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**SWEARING-IN AT 11 AM TODAY**

# On day of drama, Congress picks Dalit face Charanjit Singh Channi as new Punjab CM

At the end of several meetings in Delhi, Chandigarh, Chamkaur Sahib MLA edges out Sidhu, Randhawa

**KANCHAN VASDEV**  
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 19

CHARANJIT SINGH Channi will be the first Dalit chief minister of Punjab after he was nominated leader of the Congress legislature party (CLP) on Sunday evening.

Fifty-eight-year-old Channi, the MLA from Chamkaur Sahib and the state's technical education minister, will replace Captain Amarinder Singh, who stepped down as chief minister on Saturday.

Channi was among the leaders who had rebelled against Amarinder.

After meeting Governor Banwarilal Purohit to stake claim to form the government, Channi told reporters that he would be sworn in at 11 am on Monday.

Channi, who has been vocal in raising the issues of Dalits, was CLP leader and Leader of Opposition in 2015-16 when the previous SAD-BJP government was in power.

He is considered close to Rahul Gandhi, and is learned to have been picked by the party high command after Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu and Dera Baba Nanak MLA Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa opposed the move to make a Hindu leader, Sunil Jakhar, chief minister.

Channi's name was an-

**BUSINESS AS USUAL**

By UNNY

**EXPLAINED****FIVE REASONS WHY CONG CHOSE CHANNI**  
**PAGE 11**

nounced as the two Jat Sikh leaders jockeyed for the post. The choice remained uncertain until well into the evening as the Congress weighed its options between a Hindu and a Sikh.

A CLP meeting convened at 11 am was deferred, and Congress general secretary in charge of Punjab Harish Rawat and the party's two central observers, Ajay Maken and Harish Chaudhary, held parleys with

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



Charanjit Singh Channi, PCC chief Navjot Singh Sidhu and other Congress leaders outside Raj Bhavan Sunday. Kamleshwar Singh

## Lawyer, MBA, fighter for Dalit rights rebelled against Captain

**MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA**  
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 19

LAWYER, MANAGEMENT graduate, a strong voice for Dalits — Charanjit Singh Channi is a man of many parts.

Channi, who started out as a student leader, has risen through

the ranks to be Punjab's chief minister designate, and believes his strength lies in his connect with the masses.

Long before the revolt against Captain Amarinder Singh began to brew among Congress MLAs, Channi, who hails from the Ramdasia community, had been seeking a greater representation of Dalits in the Cabinet, given

their large numbers in the party.

After the revolt against Amarinder gathered momentum this April, Channi became an active participant. Last fortnight, he was among the four ministers who went to meet the Congress's Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat in Dehradun. But unlike the others, he chose to be

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## Punjab tremors in Rajasthan, Gehlot OSD quits over tweet

**DEEP MUKHERJEE**  
JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 19

THE PUNJAB political crisis had an impact on the Rajasthan government, with Lokesh Sharma — the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot — tendering his resignation over a tweet that was seen as questioning the party high command's decision to replace Amarinder Singh.

On Saturday, hours after Singh's resignation, Sharma had tweeted: "Mazboot ko majboor, mamuli ko maghroor kiya jaye...badh hi khet ko khayee, us fasal ko kaun bachaye!! (The strong are being made to feel helpless, the ordinary are encouraged to feel arrogant... Who can save the crop when the fence itself destroys the field?)"

As some Twitter users interpreted Sharma's tweet as questioning the decision of the Congress high command in Punjab, Sharma sent his resignation letter to Chief Minister Gehlot late on Saturday, writing, "My tweet from today is being

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## From nowhere to top of the list: How Channi choice was made

**MANOJ CG**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

CHARANJIT SINGH Channi, who will be the next Chief Minister of Punjab, was neither the Congress high command's first choice nor the unanimous choice of the Congress Legislature Party. His elevation, as the state's first Dalit CM, capped a day of hectic and desperate lobbying by several senior leaders with an unusual Sikh versus Hindu CM narrative thrown into the mix.

After the decision was taken,



Senior Congress leaders after the meeting at Rahul Gandhi's residence in Delhi on Sunday. Prem Nath Pandey

however, several leaders told The Indian Express that the appointment of a Dalit in a state with

nearly 32 per cent Dalit population was a "sound political decision" — given that all opposition parties have been wooing the community. While the Akali Dal has tied up with BSP and promised to make a Dalit the Deputy CM, AAP is banking heavily on this votebank. The BJP had also spoken about making a Dalit the Chief Minister if voted to power.

"It is a message that while all other parties are announcing that Dalits would be given important positions if they form the government in 2022, we have

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## (CM) Sikh hona ya Hindu hona secondary hai: Akal Takht jathedar

**VANDITA MISHRA**  
TALWANDI SABO, SEPT 19

BEFORE THE Congress put an end to the suspense and announced the name of Charanjit Singh Channi as the next Chief Minister of Punjab Sunday, giving the state its first Dalit CM, it was said to have played with the possibility of another first.

There was speculation about Punjab getting a Hindu CM for the first time after it was created



Giani Harpreet Singh opens a space. Vandita Mishra

as a Sikh-majority state in 1966. That was not to be.

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## Extortion case: Tihar probe finds officials helped conman block CCTV, 9 in the dock

**MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

THE TIHAR Jail administration, after an internal probe into an extortion racket allegedly run by conman Suresh Chandrasekar from Rohini jail, has initiated a proposal for departmental action against nine officials after finding negligence on their part.

Confirming this, DG (Prisons) Sandeep Goel told *The Indian Express*, "We have already sus-



Sukesh got favours from jail officials: probe

pected six jail officials."

Sukesh, who has been in Tihar and Rohini jails since 2017 for his alleged involvement in the Election Commission bribery case, was arrested last month from Rohini jail for allegedly

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**THE EDITORIAL PAGE****CITY TO RECOVER**

BY MANISH SABHARWAL AND RAJIV MEHRISHI  
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**EXPLAINED**

**EXPERT EXPLAINS WHY FRANCE IS UPSET WITH AUSTRALIA**  
**PAGE 11**

## Amid new Afghanistan reality, Saudi foreign minister meets Jaishankar

**SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

AMID A drastically altered environment in the larger region, with the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan a month ago, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Prince Faisal bin Farhan al Saud, on Sunday met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in New Delhi and discussed the situation in the country.

After the meeting, Jaishankar said they had a "very useful exchange of views" on the issue of Afghanistan, along with the Gulf



Jaishankar with his Saudi Arabian counterpart. PTI

and the Indo-Pacific.

"A cordial and productive meeting with Saudi FM HH @Faisalbinfarhan. Discussed our

cooperation in the political, security and socio-cultural pillars of our strategic partnership," the External Affairs Minister tweeted. Saudi Arabia, which was one of three countries to have recognised the Taliban in its previous regime between 1996 and 2001, has, since mid-August, been extremely calibrated about its statements on Afghanistan.

Ten days ago, on September 9, al Saud had "stressed the Kingdom's support for the Afghan people and the future choices they make for their country without any external

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**'SHARP ATTITUDINAL CHANGE'**

## Retro tax to telecom relief to bad bank: Political call to bite economy bullet

Vodafone India interest dues could translate to government picking up 30% stake in the telecom major

**P VADIVANATHAN IYER**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

FOR A GOVERNMENT led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi sensitive to charges of corporate favouritism, acquiring substantive shareholding in a private company is a leap of faith. Buried in the fine print of the telecom package was this provision that lets the government do exactly that.

Even in the United States, in the wake of the financial meltdown in 2008, emergency legislation was enacted to undertake a \$700-billion Troubled Assets Relief Program or TARP to bail out private banks and institutions. A TARP-like move — as in the telecom relief package — requires more than just conviction in Indian economy, which like politics, is prone to binaries of a different kind: "pro-corporate" and "pro-poor."

Indeed, most economic decisions taken in the last two months — from a law to bury retrospective taxation to a govern-



IDEA EXCHANGE

'We are pulling out of the worst... Problem with stimulus is it's easier to start a spending programme than to stop it'

**TV SOMANATHAN**  
FINANCE SECRETARY  
**PAGE 12**

ment guarantee for a bad bank — required a political call to be taken at the level of the Prime

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**WORLD**

**TALIBAN-RUN KABUL MUNICIPALITY TO WOMEN WORKERS: STAY HOME**

**PRO-PUTIN PARTY SET TO WIN RUSSIAN ELECTION**  
**PAGE 13**

## For easy access to schemes, Govt plans 12-digit unique ID for farmers, database

**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

THE GOVERNMENT has started generating 12-digit unique IDs for farmers that can be used to avail all farm-related services under various schemes "seamlessly", according to a senior official of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

Vivek Aggarwal, Additional Secretary, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, told *The Indian Express* that a unique ID for each farmer is part of the Government's initiative to create a database by collating data from various schemes, such as PM-Kisan, and linking them with land records.

"The intent is to create a unified farmer service interface. The unique ID will enable them to seamlessly avail various Government schemes and credit facilities, and help the Centre and state governments in better planning of procurement oper-

**EXPLAINED****Centre's digital outreach**

THE PUSH for a farmers' database is in sync with the Government's plan to create the framework for a digital ecosystem in agriculture. Recently, it signed MoUs with top private companies, including Microsoft and Amazon, to create tech-based solutions in the farm sector.

ations," Aggarwal, who heads the Ministry's Digital Agriculture Division, said.

"We have started internally generating unique farmer IDs

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**PAGE 1 ANCHOR**

**SHIVANI NAIK**  
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 19

SHRADDHA TALEKAR remembers long vacations in the "city" at her maternal uncle's home in Thane. It was during one such trip that the uncle, Vishwas Gophan, packed her off to a gymnastics summer camp. Eighteen years on, the 27-year-old from rain-soaked Pedali village, in Maharashtra's coastal Raigad district, has made it to the India team for next month's Artistic Gymnastics World Championship in Japan.

And, for her first chance to compete amongst the best, she

thanks her supportive "Mama" (uncle) — and the special equipment he put together to pull her through the pandemic in remote Pedali.

During the lockdown, Talekar wondered if it was curtains on her career, after narrowly missing out on India selection six times by scores as low as 0.5 points in trials since 2013. That's when Gophan, who is an environment activist and has been distributing cloth bags for free for years, fashioned a landing mat out of rags, and castaway stage curtains and flags.

"The stadium where I train had hosted a Marathi Natya Sammelan some time back, so

there were soft silk flags, stage curtains hanging unused. He collected all of them and stuffed them with several layers of rags and old cushions to stitch a makeshift landing mat to train," Talekar says.

In March 2020, when the lockdown was announced, Talekar feared that her dream to compete at the highest level might remain unfulfilled. "I'd missed out narrowly earlier, and was very disheartened. I was 26, and I could see my whole career ending as competitions got cancelled, but my family pushed me to stay on track," she says.

Having grown up in rural Raigad, gymnastics wouldn't



Shraddha Talekar trains on locally made gymnastics apparatus at her home at Pedali village. Express



have happened, if not for the summer camp. She was a late-starter at the age of nine and, though blessed with natural agility, could not bag medals in the junior category where most elite gymnasts firm up their career decisions. "My first competition in the sub-junior school nationals was on an open ground at Hubli in West Bengal. It was the best sight of my life, watching so many gymnasts compete even though I didn't win a medal," she says.

Facilities were primitive but for Talekar that was no less than a once-in-a-lifetime "visit to Disneyland", she quips. Her first success came in 2011 with the

state team gold at 12th National Games.

Trained at a state sports school, where movements on apparatus were broken down with weekly targets, Talekar won the Uneven Bars national gold in 2018. "I had watched so many gymnasts leave the sport and get married or start office jobs. The anxiety of never making an international team used to affect my performance in competitions and a few times cost me selection. I'd often go back home, half expecting to be told, 'now, enough'. But my parents surprised me by telling me to first fulfill my dream of going to the World Championships, and not

bother about marriage," she says.

Talekar grew up in a joint family with her homemaker mother and father, who worked in a rice mill in the village. "My mama (uncle) was a karate player, so he told my mother that my ambition had to be the World Championship or all these years were a waste. My brother is a trekker and free-spirited, so he was supportive. Plus, after Dipa Karmakar (Commonwealth medallist and first Indian female gymnast to compete in the Olympics), everything has changed in India and how we look at gymnastics," she says.

But to do a Karmakar, Talekar

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**







# 5 THE CITY



VACCINATIONS IN  
LAST 24 HOURS  
**2,03,527**

TOTAL CASES		Total		Vacant
14,38,497	HOSPITAL BEDS		16,426	16,161
	ICU BEDS		3,566	3,484
	Cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Sept 18	41	44	00	68,624
Sept 19	28	45	00	63,302
Total	387*	14,13,025	25,085	2,69,53,206

\*Total active cases

Teen found hanging: Kin allege murder, police say no foul play

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

A 17-YEAR-OLD boy was found hanging from a tree in Northwest Delhi's Shalimar Bagh Saturday. While police said he committed suicide, family members alleged that their neighbours killed the boy.

Police, however, haven't found any evidence of foul play in the matter yet and are awaiting the post-mortem report.

Police received a call about the incident around 7:30 am on Saturday. A senior officer said, "The spot was inspected and the body was shifted to BJRM Hospital; there were no external injuries. Meanwhile, the family was contacted and the body was handed over to them."

Police claimed the family initially didn't make any allegations but later refused to cremate the body. They said their son was friends with the neighbour's daughter and alleged her parents objected to this and killed him.

"The family took the body and demanded action against the girl's family. We have registered a case and are conducting an enquiry," said the officer.

POLICE SUSPECT TRUCK HIT CAR

## 26-year-old MNC employee killed in Gurgaon hit-and-run, 2 injured

PAYNEET SINGH CHADHA  
GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 19

A 26-YEAR-OLD woman was killed while her cousin and a friend suffered multiple injuries after a truck/dumper allegedly rammed into their car at Ambedkar Chowk late Saturday night. Police said the impact of collision was such that the car was dragged for over 50 metres before it turned turtle. They are yet to identify the accused driver and the vehicle.

Police said the victim has been identified as Smriti Sachdeva, who worked at an MNC in Gurgaon. The injured women are Smriti's cousin Bhawna Rajpal and her friend Tanvi Madan.

Smriti and Bhawna lived in Sushant Lok-1 in a rented house. Bhawna works with an infrastructure consultancy firm. Tanvi was staying with them for a few days. All three are originally from Sonapat.

According to police, Tanvi had gone to a friend's house in Nirvana Country in Sector 50 on Saturday evening and called Bhawna around midnight to pick her up.



Police said the impact of collision was such that the car was dragged for over 50 metres before it turned turtle

Police said around 1 am, Bhawna and Smriti went to pick up their friend and were returning home when an unidentified truck hit their car on the passenger's side.

In the FIR registered at Sector 53 police station, Bhawna, who is the complainant, said, "My

friend Tanvi was visiting Gurgaon to shop for my wedding. She had gone to her friend's place in Nirvana Country and got late. I got a call from her, asking me to pick her up. At 1 am, Smriti and I went in my car. The three of us were returning home when suddenly a big truck, at high speed, hit my car from the left side. As our car was dragged to the Chowk, my friend and I sustained several injuries and then lost consciousness."

Police said Bhawna was driving the car, Smriti was in the passenger seat and Tanvi sat behind.

A police officer privy to the investigation said, "Passersby rushed the women to a private hospital in Sector 51, where Smriti was declared dead on arrival. The other two women sustained minor injuries to their face and head; they are undergoing treatment and reportedly stable. The accused driver is yet to be identified. From the tyre marks at the accident spot, it appears that the car was dragged for over 50 metres."

Police said the car was completely mangled after the collision. In their statement, the in-

jured women told police that they could not note down the registration number of the vehicle.

Police said Smriti's body will be handed over to the family after a post-mortem.

Bhawna's father, Dr Shyam Lal, said, "I got a call from my daughter at 2:32 am, informing me of the incident. She and Smriti are first cousins and were sharing a rented place in Sushant Lok. Their friend, Tanvi, who is settled abroad, had extended her stay here for my daughter's wedding on October 14. They went to pick Tanvi up as it was late at night for her to take a cab. They told me that after the collision, commuters rushed them to hospital as they had fainted and were in shock... Our family was looking to arrange a match for Smriti too."

Police registered an FIR against the accused under IPC sections 279 (rash driving), 304A (death by negligence), 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) and 338 (causing grievous hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) at Sector 53 police station on Sunday.

## Citing corruption, Delhi BJP expels 3 councillors

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

AHEAD OF the municipal polls in the capital, the BJP's Delhi unit expelled three sitting councillors from party membership for six years over complaints of "excessive financial corruption". One of the councillors, Pooja Madan, joined the AAP hours later.

State unit president Adesh Gupta wrote to the three councillors — Rajni Bablu Pandey from New Ashok Nagar, Pooja Madan from Mukherjee Nagar (Ward N-15), and Sanjay Thakur from Said-ul-Ajaib — informing them of the party's decision.

"This is to inform you that owing to several complaints of excessive financial corruption from the people, you have been suspended from Bharatiya Janata Party's membership for a period of six years. You have been informed of these complaints many times in the past and have been asked to correct your corrupt behaviour, but no improvement was seen. Therefore, you are expelled from the party for six years, with immediate effect," he said in the letters.

AAP spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj called the expulsion a "cosmetic action". "When Adesh Gupta had complaints of



One of the councillors, Pooja Madan, joined the AAP hours later in the presence of Timarpur MLA Dilip Pandey (centre)

financial corruption against these councillors, what were they waiting for? The BJP has CBI, ACB, Vigilance Department of the MCD, the entire central government and even the L-G. Even then, they haven't submitted even a single complaint to the authorities... After five years of governing the MCD, the BJP is now taking cosmetic action against these councillors... real action would constitute getting them investigated," he said.

AAP had previously made allegations of corruption against Pandey and Thakur. AAP's Timarpur MLA Dilip Pandey, who was present at Madan's joining, said that allegations against her were leveled only because she was about to join the party.

"Our stand that the other two councillors were corrupt has

been vindicated as we were the ones to have made allegations of corruption against them. As for Pooja Madan, BJP expelled her as she was already in the process of joining the party," he said.

Madan said she did not receive support from the BJP and was unable to fulfil promises to her constituents due to lack of funds. "Why did they wait till now to expel me? When I told them I was joining AAP, they asked me to stay. If I was corrupt, why did they ask me to stay?," she said.

Rajni went to the party office on Sunday afternoon to "get clarity on the action taken against her", her husband Bablu Pandey said. Thakur said he was not given a chance to defend himself. "The building mafia opposes me, some people in my own party are against me," he said.



The entry charge at the executive lounge is Rs 150, after which passengers would be charged a tariff of Rs 99 per hour. Abhinav Saha

## Shower rooms to reclining seats: Lounge at New Delhi railway station now open

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

COMFORTABLE RECLINER seats, shower rooms, a business centre, buffets — the executive lounge at the New Delhi Railway Station, recently inaugurated by IRCTC, is slowly drawing in passengers.

The lounge, designed on the lines of those at airports, is located on the first floor near platform 1. The entry charge is Rs 150, after which passengers would be charged a tariff of Rs 99 per hour. For this charge, travelers can access the normal seating zone, charging points, free WiFi, and are given complimentary coffee. Those who opt for the recliner chairs have to pay Rs 500 for two hours.

The buffet ranges from Rs 250 to Rs 350, depending on whether it is vegetarian or non-vegetarian, while the shower and change costs Rs 200.

The lounge also has a business centre for those who need to use a computer and require printouts; this costs Rs 100 an hour.

There are signages directing passengers to the lounge. These, however, are only in English but a Hindi board will be put up soon. It has a capacity of 120 people at a time. Once it exceeds this, entry is stopped.

This is the second lounge of its kind in Delhi. The first was at Platform no 16 of the station, which has been operational since 2016. Other such lounges are present at Agra, Jaipur, Sealdah, Ahmedabad, and Madurai railway stations.

Among those at the lounge on Sunday was Piyush Ranjan (38), who traveled from Amritsar to Delhi and had a few hours to kill before his train to Asansol. Deciding to meet a friend here, he said the area was perfect for travelers like him who have to stop at Delhi for a while. However, he faced some trouble locating the lounge and had to ask around for directions.

Another group who was traveling from Pune to Dehradun via Delhi decided to spend their three hours in the lounge. Sakshi Pisal (20) said they opted for the package, which included food and seating.

The travelers, however, thought the prices were slightly on the higher side, especially for the recliner seats.

Lounge manager Sunil Goswami said they have seen around 200 passengers since the inauguration on September 16, with numbers are increasing gradually as word spreads. He had managed the lounges in Jaipur and Agra when they started, which are full on most days.

The lounge also has an open kitchen that serves Indian, continental, and Chinese. Sunil said the menu keeps changing. On Sunday, there was idly, dosa, soup, dal, paneer, salad, and gulab jamun.

A bakery is in the making and as of now, the section sells packed food items such as beverages and chips which can be seen in any other IRCTC canteen. A new food court has also been inaugurated at platform 16 and has been drawing a sizable number of customers. Open 24x7, it has several food outlets such as Haldiram's, Wow Momo, KFC, Roll Station among other popular joints.

## Former J&K MLC's murder: 1 arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

DAYS AFTER former member of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Council and National Conference leader Trilochan Singh Wazir was found dead inside an apartment in West Delhi's Basai Darapur, the Delhi Police's Special Cell arrested one of the main accused from Jammu on Sunday. They also recovered the pistol that he used to allegedly shoot Wazir.

Police said the accused, Harmeet Singh (61), a property dealer and transporter, had allegedly shot Wazir on September 3. Wazir's decomposing body was found inside the apartment with injuries to his head on September 9.

Police said Singh committed the crime after his friend Harpreet Singh Khalsa, also a suspect in the case, "instigated" him. Khalsa, who is on the run, works at an online news portal and has known Singh and Wazir for years.

Last week, *The Indian Express* had reported that Singh posted a purported confession letter on Facebook in which he admitted to the crime and claimed he and Khalsa were going to kill themselves. Police have recovered the note as well.

DCP (Special Cell) Sanjeev Kumar Yadav said, "We received information about Singh's movement and suspected he was changing his hideout again. A team was deployed near the Jammu border and the accused was apprehended with his pistol."

During questioning, Singh told police that there had been differences between him and



Harmeet Singh was arrested from Jammu on Sunday

Wazir for three years over Gurdwara work. However, it was Khalsa who allegedly instigated him to kill Wazir.

On August 22, Singh went to Delhi to get a Canadian visa for his son and stayed at Khalsa's apartment. A week later, Khalsa invited Wazir home — who had to catch a flight to Canada — and asked Singh to move to a hotel.

"On September 3, Khalsa went to meet Singh at the hotel and told him that Wazir is planning to 'eliminate' his son and has hired gangsters from Punjab and Haryana. Khalsa insisted that Wazir was planning to kill Singh's entire family in Jammu and flee to Canada. He then took Singh to his apartment," said DCP Yadav.

At the apartment, two other men, Rajender Chaudhary and Billa, who were arrested earlier this week, were present. According to Singh's statement, police said Khalsa gave him a pistol and took him to Wazir's room. Singh then allegedly fired at Wazir's head and all four men fled the house.

Police also found that Khalsa "forced" Singh to write a three-page suicide note and put his thumb impression on it.

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Chief Manager (InfoTech Dept.) HO/21-222A/12

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Last date for submission of Online Application: **04.10.2021** **कुलसचिव/Registrar**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to notify the public at large that **SHREE VARDHMAN DEVELOPERS PRIVATE LIMITED**, a company incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act, 1956 having CIN U70101DL2005PTC142029 and having its registered office at 301-311, Indraprastha Building, 21 Barakhamba Road, New Delhi- 110001 ("Company" or "the Borrower") has availed term loan facilities from **XANDER FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED**, a company incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act, 1956 and registered with Reserve Bank of India as a Non-Banking Financial Company and having its registered Office at 101, 5 North Avenue, Maker Maxity, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra East, Mumbai - 400 051 ("Lender") and in order to secure the payment/ repayment and discharge all its obligations with respect to the term loan facilities, amongst other securities, the Company/the Borrower has mortgaged all its rights, title and interest with respect to (1) land admeasuring 2 acres situated at Sector 2, Village Sohna, Tehsil Sohna, Gurgaon, Haryana, details of the land is set out in the Part A of the Schedule below ("Borrower Project Land"); (2) all development rights of the Borrower in respect of the land admeasuring 8.725 acres at Sector 2, Village Sohna, Tehsil Sohna, Gurgaon, Haryana (details of the land are set out in Part B of the Schedule below) ("Collaborator Project Land"); and (3) plotted land units listed in Part C of the Schedule below forming part of the Borrower's Project Share of Plots in the underlying Collaborator Project Land and the Borrower's Project Land ("Mortgaged Property") along with hypothecation of all the receivables arising therefrom, in favour of IDBI Trusteeship Services Limited (acting as the security trustee on behalf of and for the benefit of the Lender).

The said mortgage, charge and hypothecation over the Mortgaged Property in favour of IDBI Trusteeship Services Limited (acting as the security trustee on behalf of and for the benefit of the Lender) is duly registered with the concerned Registrar of Companies and duly recorded with Central Registry of Securitisation Asset Reconstruction and Security Interest.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE CAUTIONED AND INFORMED THAT the Company/ the Borrower is not authorized to represent and/or deal with and/or sell and/or alienate or otherwise encumber the Mortgaged Property in any manner whatsoever **without prior written consent of Xander Finance Private Limited**. Members of the public are further cautioned and informed that any sale or alienation or creation of any third-party right, title or interest of any nature whatsoever by the Company or any of its affiliates or directors or concerns or agents in respect of the Mortgaged Property, which has been entered into or proposed to be entered into without the consent of the Lender is and shall be without authority, bad, illegal, void, unauthorized and nonbinding on the Lender i.e. Xander Finance Private Limited and the Borrower/ Company, and no rights, title and interest of any nature whatsoever stood created or shall be created in favour of any third party in any manner whatsoever without prior written consent of Xander Finance Private Limited. THE PUBLIC AT LARGE IS CAUTIONED NOT TO PURCHASE/ACQUIRE/ TRANSACT IN THE MORTGAGED PROPERTIES AND WITH (i) SHREE VARDHMAN DEVELOPERS PRIVATE LIMITED; (ii) MR. SANDEEP JAIN; AND/ OR (iii) MR. SACHIN JAIN IN RESPECT OF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTIES **WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT OF XANDER FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED**.

Sd/-  
Authorized Signatory  
Xander Finance Private Limited  
Email: [info@xanderfinance.com](mailto:info@xanderfinance.com)

Delhi Contact: Mr. Ruchir Jauhari-09971738887, Ms. Priyanka Khanna  
Mumbai Contact: Ravi Shankar- 09930839007

**Schedule**  
**PART-A**  
**Description of Project 1 Mortgaged Land**

Land admeasuring 2acres situated at Sector 2, Village Sohna, Tehsil Sohna, Gurgaon, Haryana forming a part of the Project 1 Land.

Rectangle	Kila No.	Area	Marla
68	6	8	0
69	10	8	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>

**BOUNDARIES**

NORTH BY:	Project of Supertech
SOUTH BY:	G D Goenka International School
EAST BY:	75 Mtr. Road
WEST BY:	24 Mtr. Road

**PART B**  
**Details of 8.725 acres of the land**

Ref. No.	Rectangle	Kila No.	Area	Marla
P1 (Collaborator Project 1 Land)	68	2/2	1	12
		3	8	0
		4	8	0
		5	8	0
		1	8	0
	69	2/1	2	8
P2 (Collaborator Project 1 Land)	69	6 Plots	36	0
		2/2	5	12
		3	8	0
		4	8	4
		8/2	4	0
		9	8	0
Total		5 Plots	33	16

**PART C**  
**Plots forming part of the Borrower's Project Share**

Borrower's Project Share - Residential Plot				
Sr. No.	Type	Plot No.	Total Plot	Total Area (in Sq.Mtr)
1	A	8 to 14	7	120.897
2	C	36 to 39	4	118.279
3	C	41 to 45	5	118.279
4	C	50	1	118.279
5	C	56 to 65	10	118.279
6	B	97 to 116	20	120.093
7	F	137 to 156	20	104.48
8	E	157 to 160	4	91.77
9	D	161 to 181	21	102.40
10	E	183	1	91.77
<b>Total:</b>			<b>93</b>	<b>10312.56</b>

**Borrower's Project Share - Commercial Plot:** **837.76 Sq. Mtr**

**Note:** The above plot numbers of the borrower's share is tentative. The Plot numbers may be changed but the total area of the borrower's share (Approx. 10250 Sq.Mtr) will not reduce. If any change in the number of plots will be informed accordingly.

New Delhi



HARDLOOK

# When trouble calls

With thousands of ‘call centres’ cropping up in Delhi to dupe US citizens, police are having to grapple with tech savvy fraudsters and sophisticated modus operandi

MAHENDER SINGH  
MANRAL  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

SITTING IN a posh South Delhi cafe, the 38-year-old recalled a time when more than 700 people used to work for him. What he ran was a call centre — but not one dedicated to resolving customer complaints or selling a property or product. Instead, the North Delhi establishment had a singular purpose: Duping foreigners.

Those days are behind him, though. The man, who did not wish to be identified, was arrested around 2017-18 and subsequently released on bail. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, he revealed the staggering scope and intricate modus operandi of such ‘call centres’, which have become a nuisance for the Delhi Police. Senior officers *The Indian Express* spoke to testified to this trend and said the scale of each such scam runs into several crores.

According to estimates, over the past year, thousands of foreigners, mostly from the United States, have lost money to the tune of Rs 300 crore after falling prey to highly organised cons running from such call centres in Delhi. Often, the conmen and women pose as US tax officials and talk their victims into paying up huge amounts as fines for fictitious cases of tax evasions. They are trained to speak in an American accent, and paid handsomely by the masterminds — earning as much as Rs 55,000 to Rs 70,000 per month along with incentives.

Data on who to dupe is often sourced or purchased through the ‘dark web’, officers said.

In other cases, the callers pose as tech support from establishments such as Microsoft or Amazon and manage to talk people into parting with sensitive information such as bank or credit card details. In some instances, the masterminds have associates helping them in the US, but tracking them down re-

## BUSTED THIS YEAR

Districts/Units	Fake call centres uncovered	No. of arrests
East	1	26
Northwest	4	12
South	4	88
Dwarka	1	8
West	8	97
Outer	3	28
Rohini	3	39
Shahdara	7	126
Southeast	2	8
Outer north	1	32
CyberCell	8	186
Crime	2	94
Branch		
Total	44	744

mains a huge task, officers said.

There have been reports of similar rackets being run across the country, but the scale of what’s unfolding in the national capital is unprecedented, said officers. Though close to 350 alleged racketeers have been arrested so far and around 500 questioned, many such ‘call centres’ remain operational.

According to senior officers, West Delhi in particular provides a fertile ground for such illegal tele-fraud as there are several property owners who, without proper background checks, provide infrastructure and even equipment to run a scam of this nature. Some even offer ‘ready to shift’ office spaces where they charge Rs 1 lakh per computer seat. Officers estimate more than 1,000 such call centres are operational across Delhi, in areas such as Pitampura, Rohini, Shalimar Bagh, Moti Nagar, Kirti Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Janakpuri and Tilak Nagar.

Officers said connivance of policemen with owners of call centres has also been found in several instances.

In the past nine months, 35 such call centres have been busted in Delhi. This year on, however, district police teams are working dedicatedly to address the issue. This comes after



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

the Delhi Police headquarters issued an ultimatum that departmental action would be taken against local staff if any such call centre is found in their area. As a result, whenever night patrol staff find several youths near a building that looks like an office

space, they take action.

### The MO

The 38-year-old said he used to work with a BPO in Gurgaon, and though everything was done by the book there, his three years on the job helped him

learn about the system and how it can be gamed. “In the US, every citizen has a social security number (SSN). It is a nine-digit number that the government issues to all US citizens and eligible US residents and uses it to keep track of their lifetime earnings

and the number of years worked. Many scams revolve around their SSN and in making them believe they are in trouble. People in the US have a lot of respect for the law — unlike in India, they get scared if they get a call from a law enforcement

agency. And that’s how we in India are taking advantage of this and cheating them of thousands of dollars every day,” he said.

DCP (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said the fraudsters usually choose a secluded place to open a call centre as they have to operate at night.

The 38-year-old said after leaving his Gurgaon job, he opened a call centre and hired 10 persons: “Only some laptops, the internet, and a table-chair are required. Our main callers are 10-15 persons, while others are learners and they switch jobs after some time. We pay more to experienced employees as they also train these youngsters. Nowadays, call centre owners also keep changing offices to avoid arrest.”

Police said the calls are not made using a software to mask the caller’s number. “Initially, a recorded message tells the person that law enforcement agencies have found a discrepancy while scanning their tax forms or found that their bank accounts were used in a crime, especially by drug cartels in Mexico or Colombia. They are then asked to press a number to talk to an officer, and as soon as they do, the fraudster sitting in a call centre in Delhi receives a call. He starts interacting with them to extract more details and, sometimes, even sends a fake warrant. The person is informed they have been fined thousands of dollars which, if not paid, would lead to legal repercussions. They are given a choice: face arrest or accept an ‘alternative dispute resolution’ to avoid facing any legal hurdle,” said a senior officer.

The 38-year-old elaborated: “If the person agrees to pay the ‘fine’, he or she is told to do it only through gift cards or crypto currency. The person, for instance, is made to buy iTunes gift cards worth thousands of dollars and share the details with the caller. The fraudster then shares the details of the gift card with an associate in the US, who in turn shares it with a broker.

Eventually, the fraudster in Delhi gets 70-80% of the value of the gift card through hawala channels, while their associates in the US keep the rest as their cut. If someone is not able to pay the fine in full, they are told to pay in instalments.”

In some cases, fraudsters send several links to people they have identified which, if clicked, adversely affect their computer. DCP Meena said they recently arrested 12 people. “During questioning, they revealed that they send fake pop-ups such as ‘ransomware detected’, ‘security warning’, etc to US residents on their computers through pop-up vendors. The fake pop-ups provide a phone number for technical support, which links to the call centre in Delhi. The fraudsters then extort money in the guise of providing technical help,” he said.

*The Indian Express* scanned statements of over 30 employees of such call centres arrested by the Delhi Police and found a pattern: All of them had uploaded their CVs on job portals, from where those running the call centres reached out to them.

“They told police they were asked to come for an interview to a coffee shop or a fast-food joint where a person would ask about their qualifications and tell them to get trained at their call centre for English speaking,” said an officer.

The 38-year-old said there was a time when police were only arresting owners of such call centres, but nowadays, they have started picking up the employees too. “As a result, before joining, the men and women ask the owner to give an assurance that they would be protected from arrest, and also ask about their contacts in the police department. But since there isn’t a particular complainant in many of these cases and police have made suo motu arrests, many of those arrested get bail within a month. After coming out, some join another such establishment in Delhi while others leave for another city,” he said.

## NOTICE BOARD

CORPORATE ASSOCIATE DIARY

EVENTS, HONOURS



### TRAIN SERVICE – CONCOR

CONCOR strengthens its reachability by connecting East & West, starts the train service from Shalimar to Turbhe. The first train departs from Shalimar on 15/09/2021 with full container load.



### AGM – KRIBHCO

KRIBHCO has earned a pre-tax profit of Rs 513.13 Cr during FY 2020-21 and has declared dividend @ 20% on equity capital for the year in its 41st AGM held recently, which was presided over by Dr Chandra Pal Singh (Chairman, KRIBHCO).



### ALLIANCE – PSB

PSB entered into a strategic co-lending alliance with ICCL & IHFL for MSME & Priority Sector Housing Loans respectively. S Krishnan, MD & CEO informed that the co-lending model will improve the flow of credit to the un-served & under-served sector.



### MOU – PNB

PNB has entered into a Co-Lending arrangement with IIFL Home Finance Limited. The MOU was signed by AK Goel (GM – PNB) in the presence of SK Saha (ED-PNB) & SK Dixit (CGM – PNB).



### HINDI DIWAS – IPTO

‘Hindi Diwas’ was celebrated at India Trade Promotion Organisation (TIPO) at Pragati Maidan, ND. The celebration was marked with distribution of the Awards along with the motivational hindi books.



### AWARDS – BHEL

BHEL has celebrated Utkrishthta Utsav & the “Excel Awards” were conferred on meritorious employees. Dr MN Pandey, M/o Heavy Industries, graced the occasion & presented the awards. Dr NS (CMD – BHEL) was present on the occasion.

### APPOINTMENT

**DTL** Dr Sanjay Kumar Lal, an officer of 2001 batch of IRS, has recently joined Delhi Transco Limited as Director (Finance). He has done his Doctorate from prestigious IARI, Pusa, Delhi. He is also a Law Graduate. Dr Sanjay Kumar Lal has a vast experience in the field of Taxation, Account and Finance. He has worked in various capacities in the IT Department in its different wings such as Investigation, International Taxation, headquarters etc. He has also rendered his services in the M/o Finance. Before joining Delhi Transco Limited, he was posted as Commissioner (OSD) at Ghaziabad in the IT Department.



### WORKSHOP – NIOS

NIOS & Vidya Bharati Institute of Higher Education jointly organised 2 days National Workshop on ‘National Education Policy 2020: Implementation, Strategy & Progress’ at Kalyan Singh Auditorium, Noida, NIOS. Dr S Sarkar, MoS Education, was the chief guest.

**IRCTC** has recently dedicated a new Food Plaza – ‘Pop n Hop’ for the passengers at New Delhi railway. The ‘Pop n Hop’ Food Plaza is one of the most exquisite and extensive food and beverage facilities created by IRCTC for the passengers and tourists to have a wide variety of sumptuous food offered in a hygienic and extremely comfortable environment.

**IOCL** and Google Pay have announced a collaboration to make fuelling more rewarding for IndianOil and Google Pay customers. The companies also plan to make IndianOil’s countrywide loyalty program XTRAREWARDS accessible on the Google Pay app as the partnership progresses.

**BHEL** has successfully commissioned India’s largest floating Solar PV plant. Located at NTPC Simhadri in Andhra Pradesh, the 25 MW floating SPV project covers an area of 100 acres, leading to saving of valuable land resource and conserving water by reducing evaporation.

**UBI** today received the prestigious ‘Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar’ for excellent implementation of Hindi during the year 2018-19, 2019-20 & 2020-21 at a glittering function held at Vigyan Bhavan, ND. Rajkiran Rai G, MD & CEO, UBI received the award from Amit Shah, Home & Cooperation Minister.

**IRCTC** is all set to open a new world class Executive Lounge at ND Railway Station for offering an enhanced travel experience to the rail passengers. The new Executive lounge has been set up on first floor of Platform No.1 of New Delhi Railway Station towards Paharganj side. IRCTC is already operating executive lounges at railway stations at Agra, Jaipur, Sealdah, Ahmedabad and Madurai.

**PWGRID:** An Online Vendor Development Program exclusively for SC-ST Micro and Small Enterprises was organised in association with National SC-ST Hub, Surat by POWERGRID (WR-II). The program was chaired by ED, WR-II in virtual presence of Branch Head of National SC-ST Hub, Surat (NSSHO) & President of Federation of SC-ST Entrepreneurs, Vadodara (FSSE) along with 31 SC-ST MSEs.

**PSB** has announced ‘PSB Utsav Mala’ for FY 2021-22 for the festive season from 10th September 2021 to 10th November 2021. S Krishnan, MD & CEO of the Bank informed that the Festival Bonanza campaign has been extended to other credit products like MSMEs, Food Processing and Rice Shellers etc, besides retail credit products.

**Amity University** (NOIDA, India) and Baylor College of Medicine (BCM- Houston, USA) researchers have developed a powerful AI platform to find clinically important vaccine targets and epitopes that could transform vaccine discovery process for deadly infectious diseases such as COVID19 and Chagas Disease. The results of this study have been published in UK based journal Scientific Reports, and PubMed.

## Man dupes people of Rs 2.5 crore by offering fake jobs in Railways, held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

A 43-YEAR-OLD man who allegedly posed as an IAS officer and cheated over 40 people under the pretext of offering them a job in the Indian Railways has been arrested.

Police said the accused, Mohammad Raghib Firoz, and his two associates have been running the ‘fake job’ racket for years and cheated people of more than Rs 2.5 crore in the last eight months. To lure their victims and make the job appointment look genuine, the men even held seminars, and conducted medical tests and training sessions in Delhi and Dehradun for three months. They took money from their targets on the pretext of registration and training fees.

One of the victims, who refused to be named, said he lost more than Rs 2 lakh in January. He said, “I worked as a data entry operator and lost my job because of the pandemic. I was searching for jobs online when I found an ad for a job in the Railways last year. After a test and interview, I was promised a job in the PR department. I even went to Paharganj and to a hotel in Dehradun for training. I didn’t tell my parents and took a loan from friends for the job. When I returned home, I realised the job didn’t exist.”

Police said “Firoz is the kingpin and has been on the run for months. He was arrested from Greater Noida”. During questioning, the accused revealed that they put ads on the internet and tried luring their neighbours to apply for the fake job.

The Economic Offences Wing had already arrested Firoz’s associates, Brij Kishore and Sachin Kumar, in the case. During investigation, they found that the accused were printing fake appointment letters and conducting medical tests.

Additional CP (EOW) R K Singh said, “It was when the victims reached the DRM office in

Jamshedpur for their job that they realised the accused had cheated them. The men had asked the victims to report in Jamshedpur.”

Singh said his teams visited several villages near Agra, Hathras and Patna to talk to victims and identify the accused.

In the last year, Delhi Police have busted several such rackets and arrested more than 4,500 gangs/individuals for cheating people on the pretext of providing them jobs at hospitals, Railways or other government posts. In 2019, around 4,000 such cases were registered.

Police attributed the rise in these cases to persons/groups using the lockdown as an opportunity to indulge in fake job scams and post ads on Facebook and job portals. As people who lost their jobs during the lockdown couldn’t go to companies, they often applied online.

Singh said, “Mostly in these cases, the victims don’t check the credentials of the accused as they are desperate for jobs. The accused often pose as high-ranking officials and offer lucrative salaries with good job training and postings. The fake appointment letters, registration forms, training and the interviews seem genuine.”

In the present case, police said the accused booked small hotels in Dehradun and Delhi’s Paharganj and Karol Bagh area for the victims, and conducted seminars and training sessions on the Indian Railways.

“They would talk about clerical and technical work at the Railways — how to resolve complaints, check coaches, working at the control room, working with Railway Protection Force etc. The victims also underwent a medical check-up because the men asked them for a fitness test. The only requirement for the job was a bachelor’s degree. After training sessions, the accused told them to report to Jamshedpur where they would start working with senior officers,” said a police officer.

## BRIEFLY

### Two roads in Patparganj renamed after Uttarakhand personalities

*New Delhi:* Two roads in Patparganj Vidhan Sabha were renamed after freedom fighter Veer Kesari Chand and folk singer Hira Singh Rana, both of who were from Uttarakhand. C-Block Marg No. 4 in West Vinod Nagar has been renamed Hira Singh Rana Marg; the road from Vinod Nagar Red Light to Silver Line Hospital has been renamed Amar Shaheed Veer Kesari Chandra Marg. Area MLA and Deputy CM Manish Sisodia was present at the ceremony.

### Work to lay drains begins at Naraina

*New Delhi:* Work to lay drains and subsequent road reconstruction was started at Naraina Sunday. Area MLA Raghav Chadha inaugurated the work and said it will be completed in a timely manner. The cost of the project is Rs 4 crore. The issue of water-logging and poor roads have been raised by residents of the area several times. **ENS**

### ‘Vehicle owners must carry PUC certificates’

*New Delhi:* Ahead of winter when pollution levels are likely to rise in the capital, the transport department of the Delhi government has asked vehicle owners to carry valid pollution under control (PUC) certificates to avoid punitive actions. **PTI**



# 7 GOVT & POLITICS



## FINAL CALL

THE SUPREME Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana last week decided to transfer 28 high court judges, five chief justices of high courts apart from appointing eight new chief justices of high courts. However, in the 28 transfers of high court judges, 25 are known and the remaining three transfers are yet to be finally vetted by the collegium. With CJI Ramana travelling to Bangalore over the weekend to attend the memorial held for former Supreme Court judge Mohan Shantanagoudar, the remaining transfers are likely to be decided this week.

## NAGALAND FOCUS

AT A time when the BJP is looking at the emergence of the all-party government in Nagaland with some concerns about its own political future in the state, the central government appears to have become active with its development projects in the state. Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar was in Nagaland for two days last week — he celebrated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday there — inaugurating new institutions. He inaugurated the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology in Chuchuyimlang, a software technology park in Kohima and an entrepreneurial development centre in Kohima. He said these centres would ensure thousands of jobs for the youth in the insurgence-hit state in two years.

## PROGRESS, FINALLY

THE NEW National Education Policy talks about promoting multilingualism in school and higher education. For this, the government had wanted the IITs and IIMs to start offering their programmes in regional languages. After the initial meeting on this issue last year, at which the IITs had expressed reservations about the idea, there has been no development on this front. It appears that now one of the IITs has come around the idea and is planning to offer one programme in a regional language. However, this will not be for the face-to-face format. The IIT will introduce it for an online programme. Ministry officials are tight-lipped about which IIT it is and are saying an announcement will be made soon.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday at an event in Lucknow on the completion of four-and-a-half years of the BJP government. Vishal Srivastav

## UP has seen complete transformation under BJP rule: Adityanath

**MAULSHREE SETH**  
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 19

PRESENTING A "report card" of the four-and-a-half years of the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the Assembly elections, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday claimed that the state has undergone a "complete transformation" and its perception before the country as well as the world has changed as there have been no riots since 2017 and strict actions have been taken against the mafia and criminals during his rule.

The chief minister also claimed that his rule would be remembered for "surkasha (safety) and susashan (good governance)" for both women as well as for the industry.

"The four-and-a-half years' rule of Uttar Pradesh will be remembered for security and good governance... In the past, mafias under the patronage of the government used to create an environment of fear, and riots were rampant in the state... Now, the investors' confidence in the state is growing and UP has emerged as number two in the country in terms of ease of doing business," the chief minister said, adding that his government's priority is

to provide security and safety to women.

He said criminals were being firmly dealt with irrespective of their caste, religion and social status to provide a safe and secure environment in the state.

Drawing a comparison with the previous Samajwadi Party government, Adityanath hit out at the Opposition party over the law and order and accused it of indulging in corruption and nepotism in government jobs.

"You all have seen the scandals that took place between 2012 and 2017. It's not very long ago. In the previous government, there used to be communal clashes every 3-4 days. But in the last four years, there has not been a single incident of riot," he said.

"Before 2017, transfer and posting of officials had become a business and open auction used to happen for the posts," the CM said, adding that no one can make such allegations on his government.

"Whenever new government vacancies were announced, members of a family used to go across the state to extort money. But in our four-and-a-half years of rule, there has been no allegation of any kind of extortion or bribery in filling up of vacancies," the chief minister said.

## Personal anguish... hope this won't damage peace in state: Capt to Sonia

**KANCHAN VASDEV**  
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 19

INFORMING SONIA Gandhi of his decision to resign as Punjab Chief Minister, Captain Amarinder Singh sent a letter Saturday to the Congress chief in which he expressed "personal anguish" at the political developments and claimed that his government had fulfilled nearly 90 per cent of its pre-poll promises — from tackling the drug menace to handling the sacrilege case.

Conveying his apprehension of instability in the state, Amarinder wrote that the party's political moves were "not based on full understanding of the national imperatives of Punjab and its key concerns."

"Notwithstanding my personal anguish, I hope this will not cause any damage to the hard-earned peace and development in the state, and that the efforts I have been focusing during the last few years, would continue unabated, ensuring justice to one and all," he wrote.

Referring to his nine-and-a-half years as Chief Minister — 2002 to 2007 and 2017 to 2021 — Amarinder wrote that he "established the rule of law, and ensured transparent governance" and "maintained ethical conduct even in management of political affairs" while "winning 8 out of 13 seats in the Parliament Elections in 2019", apart from wins in local polls.

He claimed that his government had fulfilled 89.2 per cent of its poll promises while work was in progress on the remaining commitments.

On the sacrilege case and police action of 2015, he pointed out that his government had established a judicial probe headed by Justice (Retd) Ranjit Singh, whose report was received on August 16, 2018 — it was accepted and "full legal action" taken.

The letter stated that despite legal hurdles and "refusal" of CBI

to return the cases, which were transferred to them by the previous SAD-BJP government, 24 persons were charge-sheeted, 15 police personnel suspended, and 10 civilians arrested. "The criminal proceedings in these cases are currently underway and I am sure that in due course justice will be done," he wrote.

On the controversial power purchase agreements, Amarinder said his government had invested Rs 3,709 crore in electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure from 2017-21 and released about Rs 11,000 crore per annum to benefit 22 lakh SC and backward classes consumers, and 14 lakh farmers. "For the first time, we supplied subsidised power to the industry at annual cost of over Rs 2,000 crore," he said, adding that a "review of the PPAs is currently underway."

On farmers, he wrote that his government had given debt relief of Rs 4,624 crore to 5.64 lakh farmers, and Rs 526 crore to 2.68 lakh farm workers.

Referring to his promise on the drug menace, he said a Special Task Force was set up and a three-pronged strategy — enforcement, de-addiction and prevention — resulted in 62,744 persons being arrested, 202 clinics established, 6,28,083 drug abuse prevention officers registered and 9,51,202 support groups formed.

The former Chief Minister also said his government had facilitated jobs for 19.29 lakh people, and ensured relief for SCs and backward classes through debt waiver of Rs 50,000 each and various scholarship schemes — including 200 units of electricity free of cost to SCs, backward classes and BPL families.

He wrote that Rs 1,260 crore had been provided under the new Punjab Nirman Programme, whereby elected representatives were provided funds for local infrastructure, focusing on the poor and Dalits.

**FULL REPORT ON**

**www.indianexpress.com**

## Gehlot hopes Amarinder doesn't 'damage' Cong

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 19

A DAY after Amarinder Singh resigned from his post of Punjab Chief Minister asserting that he felt "humiliated" by the party leadership and that all courses of action were open to him, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that he hopes Singh won't take any step which could damage the Congress.

Gehlot, who himself has been embroiled in a leadership struggle in the state with his former deputy Sachin Pilot, tweeted on Sunday morning, saying that one should think beyond himself in favour of the party and the country.

"I hope that Captain Amarinder Singh ji will not take any such step which will damage the Congress party. Captain Sahab has himself said that the



Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot

party had made him the chief minister for nine and half years. He has worked to his maximum capacity and served the public of Punjab," said Gehlot.

He added that at times, the high command has to take decisions for the betterment of the party on the basis of feedback taken from MLAs and the public.

"I also feel personally, that the Congress president selects a chief minister after having to face the anger of several leaders who are also part of the chief ministerial race. But while changing that very chief minister, out of anger, the decision of the high command is touted to be wrong...," said Gehlot.

## YSR Congress wins big in zila and mandal polls in Andhra

**SREENIVAS JANYALA**  
HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 19

THE YSR Congress party Sunday won the majority of the Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (ZPTC) and Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies (MPTC) in Andhra Pradesh, completing a clean sweep of victories in elections at all levels — Parliamentary, Assembly, Municipal and Panchayat — since coming to power in May 2019.

The counting of votes for ZPTC and MPTC elections, which were held in April, was taken up Sunday. On Thursday, the Andhra Pradesh High Court had directed the State Election Commission (SEC) not to announce results following a petition filed by Opposition parties, had given permission to count the votes.

Counting was still going on but



CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy

by the evening YSRCP had won more than 500 of the 660 ZPTCs. Out of the 10,047 MPTCs, the YSRCP won over 8,500. The Telugu Desam Party, BJP, Congress and Jana Sena won at a few places.

In Assembly and Parliamentary elections in April 2019, the YSRCP won 151 out of the 175 Assembly seats, and 22 out of the 25 Lok Sabha seats. This March, YSRCP won in all 12 municipal corporations, and 74 of the 75 municipalities and nagar panchayats. In panchayat elections held in February, although it is not fought on party symbols, YSRCP-backed candidates won 10,536 panchayats out of 13,081.

## CHANGE OF GUARD IN PUNJAB



Punjab CM-designate Charanjit Singh Channi, with Congress leaders Navjot Singh Sidhu and Harish Rawat, submits a letter staking claim to the Chief Minister's post to Governor Banwarilal Purohit at Raj Bhawan in Chandigarh on Sunday. PTI

## Dalit groups on Channi: Poll stunt, Cong wants our votes

**RAAKHI JAGGA**  
LUDHIANA, SEPTEMBER 19

THE CONGRESS move to make Charanjit Singh Channi as Punjab's first Dalit Chief Minister did not enthuse the Dalit unions which termed it an election stunt and said the party was trying to kill two birds with one stone since he is both a Dalit as well as a Sikh.

The state has a total of 31.9% Scheduled Caste population as per the 2011 census while 31.3% are other backward classes (OBCs). Both sections together form 63.2% of the total population.

"It is merely an election stunt. Channi is a Dalit as well as a Sikh. Punjab will go to polls in another four-five months and code of conduct will be imposed 40 days before the elections. So what can the new face do? He will just say I am a new person, trying to understand things," said Zora Singh Nasrali, president of Punjab Khet Mazdoor Union.

"Our seven mazdoor unions of Punjab have formed a common front as village and farm labourer associations' Sanjha Morcha. Our proposed meeting is on September 23 in CM house with special secretary to CM and Lal Singh, Mandi Board chairman. So let's see as who will entertain us now. They may find an excuse to postpone this meeting too. All other protests going on in Punjab will also get stalled for the time being as the CM has changed," Nasrali said.

Tarsem Singh Sewewala, general secretary of the same union, said, "Till the time policies are not changed, a Dalit CM or a Jat Sikh CM will not make any difference. Now we will ask the newly chosen CM to chair the September 23 meeting with our Sanjha Morcha. This will be a litmus test for him and will show how caring he is about Dalits."

Bhagwant Samao, president of Mazdoor Mukti Morcha, Punjab, said, "Shiromani Akali Dal did an

### THE BREAK-UP

**31.9%** SC population  
**31.3%** OBC population

Jat Sikh population: **25%**

SC population living in rural areas: **73.3%**  
SC population living in urban areas: **26.67%**

### DOABA

Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Nawanshahr and Kapurthala districts form Doaba region; has highest Dalit population

Dalits **19.48 lakh**  
Ravidassias **11.88 lakh**  
Valmikis **4.56 lakh**

Other Dalit communities: **3.04 lakh**

All figures as per 2011 census

**34** seats out of 117 in Vidhan Sabha reserved for SCs

Farm labourers: **15 lakh** (approximately)

Doaba region

Total population **52.08 lakh**

alliance with Bahujan Samaj Party eyeing Dalit vote bank. They also announced that they will make a Dalit deputy CM while AAP too made similar announcement. BJP, too, announced that they would make a Dalit CM. So, Congress has made a Dalit CM for few months to settle their internal feud... It is Dalit votebank rajneeti. If Channi was so concerned, did he ever visit any of the dharnas where Dalits have been protesting? It hardly matters to us who the CM is."

Gurmukh Singh, member of Zamin Prapatti Sangrath Committee, said, "In 2015, Channi had visited our village Ghrachon in Sangrur district where Dalits were protesting to get their share of panchayati land for farming on annual lease. He had assured us that he will get us land on an annual lease for Rs 5,000 per acre if Congress forms government. But when the Congress came to power, he never spoke on this issue. The reserve price for annual lease of panchayati land for farming purpose starts at not less than Rs 20,000 per acre. At many places, it is more than Rs 30,000 per acre..."

## BJP raises harassment row, AAP welcomes Dalit face

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 19

IN FIRST reactions to Congress naming Charanjit Singh Channi the next Punjab chief minister, BJP on Sunday raked up a controversy when an IAS officer in 2018 had alleged that he had sent her an inappropriate text. While main opposition Aam Aadmi Party welcomed the appointment of Channi, a Dalit, to the top post, the Shiromani Akali Dal did not issue any statement.

BJP IT department head Amit Malviya, in a tweet said, "Congress's CM pick Charanjit Channi faces action in a 3-year-old MeToo case. He had allegedly sent an inappropriate text to a woman IAS officer in 2018. It was covered up but the case resurfaced when Punjab Women's Commission sent notice. Well done, Rahul."



Sunil Jakhar with Punjab CM-designate Charanjit Singh Channi. Archive

## Pushed out of race for top post, Jakhar declines to be deputy CM

**KANCHAN VASDEV**  
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 19

WITH CONGRESS making it clear that they may appoint two deputies for Punjab chief minister-designate Charanjit Singh Channi, at least one of the leaders party reached out to for the post declined the offer.

Former state Congress chief Sunil Kumar Jakhar, who was in the reckoning for chief minister's post, Sunday refused to be appointed as a deputy CM.

A Congress central observer had called up Jakhar before the party announced Channi's name. Jakhar refused to accept the offer. Later, another senior leader from Delhi called him with the same offer, but Jakhar did not budge.

The party affairs in-charge for Punjab Harish Rawat told news agency ANI that there was "a mutual feeling" that there should be two deputy chief ministers.

Having named a Dalit Sikh as CM, Congress wants at least one Hindu leader as deputy. Senior MLA Brahm Mohindra, a Hindu face who was the Local Bodies Minister in Amarinder's Cabinet, may be named a deputy CM.

Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, who also in the running for CM's post and was looking after the jails portfolio may be named the second deputy CM.

The issue had resurfaced in May this year when Punjab Women's Commission chairperson Manisha Gulati threatened to go on a hunger strike if the state government failed to apprise her within a week of its stand on the "inappropriate text" message allegedly sent by Channi, who was then a minister in the Capt Amarinder Singh government. Gulati had said she had written to the chief secretary seeking the government's action taken report.

The AAP congratulated Channi on being named new Punjab CM and said that hopes that he "will fulfill all the promises made by the Congress in 2017, as party has not been able to deliver on a single promise in the last four-and-a-half years".

While SAD did not react officially, party chief Sukhbir Singh Badal had on Saturday said that change of guard won't save Congress.

## Chhattisgarh ex-minister dies by suicide

**Raipur:** A former minister and BJP leader from Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district was said to have died by suicide on Sunday.

According to the police, BJP leader Rajinderpal Singh Bhatia was found hanging at his residence in Churia on Sunday evening. "Bhatia lived with his younger brother and his family. He was alone in the house on Sunday and when the family members returned, they found him hanging from the ceiling fan in his room," said a senior officer aware of the details of the case. "We are questioning the family members too."

Bhatia, a three-term MLA from Khujji in Rajnandgaon was transport minister in BJP government's first tenure after the state was formed (2003-2008). Sources said Bhatia was keeping unwell and had post-Covid complications. "He had been complaining about his health," the officer said.

**ENS**

## UTTARAKHAND

## Kejriwal vows allowance for unemployed youth

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
DEHRADUN, SEPTEMBER 19

IN THE run-up to the Assembly elections in Uttarakhand, Aam Aadmi Part (AAP) convener Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday promised that if his party came to power in the hill state, it will provide jobs to every unemployed youth, and unemployment allowance of Rs 5,000 per month will be given to one unemployed youth in every family until he is provided employment.

Kejriwal made six promises related to employment to Uttarakhand during his visit to Haldwani on Sunday.

Before leading a "Tiranga Sankalp Yatra", Kejriwal spoke to reporters and said the AAP government will ensure that 80 per cent jobs both in government and private sectors will be re-



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal during a rally in Haldwani, Uttarakhand on Sunday. PTI

served for local youths. He said 1 lakh government jobs will be created within six months if his party comes to power.

He said a separate ministry will be created to work on the issues of employment, prevent migration of youths and create a favourable atmosphere in the state for those people who want to return to their native places.





WORDLY WISE  
SILENCE IS A TRUE FRIEND  
WHO NEVER BETRAYS.  
— CONFUCIUS

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## CHANNI’S CHALLENGE

New Punjab CM has four months to revive governance, lead a divided party to polls. He has high command to thank — and blame

IT TOOK FOUR years and eight months for the Congress to figure that Amarinder Singh is disconnected with the electorate and legislators, that governance in Punjab is a failure, and that Dalits may need to be empowered by offering high public office. As early as in 2017, soon after the Congress swept the polls, winning 77 out of 117 seats, 33 legislators had written a letter to Singh demanding action in drugs cases. It was ignored and later, MLAs began to complain that the CM had become inaccessible and a course correction was necessary to address public grievances. It is only in the past five months that the party woke up to the fact that one of the three big states where it runs a government may be slipping from its hold. With dissenting voices increasing by the day, the Congress was compelled to look beyond Singh, its tallest leader in Punjab — Singh resigned on Saturday and on Sunday, the party chose Charanjit Singh Channi as Captain’s replacement. The burden of winning the elections is now on Channi, who has four months to prove his leadership credentials.

Channi, 58, will be the first Dalit to be sworn in as CM of Punjab, a state where Dalits constitute at least 32 per cent of the population. On paper, it is an astute move by the Congress for he ticks the religion and caste boxes and has experience in government. But does Channi have the time to recover the ground lost under Singh and win the trust of the public? The Congress had won the 2017 elections with a host of promises. It had promised to investigate allegations of corruption under the previous Badal regime, take action in the sacrilege issue, end illegal sand mining, crack down on the drug mafia and so on. The crises in industry, education, agriculture called for state intervention, which the Congress had outlined during the 2017 campaign. The Singh government ignored these concerns despite frustrated legislators frequently flagging them to the party leadership. The high command, perhaps intimidated by Singh’s stature and refusal to play ball, preferred to kick the can down the road to the state leadership, which was even less inclined to call the CM to account. Clearly, the internal checks and balances of the party had failed in gauging the crisis. The high command, instead of calling its CM’s attention to the governance crisis, sought to undermine his leadership by appointing Navjot Singh Sidhu, who had fallen out with Singh, as party chief. Channi now has to put the government back on the rails and find backing from a faction-ridden party with ambitious leaders.

Singh has said that he feels humiliated by the Congress decision and would keep his options open. He has in the past rebelled against the party, joined the Akali Dal, and even floated his own outfit. Twice CM, Singh is no pushover: He has influence among legislators and within the party. The challenge for the Congress in Punjab has got more complicated than before.

## HUNTINGTON’S GHOST

A shared secular interest in keeping India down is driving China-Pakistan alliance — not a convergence of Confucianism and Islam

IN A LECTURE last week, the chief of defence staff, General Bipin Rawat, touched upon the idea of “clash of civilisations”, propounded at the end of the Cold War three decades ago by American political scientist, Samuel Huntington. Clash of civilisations was certainly not the main focus of Rawat’s speech. It was about India’s defence reforms that have acquired a new urgency under the NDA government. The reference to the idea was in his opening remarks about the geopolitical imperatives of India’s defence reform. Given the massive political and religious baggage associated with the idea, it inevitably drew attention at home and abroad. Rawat was not making the claim himself but pointing to Huntington’s thesis on the inevitable confluence of Confucian and Islamic interests.

What is said in Delhi does not stay in Delhi these days. It travels quickly and is easily distorted. The media headlines on Rawat’s speech in India, unsurprisingly, drew attention in Beijing and it reportedly came up in the Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi’s conversation with India’s external affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar when they met on the margins of a regional summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Jaishankar affirmed that “India does not subscribe to any clash of civilisations theory”. Although the controversy seems rooted in a misperception of what Rawat had said, it is a reminder to officials in high positions not to wade into grand theologies about how the world works. It is one thing to discuss these ideas in universities and think-tanks and entirely another for policymakers to throw them around casually. Huntington argued that after the collapse of communism, the main international contradiction will be between different religious identities rather than nation-states. Although religious identity has indeed gained ground across different geographies, it has by no means become the main locus of international conflict. On the contrary religion has become a divisive force. In West Asia, the resurgence of Islamist ideology has only sharpened conflict among, and within, various Muslim societies. In the last few years, we have seen more Islamic countries make up with Israel, rather than embark on a final confrontation with the Jewish state in Israel.

India’s military planners are right to focus on the two-front military problem that it confronts with China and Pakistan. But what brings China and Pakistan together is not some grand convergence between Confucianism and Islam, but a shared secular interest in keeping India down. China’s influence in West Asia is certainly growing as Rawat noted. But that is true of every region in the world — from Europe to the South Pacific, and from Africa to the Arctic. That is a consequence of China’s economic and military weight, and not the power of its civilisation.

### FREEZE FRAME

### E P UNNY



MANISH SABHARWAL AND RAJIV MEHRISHI

NOBEL LAUREATE PAUL Romer describes technology as a different recipe rather than more cooks in the kitchen. Using his framing, cities are a technology for poverty reduction; New York City’s GDP equals that of Russia with 6 per cent of the people and 0.00005 per cent of the land. Covid has catalysed a naïve or hypocritical romanticism of villages that believes cities are undesirable technology because of their hostility to migrants, infection hotspot tendency, and diminished centrality to the future of work due to digitisation. We disagree: Covid is an opportunity to catalyse good urbanisation by empowering our cities with more power and funds.

The post-Covid debate of cities as “desirable or undesirable” technology mirrors a 1960s debate about food chronicled in the wonderful book *The Wizard and the Prophet* by Charles Mann. Norman Borlaug — the wizard — is a Nobel-winning scientist who believed science and technology will overcome challenges and he kickstarted the agricultural Green Revolution. William Vogt — the prophet — believed that prosperity would lead humans to ruin without cutting back and he kickstarted the environment movement. One says innovate; the other says retreat. But cutting back on urbanisation would hurt the three transitions — farm to non-farm, informal to formal, and school to work — that are raising per capita incomes. India’s problem is not land (if we had Singapore’s density all our people could fit into Kerala), labour or capital (we are the world’s largest receiver of diaspora remittances and FDI). Our challenge is the productivity upside of good urbanisation. And if 50 per cent of our population in rural areas generate only 18 per cent of the GDP, they are condemned to poverty.

Urbanisation gets a bad name in rich and poor countries because megacities — 10 million-plus populations — are unpleasant places to live for people who are not rich or powerful. Twenty-six of the world’s 33 megacities are in developing countries because their rural areas lack rule of law, infrastructure and productive commerce. Migrants that left our cities during the first lockdown last year are back because they were not running towards cities, but running away from sub-scale economic



MILIND MURUGKAR

THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT August 14 would be the day to remember the horrors of Partition is a manifestation of a new idea of India. This India believes in reliving historical wounds rather than getting over them.

Despite the already evident horrors of Partition, India celebrated its first Independence Day with high hopes. That India believed in a clear separation between religious identities and our identity as Indians. This view acknowledged the legacy of our ancient civilisation and also recognised that people of all religious identities participated in the freedom movement that led to the modern Indian state.

This doesn’t mean that this idea of India was rooted in a naïve understanding of the Hindu-Muslim relationship. It was aware of the complexity of this relationship — beautiful syncretism existing cheek-by-jowl with extreme conflicts and prejudices. However, without carrying the burden of history, it envisioned a modern India based on the value of individual dignity as enshrined in the Constitution, emphasising cultural convergence despite the tensions. In this view, modern India was not just a country that used modern science and technology. It was to be an India where everyone had the same inherent dignity regardless of her religion or any other identity.

It was an audacious dream for a country just partitioned along religious lines. In the past



## City to recover

Covid reinforces that good urbanisation is our most powerful technology for poverty reduction

Good urbanisation is also crucial to delivering economic justice for women, children and Dalits. Poor quality urbanisation has meant men-only migration, leaving the women with all the hard labour of farm work, raising the children, and looking after in-laws, while having virtually no recourse to health services, or to even emotional support of the spouse. Village children going to abysmal-quality government schools without bilingual possibilities places them at a disadvantage in English-dominated entrance tests for professional courses and civil services.

wastelands — estimates suggest that 2 lakh of our 6 lakh villages have less than 200 people. But there is no denying that even our non-megacities have inadequate planning, non-scalable infrastructure, unaffordable housing, and poor public transport.

Megacities are not cursed. Tokyo has a third of Japan’s population but planning and investments have ensured that essential workers like teachers, nurses, and policemen don’t commute two hours. The most insightful metric for city quality came from Italian physicist Cesare Marchetti who suggests that 30 minutes has been the most acceptable — or shall we say civilised — commute through history (even as the method changed from walking to horses to bicycles to trains to cars). The Marchetti constant is almost impossible in Bengaluru where taxi and auto speeds average 8 km/hour.

The golden rule in government is those with the gold rule; the annual spend of our central government is about Rs 34 lakh crore and of 28 state governments is about Rs 40 lakh crore. But the 15th Finance Commission estimates our 2.5 lakh plus local government bodies only spend Rs 3.7 lakh crore annually. This apartheid has many reasons. First is power; local government is curtailed by state government departments in water, power, schools, healthcare, etc (property tax collection would be 100 per cent if municipal bodies supplied water). The second is independence — only 13 per cent and 44 per cent of the budget of rural and urban bodies was raised themselves. The third is structure — a Union ministry controlling finance and governance of the states would be unacceptable at the Centre but the Department of Local Self Government in the states has almost unlimited powers (suspension/removal of mayors and other elected representatives or supercession of elected local bodies is almost routine in most states). Fourth, having separate central rural and urban ministries distorts policy. Finally, the lack of power and resources sets off a vicious cycle of decline because ambitious and talented individuals aren’t attracted to city leadership. But most Chinese premiers since 1978 apprenticed as mayors just like Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajendra

Prasad and Chittaranjan Das did in 1924.

India’s local government challenge reflects what historians call path dependence; unlike others, our democracy didn’t evolve bottom-up with local government rolling up into state governments that came together as a nation. India inherited a nationally centralised structure (a must for a colonial power) and princely states (with legitimacy, structures and resources) got strong powers in the constitution. Consequently, empowering local governments has been seen as a “favour” that involves “sacrifice”, and city leadership is either unelected with power (bureaucrats) or elected with limited power and unreasonable conditions (candidates are only eligible for one term in 30 years because of the six-category reservation-by-rotation policy for SC man, SC woman, ST man, ST woman, General man, General woman).

Good urbanisation is also crucial to delivering economic justice for women, children and Dalits. Poor quality urbanisation has meant men-only migration, leaving the women with all the hard labour of farm work, raising the children, and looking after in-laws, while having virtually no recourse to health services, or to even emotional support of the spouse. Village children going to abysmal-quality government schools without bilingual possibilities places them at a disadvantage in English-dominated entrance tests for professional courses and civil services. Though not great by any standards, the quality of both healthcare and education in cities remains better than villages by miles. Most painfully, Dalits in villages are often denied the dignity that urban anonymity provides.

Good urbanisation — getting power and funds to cities — needs chief ministers to sacrifice self-interest. Their reward will be undying *duas* of millions waiting for high-quality jobs and opportunities. India is lucky that Norman Borlaug prevailed over William Vogt in the food technology debate. As the post-Covid urbanisation debate gains momentum, we hope the wizards will again prevail over the prophets.

Sabharwal is vice-chairman, Teamlease Services; and Mehrishi is a former civil servant

## AN INSECURE NATIONALISM

Partition Day signals idea of India uncomfortable with history’s complexities

decades, this dream survived several jolts. But in recent times, it has been virtually shattered. The nationalism bome out of the Independence movement, and the idea of India it championed, is now on the verge of political defeat. Since the regime change in 2014, the process has intensified. Today, a new idea of India is casting its spell on the majority community.

The question is: Can this India ever be free? This is a legitimate apprehension because it is built upon shaky foundations.

The cultural nationalism of the RSS-BJP that forms the basis of this idea of India seeks its roots in medieval times when India was not a nation-state. Therefore, for this version of nationalism, Christianity and Islam and the accompanying cultures and lifestyles have come from “outside” — hence, they are foreign. Conflicts in medieval history are at the heart of this nationalism.

Where there is controversy about exactly what happened even in recent history, it is very difficult to talk with certainty about medieval history. And, how complicated is that history where the military constantly shifted its loyalty from one king to the other. This leaves scope for constructing history primarily based on one’s political ideology.

Just as Marxist historians look at everything through the lens of class, people influenced by the Sangh-BJP’s cultural nationalism tell us how cruel every Muslim king was. They do so by selectively imposing today’s value

system on the medieval past.

Once Islam and Islamic culture are considered “external”, their every sign is a sign of the victory of these “foreigners” over the Hindus. Gandhi-Nehru-Patel’s idea of India never felt the need to change the name Aligarh to Harigarh. But this new idea of India can never be secure and open.

Muslims have been part of this country for hundreds of years. And the fact that the impact of Islamic culture will remain in all spheres of Indian life will always vex the Sangh-BJP. No matter how much and how long the BJP-RSS enjoy political power, even under a leadership similar to the present one, this nationalism will remain entrenched in medieval history and will continue to suffer the pain of an imagined medieval “defeat”.

Any form of nationalism bears the danger of becoming hostile to democratic principles. But a theoretically constructive possibility of nationalism is that it can also be useful for building social cohesion and brotherhood. But the Sangh-BJP’s cultural nationalism is intrinsically incapable of doing this.

This India cannot be at peace with itself. By announcing the Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, the Prime Minister has shackled it all the more with the chains of history.

Murugkar writes on economic and social issues

## SEPTEMBER 20, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

PM ON NUCLEAR TESTS PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi has said that India would carry out Pokharan-type nuclear tests if necessary but would not manufacture the atomic bomb even if Pakistan did so. Mrs Gandhi emphasised that India was developing nuclear capacity solely for developmental purposes. She spelt out India’s nuclear policy in an interview to a correspondent of the Age magazine in Australia. Asked how long it would take India to change from nuclear energy for peaceful purposes to developing a bomb should the need arise, the PM said that this was a question that scientists would be able to answer. She said that India had to consider what was the real danger before it, that type of war or more

conventional warfare. Referring to Pakistan’s proposal for immediate talks for mutual non-use of force, Mrs Gandhi said India had been repeatedly making the offer of a “no-war agreement” to Pakistan.

### ANTULAY’S FATE

THE FATE OF Maharashtra Chief Minister AR Antulay remained undecided till late on the night of September 19 despite the fact that Mrs Indira Gandhi had received the report of her emissary, External Affairs Minister P V Narasimha Rao. After her meeting with Rao, Mrs Gandhi summoned some of her ministers including Home Minister Giani Zail Singh, Industry and Labour Minister N D Tiwari and the Petroleum Minister PC Sethi.

Meanwhile, NMTikde, Maharashtra labour minister, came to Delhi and went back to Bombay. During his brief stay, he met S B Chavan, Union Planning Minister.

### VIOLENCE IN BARODA

AT LEAST THREE people were killed in a fresh wave of violence in Baroda on September 19. They were stabbed to death in assaults at dawn near the Wadi vegetable market, Bharati High School in Buranpura and Jayratna building. District magistrate Ashok Chawla said that the situation in the city did not require calling for help from the army or requisitioning additional police force. Over 170 persons have been rounded up as a preventive measure.



# The Mandal-Mandir equation

BJP's growing investment in caste politics is reflected in the composition of the Modi cabinet and stance on OBC reservation. Its challenge is to balance caste aspirations and its core Hindutva appeal



CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT AND PRANNV DHAWAN

THE GROWING INTEREST of the Modi government in reservations for OBCs — as evident from its defence of the 127th amendment analysed in our last op-ed — is somewhat counterintuitive. After all, the Sangh Parivar considered caste-based positive discrimination detrimental to the nation's progress as it was implemented at the expense of merit. Its opposition to quota policies and politics was most obvious when V P Singh announced the introduction of a 27 per cent quota for OBCs, as recommended by the Mandal Commission. One editorialist even wrote in *The Organiser*: "The havoc the politics of reservation is playing with the social fabric is unimaginable. It provides a premium for mediocrity, encourages brain drain and sharpens caste divide." However, by defending merit, *The Organiser* was also defending upper castes, to whom reservations posed a clear threat. Another columnist, for instance, wrote of "an urgent need to build up moral and spiritual forces to counter any fallout from an expected Shudra revolution".

To counter this revolution — in other words, to orchestrate a counter-revolution — Hindutva, and more precisely the mobilisation in favour of the (re-)building of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, was chosen as a trump card — as evident from the launch of L K Advani's *rath yatra* soon after V P Singh's announcement. This strategy was rather effective. The Hindutva repertoire helped the BJP promote religious identity (and communal polarisation) at the expense of a sense of caste belonging.

But the Ram Mandir battle has been won in the court and may, therefore, lose some of its mobilisation power. Caste plays such a pervasive role in society that the Modi government obviously cannot neglect it, especially in respect of OBCs, who represent more than 50 per cent of the voters.

The BJP, in spite of its rejection of caste politics, never fully ignored it and the Modi government, despite introducing a 10 per cent quota for the economically weaker sections, is no exception. The party has probably never invested so much in OBC politics under Narendra Modi since K N Govindacharya's defence of "social engineering". Modi's election campaigns in 2014 and 2019 are cases in point, when he emphasised his plebeian background while campaigning in Bihar and UP in particular. In Kannauj, in April 2019, he emphasised that his family belonged to a "most backward caste".

But BJP focuses only on some OBC *jatis*. In UP, the party has turned mostly to non-Yadav OBCs to cash in on the resentment of these castes vis-à-vis the Yadavs, whom they often see as dominant, either because of their long association with the SP (which governed the state three times after the Mandal movement) or because of their capacity to corner reservations. Whereas 27 per cent of the SP candidates were Yadavs



C R Sasikumar

in 2019, according to the data set SPINPER initiated by TCPD (Ashoka University) and CERI (Sciences Po/CNRS), Yadavs represented only 1.3 per cent of the candidates of the BJP which, on the contrary, gave tickets to 7.7 per cent Kurmis and 16.7 per cent "other OBCs," who often came from small caste groups. This strategy translated into votes, according to the Lokniti-CSDS: While 60 per cent of the Yadavs voted for the SP-BSP alliance, 72 per cent of the "other OBCs" supported the BJP, showing that the OBC milieu was now polarised along jati lines, irrespective of class. Indeed, "poor" Yadavs and "rich" Yadavs voted for the SP-BSP alliance in the same proportions — but that was not sufficient. For the first time in the history of independent India, "lower OBCs" had more MPs than "upper OBCs", not only in UP, but in the whole of India.

The recent ministerial reshuffle of Modi's government followed the same logic. The BJP emphasised that never before had OBCs, SCs and STs been so well represented in the country's executive, as after 36 new faces were inducted, 47 ministers and MoS now belonged to these categories. Certainly, the overall presence of upper castes in the council has come down from 47 per cent in 2019 to 32.5 per cent, but upper castes are still in a majority among the Cabinet ministers. They occupy 16 out of the 31 cabinet berths — controlling portfolios such as home, defence, finance, external affairs, etc. There are many Brahmins (6), Rajputs (4), Vaishyas (2), Khatri (2), Bhumihar (1) and Kanait (1). Besides these, dominant intermediate castes like Marathas (2), Patels (2) and Reddys (1) have secured token representation in the Cabinet leaving only two, three and five berths respectively for SCs, STs and OBCs. Secondly, among the OBCs, there are only two Yadavs; and, among the SCs, one Jatav, a group associated with the BSP in UP. In fact, the profile of the seven leaders from UP inducted in August is very revealing: One was Brahmin, two Kurmis, one Gaderia, one Lodhi, one Kori and one Pasi — no Yadavs or Jatavs.

The profile of the BJP candidates for next

The BJP emphasised that never before had OBCs, SCs and STs been so well represented in the country's executive, as after 36 new faces were inducted, 47 Union ministers and MoS now belonged to these categories. Certainly, the overall presence of upper castes in the council has come down from 47 per cent in 2019 to 32.5 per cent, but upper castes are still in a majority among the Cabinet ministers. They occupy 16 out of the 31 cabinet berths — controlling portfolios such as home, defence, finance, external affairs, etc. There are many Brahmins (6), Rajputs (4), Vaishyas (2), Khatri (2), Bhumihar (1) and Kanait (1).

year's UP election should reconfirm this strategy which shows that, in fact, the party never lost sight of caste politics, even vis-à-vis the state, where the temple issue is supposed to make the larger impact. But will it work in 2022 like in 2017? While these electorally motivated attempts at superficial inclusion can improve the BJP's prospects, the denial of the CM post to Keshav Prasad Maurya is fresh in people's memory. The anxiety of these communities is exacerbated by the fact that the social justice commission's report on sub-classification has not yet been implemented, even as there are widespread protests against the improper implementation of quotas in public recruitment.

A new variable needs to be factored in: The demand for a caste census that is uniting different caste groups and parties, including the JD(U) and the RJD. This unity may be very shallow, but the Mandal moment was also very ephemeral — and still had lasting effects. BJP's OBC MPs from the Hindi heartland like Sanghamitra Maurya and Sushil Kumar Modi have gone beyond the BJP's official stance to demand the caste census. The latter was instrumental in taking the all-party delegation from Bihar to meet the PM.

At the same time, BJP's upper-caste leadership appears to resent the party's recent overtures to OBCs. After the passage of the 127th Amendment, they raised the pitch for establishing a "Savarna Aayog" to look into the grievances and complaints of the Savarna castes in BJP-ruled MP and HP.

These incipient signs of struggle within Hindutva's social alliance alert to the fact that BJP's key challenge, amidst the crucial battle for UP, remains this: How to adequately mollify the aspirational OBCs' claims for political power without dismantling the social oligarchy that forms its core support base.

Jaffrelot is senior research fellow at CERI-Sciences Po/CNRS, Paris and professor of Indian Politics and Sociology at King's India Institute, London ; Dhawan is a student of National Law School of India University, Bengaluru

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"If New Zealand can be spooked by what has since then emerged to be a routine threat advisory by Rawalpindi's IG Police, the PCB should harden its stance when it sends teams for tours abroad."

—DAWN

## Unblock the system

Issue of appointments to tribunals must be addressed to speed up insolvency resolution, restore confidence of creditors



CHITRANSHUL SINHA

WHILE HEARING A challenge to the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021, the Supreme Court came down heavily on the government of India. A bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana observed that National Company Law Tribunals (NCLT), and the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) are hamstrung by vacancies not being filled on time.

The government has lauded the role of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC), for improving India's ranking on the "Ease of Doing Business" index over the last couple of years. However, the SC's observation is spot-on as vacancies in the tribunals have slowed down insolvency resolution due to the huge pendency of cases. When the SC made its observations, the NCLT had only 30 members against a total strength of 63. The NCLAT had a sanctioned strength of a chairperson plus 11 members but its functioning strength was of eight members. Both the NCLT and NCLAT have been without chairpersons for six and nine months respectively. On September 11, the government appointed 18 more members to the NCLT — 8 judicial and 10 technical. The same day, the NCLAT got another acting chairperson with the retirement of the last incumbent.

These vacancies are concerning because as of May 31, 13,170 insolvency petitions were pending before benches of the NCLT. Of these, 2,785 petitions have been filed by financial creditors and 5,973 by operational creditors. More than 70 per cent of petitions were pending adjudication for over six months as of May 31. While the number of petitions filed by operational creditors is likely to reduce because of the increase in default threshold from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1 crore, petitions by financial creditors are only likely to rise now that the moratorium on filing fresh petitions has been lifted by the government.

As far as the NCLAT is concerned, 1,000 appeals under the IBC were pending adjudication as on May 31. While the IBC was enacted with an object of time-bound resolution of debts, pendency of appeals in cases where corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) has been commenced against companies only delays the final resolution to much beyond the ideal period of about a year.

The IBC created an institution called an information utility to be the repository of information on debts and defaults in India. The sole utility in India at present is the National E-Governance Services Ltd. (NeSL). According to the evidence provided by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance in August, NeSL data as of May 31 shows that the number of debtors in India stood at 93.02 lakh. The amount of

underlying debt is Rs 136 lakh crore. While NeSL has issued 41,094 default certificates, the number of defaults is likely to be much higher as not all creditors report debts and defaults to NeSL as it is not mandatory to file default certificates issued by it with the NCLT while filing petitions to commence CIRP.

While financial creditors are facing criticism for taking haircuts as high as 90 per cent against their claims, resolution applicants take a higher risk if the process is uncertain and if there is no fixed time for transfer of control of a corporate debtor to the successful applicant. A longer approval period would entail greater value erosion of a corporate debtor which would be an unattractive proposition for any prospective resolution applicant. This uncertainty can be cured by a faster approval process by the NCLT's by the creation of more benches and filling up of current vacancies.

The standing committee on finance noted that a high number of NCLT judgments gets overturned on appeal, underlining the dearth in expertise and training of members. Therefore, while filling up vacancies, the members being appointed must have sufficient domain expertise.

The Indian economy is recovering from the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. During the downturn, financial institutions and banks have suffered higher defaults than usual, impacting the robustness of the system. Lending has decreased during this time and can only be encouraged now by shoring up the mechanism under the IBC to inspire confidence in creditors.

The SC had granted time to the government till September 13 to take substantial steps in this regard, which was partially complied with by appointing 18 members. The government, however, failed to avoid embarrassment as on September 15, the CJI expressed his anger at the appointment process which had ignored candidates recommended by the selection committee. In response to the court's admonition, the Attorney General assured that the appointments will be reconsidered within two weeks. Thus, the vacancy in NCLT is now back at 33.

To underline the gravity of the situation, on September 16, the SC came down heavily on the government for premature termination of the tenure of the acting chairperson of the NCLAT and threatened to stay the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021. The government conceded to allow the chairperson to continue till September 20 to enable him to pronounce the judgments he was writing when his tenure was terminated arbitrarily.

Unless the government now addresses the SC's concerns, there is a real risk of the court taking matters into its own hands by making appointments itself, or by taking harsher steps like transferring jurisdiction under the IBC to high courts. One hopes that the situation is resolved quickly to make strict time-bound insolvency resolutions a reality.

The writer is an advocate on record, Supreme Court and partner, Dua Associates

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### SAFEGUARD RIGHTS

THIS REFERS TO the article 'The partisan state' (IE, September 18). The recent spate of income tax raids and incarcerations points to a disquieting trend of suppressing minorities and dissenters. Sharp distinctions between the majority on the one hand and dissenters and protesters on the other, have been noticed in many instances. In response to any criticism on the nature of Indian democracy, the state has paradoxically strengthened its repression. The judiciary must step in to safeguard citizens' rights and render justice.

Ila Railkar, Mumbai

### SELECTORS' CALL

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Perfect stroke' (IE, September 18). Virat Kohli's move was not entirely a surprise but what remains exciting is that he has not relinquished captaincy in ODIs. Perhaps the 2023 ICC World Cup in India is too massive a brand for Kohli to ignore. Captaincy is usually split between red-ball and white-ball cricket but with Kohli preferring this choice of both Test and ODI leadership, he is only leaving the crumbs for the imminent captain in T20s. But that will happen only if Kohli decides to remain a pure batsman or the selectors intervene. No individual should be given liberty to step down of his own choice except in case of highly personal reasons and only selectors should decide on who should be the captain.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

### RETHINK NMP

THIS REFERS TO the article 'Assets and liabilities' (IE, September 18). The NDA government considers itself infallible. Instead

of admitting to its mistakes, it goes on justifying them, even more. Its decision to monetise the nation's assets seems to have resulted more from its own acute financial compulsions than any other plausible reason. According to even neutral economists, this unexpected monetisation will render thousands of people jobless. The writer is right that if the private sector is indeed capable of exploiting the public infrastructure assets profitably, then leasing out to it only the worst performing infrastructure assets will be a useful option.

Tarsem Singh, Mahilpur

### IMPERFECT PICTURE

THIS REFERS TO the article 'The mandate and the mission' (IE, September 17). The author has very skillfully photoshopped to the foreground a few bright spots and has coloured in bright hues certain black spots. Thanks to him for pulling the wool over our eyes and leading us to the bliss of ignorance by totally blocking out the black paint spilt all over.

Pritam Singh, Jaipur

### COMPLEX PROCESS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Debt weight' (IE, September, 18). The concept of NARCL is a welcome step in the current scenario but its implementation seems complex. Although resolution under IBC is a timebound process and haircuts are very high (to some sectors especially), its performance is very poor. Credit delivery and monitoring are the root cause of the problem and need urgent attention. We need some time to test and adopt the concept of NARCL for its smooth functioning.

Love Kumar Lalwani, Mehsana



OMPRAKASH MISHRA

BJP PRESIDENT J P Nadda was joined by Union cabinet minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, in showing praise on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. The occasion was the evacuation of stranded Indians in Afghanistan against the backdrop of the Taliban's ascendance to power in Kabul. With the help of the American forces stationed at the Kabul airport, the government of India could successfully evacuate a good number of its nationals. No less important was the evacuation of some Afghan nationals from the Hindu and Sikh minority communities in that country. Unfortunately, we see motivated propaganda to claim how their evacuation attests to the justification for the CAA. There is no way that these people would be given Indian nationality under the CAA. After all, the provisions of the Act are meant for those who have been in India since before December 2014. The CAA was never meant to help asylum seekers and protect persecuted people. Moreover, the government has been unable to frame rules for the implementation of the much-touted CAA despite the passage of 20 months. Also, there is absolute silence on the constitutionality of the CAA from our judiciary.

In the absence of refugee-specific legislation, the reception, admittance and treatment of refugees in India is conditioned by ad hoc policies adopted by the government to deal with specific circumstances. Thus, among several communities, we have hosted Tibetans, Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka, persecuted Chin and Afghan refugees and the minority Chakmas

## A hollow act

Under the CAA, refugees are ineligible for protection unless they are already in India

from the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). India had received worldwide admiration for its singular support to the huge numbers of people fleeing violence and persecution from then East Pakistan in 1970-71. The decision to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955, was initially thought by unsuspecting people to be benevolent. It was supposed to be the right step, consistent with broad Indian traditions and practices to stand up for persecuted people. However, it was made clear by the government that it does not propose any changes that are consistent with the understanding and interpretation of the term "persecution". Rather, a discrimination-filled and narrow interpretation of persecution has found its way into a legislative Act, in direct contravention of the provisions on equality in the Indian Constitution.

The government has attempted to deflect criticism over the discriminatory CAA by arguing that it is about inclusion. Persecuted minority communities — Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Parsis — from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan would get necessary protection. The government has reasoned that since the three countries named are dominated by Muslims, it would not be necessary to consider Muslims as being persecuted in these countries. This interpretation of persecution has no parallel in the civilised world. The term persecution stands in complete harmony with the understanding of non-discrimination. The definition of a refugee in Article 1A (2) of the United Nations Convention on the

Status of Refugees, 1951, involves people who are unable to avail the protection of the state of which they are nationals and are forced to flee outside their countries' borders due to a "well-founded fear of persecution" based on their "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion". In fact, the worldwide refugee protection principle is premised on non-discrimination and, therefore, any rudimentary understanding of international law militates against a piece of legislation that prioritises discrimination amongst people based on religious persuasion in its definition for "persecution".

The government also claimed that the CAA is about conferring citizenship. It does not intend to take away citizenship from Indian nationals. However, it would be difficult to find a precedent for a national legislative measure attempting to accord sanctuary and protection to a class of people retrospectively. A policy for persecuted people from foreign countries is invariably for the intended beneficiaries who need protection. Under the CAA, no one is eligible to be accorded protection unless they are already here in the country. For example, a group of Hindus from Bangladesh or Christians from Pakistan or Sikhs from Afghanistan would not get any protection from the CAA should they reach India and seek its protection. The question of refuge and protection for persecuted minorities, such as the Rohingyas from Myanmar or the Hazaras from Afghanistan, or asylum seekers from different other countries on the

ground of "well-founded fear of persecution" does not arise at all. In short, the protection of persecuted minorities even from any of the three named countries in the CAA is not permissible. In consequence, the CAA does not afford protection to refugees but, rather, it is a legal instrument to deny asylum and protection even to its intended beneficiaries — the six named minority communities from three named countries were they to cross over to India today or tomorrow.

This does not mean that the absence of a legislative framework denies protection to asylum seekers. They may very well be the beneficiaries of such protection. They may receive asylum and, subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions, may be conferred citizenship in due course by the government. The government has all the power in this respect in its capacity as the executive authority of a sovereign state. This power with the government, however, is not born out of the CAA but has been its prerogative since the inauguration of constitutional democracy in India. This is exactly what the government can do and a step in this direction would be to grant visas to Afghan nationals for an extended stay in the country — for all those who have been living in the country for the past many years as well as for the few hundred Hindu and Sikh minority nationals who have just arrived.

The writer is professor of international relations, Jadavpur University, and TMC spokesperson



# 10 EXPRESS NETWORK

## BRIEFLY

### UTTAR PRADESH NEET racket mastermind identified: police

**Lucknow:** A week after Varanasi police busted a NEET racket and arrested a BDS student of BHU and an MBBS student of the King George Medical University for their involvement in the racket, the senior police officials on Sunday claimed to have identified the mastermind of the racket that was working in at least four states. The man, earlier known by the alias of PK, is identified as Patna resident Neelesh Singh and is absconding. "The person reportedly fled on September 14 along with his family members," said Varanasi Police Commissioner A Satish Ganesh. **ENS**

### CHHATTISGARH

### 9 of a family killed in road accident

**Raipur:** Nine people from the same family died in a road accident in Kondagaon district on Sunday, police said. They were travelling in an autorickshaw that collided with an SUV near Borgaon turn under Farasgaon Police Station limits. More than 10 people were in the autorickshaw and were returning to their native Pande-aathgaon after attending a funeral, an official said. **ENS**

### WEST BENGAL

### Chit fund probe: Bhunia gets CBI summons

**Kolkata:** The CBI on Sunday summoned West Bengal minister Manas Bhunia for questioning in connection with its probe in the ICore Chit Fund case. Bhunia has been told to appear at the CBI office at 11 am Monday. The summons came a week after the agency questioned his ministerial colleague Partha Chatterjee. **ENS**



## BIDDING BAPPA GOODBYE

The Lalbaugcha Raja Ganesh idol is taken for immersion in Mumbai. A total of 19,779 idols of Lord Ganesh and Goddess Gauri were immersed till 9pm on Sunday in various water bodies in Mumbai as curtains came down on the 10-day Ganpati festival. The festival was held amid various restrictions imposed for the second year in a row in the wake of the pandemic. This year, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) set up artificial lakes at 173 locations in the city, as well as idol collection centres and mobile immersion sites at various places to avoid crowding, a BMC official said. *Ganesh Shirsekar*

## 3 held for threat to BJP leaders: 'Didn't spare Mahatma, think we'll spare you?'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 19

THE MANGALURU city police on Sunday arrested three right-wing activists for issuing threats to Karnataka BJP leaders over a court-monitored drive to demolish or relocate illegal religious structures in the state.

The arrests come a day after Dhamendra Surathkal, one of the right-wing activists, had in the course of a press conference called by the Hindu Mahasabha targeted Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, former CM B S Yediyurappa and state Muzrai Minister Shashikala Jolle over the demolition drive, which saw the demolition of a temple in Mysuru's Nanjangud area on September 10.

"When we didn't spare Mahatma Gandhi and killed him to protect Hindus, do you think we will spare you?" Surathkal had stated.



(From left) Right-wing activists Rajesh Pavitrana, Dharmendra Surathkal and Prem Polali were arrested based on complaint by the Hindu Mahasabha state president. *Courtesy: Mangaluru police*

On Sunday, Mangaluru city police commissioner N Shashi Kumar said Surathkal, along with Rajesh Pavitrana and Prem Polali, was arrested on the basis of a complaint filed by Hindu Mahasabha state president L K Suvama.

The accused have been

booked under IPC Section 120 (B) (criminal conspiracy), 153(A) (promoting enmity), 505 (2) (public mischief), 506 (criminal intimidation), 465 (forgery), and 149 (unlawful assembly).

The Karnataka government has been implementing a 2010 Supreme Court order for the re-

moval of all illegal structures built after September 29, 2009 in public places. The implementation of the court order is being monitored by the Karnataka High Court.

However, the demolition of the Nanjangud temple has caused a political furore in the state, with severe opposition to the drive. Former CM and Congress leader Siddaramaiah questioned the BJP's commitment to Hindus and blamed the state government for carrying out the demolition without consulting locals. Mysore MP and BJP leader Prathap Simha, meanwhile, claimed that only temples were being targeted.

Following the adverse reactions, CM Bommai last week called a halt to the demolitions and said that his government will examine the court orders and issue fresh directives to the districts. The state government also issued a notice to district officials in Mysuru.

## SINGHU BLOCKADE

# Farmers refuse to meet Haryana panel: 'Delhi cops blocked highway'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 19

THE SAMYUKT Kisan Morcha (SKM) Sunday did not attend a meeting called by a high-powered committee formed by Haryana government to make efforts to clear the blockade on National Highway-44 on Kundli-Singhu border. The SKM said that "the farmers are not the ones who have barricaded the roads or blocked them" and accused the Haryana government of "misinterpreting the Supreme Court order" to "drag farmers into meetings".

The Haryana government had earlier this week formed the committee comprising Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajeev Arora as chairperson and DGP and Additional DGP (Law and Order) as members to hold talks with farmer leaders and discuss modalities to reopen the NH-44 stretch at the Kundli-Singhu border.

While the farm unions skipped it, Arora held a meeting with industrialists in Murthal and heard their grievances regarding the blockade. "It was our first meeting. We will continue the process and make efforts again till a solution is found to reopen the road. It will be a continuous

process. We are confident that some solution will be found out".

On farmers' contention that they have not blocked the road but it's the Delhi Police, which has put up barricades, Arora said: "These things will be cleared only when the talks are held. We just know that we came here for a meeting and those who were invited to it, did not come to attend it".

Meanwhile, the SKM, in a statement said, "The SKM leaders have reasoned that the SC orders were being misinterpreted. The Government is adamant on not fulfilling the farmers' rightful demands, and has not initiated any talks with farmer representatives after January 22... It is not the farmers who have blocked the roads. In fact, protesting farmers have created clear paths on both sides of the road at Singhu border as well as Tikri border for traffic to move..."

The previous day, Jagmohan Singh Patiala, general secretary of BKU Dakaunda, Punjab, who is a member of SKM, had said, "We have not blocked any road. It is the Delhi Police that installed the barricades on the highway to halt our movement in November 2020 when we first reached there... Barricading is still there... we are not blocking the way..."

## TRACKING THE SECOND SURGE

567  
DAYS SINCE  
PANDEMIC  
BEGAN

NEW CASES: 30,174

ACTIVE CASES: 3,18,752

VACCINATIONS: 80,43,72,331

DAILY DEATHS  
298

TOTAL DEATHS  
4,45,136

WEEKLY CFR  
0.78%

OVERALL CFR  
1.35%



TESTS TODAY: 11,38,860 | TOTAL TESTS: 55,34,79,028

WEEKLY POSITIVITY: 2.05% | OVERALL POSITIVITY: 6.05%

## STATES REPORTING MOST CASES

STATE	NEW CASES	ACTIVE CASES	WEEKLY POSITIVITY	TOTAL VACCINATION
■ Kerala	19,653	1,74,122	17.09%	3,35,91,062
■ Maharashtra	3,413	42,955	2.29%	7,32,96,176
■ Tamil Nadu	1,697	16,969	1.07%	4,15,37,864
■ Andhra Pradesh	1,337	14,699	2.20%	3,71,48,973
■ Mizoram	1,104	13,576	15.60%	10,47,001

## STATES REPORTING MOST DEATHS

STATE	TODAY'S DEATHS	TOTAL DEATHS	WEEKLY CFR	OVERALL CFR
■ Kerala	152	23,670	0.52%	0.56%
■ Maharashtra	51	1,42,073	1.31%	2.19%
■ Tamil Nadu	27	35,337	1.56%	1.35%
■ Karnataka	16	37,603	1.25%	1.27%
■ West Bengal	11	18,652	1.66%	1.20%

Note: Data as on Sept 19; vaccination numbers as of Sept 18. Deaths include those from previous days.

## Casinos open today, fresh SOPs in Goa

**Panaji:** A day before casinos in the state open, the Goa government Sunday issued fresh SOPs. CrPC section 144, that was in place, has been withdrawn. Under the Epidemic Diseases Act, however, the state however,

imposed certain restrictions, "satisfied that the state of Goa still faces threat of spread of Covid-19 virus and therefore to take certain emergency measures to prevent and contain the spread of virus". **ENS**

## Hindu man travelling with Muslim woman attacked

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 19

A HINDU man who was dropping his Muslim woman colleague home on his two-wheeler was stopped and assaulted in Bengaluru by two men who questioned why she was travelling with a man from a different faith.

The men, who were later arrested by the police, forced the woman to get off and take an auto rickshaw home.

The incident took place on Friday evening near the Dairy circle when the miscreants stopped their bike and started questioning the woman, who was wearing a burqa.

They assaulted the man, forced the woman to share her family members' numbers and called them to abuse them.

The police said that the woman and the man are colleagues at a bank. As it was late on Friday evening, he was dropping her home.

The incident came to light only after a video was shared widely on social media. Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-East) Joshi Srinath Mahadev said: "After the video went viral, we registered a case in SG Palya police station and arrested two persons within 12 hours after the incident."

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai tweeted: "In connection with the case of assault on a bike rider travelling along with a woman of different faith, @BlrCityPolice has acted swiftly, identified & secured 2 accused persons. A case is registered & legal action is initiated. My Govt. deals with such incidents with an iron hand."

## Hindu Jagran Manch leader booked for abetting assault on Muslim man

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MEERUT, NEW DELHI, SEPT 19

A HINDU Jagran Manch leader was booked in Meerut for allegedly abetting assault against a Muslim man.

In a video of the alleged incident that emerged on social media, a woman could be seen slapping a man with a slipper as a group of men encourages her.

Police said they received a complaint from the woman against Sachin Sirohi, the local chief of Hindu Jagran Manch, and unknown accused of allegedly making her slap her friend Salman on Friday afternoon.

While the Hindu Jagran Manch alleged that Salman was "eve-teasing" the woman, the complainant maintained that Salman was her friend.

As per her complaint, she and

a friend, along with Salman, were having a cold drink when a group of people asked their names and began assaulting Salman.

"They forced us to beat him (Salman) and told me to get an FIR registered against him or else there will be bad consequences," the woman's complaint lodged at Civil Lines Police Station read.

Circle Officer (Civil Lines) Devesh Singh said: "Following the incident, we received a complaint against a group of people for inciting violence against the woman's friend. We are ascertaining the facts and an investigation is being carried out."

Notably, 10 minutes before the woman had lodged the complaint, another complaint was filed at the police station by the woman's mother in which she accused Salman of grabbing her.

"The mother later withdrew the complaint, saying that it was

not written by her but by the members of the Hindu Jagran Manch," said Gajendra Singh, the Investigating Officer.

"The incident is directly related to the woman student and therefore her statement is important. We are investigating the issue. We will also scrutinise CCTV footage to know the truth," Meerut SSP Prabhakar Chaudhary said.

Meanwhile, Sirohi accused the police of "trying to downplay the incident".

"I had been informed that a Muslim man was sitting with his arms around the neck of a Hindu woman... Some people asked his name and he tried to evade it. The crowd got hold of him and he was slapped. By the time my men and I reached, he was already assaulted. In fact, I tried to stop it... The police have pressured the woman to write the complaint..." said Sirohi.

## Nagaland's new 'Opposition-less' govt set to be called United Democratic Alliance

TORA AGARWALA  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19



Nagaland  
Chief  
Minister  
Neiphiu Rio

A MONTH after the Opposition in Nagaland joined hands with the government, the state's legislators have decided to call themselves the United Democratic Alliance (UDA).

On July 19, the Opposition Naga People's Front (NPF) submitted a letter to Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, requesting for an all-party government to help reach an early settlement of the Naga political issue. Later, in August, the Rio-led People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) — which comprises the National Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) and the

BJP, with support from two Independent MLAs — passed a joint five-point resolution with the NPF, stating that all the political parties shall "aim at promoting the Naga Peace Talks with a positive approach in the greater interest of achieving peace".

Subsequently, late on Saturday, Rio tweeted, "The nomenclature of United Democratic Alliance (UDA) for the Opposition-less government in Nagaland has been unanimously

resolved by the legislators and party leaders of the NDPP, BJP, NPF and Independent MLAs."

The legislators will now write to the Speaker for the formation of the UDA government. "As of now, we have not discussed the allocation of portfolios. That is the prerogative of the chief minister," government spokesperson Neiba Kronu told *The Indian Express*.

The Naga movement is considered India's longest-running insurgency. In 1997, the Centre signed a ceasefire agreement with the largest Naga rebel group — the NSCN-IM. In 2015, renewed negotiations for a solution to the Naga political issue began between the Government of India and the NSCN-IM.

Since then, seven other Naga armed outfits have joined the talks. While formal talks are said to have concluded in 2019, they are yet to yield a final agreement.

A government source said Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is the convener of the North-East Democratic Alliance and the face of the BJP in the Northeast, was "instrumental in ensuring that there were no hitches" in the "transition to the UDA".

Sarma is set to visit Dimapur on September 21 to hold talks with NSCN (IM) chief Th Muivah. "He will also hold talks with the BJP and NDPP to discuss the new political developments," said the source.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 19

UTTAR PRADESH Assembly Speaker Hriday Narayan Dixit, in a video that emerged Sunday, purportedly said that if people could be venerated based on how few clothes they wear, then actor Rakhi Sawant would be a more well-known personality than Mahatma Gandhi. Dixit however claimed that he was quoted out of context, and said that he, in fact, praised Gandhi.

The Speaker made the comment at the BJP's "Prabuddha Sammelan" in Unnao's Bangaram area on Saturday.

The BJP is currently organising these sammelans across the



'Quoted out of context':  
Hriday  
Narayan  
Dixit

state, and Dixit was invited to the event in Unnao since he hails from the district.

"Gandhi ji kapde kam pehante they... Gandhi ji ko Bapu kaha gaya. Ab agar kapde utarne se koi mahan ho jata hai toh Rakhi Sawant Mahatma Gandhi se bari ban jati... [Gandhi ji used to wear few clothes... Gandhi ji was called Bapu... now, had anyone become a big personality just by shedding their clothes then Rakhi Sawant would have been bigger than Gandhi]," Dixit is purportedly

heard saying in a video of the event.

Dixit told *The Indian Express* that the video was being shown out of context, and added that he praised Gandhi. He said those who listen to the entire video would know that he was praising Gandhi, and was trying to explain that a person becomes great through hard work and honesty, among other things.

"I was trying to explain that there are various factors that make one great," he said. "One should listen to the entire video to understand what I was saying."

Asked about his presence at a BJP event, Dixit said he had made it clear that he would not speak on any political matter, and kept his word.



M Venkaiah Naidu

## Agriculture is backbone of economy: Venkaiah

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA  
GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 19

VICE-PRESIDENT M Venkaiah Naidu Sunday said that agriculture was the "backbone of our economy" and called for unshackling the potential of rural economy to ensure income security for farmers.

"Agriculture is the basic culture of India. Half of the country today depends on agriculture. Our villages not only produce food-grains but they also inculcate values and principles," he said. "All governments should give priority to welfare of farmers and ensure remunerative prices. There must always be a dialogue between farmers and government; however farmers' problems should not be linked to politics. When it is linked to votes, division happens."

Naidu was addressing a gathering in Gurgaon after releasing five volumes of collected works of speeches and writing of Sir Chhotu Ram, the co-founder of National Unionist Party and prominent politician in pre-independence India.

Heaping praise on the agriculture sector and work ethic of farmers, Naidu said even during Covid, when other sectors of the economy suffered, production in agricultural sector increased for two successive years.

"You must remember a government had fallen due to onion prices. There should be one market for all, without restrictions, and support prices should be raised from time to time. But, I am not in favour of government procuring all the produce. It should procure when there is no demand in the market. Otherwise, commission agents will exploit farmers," said Naidu, adding that he was not referring to any particular government on this.

"I am not in politics. I have retired from politics, but not tired from public life. I am myself son of a farmer," he added.

Naidu reiterated that there was a need to look beyond politics of freebies in addressing farmers' needs. "Farmers need infrastructure — uninterrupted power supply for 12 hours, roads, water, timely credit, market, godowns. They need permanent projects, not populist schemes," he said.

## Nainital: Villagers stage dharna against borewell

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
DEHRADUN, SEPTEMBER 19

RESIDENTS OF over half a dozen villages Sunday staged a dharna in Satoli village of Nainital district to protest against a borewell dug allegedly for commercial misuse under the garb of residential use.

Villagers of Satoli, Peora, Diyari, Chatola, Satkhol, Sitala and neighbouring areas apart from environmentalists and eminent citizens took part in the dharna. They alleged that laws, norms and guidelines have been flouted in digging the borewell.

Local resident Seema Kundra said permission for the borewell in Satoli was granted around 10 years ago for personal use of a person who did not live in Satoli. Earlier this year, a private builder operationalised it to extract water for luxury villas coming up at the village.

The villagers alleged that gallons of water were being extracted daily by the builder and several households were being impacted by this.

Dr Col C S Pant, chairman AAROH, an NGO headquartered in Satoli, who was present at the dharna said, "This [borewell] poses a huge threat to water supply in Satoli and surrounding villages... It is totally against the interest of our people and must be stopped."

Nainital District Magistrate Dhiraj Singh Garbiyal could not be reached for comment.





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## EXPLAINED GLOBAL

## The ire of the French

A defence deal among Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom that seeks to check China in the Pacific has enraged France, which has lost a lucrative submarine contract with Australia. Why are democratic allies with the same overall objectives undercutting each other?

### EXPERT EXPLAINS

C RAJA MOHAN

From The Indian Express panel of specialists, exclusive insight

**What prompted the signing of the trilateral defence agreement among the US, UK, and Australia?**

The nub of the problem is this: Australia had initially wanted conventionally powered submarines, and they signed a contract with France in 2016. But the security situation in the region has since deteriorated significantly in terms of the threat from China. There has been a rethink in Canberra along the lines of, "Look, to be able to deal effectively with the expansion of Chinese naval power and China's bullying of Australia, we will need more powerful submarines."

Nuclear-powered submarines are far more powerful than conventionally powered ones, they are more stealthy, they have a far longer range, and they can operate for longer periods under water. And to take on the challenge from the Chinese, who are building submarines and ships in such large numbers, there is no option but to invest in better technology.

The negotiations on the new AUKUS deal seem to have been ongoing for the last six months — recent reports suggest that the Australians were talking to the British, the British went to the Americans, and then the three countries decided that they would take a fresh look at the issues at hand. Subsequently, Australia cancelled its French contract and announced that it will start work on the new deal with the US.

**Was there a way in which France could have been included in these negotiations?**

When you're going to ditch a friend, you don't tell them until the last minute! It was probably not fair — the French should have been told in advance; they were completely blindsided, and that is one of the reasons they are so upset.

Two weeks ago, there was a meeting between the Australian and French ministers, and the joint statement said the submarine programme would continue. To go back to the real-life example, when you are about to leave



President Biden and President Macron at the G7 Summit in England on June 12. The scuttling of France's contract with Australia has led to its relationship with the US plunging to its lowest depth in decades. *The New York Times/Archive*

a friend, you hint, "Oh I have problems with what we are doing, so let me rethink...", and Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison says that something to that effect had indeed been suggested. But the French say, "We didn't see any sign of this, and this is really, absolutely unfair", it is "stabbing [us] in the back".

**How common is such 'ditching' of an ally in international politics?**

Countries do change their minds, even though it rankles when it is among friends. In the early 1970s, President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt reversed his predecessor Gamal Abdel Nasser's policy of extremely close ties with the USSR, expelled Russian military observers, purged the government of pro-Soviet Nasserists and, following the peace treaties with Israel, switched over to the American side. More recently, in 2015, France cancelled a €1.2 billion deal struck four years previously to sell two warships to Russia.

But the scale of the current situation is different. France has been the only European power that has fully endorsed the idea of the Indo-Pacific that the US and Australia support; in April 2019, they took on the Chinese in the strategic Taiwan Strait; they have stood up for the freedom of navigation. In a sense there is no difference in the objectives of France, the US and Australia in the Pacific region, and the diplomacy could have been a lot better. Australia needed the nuclear submarines and, ironically, there is a nuclear variant of the vessel the French were selling — it was the Australians who said they wanted the conventional sub. There will now likely be some effort from the Americans and the Australians to

find a way to bring the ball to the French, and they get over their anger and feeling of betrayal.

**What about the revenue that France will be losing?**

It was a large deal, worth about AUD 90 billion, or USD 66 billion. It was billed as the "contract of the century" in France, and it was very important for the French naval industry and French presence. A part of the French complaint concerns the business side of the deal and the money that has been lost, so there will likely be some legal recourse, a demand for compensation, etc. But the signing of the contract was preceded and followed by an intensive political engagement between Paris and Canberra, and there was a sense that the countries could be strategic partners in the Indo-Pacific, with shared objectives, working together. The cancellation of the deal shattered this larger framework.

**What does this mean for the EU's Indo-Pacific policy?**

The AUKUS announcement came just before the EU was to announce its own Indo-Pacific policy. In the European narrative, the US is undermining their efforts in the region — and the fact that Britain, which has walked out of the EU, is involved, adds a layer of complication. The feeling in some quarters in Europe is that the US is unreliable — the current situation has come soon after the chaotic American withdrawal from Afghanistan — and that Europe needs to act on its own.

This is somewhat like India's "strategic autonomy" argument — however, there is a problem. Most European countries are reluctant to

spend much on defence. They've had it good as a collective, and are happy to live with the Americans doing more on the security side. That is unlikely to change in the near term — while some countries like France might argue for more extensive strategic autonomy, others like the Central Europeans or Northern Europeans might not.

**What are the implications for New Delhi, considering India, France, and Australia had their first trilateral dialogue on the Indo-Pacific recently?**

The French have cancelled a trilateral dialogue meeting of foreign ministers that was supposed to take place in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. In the near term, there is a setback. But India's relationships with the US, UK, and Australia have improved dramatically over the last five years. France too, has been a very important for India, and there is great trust in France in New Delhi today. A quarrel among its friends is uncomfortable for India. To deal with this situation, India can step up its own security and defence engagement with France. For example, India is planning to buy more submarines — and there is the argument that it is better to have nuclear submarines rather than conventional ones because India has the same problem as Australia with regard to the Chinese navy showing up close.

France could be a partner here — because it is already a resident power in the Indian Ocean, and India has an interest and stake in keeping it there. At the same time, India is happy to be a part of the Quad, and to work with the Americans, British, and Australians. The submarine question could become an important opening for India and France to start taking a fresh look at more things they can do together in the Indian Ocean.

**What happens here onward?**

There is no doubt that the objectives of France are in a sense the same as those of India, Australia, the US, or UK. But there is a sense of pride, a sense of betrayal, and the loss of the contract. These are serious setbacks for the French. But the French are also realists, they will come back, and that's where India can play an important role in reaching out to them and helping them stay engaged in the Indo-Pacific, while strengthening its own partnership.

(C Raja Mohan is Director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, and Contributing Editor on international affairs for The Indian Express. He spoke to **Mehr Gill**)

## THIS WORD MEANS

### HUMBOLDT PENGUIN

Two chicks born this year in Mumbai's Byculla Zoo. How are Humboldts different from other penguins?

LAST WEEK, Mumbai's Byculla Zoo announced the addition of two new Humboldt penguin chicks this year (*The Indian Express*, September 16). Oreo was born to Flipper and Mr Molt on May 1; and an as-yet-unnamed chick to Daisy and Donald on August 19. The two join seven adult Humboldt penguins at Byculla Zoo — Popeye, Flipper, Bubble, and the new parents.

Humboldt penguins are a medium-sized species among at least 17 species. The exact number of distinct species is debated, but it is generally agreed that there are between 17 and 19 species, according to the Smithsonian Institute. The largest, the Emperor penguin, stands at over 4 ft tall while the Little penguin has a maximum height of 1 ft. Humboldt penguins have an average height of just over 2 ft.

Penguins are divided into six genera (see table). The Humboldt penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*) belongs to a genus that is commonly known as the 'banded' group. Humboldt penguins are endemic to the Pacific coasts of Chile and Peru. They are so named because their habitat is located near the Humboldt Current, a large oceanic upwelling characterised by cold waters.

Humboldt penguins have large, bare skin patches around their eyes, an adaptation to help keep them cool, according to the Smithsonian Institute. Their breeding season in the wild is either March-April or September-October depending on the location of the colony. "The Humboldt is one of the most popular zoo penguins due to its ability to withstand warmer climates," the Institute says on its website.

At Byculla, the seven adult penguins were brought to the zoo in 2016 from Seoul. The unnamed chick is being looked after by its parents Flipper, the oldest fe-



Humboldt penguin chick Oreo, born to Flipper and Mr Molt on April 1. *BMC*

#### PENGUIN SPECIES

Genus	Species
Crested group ( <i>Eudyptes</i> )	Macaroni, Royal Fiordland, Rockhopper, Snarres Crested, Erect-Crested
Banded group ( <i>Spheniscus</i> )	Humboldt, Magellanic, African, Galapagos
Brush-tailed group ( <i>Pygoscelis</i> )	Chinstrap, Gentoo, Adélie
Large group ( <i>Aptenodytes</i> )	Emperor, King
Yellow-Eyed ( <i>Megadyptes</i> )	Yellow-Eyed
Little ( <i>Eudyptula</i> )	Little (or Fairy)

Source: Smithsonian Institute

male penguin at the zoo, and Mr Molt, the youngest among the males, through a process called 'brooding'. Its sex is yet to be known.

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#### The Dalit factor

At 32%, Punjab has one of the highest populations of Dalits in the country. Some researchers say this number is likely to go up to 38% once the results of the latest census are out. Although Jat Sikhs constitute only 25% of the population, they have traditionally monopolised political power in the state. While the Congress has 20 Dalit MLAs — the 117-member Assembly has 36 reserved constituencies — only three of them were included in the Cabinet. With a Jat Sikh as the PCC chief in Navjot Singh Sidhu, and a Dalit as



CM-designate Charanjit Singh Channi (red turban), MLA from Chamkaur Sahib, in Chandigarh on Sunday. *jasbir Malhi*

the CM, the Congress party has undertaken a reform towards a more equitable distribution of power.

#### Counter to Opposition

Both Shiromani Akali Dal, which has joined hands with Bahujan Samaj Party, and the Aam Aadmi Party, which has the highest number of Dalit legislators at 16, have been promising a Dalit as Deputy Chief Minister if they come to power. By installing Channi, the Congress has upstaged the entire Opposition.

#### A Sikh face

Channi is not only a Dalit but also a Sikh. Veteran Congress leader Ambika Soni had earlier shot down the proposal to install former PPCC chief Sunil Kumar Jakhar as the Chief Minister, saying a Punjabi suba (state) cannot have a Hindu CM. Opposing his candidature, Jails and Cooperation Minister Sukhwinder Singh Randhawa too had said he wouldn't be able to face posterity if he allowed a non-Sikh to become the CM, thus setting a precedent that may be difficult to

overturn. With Channi at the helm, it addresses such concerns.

#### Acceptability in party

The Congress expects that Channi, known for his political acumen, will be able to negotiate the warring camps in the party. He is close to the 'Majha camp' of three ministers that had started marshalling legislators against Captain Amarinder Singh. Party members feel he is also unlikely to upset Navjot Singh Sidhu.

#### Mass appeal

A grassroots politician from the small hamlet of Kharar, who rose through the ranks after starting out as a student leader, Channi is known for appealing with the masses. He has also been upgrading his skills all his life while pursuing a career in politics. As Minister for Technical Education, he was behind the job fairs and opening of new colleges and skilling centres. The party hopes he will be able to give jobs and education the required push in a state, which is seeing an exodus of youngsters.

## Why Planet Nine hunters believe they now know where to look

ASWATHI PACHA  
KOCHI, SEPTEMBER 19

IN 2016, planetary scientists Konstantin Batygin and Michael E Brown, both from the California Institute of Technology, published a paper in *The Astronomical Journal*, claiming evidence for a giant planet in the far reaches of the Solar System. Five years on, Batygin and Brown have published a new paper in which they say they know where to look for what has come to be known as Planet Nine.

#### What is Planet Nine?

It is predicted to be the ninth planet of our Solar System. (Pluto was once considered a planet but was reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006.) Planet Nine, estimated to be several times as massive as Earth, is believed to be orbiting the Sun beyond Neptune.

A series of studies over the last few years have provided evidence that it exists by noting its influence on other objects. Planet 9 itself, however, continues to elude scientists.

#### What is the evidence?

In their 2016 paper, Batygin and Brown argued that Planet could be responsible for the peculiar alignment of objects in the Kuiper belt, an expansive field of icy debris on the outskirts of the Solar System.

"The most distant objects that we know of in the solar system are being slightly tugged by some gravitational effects; as far as we can tell, the only plausible explanation is a giant planet out there," Dr Brown said in an email to [indianexpress.com](http://indianexpress.com). Brown, incidentally, was one of the researchers who had helped reclassify Pluto and is the author of the book *How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming*.

In 2016, Batygin had said in a press re-

lease: "Although we were initially quite skeptical that this planet could exist, as we continued to investigate its orbit and what it would mean for the outer solar system, we became increasingly convinced that it is out there," Batygin said in a release in 2016.

Also in 2016, another Caltech team calculated that it is the influence of Planet Nine that is causing the skew of the Solar System — the Sun's equatorial plane is aligned six degrees off from the orbital plane of the planets. Other studies, too, have calculated that the observed behaviour and alignment of various objects can only be possible if Planet Nine exists.

In 2019, Batygin and Brown published a pair of papers on Planet Nine's orbit and influence on other objects.

#### What is the new finding?

Last month, Brown tweeted that he has 'the treasure map' to find Planet Nine. "Five



Artist impression of Planet Nine. *Caltech/R Hurt (IPAC)*

and a half years after our proposal of the existence of Planet Nine, we have finally accomplished what is perhaps the most important task in aiding the search: we now know where to look," he wrote in his blog.

The new paper calculates the planet's orbital path. "The paper [finally!] takes all

of the observations of the outer solar system and tries to invert them to learn about the orbit and mass of Planet Nine in a meaningful way," Brown tweeted.

The paper, posted on the preprint server *arXiv*, calculates Planet Nine at 6.2 Earth masses, and also details Planet Nine's semi-major axis, inclination, and perihelion.

The data only tells us the orbital path of Planet Nine, but not where in the orbital path it is, Brown said. "It is more likely to be at its most distant point from the sun, but only because it travels more slowly there. But this is where you should be looking," he tweeted.

Asked how Planet Nine might have formed, Brown said: "Our best guess is that it formed in the vicinity of Uranus and Neptune and eventually got too close to Jupiter or Saturn which flung it out into the outer reaches of our solar system."

He said the Vera C Rubin Observatory, currently under construction in Chile, will fur-

ther help the hunt for Planet Nine. "The observatory will scan the skies night after night and eventually uncover many things, including — we hope — Planet Nine," Brown said.

**Is everyone convinced that Planet Nine exists?**

Since 2016, studies have variously concluded that there is more and more evidence of Planet Nine's exist, or that it does not exist, or that it may in fact be a black hole. A paper published last year in *Physical Review Letters* argued that the unknown object causing anomalous orbits of the trans-Neptunian objects could be a primordial black hole.

Another study published in 2018 in *The Astronomical Journal*, on the other hand, cited fresh evidence for the existence of Planet Nine. It noted that a trans-Neptunian object called 2015 BP519 had an unusual trajectory because it was affected by Planet Nine's strong gravity.



# 12 IDEA EXCHANGE

## NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

Must be realistic about India's position in global markets... Our plan is a calibrated fiscal expansion that will support the economy at a time of acute need, which is why we are not at 3%, but budgeted 6.8% deficit



### WHY T V SOMANATHAN

As the country's top bureaucrat in the Finance Ministry, Somanathan has been at the centre of the government's measures to revive the country's Covid-hit economy. From the Atmanirbhar Bharat stimulus packages to the Centre's Capex push for economic revival, the 1987-batch Tamil Nadu-cadre IAS

officer has been at the helm of major government schemes. The Expenditure Secretary was earlier director at the World Bank in Washington DC and holds a PhD in Economics from Calcutta University. Earlier, he has also held positions as additional secretary and joint secretary in the Prime Minister's Office



“(On taking payment of telcom cos’ statutory dues in equity) It’s a very peculiar circumstance. It is an attempt to protect the future of the telecom sector, while also preserving the ability to collect govt’s dues

**SUNNY VERMA:** Since the lockdown last year, the government has taken a series of important decisions, including the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP), spending on infrastructure, formation of India's first-ever ‘Bad Bank’ and the package for the telecom sector. Is there a strategy at play?

Yes, there is a strategy. It's not as if it has happened in the past couple of months. If you look back, it's a continuation of things that started from late 2020 onwards, with the first set of Atmanirbhar Bharat announcements, which had, among other things, the mining sector, farm sector changes... Then there was the second set (of Atmanirbhar Bharat measures), then the third set, then the Budget. Asset management and the bad bank decisions were announced in the Budget and are being executed now. So yes, there is a broad strategy towards building a stronger Indian economy with an emphasis on core domestic manufacturing — building the capabilities that we don't have and preserving the capabilities that we have. There is a consistency... It's a continuum of things that form a cogent strategy.

**SUNNY VERMA:** And are you satisfied with the economy's recovery so far?

It's a good recovery but we have a long way to go. We are not yet past the 2019-20 figures in terms of actual, absolute levels of real GDP. On the whole, the recovery path has been good, better than many people expected, and I am reasonably satisfied.

**SUNNY VERMA:** But isn't there more scope to push the spending, capital expenditure to give a thrust to the economy?

We provided for a much higher capital expenditure in the Budget. The challenge is going to be utilising that. There is a considerable increase... The last figure that I had was about 15% up year-on-year, and it is also up on 2019-20. So capital expenditure from the government is high. It's not as high as the Budget estimates would indicate, but we have had two very difficult quarters. So I think it will begin to pick up speed in the remaining two quarters. So on capital expenditure I am optimistic that we will reach our quite ambitious Budget targets and there will be absolutely no restriction of any kind from the Finance Ministry's side on capital expenditure. The issue will be the ability of user departments to utilise the available provisions, because capital expenditure is not the signing of a cheque. It may require land acquisition, construction, environmental permission... many steps to be taken before the cheque can be signed. From our side, the money is available. The departments are doing their best and we are actively reviewing the progress... and there is considerable progress. The increase that we have seen in the first two quarters despite the second wave is a good sign and I am quite hopeful that it will be even better in the remaining two quarters.

As far as room for more fiscal spending, glide path is concerned... When you use the expression 'glide path', in your mind you have a paper plane or a glider that you throw at a particular height and by gradual gravitational pull it comes down automatically and lands gently. Fiscal deficits have no automatic downward gravitational pull. If anything, they have an upward path. If they are not actively pulled down, they don't glide. So glide path is a loose terminology that I, as a fiscal manager, am not very happy with because it implies that if you start at 6.8% (fiscal deficit) it will automatically glide down to 4%. No. If you push it up, it will stay up. So we have to be very careful about how we manage fiscal deficits. We must be realistic about where India stands as a country in terms of global markets. We are following carefully, calibrated fiscal expansion. It's an expansion which we want to sustain, without the kind of difficulties that we faced in the end of 2009-10, which led to 2012-13... So we don't want the expansion of these two years to lead to a situation where we are out of control or we have lost macro-economic stability. That is a delicate balance... So we are planning for a calibrated fiscal expansion that will provide support to the economy at a time of acute need, which is why we are not near 3%. We are at a budgeted deficit of 6.8%.

Yes, there are increased revenues in the last two quarters, but one mustn't forget the expenditure pressures that are already known and are above the Budget estimates. For instance, we have eight months of additional food supply, which will cost us Rs 1 lakh crore. We have an additional fertiliser subsidy, already announced for Rs 15,000 crore. Now, the Commerce Ministry has announced a decision to clear arrears of export incentives worth Rs 56,000 crore... So there are already expenditure commitments which one shouldn't lose sight of when you say there is enhanced revenue,

## ‘We are pulling out of the worst... Problem with stimulus is it’s easier to start a spending programme than to stop it’

Finance Secretary TV Somanathan explains the recent telecom reforms; insists revival of economic activity will create demand; and says that on capital expenditure, he is “optimistic” about reaching Budget targets and that there would be “no restriction” from the Ministry



TV Somanathan with Senior Assistant Editor Sunny Verma in *The Indian Express* newsroom. Abhinav Saha

but there is also enhanced expenditure. The government is prioritising expenditure on the poor and there we are not being constrained by fiscal mathematics. We will make sure they are protected and the government is the only agency that can protect them. For more than that, we have to look at what is prudent and something that will not create a future crisis that will simply 'glide down'.

**ANIL SASI:** The government's Final Consumption Expenditure in the first quarter, as per GDP numbers, was lower on a year-on-year basis. Why has it gone down? Also, you have started incentivising states that have met their expenditure targets. Can this be interpreted as a move to push things more towards the states?

The government's Final Consumption Expenditure is a result of elevated levels last year. It is not because of reduced levels this year. Last year, this was the time of the lockdown and there was the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, so there were a lot of special (measures). For example, there was a transfer to Jan Dhan accounts. So government expenditure in the first two quarters of last year was unusually elevated. This year it is returning to a more normal pattern.

In the Budget we had said that the... 4% fiscal deficit for states would have a component linked to capital expenditure target. Several states have met those targets and others have time till March 31 of this fiscal year to meet the targets. That is part of what was announced in the Budget. It is not a reduction of the Central government's capital expenditure. It is an attempt to push the state's own expenditure in the direction of infrastructure and capital spending... This is part of the 1% extra fiscal deficit.

**ANIL SASI:** On the retrospective tax amendment, we gathered that the decision to move on it was taken after the two arbitration awards (Vodafone, Cairn) came in. But why wait for the conclusion of an arbitration process to start something that is perhaps right?

I would say this: until you lose the arbitration award it is not even clear that you have done something that you shouldn't do. Hypothetically, if the arbitration award had said that Vodafone has to pay, then it is really good for us to give up taxpayers' money without even that attempt to see if it's actually, judicially or arbitrarily, determined that they were right in making that claim. Why should we give up that claim? It is public money. That, I think, was the logic.

**LIZ MATHEW:** We keep hearing about legacy issues from ministers and

**officials. What exactly are the economic legacy issues for the government now?**

I don't think at this point I would like to separate legacy and non-legacy issues. The government of the day tackles all the issues that are with us today.

**SANDEEP SINGH:** While you are allocating funds for the poor, what are you planning on doing for the middle segment, which is responsible for creating demand?

The revival of economic activity will bring a considerable amount of demand in its wake. There are people who think that demand should be stimulated... The problem with stimulus in a vibrant democracy is that it is easier to start a spending programme than to stop it, and then you may lead yourself into a situation where you are spending where you don't need to spend. So it is a calibration that is quite difficult to pull off. I think demand is reviving because economic activity is reviving. Already you see sectors where the demand outstrips the supply, such as the auto sector... So demand is being considerably revived — more for goods, a little less for services. Shortage of demand for services is not so much a function of the economy, it is a function of the health situation. So as and when mask mandates and closure of service establishments begin to recede with increased vaccination, the demand will come back. A lot of sections that have spending power are not necessarily left impoverished in the pandemic... As the health situation improves, one can expect fairly good recovery... The indirect tax numbers, which are a reflection of the demand, are looking healthy. The GST, excise, customs, they are looking better than I might have guessed in the middle of the second wave. I think we are pulling out of the worst of the situation quite fast.



**PRANAV MUKUL:** One of the measures announced as part of the telecom reforms was that the government would be able to take payment of statutory dues in equity. How does that play out? Also, on the one hand the government is trying to monetise its assets and on the other you are talking a stake in a company, when you already have a State-owned enterprise.

This is a very context-specific measure. First of all, there are no other sectors where you would find non-tax dues of this magnitude. These are not tax dues. This is a non-tax levy of the government. It is extremely unusual for this magnitude of non-tax levies to affect the existence or survival of an enterprise in any other sector.

Secondly, there is a history of disputes, which have been decided by the courts in a particular way. So it is not as if there was clarity on the amount of these dues over the period in which these dues have accumulated. So in a sense there is an element of uncertainty which was present, which was judicially determined quite recently, which provides a large liability, which may not have been contemplated, rightly or wrongly, by the enterprises there.

Thirdly, it's an infrastructure sector where the presence of competition is vital. So it is not unprecedented for governments to intervene in the survival of private sector enterprises in situations where the disappearance would affect levels of competition. For example, the US government gave Chrysler a bail out in 1979 because they didn't want only Ford and General Motors to be the car manufacturers in the US... In India also we have several instances, starting from Satyam, where innocent bystanders could get affected by a situation. We have chosen to take a decision that balances public interest in many dimensions. It is not necessarily a precedent that will be done to other

“As a short-term palliative (to help poor post Covid), we have used food etc... Govt is focused on doing things that are feasible. When we come out of this emergency-like state, we will be able to do more

enterprises. The circumstances of each case may be different. This is a very peculiar circumstance, where the preservation of competition and the protection of huge amounts of government dues were best served by this particular mode of operation... So this is an attempt to protect the telecom sector, create a vibrant telecom sector for the future, while also preserving the ability to collect government's dues.

**PRASANTA SAHU:** What is your assessment of the revenue situation?

It is looking better than we had anticipated a few months ago, both on the direct side and indirect tax side. Year-on-year it is up 15%, and not 36%, which is the Budget estimate. We want it to be 36%... This much I will say, it is not because of curbs on capital expenditure... So yes, the situation on the revenue side is looking good.

**P VAIIDYANATHAN IYER:** The pandemic has worsened inequalities, globally and in India. How do you look at it in terms of ensuring government benefits reach the poor? Is it just in terms of food grains or much more substantial?

The inequality has two elements to it — the bottom end and top end. I am looking more at the worsening of the bottom end rather than the enrichment of the top end. As a short-term palliative, we have used the food and these immediate emergency measures. So we are not completely out of the woods in terms of saying we have seen the end of the pandemic. In the short term, the government machinery has limitations on what it can do... What we are likely to see, as we come out of this situation, are a lot of programmes that are targeted to help the poor — so you will see a big thrust on drinking water and sanitation, urban and rural housing. So these are ways in which inequalities are addressed, not necessarily only through income transfers. Some of those programmes are announced and in operation, some more are likely to come. These are all means by which you would improve the lot of the weakest within the capacity constraints of the government machinery... The government is focused on doing things that are feasible and will actually reach the targeted groups. I am not saying we have all the answers. We have some answers but we may need to do better. You will see more efforts as we come out of this so-called emergency-like situation that we have been in for a year and a half. As we get to a more normal situation, we will be able to do a little more.

At the top end, the government has already reversed the policy of capital gains being tax free, which is an important step

on inequality. Internationally, asset price inflation is the main cause of inequality at the top end. Of course, there is a grandfathering of gains up to 2018. But gains accruing after that are now taxable. Progressivity in tax rates has also increased in the last few years in the individual income taxes.

**P VAIIDYANATHAN IYER:** Last 3 months have seen a barrage of measures and many of them are different from the government's stated position or action so far — be it Bad Banks or retrospective tax. What has led to this change?

It's not in a short span, it's over a year and a half. I would connect this in a continuum starting from May 2020's Atmanirbhar reform and if you see, all of them have been in one direction... It's part of consistent efforts to get to an Atmanirbhar Bharat... It is in a broad sense towards reviving India's capabilities as an economy. I think it is a carry-forward from the Budget. There were some interruptions due to Covid second wave, but we are returning to longer-term priorities.

**SUNNY VERMA:** Privatisation was a change that was introduced in the Budget. Where are we on that front?

You would have seen that the bids for Air India have been received. A lot of work had to go into that... The fact that we have received two bids is a good sign and we are quite hopeful that we will see success there. Others are to follow. LIC is a stakes sale, not privatisation. That is an advanced stage of privatisation. It's a classic corporation. It's not a company under the Companies Act. So even its accounting methodology, standards, everything was different. A lot of progress has been made on LIC.

**AASHISH ARYAN:** A four-year moratorium on AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue) and SUC (Spectrum Usage Charge) payments was announced in the telecom reforms. For 2021, the budgeted estimates were Rs 53,988 crore. It looks like telecom companies will opt for this. So this goes out of the estimates for the next four years. How much hit would the government take?

We will have to see how many companies opt for the moratorium. It is NPV (net present value)-protected at its own internal rate of return. Some of those rates of interest are higher than today's borrowing rates. So not everyone would automatically opt for the moratorium. The offer is open to all. We have to manage the cash flows. But hopefully, if we get better spectrum receipts because of a healthier spectrum market; we will see some offset there.



TOPOF THE  
WORLD

Lava shoots up after the eruption of a volcano on the Canary Island of La Palma. *Reuters*

## CANARY ISLANDS

## Lava shoots up from volcano on La Palma

A VOLCANO erupted on the Spanish Canary Island of La Palma on Sunday, sending jets of lava and a plume of smoke and ash into the air from the Cumbre Vieja national park in the south of the island. Authorities had begun evacuating the infirm and some farm animals from the surrounding villages before the eruption at 3.15 pm on a wooded slope in the sparsely populated Cabeza de Vaca area, according to the islands' government. Immediately after the eruption, the municipality urged residents in a statement to "exercise extreme caution", and stay away from the area and off the roads. **REUTERS**

## PAKISTAN

## Policeman escorting polio team killed

GUNMEN ON a motorcycle Sunday shot dead a police constable guarding polio vaccination workers in rural north-west Pakistan, police said. Senior officer Khalid Suhail said the attack happened in the village of Dhal Behzadi about 75 kilometres south of Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Members of the vaccination team were unhurt, he said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the assault. The attack came on the third day of a five-day polio vaccination drive across the province. **AP**

## WEST ASIA

## Israel captures last 2 escaped Palestinians

ISRAELI FORCES on Sunday caught the last two of six Palestinians who tunneled out of a maximum security Israeli jail nearly two weeks ago, in an escape that embarrassed Israel's security establishment but delighted Palestinians. The two members of the Islamic Jihad group were apprehended before dawn from a house in the Palestinian city of Jenin in the occupied West Bank, Israeli Police Commissioner Yaakov Shabtai said. **REUTERS**

## Australia: France knew of 'grave' submarine concerns

ROD MCGUIRK

CANBERRA, SEPTEMBER 19

FRANCE WOULD have known Australia had "deep and grave concerns" that a submarine fleet the French were building would not meet Australian needs, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Sunday after the contract's cancellation set off a diplomatic crisis.

France accused Australia of concealing its intentions to back out of the 90 billion Australian dollar (\$66 billion) contract for French majority state-owned Naval Group to build 12 conventional diesel-electric submarines.

US President Joe Biden revealed last week a new alliance including Australia and Britain that would deliver an Australian fleet of at least eight nuclear-powered submarines.

Morrison blamed the switch on a deteriorating strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific. He has not specifically referred to China's massive military buildup, which has gained pace in recent years.

"The capability that the Attack class submarines were going to provide was not what Australia needed to protect our sovereign interests," Morrison said.

"They would have had every reason to know that we have deep and grave concerns that the capability being delivered by the Attack class submarine was not going to meet our strategic interests and we have made very clear



Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison

that we would be making a decision based on our strategic national interest," he added, referring to the French government.

France responded to the contract cancellation, which Morrison has said will cost his government at least A\$2.4 billion (\$1.7 billion), by recalling its ambassadors from Australia and the US.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian denounced Saturday what he called the "duplicité, disdain and lies" surrounding the sudden end of the contract and said France was now questioning the strength of the alliance.

China has denounced the sharing of such US and British nuclear technology as irresponsible.

France won the contract in 2016 over offers from Germany and Japan. The Shortfin Barracuda was to be a nuclear submarine design adapted to be powered by diesel on the surface and battery underwater, Japan was particularly disappointed because then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott had promised the close defense ally the contract before he was deposed by his own party in 2015. **AP**



A SpaceX capsule carrying four people parachutes into the Atlantic Ocean on Saturday. *SpaceX via AP*

## Trailblazing tourist trip to orbit ends with splashdown

MARCIA DUNN

CAPE CANAVERAL, SEPT 19

FOUR SPACE tourists safely ended their trailblazing trip to orbit Saturday with a splashdown in the Atlantic off the Florida coast.

Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the ocean just before sunset, not far from where their chartered flight began three days earlier.

The all-amateur crew was the first to circle the world without a professional astronaut.

The billionaire who paid undisclosed millions for the trip and his three guests wanted to

show that ordinary people could blast into orbit by themselves, and SpaceX founder Elon Musk took them on as the company's first rocket-riding tourists.

"Your mission has shown the world that space is for all of us," SpaceX Mission Control radioed.

"It was a heck of a ride for us ... just getting started," replied trip sponsor Jared Isaacman, referring to the growing number of private flights on the horizon.

SpaceX's fully automated Dragon capsule reached an unusually high altitude of 585 kilometres after Wednesday night's liftoff. Surpassing the International Space Station by

160 km, the passengers savored views of Earth through a big bubble-shaped window added to the top of the capsule.

The four streaked back through the atmosphere early Saturday evening, the first space travelers to end their flight in the Atlantic since Apollo 9 in 1969.

Within a few minutes, a pair of SpaceX boats pulled up alongside the bobbing capsule. When the capsule's hatch was opened on the recovery ship, health care worker Hayley Arceneaux was the first one out, flashing a big smile and thumbs up. All appeared well and happy. **AP**

## Constitution Day in Nepal sees major protests

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

KATHMANDU, SEPTEMBER 19

NEPAL OBSERVED its seventh Constitution Day with subdued official ceremonies amid growing protests and calls from some quarters for major constitutional amendments, and from others for a return to the constitution of 1991 which allowed for a constitutional monarchy.

A major procession in Kathmandu was taken out by those who demanded that the 1991 constitution be restored. Protesters marched with the national flag and pictures of former King Gyanendra and Queen Komal. They also burnt the current constitution.

Another group — Brihat Nagarik Samaj — demanded major amendments to the present constitution to ensure that the identity and rights of different ethnic groups are better protected.

The government also came in for widespread criticism over those it chose to honour with awards, with some prominent figures refusing to accept them.

Led by senior Nepali Congress leader and former Kathmandu mayor P. L. Singh, half a dozen journalists also refused to accept awards, with some saying that there was no transparent method applied to the selection of the awardees.

P. L. Singh, the man who liaised with the international community during the movement for democracy in 1990, also said: "I refuse to accept this medal as I have not so far accepted the current constitution that was arbitrarily imposed upon the country."

## Pro-Putin party poised to win Russian election following Navalny clampdown

GABRIELLE

TÉTRAULT-FARBER

&amp; TOM BALMFORTH

MOSCOW, SEPTEMBER 19

RUSSIANS VOTED on Sunday in the final stretch of a three-day parliamentary election that the ruling party is expected to win emphatically after a crackdown that crushed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's movement and barred opponents from the ballot.

The expected win by the ruling United Russia party will provide a major boost to Vladimir Putin, who has been in power as either president or prime minister since 1999.

Allies of Navalny, who is serv-

## Important election for Putin

THIS WILL be the last

national election in

Russia before the 2024

presidential election,

and having the Duma

filled with his party members

will be a major part of President

Vladimir Putin's efforts at con-

solidating his grip on power by

the time his term ends. He has

already used his party's major-

ity in the legislature to amend

EXPLAINED

the constitution to allow him to run for two more terms as president after 2024. Victory in the election to the Duma,

despite reports of irregularities, is also likely to be used by Putin as proof of public support for him even as critics inside and outside Russia raise concerns over falling living standards and rising authoritarianism.

ing a jail sentence for parole violations he denies, are encouraging tactical voting against United

Russia, that amounts to supporting the candidate most likely to defeat the ruling party in a given

## HK's first 'patriots-only' election kicks off

SARA CHENG &amp; ALUN JOHN

HONG KONG, SEPTEMBER 19

FEWER THAN 5,000 Hong Kong people from mostly pro-establishment circles began voting on Sunday for candidates to an election committee, vetted as loyal to Beijing, who will pick the city's next China-backed leader and some of its legislature.

Pro-democracy candidates are nearly absent from Hong Kong's first election since Beijing overhauled the city's electoral system to ensure that "only patriots" rule China's freest city.

"The whole objective of improving the electoral system is to ensure patriots administer Hong Kong," Carrie Lam, Hong Kong's chief executive, said on Sunday.



During a protest in Hong Kong on Sunday. *AP*

"I doubt very much that another government or country will allow the public election to their local legislature of people whose mission is to undermine the national interest or national security."

The election committee will select 40 seats in the revamped Legislative Council in Dec, and choose a chief executive in March.

Police have ramped up security across the city, with local me-

dia reporting 6,000 officers are expected to be deployed to ensure a smooth vote, in which about 4,900 people are expected to cast ballots.

Changes to the political system are the latest in a string of moves — including a national security law that punishes anything Beijing deems as subversion, secession, terrorism or collusion with foreign forces — that have placed the international financial hub on an authoritarian path.

Most prominent democratic activists and politicians are now in jail or have fled abroad.

China's rubber-stamp parliament in May changed Hong Kong's electoral system, reducing democratic representation in institutions and introducing the vetting mechanism for election candidates and winners. **REUTERS**

that he called the vote the same weekend Afghanistan fell to the Taliban, when Canadian troops were struggling to evacuate Canadians as well as Afghans who had assisted their forces.

Trudeau has said that he needs to replace his plurality in the House of Commons with a majority to deal with the remainder of the pandemic and the recovery that will follow — although he avoids explicitly saying "majority."

The Liberal Party's political calculation was that it was best to strike while Canadians still held favourable views about how Trudeau handled pandemic issues, particularly income supports and buying vaccines. **NYT**

boarded his campaign bus. Trudeau has many achievements since 2015 to point to. His government has introduced carbon pricing and other climate measures, legalised cannabis, increased spending for Indigenous issues and made 1,500 models of military-style rifles illegal. A new plan will provide day care for 10 Canadian dollars a day per child.

But as Election Day nears, many Canadians are still asking why Trudeau is holding a vote now, two years ahead of schedule, with Covid infections on the rise, taxing hospitals and prompting renewed pandemic restrictions in some provinces or delaying their lifting in others. Also criticised was



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at a campaign event in Quebec City. Voting will take place on Monday. *Reuters*

for the nation's good — of which the snap election being held Monday is the most recent example. They also have had rich material to attack him on over controversies involving a contract for a charity close to his family, and a finding that he broke ethics laws by pressing a minister to help a large Quebec company avoid

criminal sanctions.

And for every accomplishment Trudeau cites, his opponents can point to unfulfilled pledges.

One rally in Ontario where protesters significantly outnumbered the police was shut down over safety concerns, and at another in the same province, the prime minister was pelted with gravel as he

## UKRAINE

## THOUSANDS MARCH FOR LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

Thousands of people including soldiers and diplomats marched peacefully through the Ukrainian capital on Sunday in an annual gay pride parade despite some opposition to an event called off last year because of the Covid pandemic. Organisers said about 7,000 attended the Equality March this year.



## Taliban-run Kabul municipality tells female workers to stay at home

Jalalabad: Another blast targets Taliban

KATHY GANNON

KABUL, SEPTEMBER 19

FEMALE EMPLOYEES in the Kabul city government have been told to stay home, with work only allowed for those who cannot be replaced by men, the interim mayor of Afghanistan's capital said Sunday, detailing the latest restrictions on women by the new Taliban rulers.

Witnesses, meanwhile, said an explosion targeted a Taliban vehicle in the eastern provincial city of Jalalabad, and hospital officials said five people were killed in the second such deadly blast in as many days in the Islamic State stronghold.

The decision to prevent most female city workers from returning to their jobs is another sign that the Taliban, who overran Kabul last month, are enforcing their harsh interpretation of Islam despite initial promises by some that they would be tolerant and inclusive. In their previous rule in the 1990s, the Taliban had barred girls and women from schools, jobs and public life.

In recent days, the new Taliban government issued several decrees rolling back the rights of girls and women. It told female middle- and high-school students that they could not return to school for the time being, while boys in those grades resumed studies this weekend. Female university students were informed that studies would take place in gender-segregated settings from now on, and that they must abide by a strict Islamic dress code.

On Friday, the Taliban shut down the Women's Affairs Ministry, replacing it with a ministry for the "propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice" and tasked with enforcing Islamic law.

On Sunday, just over a dozen women staged a protest outside the ministry, holding up signs call-



Afghan women participate in a demonstration in Kabul on Sunday. *AP*

## PAK CLERIC BOOKED AFTER TALIBAN FLAGS HOISTED AT WOMEN'S SEMINARY

Islamabad: Pakistan police have registered a case against a prominent cleric and several others after the flags of the Afghan Taliban were found hoisted on the top of a women's seminary here run by him, according to a report on Sunday. The flags were spotted on the rooftop of the Jamia Hafsa, a women's madrasa in the capital, on Saturday, *Dawn* newspaper reported. A case was registered against Maulana Abdul Aziz — who is the cleric of the Lal Masjid — and his collaborators, as well as seminary students under the Anti-Terrorism Act and different sections of the Pakistan Penal Code, the report said. **PTI**

ing for the participation of women in public life. "A society in which women are not active is (sic) dead society," one sign read.

The protest lasted for about 10 minutes. After a short verbal confrontation with a man, the women got into cars and left, as Taliban in two cars observed from nearby. Over the past months, Taliban fighters had broken up several women's protests by force. **AP**

## First tied to ISIS, then to US: Family in drone strike tarnished twice

MATTHIEU AIKINS

&amp; ALISSA J RUBIN

KABUL, SEPTEMBER 19

THE PENTAGON'S admission of having made a "tragic mistake" in the killing of an Afghan aid worker, and seven children from his extended family in a drone strike, added one more incident to the long, grievous list of US military mistakes in Afghanistan.

But for the Afghan family it devastated, and for the co-workers of the targeted man, Zemari Ahmadi, the American apology did nothing to ease their sense of vulnerability in the new Taliban order. If anything, their fears and feelings of exposure have only increased.

Emal Ahmadi, the brother of Zemari Ahmadi, described his family as having been tarnished twice over: first by being suspected by the US of being linked to the Islamic State in Khorasan, a branch of the Islamic State group that is active in Afghanistan and is an enemy of the Taliban.

And second because it has now been revealed that his brother worked for an American aid organisation — a fact that only became widely known after the drone strike.

"There's a big threat against us, now that everyone knows that he was working for the Americans," Emal Ahmadi said. "But we had no choice but to tell the media, so that the world would believe" that the family was not connected to the Islamic State group, he said.

The Pentagon launched the strike from a Reaper drone on Aug 29, barely 48 hours before the last US soldier withdrew from Afghanistan. Before the attack, the US military had been tracking a vehicle believed to be connected to the Islamic State group and whose driver was



Emal Ahmadi is the brother of Zemari Ahmadi, who was killed in a drone strike last month along with nine family members. *NYT*

thought to be preparing a bomb.

In fact, the car belonged to Zemari Ahmadi, an aid worker, who was going about his daily work for a Pasadena, California-based food charity. When he returned home, the missile struck, killing 10 people, seven of them children.

That the Americans tied this target to the Islamic State group posed a serious threat to family members and close associates because the Taliban treat the Islamic State group as mortal enemies and have been in competition with them for fighters and influence in Afghanistan for the past three years. So the Ahmadi family was eager to erase any thought that they might be connected to the extremist group.

While the United States is no longer seen as a battlefield enemy of the Taliban in the way that it was before the militants effectively took over the Afghan government on Aug 15, the Taliban still view any American nonprofit groups operating in the country with deep suspicion.

In trying to clear the family name of connections to ISIS, it was revealed that Nutrition and Education International, Ahmadi's employer, was preparing the paperwork to make it possible for him to emigrate to the US. **NYT**

## SNAP POLLS MEANT AS SHOW OF STRENGTH HAS ALLOWED OPPONENTS TO HIGHLIGHT HIS WEAK POINTS

## Trudeau seeks fresh start, but many voters see a power grab

IAN AUSTEN

BURNABY, SEPTEMBER 19

OUTSIDE A TV studio in a Vancouver, British Columbia, suburb where Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada was recording an interview days before the country's election, a man shouted insults, mostly obscene, about Trudeau and his family while blasting Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It" from a stereo on a cart.

Heckling is something Trudeau has always faced, but this time the attacks have new bite. After six years in office, a prime minister who promised

"sunny ways" and presented himself as a new face is now the political establishment, with a track record and missteps for opponents to criticise. Even if the Liberal Party clings to its hold on Parliament, as observers expect, this bruising election campaign has done him no favours.

Ben Chin, the prime minister's senior adviser, said that no politician could have sustained Trudeau's initial popularity.

"If you're in power for six years or five years, you're going to have more baggage," Chin said.

For much of his time in office, opposition party leaders have accused Trudeau of putting his personal and political interests be-

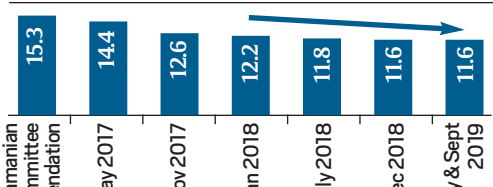


# 14 ECONOMY

## TAXATION WATCH GOODS & SERVICES TAX

### Course correction mode: Council looks to fix duty structure, boost revenues

#### WEIGHTED AVERAGE (EFFECTIVE) GST RATE



Note: Figures in %; source: Staff calculations based on data from CBIC and minutes of GST Council meetings, RBI report, Sept 2019

#### AANCHAL MAGAZINE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

TAKING NOTE of the revenue trend dipping below the revenue neutral rate levels, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council will now be looking at a series of measures including rate rationalisations to correct the inverted duty structure and to take steps to augment revenues. The move comes after four years of the rollout of the indirect tax regime, with the acknowledgement that a series of rate cuts across these years and spanning over 500 items has resulted in a strain on

Lucknow on Friday, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman after the meeting said that the revenue neutral rate has fallen to 11.6 per cent from 15.5 per cent.

“The Revenue Neutral Rate of 15.5 per cent coming down to 11.6 per cent is because of course, the Council in its wisdom probably over the years had reduced the rate of many many items and not just the reduction but the resultant refund due to the inversion have

#### EXPLAINED

resulted, net, in the collection coming down from the revenue neutral levels. As a result we feel that the overall collection has come down. We also feel why it has come down. But if we all put together we can all see that we are far below the revenue neutral rate,” she said.

Two GoMs will be formed to look at inverted duty structure and compliance measures through e-way bills, composition schemes.

A September 2019 report by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had noted that the rationalisation of rates by the GST Council has brought down the effective weighted average GST rate from 14.4 per cent at the time of inception to 11.6 per cent. It, however, said that enhanced buoyancy has been achieved by widening the tax base and removing distortions.

The GST Council had, within one year of the July 2017 rollout of GST, reduced rates for every four items. The rate cuts on over 350 items out of total 1,211 items in the five broad categories of zero, 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent under GST were estimated to have resulted in a revenue loss of about Rs 70,000 crore in a year.

At the time of fitment of goods and services in the various GST slabs in May 2017, the government had said about 7 per cent of the total 1,211 items were exempted, 14 per cent of the items were kept in the 5 per cent tax slab, 17 per cent were in the 12 per cent tax slab. About 43 per cent of items were in 18 per cent tax slab, while only 19 per cent were in the 28 per cent tax slab. Now, only about 3 per cent of the total 1,211 items remain in the peak 28 per cent slab.

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

## KOCHI-LAKSHADWEEP ISLANDS SUBMARINE OPTICAL FIBRE CONNECTIVITY

# Sea cable tender bid ‘rigged’: Panel to decide project fate

Domestic cos allege bid conditions rigged to meet tech supported by only 1 firm

#### AASHISH ARYAN

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

THE EMPOWERED Technology Group (ETG), led by the Principal Scientific Advisor to the government, is likely to meet soon to decide on the fate of Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands (KLI) submarine optical fibre connectivity after domestic companies alleged that the bid conditions were “rigged” to meet the technology supported by only one company, sources said.

The ETG, which also has the Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission, the Chairman of Space Commission, the Chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation, the Secretaries of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the Department of Communications and the Department of Science and Technology, was scheduled to meet last week, sources said.

The meeting, however, had to be postponed after the NITI Aayog and the office of the National

**As per Tema, the BSNL bid includes a condition that the technology must be repeater based tech, which is available only with 3 companies across the globe**

Security Advisor sought more clarification the present capabilities of domestic companies, along with the details of the KLI submarine optical fibre connectivity tender.

Domestic companies, under the umbrella of Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (Tepc) and Telecom Equipment Manufacturers Association of India (Tema) had made representations to Neeraj Sinha, the senior advisor for digital communications at NITI Aayog, who sought to know from the two industry bodies the capacities of Indian firms.

In a reply to the emailed representations of the two industry bodies, Sinha had sought to know

the maximum length of submarine optical fibre cable that, so far, has been produced in India by indigenous companies, the total production capacity of the cables, and the time as well as cost required to commission a new plant near the Indian coast line. *The Indian Express* has reviewed a copy of the emailed conversation. In its reply to Sinha, Tema has claimed since the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), which is the executing agency for the KLI project, were insisting that bidders must have at least 10-12 years of experience in manufacturing and laying submarine optical fibre cable, it was impossible for the domestic companies to even think of placing a bid.

The KLI submarine cable connectivity project was approved by the Cabinet in December 2020 with an outlay of Rs 1,072 crore and is expected to be completed by May 2023.

Domestic companies, which manufacturer optical fibre cable and other related equipment, however, have alleged that the bid

conditions were so changed that no international or domestic player, except NEC India, a Japanese company’s Indian subsidiary, could bid in the project.

In an August 31 letter sent to the S Gopalakrishnan, the additional secretary at the Prime Minister’s Office, Tepc claimed that despite objections from the ETG about the capital, operation and maintenance costs of the project, the DoT’s High-Level Committee ignored the suggestions.

According to industry body Tema, the BSNL bid includes a condition that the technology must be repeater based tech, which is available only with three companies across the world.

“The said 3 companies normally work in tandem or, in other words, they work in their own regions i.e. NEC works in Asia whereas the other two companies don’t bid in Asia. Therefore, by adding a single repeater segment, BSNL has ensured that no competitor, either from Indian company or from any other country, could bid in the tender,” Tepc alleged in its August 31 letter to the PMO.

## ‘Electrical gear mkt may grow 12% annually to hit \$72 bn by 2025’

Domestic electrical equipment market is expected to grow at an annual rate of 12 per cent to reach \$72 billion by 2025, said Anil Saboo, president of the Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers’ Association



**INDIA HAS SET AN AMBITIOUS TARGET OF HAVING 175 GW RENEWABLE ENERGY (RE) CAPACITY BY 2022, 450 GW BY 2030**

**Total worth of India’s electrical equipment market stands at \$48-50 bn**

#### TRAJECTORY:

“We are at \$48-50 billion and shall grow at a CAGR of 11 to 12 per cent. So, by 2025 it shall be around \$72 billion,” he said

**Local electrical equipment industry** will play a crucial role in meeting India’s renewable energy targets as well as the overall carbon reduction targets under the Paris agreement

Source: PTI

**Increasing RE capacity** will require new age equipment and local players look towards fulfilling the requirement locally

The industry is bullish that it will be able to garner \$18 billion investment per year to meet the target of 450 GW of RE by 2030

**With increased manufacturing** of equipment, our industry can play a vital role in meeting these targets

## FPIs turn to India amid global headwinds, pump in ₹17K cr

#### ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 19

WITH THE markets remaining buoyant, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) remained net buyers in domestic markets so far in September by investing a net sum of Rs 17,822 crore. FPIs invested Rs 11,287 crore into equities and Rs 5,018 crore in debt segment on a net basis between September 1 and 17, according to data available from National Securities Depository Limited.

FPIs had pulled out Rs 11,308 crore in July and invested Rs 2,083 crore in August. FPIs have invested Rs 62,406 crore in 2021.

VK Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said, “An important trend in FPI investment since July is the increasing inflows into equity and debt. After the Rs 12,308 crore of selling in equity in July, FPIs have been steadily increasing their buying in equity with Rs 2,083 crore buying in August and Rs 11,287 crore up to September 18. Buying



The BSE in Mumbai. File

in debt which began for the first time this year in July continues in September, aided by steady rupee.”

“The regulatory crackdown in China and the consequent huge erosion of investor wealth has made India an attractive investment destination for FPIs. FPIs have been showing interest in segments like hotels and travel since these segments have started to do well. Some profit booking is seen in segments like metals and insurance which had appreciated handsomely,” he said.

US Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell indicated that the

central bank is likely to begin tapering before the end of the year. “Tapering means less of the QE bond purchase programme which has been pursued post the financial crisis. But in case of rate hikes, it is still some distance away and this means that hikes are not imminent as there is still “much ground to cover” before the economy hits full employment,” Care Ratings said in a report.

The markets reacted positively to Powell’s comments, sending major stock indexes to record highs. “The Fed’s balance sheet is now at nearly \$8.4 trillion, about double where it was in March 2020. The reaction in Indian markets is that this is positive though negative news. The line of reasoning is the following. It is positive news insofar as it indicates a recovery in the global economy especially the USA and the collateral benefits would flow to the EMs,” it said.

If the US Fed starts tapering, there will be less liquidity in the system, and fund managers will start reconsidering their options.

## TOMAR AT G-20 AGRI MEET

# ‘India becoming destination for healthy foods’

#### ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

INDIA IS becoming the destination country for healthy food items like millets and the government is promoting biofortified varieties to address malnutrition, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Sunday said as he participated in the G-20 agriculture meeting virtually.

Tomar said the United Nations (UN) has accepted India’s proposal and declared 2023 as international year of millets and urged the G-20 nations to support the celebration of the millet year to promote nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

The G20 Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting is one of the ministerial meetings organised as part of the G20 Leaders Summit 2021 to be hosted by Italy in October.

“The Government of India has

emphasised on re-introducing traditional food items including millet, other nutritious cereals, fruits and vegetables, fish, dairy and organic products in the diet of the people. Their production has been phenomenal in India in recent years and India is becoming a destination country for healthy food items,” a statement quoted Tomar having said in his virtual address.

Tomar said biofortified varieties, which are the source of staple diet rich in micro-nutrients, are being promoted to remove malnutrition. About 17 such varieties of different crops have been developed and released for cultivation.

The government has also taken steps to increase the optimal use of water resources, create infrastructure for irrigation, conserve soil fertility with balanced use of fertilizers, and provide connectivity from farms to markets, he added. **WITH PTI**

## e-Shram: Over 1 cr informal workers registered

#### ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

OVER 1 crore unorganised workers have registered themselves at e-Shram portal, the labour ministry said on Sunday.

More than 1 crore unorganised workers registered at e-Shram portal, which is India’s first national database on unorganised workers, the ministry said in a statement. The drive to facilitate registration of migrant workers at e-Shram portal received huge attention since its launch on August 26, 2021, it added.

In almost 24 days, over 1 crore workers have registered at the portal, according to the statement.

This is the first-ever concentrated step towards generating a comprehensive database of unorganised workers from different sectors like construction, apparel manufacturing, fishing, gig and platform work, street vending, domestic work, agriculture and so on.

## BRIEFLY

### Ration card

**New Delhi:** Services related to ration card, such as applying for a new card, updating details and seeding with Aadhaar, will now be available at over 3.7 lakh common services centres.

### Gadkari on airbags

**New Delhi:** Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Sunday said that small cars should also have an adequate number of airbags.

### Harley-Davidson

**New Delhi:** Hero MotoCorp is going full throttle to launch a Harley-Davidson model with retro styling, Hero MotoCorp CFO Niranjana Gupta said. **PTI**

## ‘US trade official called Mastercard ban draconian’

#### REUTERS

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

ASENIOR US trade official privately criticised India’s July decision to ban Mastercard Inc from issuing new cards, calling it a “draconian” move that caused “panic”, according to US government emails seen by Reuters.

The RBI accuses the firms of breaking local data-storage rules.

The ban on Mastercard triggered a flurry of emails between US officials in Washington and India as they discussed next steps with Mastercard, including approaching the RBI, the emails show. “We’ve started hearing from

stakeholders about some pretty draconian measures that the RBI has taken over the past couple days,” Brendan A Lynch, deputy assistant US trade representative for South and Central Asia, wrote on July 16. “It sounds like some others (Amex, Diners) may have been impacted by similar actions recently,” wrote Lynch.

Lynch, spokespeople for the Office of US Trade Representative and the US Embassy in New Delhi did not respond to requests for comment. The RBI did not immediately respond. A Mastercard spokesman told Reuters, “We’ve had very constructive engagements with the Indian and US governments.”

## ‘At meet with Wall St execs, China defends clampdown on tech cos’

**Bengaluru:** China’s top securities regulator defended their crackdown on various industries in a meeting with Wall Street executives, *Bloomberg News* reported.

China Securities Regulatory Commission Vice Chairman Fang Xinghai explained during the meeting that recent actions were taken to strengthen regulations for companies with consumer-facing platforms, and improve data privacy and national security, the report said. The meeting on Thursday included the head of the People’s Bank of China, and executives from Goldman Sachs Group, Citadel and other Wall Street powerhouses. **REUTERS**

## Battle for privacy may reshape the internet

#### BRIAN X CHEN

SAN FRANCISCO, SEPT 19

APPLE INTRODUCED a pop-up window for iPhones in April that asks people for their permission to be tracked by different apps.

Google recently outlined plans to disable a tracking technology in its Chrome web browser.

And Facebook said last month that hundreds of its engineers were working on a new method of showing ads without relying on people’s personal data.

The developments may seem like technical tinkering, but they were connected to something bigger: an intensifying battle over the future of the internet. The struggle has entangled tech titans, upended Madison Avenue and disrupted small businesses. And it heralds a profound shift in how people’s personal information may be used online, with sweeping implications



Apple CEO Tim Cook at the launch of the latest iPhone. Reuters file

for the ways that businesses make money digitally. At the center of the tussle is what has been the internet’s lifeblood: advertising.

More than 20 years ago, the internet drove an upheaval in the advertising industry. It eviscerated newspapers and magazines that had relied on selling classified and print ads, and threatened to de-throne television advertising as the prime way for marketers to reach large audiences.

Instead, brands splashed their ads across websites, with their promotions often tailored to people’s specific interests. In exchange, people were tracked from site to site by technologies such as “cookies,” and their data was used to target them with relevant marketing.

Now that system, which ballooned into a \$350 billion digital ad industry, is being dismantled. Driven by online privacy fears, Apple and Google have started re-

vamping the rules around online data collection. Apple, citing the mantra of privacy, has rolled out tools that block marketers from tracking people. Google, which depends on digital ads, is trying to have it both ways by reinventing the system so it can continue aiming ads at people without exploiting access to their personal data.

Jeff Green, CEO of the Trade Desk, an ad-technology company in California, which works with major ad agencies, said: “The internet is answering a question that it’s been wrestling with for decades, which is: How is the internet going to pay for itself?” The fallout may hurt brands that relied on targeted ads. It may also initially hurt tech giants like Facebook — but not for long. Instead, businesses that can no longer track people but still need to advertise are likely to spend more with the largest tech platforms, which still have the most data. **NYT**



# Kohli's unburdening continues, this IPL to be his last as RCB captain

SANDIP G  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

THE TWO-MONTH stint in UAE will be the last for Virat Kohli as a T20 captain. Two days after he announced his decision to quit as his country's T20 captain after the World Cup, he has decided to renounce captaining his franchise side, Royal Challengers Bangalore, post this edition of the Indian Premier League.

In a 2.9-minute video posted on the RCB Twitter handle, he said, with a crisp smile on his face: "This will be my last leg in the IPL as captain of the RCB. I will continue to be an RCB player till I play my last IPL game. It was something that was on my mind for a while, as I had recently announced stepping down from T20 captaincy (of the country) to manage my workload."

Easing the workload, he felt, would keep him fresh for the challenges in what could be the final stretch of a glorious career.

"I want to be able to be committed to the responsibilities that I am fulfilling and I felt I needed the space to be fresh, to regroup and be absolutely clear in how I want to move forward. This is just a little halt, it's not the

end of the journey," he said.

It would end a rather underwhelming stint as Bangalore skipper, unless of course he could salvage the season by winning the trophy and leaving on a high.

But otherwise, his eight-year tenure was of cringing underachieving, despite having some of the biggest names in this format like AB de Villiers and Chris Gayle.

He could partly blame an imbalanced squad, unfortunate injuries and untimely loss of form. But he can't wash his hands off the abysmal 60-65 win-loss record, irrespective of all the conspiring circumstances.

The closest he came to landing the trophy was in 2016, driven by himself with staggering 973 runs, but it eluded him. They reached two play-offs, in 2015 and 2020, but his captaincy drew flak.

Partly, the real reason Kohli the leader is not as appreciated as Kohli the batsman, despite being the most successful Test and T20 captain of his country, stems from his middling record as RCB's captain. People tend to twin the tales, and read them as the same narrative. The Rohit Sharma-versus-Kohli captaincy debates begin from IPL.

But then both India and RCB need the outer limits of Kohli the insuperable bats-



Despite having some of the biggest names in T20 cricket in the side, Virat Kohli has not been able to lead RCB to an IPL title yet.

**"This will be my last leg in the IPL as captain of the RCB. I will continue to be an RCB player till I play my last IPL game. It was something that was on my mind for a while, as I had recently announced stepping down from T20 captaincy (of the country) to manage my workload."**

VIRAT KOHLI

man, than Kohli, the uber-aggro skipper. Even without being a captain, Kohli would continue to bring intensity and aggression onto the field. Maybe, he could turn out to be more intense than ever before, as if a heavy millstone is off his neck. It could liberate him. It could elevate his batsmanship to hitherto untouched peaks, beyond the lofty peaks that he himself had scaled.

**Emotional investment**

While forsaking captaincy of his country alone would not have mattered much in terms of unburdening, there is relatively less pressure leading your country in a T20 game,

unless it's the World Cup, leaving T20 skipper-ship altogether infuses more sense and purpose. The pressure, the emotional investment and rigours, of leading the franchise is significantly higher than leading the country. There is a lot more at stake, especially for an aspirational club like RCB, who are so desperate for landing the trophy.

And unlike the World Cup that knocks once in four years, the IPL is an annual affair. Moreover, he not only has to lead the side for two months of the Indian summer, but would be constantly involved in auctions, pre-season, commercials and camps. And, of course, the nerve-wracking scrutiny.

Those are distractions, or negativity, that Kohli wants to steer clear off in his endeavour to enhance his batsmanship. The last two years have been dismayed by his dizzying standards—he hasn't registered a hundred for nearly two years.

If he cannot reacquaint with his own heavy-scoring ways sooner, he perhaps never would. By calling time on his T20 captaincy, he's trying to buy time to win back the lost form. It could turn out to be a win-win for the country, franchise side, and importantly Kohli himself. As he said, a halt, a necessary one, before a long journey. .

# CSK off to a flying restart

As IPL resumes following break, Chennai beat Mumbai by 20 runs after Gaikwad's 88 n.o. steadies ship



Fast bowler Josh Hazlewood celebrates dismissing Mumbai Indians' stand-in skipper Kieron Pollard in Dubai on Sunday. [iplt20.com](#)

**SYNOPSIS:** Gaikwad's classy batting and Chahar's Powerplay bowling win it for CSK, as MI miss Rohit.

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY  
SEPTEMBER 19

FOR THE first 10 overs, the game followed a predictable script before it changed and shifted towards Chennai Super Kings' direction. Ruturaj Gaikwad was central to the change, through his classy batting. Then, Deepak Chahar lived up to his Powerplay reputation, taking a couple of crucial wickets, mixing brain with brawn.

Without Rohit Sharma at the top and Hardik Pandya at the death, Mumbai Indians missed the winning mojo. 156/6 posted by CSK wasn't a winning total. But the degree of difficulty is higher for the batsmen in Dubai, with a bigger outfield and help for the seamers, compared to the venues in India. And once MS Dhoni gets a fighting total, he is a master of defending it. CSK won by 20 runs, restricting MI to 136/8 in 20 overs.

**Gaikwad's classy batting**

Gaikwad's introduction to international cricket a couple months ago in Sri Lanka wasn't a resounding success.

He made 21 and 14 in the two T20Is he played. But even during those two knocks, his talent was unmissable, a reason why the young opener is rated so highly in the CSK camp. When wickets were falling around him in the beginning, Gaikwad showed composure. He was ready to weather the storm and waited for the spinners to come. Quinton de Kock dropped him on 19 off Rahul Chahar, his only blemish. He beautifully paced his innings. Kieron Pollard's tactical error played to his advantage, but we would come to that later.

Pollard, the stand-in MI captain had the advantage of losing the toss on an unknown

POINTS TABLE					
	M	W	L	NRR	Pts
CSK	8	6	2	+1.223	12
DC	8	6	2	+0.547	12
RCB	7	5	2	-0.171	10
MI	8	4	4	-0.071	8
RR	7	3	4	-0.190	6
PBKS	8	3	5	-0.368	6
KKR	7	2	5	-0.494	4
SRH	7	1	6	-0.623	2

surface, fresh in nature and greenish in look. Dhoni chose to bat first but CSK were soon on the back foot. The ball swung a touch and seamed. But to start with, it also got stuck on the pitch, which was a little two-paced.

The undercooked CSK batsmen, bereft of game time coming into the second phase of the IPL, expectedly found it difficult. Faf du Plessis sliced a shortish Trent Boult delivery to wide gully in the first over. Moeen Ali toe-ended another short ball from Adam Milne because it arrived late.

A quicker one from Milne landed on Ambati Rayudu's forearm, forcing him to retire hurt. Through an agricultural four off Boult followed by his dismissal next ball, Suresh Raina never looked comfortable and Dhoni unerringly picked the deep square leg fielder, attempting to pull Milne.

After 10 overs, CSK were 44/4 when Gaikwad rose to the challenge. The pitch offered no assistance to the spinners. Chahar, being a leggie, still managed to push the odd one through, but Krunal Pandya's finger-spin was easy picking for Gaikwad.

A six and a couple of fours - one by Ravindra Jadeja - triggered an upward surge. His half-century came with a four against Pollard. The sweep off Jasprit Bumrah for a six in the final ball of the innings oozed audacity, easily the shot of the match.



CSK opener Ruturaj Gaikwad top scored with 88 off 58 balls. [iplt20.com](#)

Gaikwad's 88 not out off 58 balls was a match-winning effort. His 81-run fifth wicket partnership with Jadeja (64 balls) gave Dwayne Bravo the licence to swing at the death - 23 off eight balls.

**Chahar's Powerplay bowling**

He got the better of de Kock with late swing, the ball coming back and trapping the left-hander plumb in front, confirmed by DRS. The debutant Anmolpreet Singh's scalp was an excellent piece of cricket. The previous delivery was short and fast, hitting the batsman on the shoulder. A knuckleball came next, with Singh playing early and the off stump getting disturbed.

To defend the total, CSK needed to take wickets in Powerplay. They took three - Shardul Thakur seeing off Suryakumar Yadav. Chahar finished his first spell with the

**After 10 overs, CSK were 44/4 when Gaikwad rose to the challenge. The pitch offered no assistance to the spinners. Chahar, being a leggie, still managed to push the odd one through, but Krunal Pandya's finger-spin was easy picking for Gaikwad.**

figures of 3-0-9-2. Towards the end, the medium pacer suffered a cramp and his team surely would be concerned.

Dhoni's captaincy was superb. Ishan Kishan's wicket was a tactical masterstroke. Raina at short cover and Bravo bowling a touch slower outside the off stump was the plan, knowing Kishan's inclination to play on the up. The wicketkeeper-batsman fell into the trap. Bringing back Josh Hazlewood after Jadeja looked innocuous in his first over was another example. Hazlewood, expensive in his first spell, trapped Pollard LBW in the first ball of his second spell.

**MI miss Rohit**

A left knee "discomfort" that surfaced during the Oval Test, kept Rohit out of this game. MI coach Mahela Jayawardene spoke about "precaution". The defending champions missed Rohit's batting and captaincy. When they had the chance to grab the game by the lapels, Pollard let it drift. He gave Bumrah only one over upfront and didn't bring him back readily, when the Gaikwad-Jadeja partnership was getting into the groove.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Chennai Super Kings: 156 for 6 in 20 overs (R Gaikwad 88 not out, R Jadeja 26, D Bravo 23; A Milne 2/21, J Bumrah 2/33, T Boult 2/35) beat Mumbai Indians: 136 for 8 in 20 overs. (S Tiwary 50 not out, Q de Kock 17; D Bravo 3/25, D Chahar 2/19).

## EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER



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

## Raina gets quick relief



Suresh Raina looked uncomfortable during his short stay. [iplt20.com](#)

It was relief that screamed on Suresh Raina's face after he mis-sliced what looked like a jailbreak attempt to escape his six-ball torment. The stroke was hideous (to understate it). Raina just backed away, all three stumps in full view, and just slammed his bat at the ball, in hope that it would somehow miss everything, or like two balls before, brush his edge to the boundary. But this ball was fuller and shaping away from him. He was perhaps

anticipating a short ball. The blind slash ballooned airily into the point's hands, putting an end to his misery.

The previous five balls were Raina-Down-Under throwback, where his old weakness against the short-pitch ball into his body was ruthlessly re-examined. He was hopping and hustling at the crease. He seemed genuinely spooked out, and in the end, it was relief that his mental agony was not prolonged.

## Stunned Boom goes bust

Rarely does a batsman smear Jasprit Bumrah over long-off. Ruturaj Gaikwad accomplished it, without straining a sinew. Bumrah floated a full ball slower ball outside the off-stump, not the floaty, dipping devil that hoodwinked Shaun Marsh, but wide of the off-stumps, giving Gaikwad the room to swing his arms through the line. A neat, fluid swing of the blade and the ball floated into the stands, after alluring the boundary riders for a majority of its journey.

Gaikwad could not believe what he had achieved, as the ball wafted into the stands, he gaped his mouth in disbelief and looked genuinely in trance. For the majority of the innings, his batting looked as if in a trance too. It's not every day that a batsman metes out such treatment to Bumrah.



## Jiving Bravo puts on the dancing shoes

The dancing feet of Dwayne Bravo danced again. The Trinidadian's batting had been quite awry in the last few editions, but this time, he seems to have rediscovered his mojo, the rhythm of his feet, the swirl of his hands, and the rhyme of his batting, as if he was dancing to the tune of soca or reggae in his head. Just the second ball he faced, off 90mph-er Adam Milne, he twinkled out of the crease, the feet gliding towards the ball, then away from it, each stride a measured stanza of athletic finesse, inside-out, his front-knee crouching, back-knee arching, his body beautifully stilled, his arms flexing, the wrists twirling the ball somewhere into the distant Dubai skies. If he can play a few more cameos like this, Chennai won't find it hard to get going at the back end of an innings.



## Works like a charm: Clockwork Yellow

10th over of the MI innings, CSK has been wicketless for close to 4 overs. A partnership is shaping, always a dangerous sign when defending a modest total. Dhoni needs a breakthrough.

Hazlewood has bowled 2 overs, the T20 captain's manual says the strike bowlers can be brought in for one over. Ravindra Jadeja hasn't yet started; he can be trusted to build pressure and force a mistake. What does Dhoni do? None of the two, he throws the ball to Bravo.

On his second ball, he gets Ishan Kishan to drive into the hands of Suresh Raina at short cover.

Jadeja rushes to lift Raina in the air, Bravo is flying around like an airplane with his hands spreads like wings, an expressionless captain walking towards his



excited foot soldiers.

That's so CSK. That's so Dhoni. That's so Bravo. That's so Raina-Jadeja.

That's so nostalgic.



BRIEFLY

Manny to run for presidency

Mannila: Philippine boxing icon and senator Manny Pacquiao says he will run for president in the 2022 elections. Pacquiao accepted the nomination of his PDP-Laban party at its national convention on Sunday, saying that the Filipino people have been waiting for a change of government. "I am a fighter, and I will always be a fighter inside and outside the ring," Pacquiao, 42, said in his speech. "We need government to serve our people with integrity, compassion and transparency," he added. Pacquiao is the president of the PDP-Laban faction led by him and Sen. Aquilino 'Koko' Pimentel III.

Gokulam Kerala, Army Red in quarters

Kolkata: Defending champions Gokulam Kerala FC and Army Red entered the quarterfinals of the 130th Durand Cup football tournament from Group D here on Sunday, beating Assam Rifles 7-2 and Hyderabad FC 2-1 respectively. The Army Red team became the second Services side after Army Green to progress to the tournament's knockout stages. The simultaneous final group fixtures were extremely contrasting in nature. While the game between the Reds and ISL side Hyderabad FC at the Vivekananda Yubabharati Krirangan (VYBK) was tight and cagey in nature, it rained goals at the Kalyani Stadium where Assam Rifles and Gokulam Kerala squared off.

Thapa storms into semis of boxing nat'ls

Bellary: Five-time Asian Championships medalist Shiva Thapa entered the semi-finals of the 5th men's Boxing Nationals with a thrilling win over Ankit Narwal, here on Sunday. The Assam boxer showed great footwork and used all his experience to put pressure on his RSPB opponent with precise punches. Though Thapa faced a stiff challenge, he did not let the momentum slip and completed a 4-1 win in the 63.5kg quarter-final. For RSPB, Sachin and Varinder Singh (60kg) emerged victors in their respective quarter-finals.

PTI & AP

A Noble gesture

After coming on as a 94th-minute substitute only to take a penalty, West Ham midfielder misses to hand Manchester United a 2-1 win in EPL

REUTERS

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 19

WEST HAM United manager David Moyes said it was his decision for substitute Mark Noble to take the missed penalty in the 2-1 defeat by Manchester United in the Premier League on Sunday.

Jesse Lingard snatched all three points against former club West Ham with a vicious 89th-minute strike into the top corner after Cristiano Ronaldo had cancelled out Said Benrahma's opener in the first half.

The visitors had to cling on for the victory and were let off the hook when goalkeeper David de Gea saved the 94th-minute penalty from Noble, who Moyes hauled on from the bench immediately after Luke Shaw had been penalised for handball.

Noble had only missed four of 42 career penalties before Sunday and Moyes said he had no regrets about the decision. "Not at all, Mark Noble is one of the best penalty takers we've got, it was my decision. Sometimes they go your way sometimes they don't but you have to take the decisions," Moyes told a news conference. "I thought we had a really good penalty taker on the bench and if someone else had taken it and missed I'd have been more disappointed had I not taken that decision. That's what happens, decision taking can either be right or wrong."

Moyes said England coach Gareth Southgate's ill-fated decision to bring on Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho to take penalties in the Euro 2020 final shootout defeat to Italy had gone through his mind. Moyes had also considered De Gea's poor record at saving penalties -- the Spaniard had failed to save any of the previous 40 spot-kicks he had faced -- before making the decision.

"It went through my mind quickly and I asked Mark and he said yes," Moyes added. "I felt that because of his record he was most suited. Mark Noble has an incredible record at penalties so I'm thinking Mark has come on, De Gea's not saved many and hopefully this is the answer."

It was the first time De Gea had kept out a penalty since April 2016, having let in the previous 40 spot-kicks he had faced including 11 in the shootout in last season's Europa League final loss to Villarreal.

"It was the last minute, I made the save. Going through my head was 'save the ball'. It's a massive three points for us," De Gea said. "It was a really tough game, both teams had good chances, again a great goal from Jesse.



West Ham United's Mark Noble takes a penalty, which he eventually missed, against Manchester United in a Premier League match on Sunday. Reuters

JINX BROKEN

5 Number of years after which David de Gea saved a penalty for club and country. The last time he saved one was in April 2016. Since then, he conceded 40 consecutive penalties before saving Noble's shot on Sunday.

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
Chelsea	5	4	1	0	11	13
Liverpool	5	4	1	0	11	13
Man Utd	5	4	1	0	9	13
Brighton	5	4	0	1	3	12
Man City	5	3	1	1	10	10

In the dressing room we said the three points were the most important thing."

Lingard redemption

There was also a sense of redemption for Lingard, whose stray pass had given away Young Boys' last-gasp winner in the Champions League on Tuesday. "Mistakes happen in football, you have to overcome those things," said Lingard, who scored nine Premier League goals for West Ham last sea-

son after joining on loan. "I got a brilliant reception. I had a good time here but I have to move on with Man United and do my best," he added.

Both sides showed signs of tiredness after their European exploits, with West Ham winning 2-0 on Thursday in their opening Europa League game away to Dinamo Zagreb.

Moyes's side took the lead when Algerian midfielder Benrahma tried his luck from the edge of the area and his shot flew into the net off the back of Raphael Varane. But the visitors responded strongly and levelled when Ronaldo struck a fourth goal in three games since returning to Manchester United, netting twice against Newcastle United and once in the 2-1 defeat at Young Boys.

The Portuguese had another chance in the second half before Lingard's strike when he was again played in by Portugal team mate Fernandes but Fabianski thwarted the attempt with his legs.

Chelsea beat Tottenham 3-0

Chelsea's dominant second-half performance earned a 3-0 win at Tottenham Hotspur thanks to goals by Thiago Silva, N'Golo Kante and Antonio Rudiger as the Blues moved joint top of the Premier League.

The emphatic scoreline did not look likely in the first half as the hosts shaded it, but Chelsea took complete control after the break to send out an ominous warning in the title race.

Football's loss is athletics' gain as Amlan bags 200m title

ANDREW AMSAN

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

ASSAM SPRINTER Amlan Borgohain won the 200m title with the second-best timing on Indian soil at the Open Nationals, Warangal, on Sunday. But it came at a price. The 23-year-old, who clocked 20.75 seconds, to finish comfortably ahead of Balakumar Nitin (21.06) and Nalabothu Shamugha (21.12), had to give up on his first love, football, before taking up athletics seriously.

"I was getting injured very often while playing football and my mum did not like it. You know how moms are, right?" says Amlan whose 20.75s is also the fifth-best all-time run by an Indian. Troubled by the sight of her son's frequently bandaged ankles, she decided it was time to put her foot down.

"My mom asked me to either switch to a different sport or quit entirely. Playing football wasn't an option anymore. It was a tough decision to make," recalls the Cristiano Ronaldo and Sunil Chhetri "superfan". A contactless sport like running was an easy choice to make, and after his first school meet he realised this new discipline matched the adrenaline kick football gave him.

Just when Amlan was looking for a mentor to help him progress to the next level, he was spotted by James Hillier, the head coach at Reliance Foundation Odisha Athletics High-Performance Centre at Bhubaneswar during a competition in July 2019.

The gamble

The first thing Hillier noticed: "He was a little chubby." But the seasoned English coach, who has mentored the likes of Rio Olympics 400m relay bronze medallist Emily Diamond, saw something special in him. "It is sometimes hard to describe. I just knew there was something special about him. I have been doing this for a long time. His timings were not great but I knew he had potential. I decided to take the gamble," says Hillier.

After further assessment, Hyderabad-based Amlan was inducted into the training centre at Bhubaneswar in early 2020. Amlan, who arrived at the centre with a personal best of 21.89s, has immensely impressed his English coach but Hillier feels there is still a lot of room for improvement.

"He arrived with a 13 percent body fat and now it's seven (the same as his idol Ronaldo's). His muscle mass has also increased. There are no specific areas but I would say we will work on every aspect. I will not give you a number as to how much he can improve because that is like limiting his potential," says the 43-year-old coach.

During his free time, Amlan likes to knock around the football in his room since play-



Amlan Borgohain clocked 20.75 seconds, to win the 200m title. It's the second-fastest timing on Indian soil.

"He (Amlan) arrived with a 13 percent body fat and now it's seven (the same as his idol Ronaldo's). His muscle mass has also increased. There are no specific areas but I would say we will work on every aspect. I will not give you a number as to how much he can improve because that is like limiting his potential."

JAMES HILLIER

AMLAN BORGHAIN'S COACH

ing his favourite sport on the ground is still off-limits due to fear of getting injured. "You can say football is banned for me right now. I but I watch a lot of football," says Amlan who also spends a lot of time reading motivational books and watching TED Talks.

"I like to know about people's struggles and how they come up from them. It inspires me a lot," says the chirpy youngster, who approves of Cristiano Ronaldo's return to Old Trafford. "I still have that old Ronaldo United jersey," says Amlan, who also bagged the 100m silver on Saturday.

But there's another jersey that Amlan would absolutely love to add to his collection. "When Sunil Chhetri came to Hyderabad for a match I got to meet him as a fan. I did not get to sit down and talk with him. If that happens that would be like a dream come true. I know everything about him, his story, his struggle. I won't ask him any questions but just say one thing to him, 'I'm a big fan'".

Amlan may not have any questions to ask but rest assured a request for a signed jersey would be on the cards if and when he meets the India football skipper.

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	4708888	9999003888	95822263509	9999003888	9999324333	9711507777	9999003888	9999159577	9873477733	8929268182	8448296614, 8448296615		9971500011	8745887458	9999003888	8826892666	26712222	9500036262	9999563333	9582797810		9999399157	8929268145	9582797749
GREATER WEST DELHI	T.R. Sawhney (Rajouri Garden)	Competent (Najafgarh)	Magic Auto (Dwarka Sec-13)	AAA Vehicleleads (Mundka)	Competent (Dwarka)	Magic Auto (Palam Dabri Road)	Competent (Shivaji Marg)	Rana Motors (Janakpur)	D.D. Motors (Mayapuri)	Magic Auto (Sec-20, Dwarka)	EAST DELHI	Magic Auto (Preet Vihar)	Fairdeal Wheels (Bhajanpura)	Fairdeal Wheels (Shahdara)	Competent (Gazipur)	Bagga Link (Patparganj)	T.R. Sawhney (Gokulpur)	Vipul (Sec-18)	Vipul (Sec-63)	Fairdeal Cars (Sec-10)	Rohan (Sec-1)			
	9873781333	9582797763	8929268144	9650445555	9582797879	8929400501	9810411440	9999577776	9999003888	8929268146		8929400502	7290009372	8448296614, 8448296615	8377007977	9818199370	9999399150	8800091555	0120-4824000	9999700944	9873501288			
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	9811800980	4845400	8750987509	4395700	4012000	9582797739	4260000	7835003300	9582797711	8750487504		9582139824	9999994707	0129-4252525	9899596002	0129-4208400	9830202062	9053088402	9953345312	9205192634				
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	9953345311	9053088437	9953345313		8057692222	9650100045	9650972222	9319563222	9582263544	7065191234	0122-2313204		8683000929	8683000956	8683000929		7082100107	01259-275300	7082100280	7082100481	7082100244	8445710000		

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