthik with what seemed like a rank short ball. But it might have been a cleverly-laid trap. The leg-side boundary was shorter and Karthik would invariably look to pummel a short ball out of the ground. But it came slightly faster than Karthik had gauged and he ended up mistiming one of his staple strokes. It might have been a punt, but Jadeja is not someone who would die ruing that ball.

The second wicket was throwback Jadeja. Flat and fast on middle stump, angling into the body from around the stumps, delivered from wide of the crease. Shakib Al Hasan, like a novice, played the angle and looked to shovel him down the leg for a quick single at best, but the ball was too quick for him, delivered at 103.5 kph, and beat him for pace. Jadeja celebrated ecstatically, like a man who has his name written on the skies, soon to be illuminated by the dazzle of fireworks.

EMOTIONAL

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

Cool play & it's all yellow



MS Dhoni finally cracks a smile after winning the final . iplt20.com

"CSK CSK" rang out the shouts in the stands in the final over of the chase. In the dug out, Robin Uthappa whose lovely cameo was a factor in CSK's high score but who was off the field, hugged the assistant coach Eric Simons. Dhoni had a smile as his happy players converged on him. Even though the match was long-over, Dhoni, as ever, kept it simple, urging his players to do the basic stuff properly. Shardul Thakur really tested MS Dhoni's patience in the 19th over. Particularly with a slower one that slipped out as a chest-high full toss and

a no-ball of course. Dhoni gave a stare and gave out an angsty "C'mon!". More than 40 runs were needed but Dhoni wasn't resting on his laurels. Two more wides followed and Dhoni gathered both and sighed. Then a six came and he was now visibly upset and screamed out a few words. And when the final ball was a dot ball, a slower one that he collected, he waved his gloves as if to say, "just keep it simple like this'. Still not done, he followed Thakur who was trying to hide in the outfield and had more words to say.

DK, fluffed stumping not OK

It's third time in as many games that **Dinesh** a stumping chance. Off the first ball of the



Hasan looped one up on a length, sucking Faf du Plessis into a drive but the ball dinked past the inside edge of the bat and slid down leg side but Karthik couldn't gather. It still would have needed Dhoni-like reflexes to pull off the stumping as du Plessis had begun to slide his back foot towards safety but as it transpired, it rolled away for a bye. To make matters worse, Ruturaj Gaikwad swept a four and pulled a six in that over. The good news for the superstitious Kolkata fans is that in the last two games Karthik fluffed a stumping, Kolkata Knight Riders went on to win.

Chewing gum, chewing up the bowler

Even as Deepak Chahar ran in for the first ball of Shubman Gill was chewing his gum.



to create carnage.

in between deliveries and only a few - we all know who - do it actively even when the bowler is about to deliver the ball. Just as the ball was released, Gill went down the track and absolutely walloped it over midwicket. Gill loves that shot over midwicket. Many others do play that shot but not many retain shape even when going down the track. Almost as if he is standing on a camera trolley that has been slid forward. Gill somehow manages to stay almost still - no jarring of the lead shoulder, no bobbing of the head and the bat swoops down nice and smooth

This/that, left/right, Iyer/or

Lanky Venkatesh Iyer has been the discovery of the tournament. He could strike stadium-clearing sixes, chime in with wickets with all-sorts medium pace, and he could fling bullet throws from the deep with both hands.

He was stationed at cover, and Robin Uthappa dabbed a Varun Chakravarthy ball towards third man. He sprinted a fair distance, intercepted the rapidly travelling ball near the ropes, picked it with his left hand and flung a neat, flat throw in one fluid motion. In the next over, he was standing at deep point when Uthappa hammered one through covers. Iyer blitzed in time to thwart a boundary, gathered it cleanly and bulleted another flat throw to the bowler. Only this time. he used his right hand. There are batsmen who bat left-handed and bowl right-

The other way around. But there are few fielders worth their salt who could be



dexterous with both their arms to file in a hammer throw from the deep.

Who knows, he could bat righthanded and bowl left-handed too. Quiz his school teachers, maybe he could write with both hands.

Sweat and tears: The making of orange cap holder Ruturaj Gaikwad

DEVENDRA PANDEY MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

THE COACH Mohan Jadhav still remembers the moment when a student informed him that Ruturaj Gaikwad was crying in the back of the dressing room.

He was 13 and had failed in two games which would have propped his selection for the Under-14 camp of the Maharashtra Cricket, Young Gaikwad had arrived at that invitational tournament with seven centuries behind him but in the key selectiontrial games, his bat had gone mute.

"He told his friend, 'what's the point of those runs in league games when he failed in the main games'. For him the runs in the big games mattered the most," Jadhav recalls to this newspaper. Jadhav allowed Gaikwad to weep before he pacified him saying that if he does well in the next game, Maharashtra will still pick him. Gaikwad hit 182 and hasn't looked back since.

He still has had to wait out for his chances. Even with Chennai Super Kings. When he

was benched for an entire season a couple of years ago, he dialled Jadhav, a touch upset.

"I told him that they have kept you to watch and learn. The day your turn comes, you should be mentally ready. You are lucky that you are not getting a chance to play; imagine if you got and failed, it would take a lot of time to get back (into the scheme of things). Just be ready for your chance," Jadhav recalls telling him.

Just as he waited for the right moment when he was a young kid to start hitting sixes. He was 13 when he joined the Varroc Vengsarkar Cricket Academy in Pimpri Chinchwad in Pune where the coaches had a tradition of asking their players to maintain a daily diary.

Gaikwad's entry dated 25-11-2009 ran thus: "Sir told me not to hit on the up. We should always watch the gap and not the fielder." Just below, was his coach's reply: "Because you don't have that much power now. When you get power, I will tell you to hit

Even his academy coaches would not have been prepared for the stunning bent-





(Left) With 635 runs in 16 innings Ruturaj Gaikwad finished as the Orange Cap holder. (Above) A young Gaikwad with coach Mohan Jadhav.

knee swept-six of Jasprit Bumrah he hit in an IPL game. It's not only others who took time to realise his talent but at times even he doesn't quite recognise his own worth.

When gifs and raves spread in social media about that Bumrah six, Gaikwad didn't quite get the fuss. His close friend Naushad Shaikh, who played for Maharashtra, has a chuckle about the incident.

"He didn't even realise what a great shot he played initially. It's his favourite shot and he actually plays it often. He called me later to say, "sach main yaar, kya shot maara maine! (True mate! What a shot I played!)," Shaikh says

Surendra Bhave, former India selector and ex Maharashtra coach, too was dazzled by that shot. "Bumrah ko maara boss!" But he too wasn't surprised by the shot selection and in fact says that it might not even have been a predetermined shot.

"I have asked him before in the past and he has told me that he sort of instinctively goes for it."

Even as Bumrah released the ball full, Gaikwad crouched, bent his knee, and swept it as if it were a full toss from an offspinner.

"Not a single bad-looking or any outof-place shots," Bhave says. He then perfectly summed up Gaikwad's batting. "It seems every shot is the most appropriate shot for that ball. And yet, we see him sweeping, charging down the track, pulling, lapping, and the whole array of

shots really - and still, each time it seems it's a perfect shot for that ball. What it tells you is the clarity of thought and calm temperament. There is no rush of blood or predetermination. And this even in a T20 format. I have seen him in longer forms and can tell you he is brilliant there.

Another facet that impresses and amuses Bhave is the earnestness. "He almost plays cricket as if it's part of a 9 to 5 job, if you get the idea. In control, does his stuff, works hard, goes home. And comes back the next day to do the same! Very sincere and absolutely no airs about him," Bhave says.

It has come true this season where he has scored 635 in 16 IPL games and been the main architect for CSK reaching the final.

Eleven years ago, on February 10, Gaikwad had written in his diary: "Sir told us that concentration is very important. Sir also told us that we should not get bored when doing skills or drives. We should become mean, as they say in Marathi. You should become consumed by this activity. This activity should completely obsess your mind because passion creates history."

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