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IN BRIEF



Pawar likely to be Oppn. candidate for President

NEW DELHI
 Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar could emerge as a consensus candidate for the presidential election if other Opposition parties manage to convince him, a source familiar with the developments said on Monday.

NEWS | PAGE 11

HC rejects plea for FIR against Thakur, Verma

NEW DELHI
 The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected a plea by CPI(M) leaders Brinda Karat and K.M. Tiwari seeking registration of an FIR against Union Minister Anurag Thakur and BJP MP Parvish Verma for their alleged hate speeches against anti-CAA protesters in January 2020.

CITY | PAGE 2

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Retail inflation eases to 7.04%

Price rise in vegetables surges to 18.3%; urban food inflation accelerates to 8.2%

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI
 India's retail inflation eased marginally to 7.04% in May from the nearly eight-year high of 7.79% in April, reflecting a persistent uptick of over 6% in prices paid by consumers for the fifth successive month.

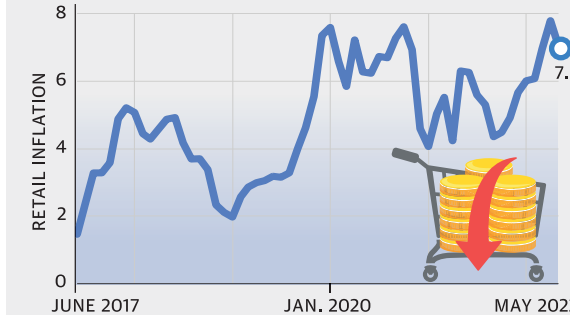
Inflation faced by rural consumers fell to 7.01% in May from 8.38% in April, but for households in urban areas, the pace of price rise was virtually flat month-on-month, moving from 7.09% in April to 7.08% in May.

Food price inflation, which had hit a 17-month high of 8.31% in April, eased a little to 7.97% in May, thanks to a decline in rural food inflation to 7.76% from 8.5%. However, the Consumer Food Price Index surged for urban India to 8.2% in May from 8.09% in April.

A sharp rise in tomato prices, along with hardening potato prices, raised the inflation in vegetables, even as wheat and rice prices climbed to keep cereals inflation elevated. CARE Ratings said food remained the main inflation driver, with a nearly 50% contribution.

A modicum of relief

India's annual retail inflation eased marginally to 7.04% in May from a year earlier, after touching an eight-year high of 7.79% in the previous month



Economists attributed the mild moderation in the retail inflation rate to base effects (May 2021 had recorded high inflation at 6.3%), as well as the lowering of excise duties on fuel products by the Centre on May 21, which could be fully reflected in June's inflation print.

With inflation staying firmly above its tolerance threshold of 6% since January 2022, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised key interest rates by 90 basis points since April, and has projected an average inflation rate of 7.5% for the first quarter of 2022-23. One basis

point equals 0.01%. The RBI's estimate for the April to June quarter may turn out to be an overestimate unless inflation surges sharply in June. However, the double whammy of the rise in crude oil prices and the Indian rupee's depreciation poses upside risks to the June 2022 retail inflation print, ICRA chief economist Aditi Nayar cautioned.

The rupee closed at an all-time low on Monday, while global crude prices remain high amid the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Inflation is expected to hover in the 6.75%-7% range

in June, reckoned Bank of Baroda chief economist Madan Sabnavis, noting that the price rise was high in all segments except housing.

'Respite unlikely'

"Food inflation was high with edible oils, spices and vegetables pushing it up and there is unlikely to be respite any time soon on these items, while foodgrain prices may inch up even if there is a good harvest after the significant increase in minimum support prices for the Kharif crop," he pointed out.

While inflation in food and beverages cooled only marginally to 7.84% in May from 8.1% in April, three sub-categories of food items clocked a further escalation - vegetables, meat and fish, and milk products.

Vegetables inflation surged to 18.26% in May from 15.41% in April, while inflation in meat and fish moved up to 8.23% from 6.97%. The pace of increase in the prices for milk and related products was mildly higher at 5.64% in May compared with 5.47% in April.

CONTINUED ON | PAGE 10

Rahul quizzed by ED for 11 hours, summoned again

Congress puts up a show of strength in multiple cities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
 Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi's questioning on Monday by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case linked to the *National Herald* newspaper turned into a massive show of strength by party workers in multiple cities, including Delhi. Mr. Gandhi has been summoned again on Tuesday, officials said.

On Monday, Mr. Gandhi, who entered the ED headquarters around 11.10 a.m., underwent about three hours of questioning before he was allowed a lunch break around 2.30 p.m.

After visiting his mother, Sonia Gandhi, who has been admitted to Sir Gangaram Hospital for COVID-related issues, Mr. Gandhi returned to the ED office at 3.30 p.m. for a second round of questioning. He left the ED headquarters around 11.25 p.m., after nearly eight hours of questioning in the second round.

Officials are believed to have asked Mr. Gandhi to



Rahul Gandhi leaving for the ED office in New Delhi, along with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, on Monday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

write down his statement under Section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) during the first round of questioning.

Leaders detained
 Earlier, the Delhi Police clamped down on the party's plans to take out a march from the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters to the ED office with layers of barricading and detained senior leaders, including Rajasthan

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Lok Sabha member Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, K.C. Venugopal, Harish Rawat, Jairam Ramesh, Randeep Surjewala and Manickam Tagore. Mr. Surjewala said former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram was pushed away by the police which resulted in an injury.

CONTINUED ON | PAGE 10
 ANOTHER REPORT | PAGE 10

Nobody can change history: Nitish

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PATNA
 Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said on Monday that nobody could change history. "I don't understand how one can change history... History is history... language is a different issue," he told mediapersons on the sidelines of his weekly *janata durbar* (public interaction) programme when a journalist asked for his comments on Home Minister Amit Shah's recent remark about revisiting history books.

Senior BJP leader and Deputy CM Tarkishore Prasad was beside Mr. Kumar when he made the remark, while BJP leader and State Labour Resource Minister Jibesh Kumar Mishra stood behind him smiling.

Mr. Shah had said recently that historians had focused only on the Mughal empire.

Vaccinate more, Centre tells States

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN

NEW DELHI
 COVID-19 is not over yet and with the rise in cases in some States, it is important to be alert and not forget COVID appropriate behaviour, said Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday after a review meeting with State Health Ministers. Flagging the decrease in testing, he urged the States to strengthen surveillance and focus on genome sequencing.

The Minister directed the States to ensure increased focus on COVID vaccination coverage for school-going children and administering precautionary dose to the elderly. He added that there should be no wastage of COVID-19 vaccines at any cost.

CONTINUED ON | PAGE 10

Media rights sale: BCCI to net ₹45,950 cr.

AMOL KARHADKAR

BENGALURU
 The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is set for a windfall from the auction of media rights for the Indian Premier League.

At the end of the second day of the e-auction, the BCCI was assured of a minimum revenue of ₹45,950 crore for the five-year cycle from 2023 to 2027.

With two of the four categories the media rights have been divided into yet to be finalised, industry experts expect the figure to cross ₹60,000 crore.

The e-auction, which began on Sunday, is likely to conclude on Tuesday.

On Monday, bidding concluded for the first two packages - television rights for the Indian subcontinent and

digital rights for India.

With a base price of ₹49 crore and ₹33 crore per game respectively, multiple sources in the BCCI and bidders told *The Hindu* that the winning bids were ₹57.5 crore and ₹50 crore.

The Reliance-backed Viacom 18-Paramount combine is understood to have bagged the digital bouquet for ₹20,500 crore.

Sporadic violence continues in West Bengal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
 Several towns in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, where protests over the comments of erstwhile BJP spokespersons on the Prophet had spiralled into violence on June 10, were limping back to normalcy on Monday.

The count of persons arrested by the police in the two States rose to 333 in Ut-

tar Pradesh and 200 in Bengal; 13 FIRs have been filed by the U.P. police, while their West Bengal counterparts have lodged 42 FIRs so far. Sporadic incidents were, however, reported from parts of Bengal on Monday.

In North 24 Parganas, train services were briefly affected after protesters blocked the tracks near the Hashnabad railway station.

The police in Bethuadahari, Nadia district, resorted to baton charge to disperse a mob that gathered near the railway station.

Uneasy calm in Howrah
 An uneasy calm prevailed in Howrah, where protests erupted on June 9. "No fresh violence was reported in the past 48 hours," said Javed Shamim, Additional Director

General of Police (Law and Order), West Bengal.

In Delhi, several student groups held demonstrations at JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia on Monday in support of former JNU student Afreen Fatima, daughter of Javed Mohammad whose house was demolished by the authorities in Prayagraj.

MORE REPORTS | PAGE 11

SHUBHRA RANJAN

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Kamla Nagar, Sarojini, Lajpat among five iconic markets set for facelift

Traders' bodies hope CM's redevelopment plan will boost business, generate jobs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government will redevelop five city markets — Kamla Nagar, Khari Baoli, Lajpat Nagar, Sarojini Nagar and Kirti Nagar — as per global standards, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced on Monday.

In a related development, the Delhi government on Monday held the first round of consultation with various stakeholders to organise a "Wholesale Shopping Festival".

Budget announcements
The Delhi government had announced both these initiatives under its 'Rozgar Budget' 2022-23.

While presenting the budget, Finance Minister Manish Sisodia had earmarked ₹100 crore for redeveloping several iconic retail markets in the city into attractive tourist destinations over the next five years.

To begin with, the government had decided to pick five markets this year. In his budget speech, Mr. Sisodia had said, "1.5 lakh new job opportunities will be created in the next 5 years from within just 5 markets".

He had also talked about organising a wholesale shopping festival on the lines of a similar event held in Yiwu City of Zhejiang in China, which he had described as "a game changer in attracting customers from all over the world."

Redevelopment details
Mr. Kejriwal said the redevelopment of the retail markets was being planned to help businesses grow and to



Shoppers stop: Crowd at Sarojini Nagar, one of the most popular markets in Delhi. ■FILE PHOTO

generate employment. "We have decided to redevelop five major markets of Delhi under phase one. This decision has been taken not in an AC room but after an extensive study on the ground," Mr. Kejriwal said.

Explaining the process of selection, the Chief Minister said that market associations in the city were asked to fill up a form explaining their needs and ideas for redevelopment in their areas.

The government received 49 applications from 33 markets. Subsequently, an eight-member committee of officers and industry leaders assessed these applications and shortlisted nine markets for further assessment, the Chief Minister added.

This committee then went on to visit the nine markets and studied their various aspects before finalising the five for the first phase of the initiative.

Mr. Kejriwal said there were about 3.5 lakh shops in Delhi which employed a workforce of around 7.5 lakh to 8 lakh people.

Unique markets
Describing the features that made these markets stand out from the rest, Mr. Kejriwal said Kamla Nagar was identified as a "youth hangout zone", Khari Baoli as "a legacy market from the Mughal times with the best spices", Lajpat Nagar as a "high-end street fashion and one-stop destination for wedding shopping".

Similarly, he said, Sarojini Nagar was identified as a "fast-fashion market with the latest trends" and Kirti Nagar as a "one-stop destination for furniture and household items".

The Chief Minister said that the government's plan was to eventually extend the redevelopment plan to all

markets of Delhi.

Mr. Kejriwal said that the designs for the redevelopment of the five markets will be chosen on the basis of an all-India design competition, in which the government expects some of the finest designers and architects in the country to compete. He said that the competition will be held sometime within the next six weeks. "I believe that these markets, which are Delhi's pride, will become the centre of attraction of the whole world," he added.

Traders upbeat
Several market associations welcomed the redevelopment project.

Nitin Gupta, president, Kamla Nagar Traders Association, said the announcement had brought "a wave of happiness among the traders". Kuldeep Arora, secretary, Pushpa Market Traders Welfare Association, Lajpat Nagar, was hopeful that the redevelopment project would help local businesses grow.

Ghanshyam Kushwah, president, New Timber Market Dealer Association, Kirti Nagar, said, "Beautification of the market will result in the growth of our businesses. More customers will visit the market, which will result in an increase in the employment as well."

Lalit Gupta, secretary, Delhi Kirana Committee, Khari Baoli, expressed happiness at the government's decision to choose their market in the first phase. Ashok Kalra, secretary, Sarojini Market Shoppers Association, hoped the move would improve the market's prospects.

HC rejects plea for FIR against Thakur, Verma

They had been accused of delivering 'hate speeches' against anti-CAA protesters

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected a plea by CPI(M) leaders Brinda Karat and K.M. Tiwari seeking registration of an FIR against Union Minister and BJP leader Anurag Thakur and party MP Parvesh Verma for their alleged hate speeches against anti-CAA protesters in January 2020.

Trial court order upheld
Justice Chandra Dhari Singh said the Delhi police in their status report had specifically stated that no cognisable offence was made out against Mr. Thakur and Mr. Verma in the case. The court refused to interfere with the August 26, 2020 order of a trial court, which had rejected the plea stating that a prior sanction of the Central government

was required at the stage of ordering of registration of FIRs as both Mr. Thakur and Mr. Verma were Members of Parliament.

Ms. Karat had said in her plea that on January 27, 2020, Mr. Thakur allegedly made a hate speech at a rally in Rithala, inciting the crowd to "shoot the traitors". On Mr. Verma, the complaint stated that on January 28, 2020, he made false, provocative and communal statements against the anti-CAA-NRC protests in Shaheen Bagh.

The CPI(M) leader had sought the registration of an FIR against the two BJP leaders under sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race), 153B (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration), 295A (deliberate and mali-

icious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) of the Indian Penal Code.

Justice Singh said, "If such investigations are ordered in a routine manner for offences under Section 295-A, 153-A and Section 505, it would lead to a situation where thousands of FIRs would be registered to settle scores against political opponents across the country."

"This would not only be undesirable and an abuse of the process but would also result in choking of the already overburdened criminal justice machinery," the judge added.

Justice Singh observed that Ms. Karat and Mr. Tiwari had the option of approaching the revisional court against the trial court's order but

they approached the High Court directly. The judge said the petitioners "have failed to satisfy the court and no case is made out warranting the intervention of this court at this stage".

He said hate speeches incite violence and feelings of resentment against members of specific communities, thereby causing fear and feeling of insecurity in the minds of the members of those communities.

"There have even been instances of demographic shifts in the aftermath of such hate/inflammatory speeches; the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir Valley is a prime example," the judge said. He also pointed out that Article 19 of the Constitution provides for freedom of speech and expression with reasonable restrictions.

Stay vigilant about COVID uptick: L-G

Officials asked to monitor spread of vector-borne diseases too

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Taking stock of the rising COVID-19 cases in the Capital, Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday emphasised the need to remain vigilant and not let the guard down.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and senior government officials were also part of the meeting where concern was expressed over dengue cases and other vector-borne diseases being reported consistently despite it being an unfavourable season for the spread of such diseases.

Delhi on Monday reported 614 new COVID-19 cases, while the total positivity rate



Delhi on Monday reported 614 new COVID cases. ■FILE PHOTO

variant. Mr. Saxena asked officials to ensure that hospitals are prepared to tackle any upsurge in COVID-19 cases, the Raj Niwas said.

The city recorded eight dengue cases over the past week (till June 11), taking this season's caseload to 126, according to a report by the MCD on Monday. The L-G asked officials to consult experts to ascertain if a new virus strain had evolved for vector-borne diseases.

While reviewing the status of vector-borne diseases, the L-G directed that the checking of mosquito breeding, which is currently done manually by Domestic Mosquito Breeding Checkers be automated.

rose to 7.06%, according to a government health bulletin.

Genome sequencing
The L-G also instructed officials to ensure genome sequencing of the COVID-19 cases being reported so as to proactively address any new

Delhi, Denmark to collaborate on water, power

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Monday announced that it will collaborate with Denmark on groundwater recharge and power generation from stubble in the Capital.

A delegation of experts led by Denmark's Ambassador to India, Freddy Swain, met Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to present solutions on the two issues and held an extensive discussion on ways in which they can be adopted in Delhi.

The team also apprised Mr. Kejriwal of modern technologies for recharging groundwater through rainwater.

E-Procurement cell
Office of the Executive Officer
Nagar Parishad Mihijam, Jharkhand Urban Development & Housing Department

CORRIDGEM - I
NIT No. - 2/2022-23 (15th FC) Date: 07.06.2022 (PR No. 271158)

Sl. No.	E TENDER REF. NO.	NAME OF WORK
1	NPM/F2/21-22/02	RAIN WATER HARVESTING SYSTEM IN VARIOUS GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC PLACES UNDER MIHIJAM
2	NPM/F2/21-22/03	CONSTRUCTION OF VENDING ZONE AT MIHIJAM
3	NPM/F2/21-22/04	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC ROAD FROM HOUSE OF RAMESH RAJAK TO HOUSE OF RAM NARESH VIA HOUSE OF SURAJ MODI AND SUMANT MANDAL, WARD NO.17
4	NPM/F2/21-22/05	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC ROAD FROM AMBAGAN DURGA MANDIR TO NAGAR PARISHAD MIHIJAM BORDER UNDER WARD NO. 02 & 03
5	NPM/F2/21-22/06	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC ROAD IN BADULIGARH GALI NO. 2, UNDER WARD NO. 2, MIHIJAM
6	NPM/F2/21-22/07	DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN AREA AROUND 3000 METER UNDER MIHIJAM

Sl.No	Description	As per NIT	To be read as
1	Closing date and time for receipt of tender on website	19.06.2022 at 17:00 hours	20.06.2022 at 11:00 hours

Note:- All other term and Condition shall remain same as per original NIT.

Executive Officer
Nagar Parishad Mihijam
PR 271426 (Urban Development and Housing) 22-23 (D)

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location	30-Elect-04-T-R1-22-23-E3 Replacement/Augmentation of existing centralized air conditioning plant with other allied works at Rail Bhawan.
Approx. Cost of work	₹3932.99 lakh
Address of the office	Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi
Bid Security (Earnest Money)	₹21,16,500.00
Date & time of submission of tender	05.07.2022, 12:00 hrs.
Opening of tender	05.07.2022, 12:00 hrs.
Website & Notice Board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi

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EPBAX: 0135-2640114 and 2640115
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ADVERTISEMENT No. WII/RB-NRCD/2022/Recruitment-2
CONTRACTUAL ENGAGEMENT OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

The Wildlife Institute of India invites application for engaging various project personnel on contractual basis in its NRCD-WII River Conservation Project. The last date of submission of application is 10th July, 2022. The positions are initially for a one-year period from the date of engagement that can be extended based on the requirement of the project. For detailed advertisement with essential and desirable qualification etc., please visit the institute's website (www.wii.gov.in).

(Dr. Ruchi Badola)
Scientist G & Registrar

Light rain likely by midweek

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhites are likely to get a respite from the scorching heat with light showers over the week, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Parts of Delhi reeled under a heatwave on Monday with the maximum temperature settling at 43.7 degrees Celsius — four notches above

the season's normal. But the mercury is likely to gradually drop over the week and reach 36 degrees Celsius by Sunday.

Though partly cloudy skies and the possibility of very light rain are predicted for Tuesday, the maximum temperature will hover around 43 degrees Celsius. The city is likely to experience cloudy skies and light

rainfall from Thursday to Sunday, the IMD said.

On Monday, the mercury at Safdarjung observatory soared to 43.7 degrees Celsius. The highest temperature of 46.6 degrees Celsius was reported at Najafgarh. The maximum temperatures are expected to be 41, 40, and 39 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday respectively.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax-2482032 email- kashflori@rediffmail.com

Gist of Fresh e- Tender Notice No.18 of 2022
Dated: 10/06/2022

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, e-tender is invited from interested parties/persons for Outsourcing of entry ticketing system of Ashmuqam Park, Anantnag of Floriculture Department Kashmir as per details given below:-
The participants have to quote their bid amount in the concerned BOQ:-

S. No	Period of contract	Reserve Bid (Rs. in Lakhs)	Value of security deposit	Cost of tender document
1	(01) One year from the date of award of contract	3,88,000.00	38,800.00	500.00 in the shape of e-challan

The bidding document(s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

Sl. No.	Period of downloading of bidding document	Start Date	End Date
1	Period of downloading of bidding document	11.06.2022 from 03:30 PM to 30.06.2022 up to 02:00 PM	
2	Bid submission Start Date	11.06.2022 from 04:00 PM	
3	Bid submission End date	30.06.2022 up to 02:00 PM	
4	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	02.07.2022 at 02:00 PM	

The security deposit money exceeding 2% shall be adjustable towards approved bid amount in favour of the successful bidders. The CDR's of the bidders who offer below the reserve bid shall be forfeited.
In case of any eventuality, the date of opening will be considered on any other convenient working day.

Sd/-
Accounts Officer,
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DIP/K- 3883/22

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Open E-Tender Notice

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work.

Name of Work	Cleaning of Railway land and disposal of material beyond Railway Boundary which includes removal of garbage, rag picking, cleaning of drain, cow dung, leaves, muck, malba, debris, soil heap, animal carcass, building material and shifting and stacking of Railway material in the section of SSE/P-way/SSB under ADEN/DLI.
Approx. Cost of work	Rs.55,99,552.31 (Rupees Fifty Five Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Two and Thirty One Paise Only)
Earnest Money to be Deposit	Rs. 1,12,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Twelve Thousand Only)
Cost of tender document	Rs.0.00/-
Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender	08.07.2022 at 15:00 Hrs.
Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

*The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system.
*For all terms and conditions please refer tender document.
*No manual offers are acceptable.
*Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT/19/2022-23/W-3 Dated: 11.06.2022

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Admission Notice

Some seats for admission are vacant for Scheduled Tribes, Differently Aabled and OBC (Non Creamy Layer) in class I for the session 2022-23 in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sector-4 R.K. Puram. Interested candidates whose age is between 6 to 8 years as on 31.03.2022 may register themselves in Vidyalaya from 14.06.2022 to 24.06.2022 (10 AM to 1 PM).

Principal

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. PC.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that **accused** Kailash @ Om Prakash S/o: Nand Ram R/o: 39, ARP Matiyakhn, Pahargani, Delhi, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case registered vide **FIR No. 45207/2019, U/s 379/411 IPC** has been registered at P.S. I.P. Estate, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **accused** Kailash @ Om Prakash cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **accused** Kailash @ Om Prakash has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said **accused** Kailash @ Om Prakash of case **FIR No. 45207/2019, U/s 379/411 IPC** at P.S. I.P. Estate, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **14.07.2022**.

By Order
Sh. Rishab Kapoor
Metropolitan Magistrate-03
Central District, Room No. 150,
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/1553/CD/2022

NDMC sets up 6 control rooms to monitor waterlogging

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has set up six control rooms in areas under its jurisdiction to monitor possible waterlogging during the upcoming monsoon season, said the civic body's member Kuljeet Chahal on Monday. The control rooms are based at Sangli Mess, Khan Market, Netaji Nagar, Malcha Marg, Mandir Marg and Hanuman Road.

Apart from this, the NDMC has identified five vulnerable points — Africa Avenue, Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Panchkuian Road, Purana Quila Road and Lodhi Estate — that are at a risk of facing water stagnation due to heavy rain.

"A total of 600 employees of NDMC will be deployed with all equipment, including permanent and portable pumps, to avoid any possibility of waterlogging in any area," said Mr. Chahal. He said the NDMC has completed its first phase of desilting, while the second phase is set to kick-off from June 15.

"A total of 278 rainwater harvesting pits are functioning all over the NDMC area. Desilting of these pits will be completed by June 30. The pits will be helpful in curbing the situation of waterlogging as well as uplifting of groundwater level in the NDMC areas," he added.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax-2482032 email- kashflori@rediffmail.com

Gist of Fresh e- Tender Notice No. 16 of 2022
Dated: -10/06/2022

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, e-tender is invited from interested parties/persons for Outsourcing of entry ticketing system of Darashikho Park, Bijbehara, Anantnag of Floriculture Department Kashmir as per details given below:-
The participants have to quote their bid amount in the concerned BOQ:-

S. No	Period of contract	Reserve Bid (Rs. in Lakhs)	Value of security deposit	Cost of tender document
1	(01) One year from the date of award of contract	8,22,000.00	82,200.00	1000 /- in the shape of e-challan

The bidding document (s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

Sl. No.	Period of downloading of bidding document	Start Date	End Date
1	Period of downloading of bidding document	10.06.2022 from 03:30 PM to 30.06.2022 up to 02:00 PM	
2	Bid submission Start Date	10.06.2022 from 04:00 PM	
3	Bid submission End date	30.06.2022 up to 02:00 PM	
4	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	02.07.2022 at 02:00 PM	

The security deposit money exceeding 2% shall be adjustable towards approved bid amount in favour of the successful bidders. The CDR's of the bidders who offer below the reserve bid shall be forfeited.
In case of any eventuality, the date of opening will be considered on any other convenient working day.

Sd/-
Accounts Officer,
Member Secretary
DIP/K- 3853/22

Uttarakhand Metro Rail, Urban Infrastructure and Building Construction Corporation Limited (UKMRC)
(A Government of Uttarakhand Undertaking)
Website: www.ukmrc.org CIN: U45309UR 2017 SGC007687

Notice Inviting Tender (NIT)

(1) NIT No. RSTC/UKMRC/SYS/282/2022-23 Dated: 14.06.2022
UKMRC invites Open e-tender (ICB with QCBS system) for the work: Engagement of Consultant for Guiding System/Technology & Rolling Stock for Metro Neo Project.

(i) Estimated Cost of work	₹ 1.00 Crore (excl. of GST)
(ii) Tender availability on e-portal	16.06.2022 to 15.07.2022
(iii) Tender Submission End Date & Time	15.07.2022 (upto 15:00 Hrs.)

(2) NIT No. DDCA-01 Dated: 14.06.2022
UKMRC invites Open e-tender on Local Competitive Bidding (LCB) under Single stage Two packet system with Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) system for the work: Engagement of Detailed Design Consultant (DDC) for Civil, Architectural and Building Services including E&M works for two corridors (a) ISBT (Dehradun) to Gandhi Park (b) FRI to Raipur for Metro Neo System including one depot.

(i) Approximate Cost of work	₹ 72.76 Crore (excl. of GST)
(ii) Tender/Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit)	₹ 5,52,000/-
(iii) Tender availability on e-portal	16.06.2022 to 18.07.2022
(iv) Tender Submission End Date & Time	18.07.2022 (upto 15:00 Hrs.)

Full tender details can be downloaded from the e-procurement website of Uttarakhand i.e. <https://uktenders.gov.in> MD (UKMRC)

Government of Jharkhand
Department of Mines & Geology
Directorate of Geology
Engineers' Hostel No-1, 2nd floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004

Notice No.- 02/2022-23

Directorate of Geology invites sealed application on attached format from Empanelment of Agencies for preparation of DPR to set up a New Geological Laboratory at Chaibasa West Singhbhum, Jharkhand for Chemical and Petrological analysis of different rocks, minerals and ores as per NABL.

Last date of submission of EO1 is **05.07.2022 upto 1.00 P.M.**

- Terms, Conditions & Application forms are available on our website www.jharkhand.gov.in and also at our office notice board.
- Cost of tender document - 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only)
- It will be submitted online through official website www.jharkhandminerals.gov.in Other & Services www.jharkhandminerals.gov.in
- Payment office (Directorate of Geology) www.jharkhandminerals.gov.in Head of Payment (Cost of Tender Document) www.jharkhandminerals.gov.in Description Type of Depositor (Other) www.jharkhandminerals.gov.in District Name (Directorate of Geology) www.jharkhandminerals.gov.in DDO Code (PRJOTH002)

Sd/-
(Vijay Kumar Ojha)
Director, Geology

PR.NO.271406 Mines and Geology(22-23)-D

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DELHI

TUESDAY, JUN. 14
RISE 05:24 SET 19:21
RISE 19:30 SET 04:50

WEDNESDAY, JUN. 15
RISE 05:24 SET 19:21
RISE 20:39 SET 05:50

THURSDAY, JUN. 16
RISE 05:24 SET 19:21
RISE 21:41 SET 06:58

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Safdarjang 44 32
Palam 44 33

Delhi Palam Today
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Delhi Palam Tomorrow
44°C A dry weather to continue. Heat wave to prevail. Day will be very hot and uneasy. Night will be slight warm.

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NCP unhappy with Shiv Sena over comments on Rajya Sabha elections

'Sanjay Raut naming MLAs ditching the MVA does not augur well for the Maharashtra govt.'

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Days after the Shiv Sena blamed the loss of its second candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections on Independents close to the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), especially Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, the NCP leaders let their displeasure known to party chief Sharad Pawar.

Mr. Pawar held a meeting with senior party leaders on Monday to discuss the RS elections as well as the upcoming State Council polls where the NCP will be contesting two seats. According to sources, the NCP leaders expressed displeasure over Mr. Raut's statements in the media in which he named a few MLAs for ditching the MVA. "He should not have done that. That casts negative aspersions not only on the NCP but also on the entire government," said a Minister who attended the meeting.

On Monday, the MVA too held



Congress candidate Bhai Jagtap (right) would require the help of the Independents in the Legislative Council elections. *FILE PHOTO.

a joint meeting on the Council polls. As per the calculation, the Congress' second candidate, Bhai Jagtap, would require the help of the Independents. "I know I have a challenge in front of me. But I am sure that I will overcome it. The equations for the Rajya Sabha and the Council are different as the Independents are still with the government," said Mr. Jagtap.

He added that the shortcom-

ings during the Rajya Sabha polls have been discussed and the strategy to overcome them has also been put in place.

Mr. Raut had named three MLAs of the Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (BVA) and three other Independents - namely Devendra Bhuyar, Sanjay Shinde and Shyamsundar Shinde - for voting against the MVA. All the three Independents are known to be close to the Deputy CM. Mr. Bhu-

ayar and Mr. Shyamsundar had even said that they voted as per the directions of Mr. Pawar, while maintaining that their vote was for the MVA.

"Ajit Pawar meets me when I go for any work to him. I voted for a candidate told to me by him," Mr. Bhuyar had said, denying that he had voted for the BJP. Mr. Bhuyar also held a meeting with the NCP chief at the latter's residence and even met Mr. Raut to explain his side of the story. After meeting Mr. Pawar and Mr. Raut, the MLA said that he stands with the MVA. "I was with the MVA in the past and will remain with them even in future. There was miscommunication between us, but I have clarified everything with him [Mr. Raut]," he added.

Mr. Bhuyar had contested the 2019 Assembly election from the Swabhimani Party of farmer leader Raju Shetti and had defeated BJP's Anil Bonde. Mr. Bonde was elected to the RS in this election.

Anil Deshmukh moves HC seeking release for one day

Enforcement Directorate has opposed his plea

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Maharashtra's former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh moved the Bombay High Court on Monday seeking release for one day to cast his vote in the upcoming State Legislative Council elections on June 20.

In the plea, he has sought to be released on a bond to enable him to cast his vote. The Single Bench of Justice N.J. Jamadar will hear the plea on June 15.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had opposed Mr. Deshmukh being released for a day to cast his vote in the Rajya Sabha elections before the special court.



Anil Deshmukh

The central agency had said, "It is pertinent to mention that prisoners do not have voting rights under the Representation of People (RP) Act. The right to vote is a statutory right created under Section 62 (right to vote) of the RP Act and the law is settled that the right to vote being a statutory right is subject to restrictions prescribed in the RP Act. Hence, the application is liable to be rejected

at the very threshold."

On April 5, the High Court had directed a preliminary enquiry to be held against Mr. Deshmukh by the Central Bureau of Investigation. Soon thereafter, the ED stepped in and started conducting a probe into allegations of money laundering against Mr. Deshmukh.

On April 21, 2021, an FIR was registered against Mr. Deshmukh under Section 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC and section 7 (public servant taking gratification other than legal remuneration in respect of an official act) of the Prevention of Corruption Act. He was arrested by the ED on November 2, 2021, and has been lodged at Arthur Road jail.

Moosewala murder: Pune police arrest one more suspect

Santosh Jadhav, his aide picked up from Gujarat

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

In a breakthrough in the murder of Punjabi rapper and Congress leader Sidhu Moosewala, the Pune Rural police have nabbed history-sheeter Santosh Jadhav - one of the eight suspects named by the Punjab police in the killing, said the authorities on Monday.

According to police sources, Jadhav, along with another associate Nagnath Suryavanshi, were picked by the police from Gujarat and were produced before a District Court Judge late Sunday night following which they were remanded in police custody till June 20. Jadhav was arrested as he was the prime suspect in the murder of another history-sheeter, Omkar Bankhele. He was said to be the shooter in Bankhele's killing, which had taken place in Pune district's Manchar taluk last year.

Since then, Jadhav has been on the lam for more



Youngsters paying tributes to Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala in Jalandhar. *FILE PHOTO

than a year and a half.

His arrest comes close on the heels of that of Siddhesh Kamble, known by his aliases 'Mahakal' and 'Saurabh' - the second suspect from Maharashtra said to be involved in the Moosewala killing.

On June 7, the Pune Rural police had picked Kamble from Sangamner near the Pune-Ahmednagar border last week in connection with Bankhele's murder in which Kamble is said to have sheltered Jadhav.

Investigators had re-

vealed that both Jadhav and Kamble were allegedly working for incarcerated gangster Lawrence Bishnoi.

A warrant had been issued by the Pune police for Jadhav and Kamble since Bankhele's murder last year.

Since Moosewala's killing, the Pune police have been in continuous touch with their Punjab counterparts.

On Sunday, Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil said the police teams from four-five States were working together on the Moosewala murder case.

SGPC to install portrait of ex-CM's assassin at museum

Beant Singh's grandson calls it 'unfortunate'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AMRITSAR

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee will install a portrait of the assassin of former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh in the central Sikh museum of the Golden Temple.

Around one lakh people visit the museum daily.

A senior SGPC official said on Monday, "On June 14, a big religious function is sche-

duled to take place in the Golden Temple complex. A portrait of Dilawar Singh will be unveiled in the Sikh museum of the Golden Temple."

Suicide bomber Dilawar Singh had killed former Punjab CM Beant Singh on August 31, 1995. Dilawar Singh was a Punjab police officer who had later joined the terror outfit, Babbar Khalsa International.

Reacting sharply to

the development, Gurkirat Singh Kotli, a former Punjab Cabinet Minister and the grandson of Beant Singh said, "This is a highly unfortunate step by the SGPC. It will disseminate a wrong message to the young generation and can disturb the hard-earned peace of Punjab. Moreover, in the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple), a poster of a killer should never be installed."

Inter-caste couple killed in Tamil Nadu

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR

An inter-caste couple, who had married five days ago in Chennai against the wishes of their families, was murdered by the woman's brother and relative at Thulukkaveli, Cholapuram, near Kumbakonam, on Monday.

Police said the victims were Mohan, 31, and Saranya, 22. Mohan was from the Most Backward Community, while Saranya was from the Scheduled Castes.

Police said Saranya's brother, Sakthivel, 31, had pretended to reconcile with the couple and invited them home. The unsuspecting couple were about to enter the house when Sakthivel and his relative Ranjith allegedly attacked them with weapons, killing the couple on the spot.

'Cong. checking whose vote was invalid'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

After the Congress nominee, Ajay Maken, lost the Rajya Sabha polls from Haryana, senior party leader and former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said on Monday that the results were being scrutinised to identify the MLA whose vote was declared invalid.

Amid a blame game in the party's State unit, the MLA from the Faridabad NIT Assembly constituency, Neeraj

Sharma, said the Congress should identify the 'black sheep' whose vote was cancelled.

On Mr. Maken's defeat, Mr. Hooda said in Rohtak that the party is analysing the election results in detail. "We are scrutinising (the results) to identify which Congress MLA's vote was cancelled. The party's counting agent knows the ballot number of that MLA," he said.

The Congress had 31 MLAs and needed as many

votes to win the Rajya Sabha seat from Haryana, but one of its legislators, Kuldeep Bishnoi, cross-voted and another's vote was cancelled.

In the June 10 polls for the two Rajya Sabha seats from Haryana, BJP's Krishan Lal Panwar and BJP-JJP-backed Independent candidate and media baron Kartikeya Sharma won.

After Mr. Maken's loss, a blame game has started in the party's State unit.

Dhami takes oath as MLA in Uttarakhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami was sworn in as a member of the Uttarakhand Assembly here on Monday, 10 days after he won the Champawat Assembly bypoll with a record margin.

The oath of office was administered to Mr. Dhami by Speaker Ritu Khanduri in the Assembly auditorium in the presence of his Cabinet colleagues, MLAs and party leaders.

He was sworn in as a member of the House just a day before the budget session of the Assembly begins on Tuesday.

Mr. Dhami thanked the people of Champawat and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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www.thehindu.com

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Soren seeks time to appear before EC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has sought more time from the Election Commission to appear before it over alleged irregularities in granting mining leases, citing the unavailability of his counsel due to medical reasons.

He was to appear before the poll panel either in person or through his counsel on Tuesday. Mr. Soren was earlier asked to appear before the EC on May 31 but he had sought more time. His appearance was then rescheduled for June 14.

In May, the poll panel had issued a notice to Mr. Soren citing Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act, which deals with the disqualification of a lawmaker for government contracts.

The panel prima facie found that he violated provisions of Section 9A. After going through his response, the EC had asked him to appear before it.

While hearing such cases, the EC functions like a quasi-judicial body.

'Governors should act impartially'

T.N. Assembly Speaker objects to Union govt. 'infringing' on the domain of State legislature

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker M. Appavu on Monday said Governors "should act impartially as the head of the State in terms of the Constitution", as they played an important part in conveying the collective opinion of the legislature along with their "just recommendations".

He also took objection to the Union government 'infringing' on the domain of the State legislature, disregarding the collective opinion of the House.

During his speech in a meeting of the Committee of Presiding Officers in Delhi, which was held to suggest criteria for the Outstanding Legislative Council/Assembly Award, Mr. Appavu said, "There is potential for conflict when there is no harmony between the Union and the States, and especially when the Union, without consensus or consultation, infringes on the legislative domain of the State legislature or disregards the collective opinion of the State Legislative Assembly expressed in the form of bills/resolutions."

Citing debates in the media over the Union government asserting itself forcefully, against the wishes of the States, in mat-



The Governor of the State plays an important part in conveying the collective opinion of the legislature along with his just recommendations

M. APPAVU
Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker

ters of legislation, Mr. Appavu said: "The Governor of the State plays an important part in conveying the collective opinion of the legislature along with his just recommendations. The Governor should act impartially as the head of the State in terms of the Constitution. How the legislature fights for protecting the State's rights may also be considered as one of the criteria while selecting the best legislature."

A copy of his speech was circulated to the media.

It may be recalled that a Bill seeking an exemption from NEET-based admissions to undergraduate medical courses, which was adopted by the Tamil Nadu Assembly, was returned by Governor R.N. Ravi, after which the House adopted the Bill once again.

The Governor eventually forwarded the Bill to the Centre. Earlier this month, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin called on the Governor and urged him to grant his assent to as many as 21 Bills adopted by the House, "to uphold the spirit of the Constitution and the sentiments of the people of Tamil Nadu".

Sitting days

Adverting to other issues, Mr. Appavu said the available data suggested that State legislatures convened for an average of 30 days a year. This did not give the members adequate time to discuss the business, including the scrutiny of the Budget and a thorough consideration of Bills before they were passed in the Assembly.

"Hence, in my opinion, the number of sitting days and

working hours of the legislature may be taken into account while selecting the outstanding legislature," he said.

The time spent on the Question Hour and the number of members given an opportunity with the Ministers' reply may also be taken as one of the criteria, he said.

More chances

The Opposition parties' main role was to question the government and hold it accountable, he said, and added that they must be provided more chances to take part in the Assembly debates in order to facilitate the smooth functioning of the House.

"Dissent is a democratic expression, but it should be expressed through the contours and parameters of parliamentary devices. Maintenance of discipline and decorum, therefore, is vital for the functioning of our parliamentary democracy. Proper utilisation of the time of the House is very vital to ensure quality debates. It is unfortunate that the precious time of the House is wasted on account of disorderly scenes and interruptions in some of the Houses," the Speaker said.

Why create issue when BJP has taken action, says Nitish

Bihar CM condemns violence over remarks on Prophet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA

Condemning the violence in parts of the country over the controversial remarks against Prophet Muhammad by suspended functionaries of the BJP, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday asked why an issue was being created over the matter as the party had already taken action against the two leaders.

Expressing displeasure over the attack on his Cabinet colleague Nitin Nabin by miscreants in Jharkhand amid the protests, Mr. Kumar asserted that "the responsibility of maintaining peace and communal harmony rests with the State government".

He was responding to queries over the BJP's allegations that the attack was a "premeditated one" after his public interaction programme, 'Janata Ke



Nitish Kumar

Darbaar Mein Mukhyamantri".

"Immediately after the attack on my young Cabinet colleague, I instructed the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police to enquire about the whole incident. They are still in touch with senior officials of the Jharkhand government and taking updates pertaining to the case," Mr. Kumar said.

Mr. Nabin, BJP leader and State Road Construction Minister, had a narrow escape on June 10 in Ranchi as his vehicle came under attack near Hanuman

temple during protests over the remarks made by the suspended BJP functionaries.

Mr. Nabin's SUV was vandalised while he was returning from a family function.

'Govt. responsible'

"The responsibility of maintaining peace and communal harmony rests with the State government. The police had no control over the mob [in Jharkhand]," Mr. Kumar said.

"Why is the issue being used as a tool to create chaos in society? There are certain people who believe in creating communal disharmony in society... they wait for such moments," he added.

The Chief Minister maintained that the officials concerned, on his instructions, had taken appropriate steps in his State to ensure the "situation does not get out of control".

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Manik Saha says he is BJP's 2023 Tripura CM candidate

He is contesting the Town Bardowali Assembly bypoll

SYED SAJJAD ALI
AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has asserted that he will be the face of the BJP in next year's Assembly elections in the State.

Dr. Saha is contesting the Assembly bypoll from the Town Bardowali constituency on June 23. He asserted that he would continue to hold the Chief Minister's position and appealed to people not to fall prey to rumours over him being replaced.

Addressing a rally on Sunday night, Dr. Saha said the entire nation is watching the Assembly bypoll. "Don't believe in rumours. I have been made the Chief Minister and it is not a temporary arrangement," he said. Dr. Saha, who was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Tripura in April this year, was sworn in as Chief Minister on May 15, a day after his predecessor Biplab Kumar Deb resigned.

He was made a candidate in the Town Bardowali constituency as per

his wishes, party sources said. However, he is facing a tough fight from Ashish Kumar Saha of the Congress, who has won from his home turf in the last five Assembly elections and never seen defeat in electoral politics.

Reaching out to voters

The Chief Minister is spending hours campaigning in the semi-urban constituency every day and getting acquainted with the voters in his first election since joining politics less than a decade ago.

Prominent party leaders and some Ministers are working hard to ensure that he emerges victorious.

Dr. Saha is facing a certain level of anti-incumbency in the Congress bastion, but his stature as the Chief Minister and the BJP's extra focus on the constituency will make sure that he wins, according to political analysts.

Dr. Saha has also promised development and welfare initiatives for the Assembly constituency.

Satyendar Jain sent to 14-day judicial custody

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday sent Aam Aadmi Party Minister Satyendar Jain to judicial custody for 14 days in connection with a money laundering case. A special court in the Rouse Avenue courthouse sent the Minister to judicial custody after the ED's custody of 14 days expired. After Mr. Jain was arrested on May 30, the ED had secured his custody till June 9, following which the agency was granted three more days of his custody.

Mr. Jain has already moved for bail in the ED case and the application is listed for hearing on Tuesday (June 14). The ED has alleged that Mr. Jain was purportedly laundering money through shell companies based in Kolkata.

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Polls held for 4 Karnataka Council seats

KARNATAKA BUREAU
BENGALURU

The polling for the four Legislative Council seats from Graduates and Teachers constituencies across the State went off peacefully on Monday with Karnataka West Teachers constituency reporting the highest turnout while the Karnataka North West Graduates reported the lowest turnout. Both teachers' constituencies reported good turnout.

At the end of polling, Karnataka West Teachers, where former Chairman and BJP candidate Basavaraj Horatti is contesting, reported 84% polling, while the Karnataka North West Graduates constituency, where BJP's candidate Hanumanth Nirani, brother of senior Lingayat leader and Industries Minister Murugesha Nirani is defending his seat, reported the lowest turnout at 59%.

The North West Teachers constituency, which is witnessing a fierce battle between sitting legislator BJP's Arun Shahpur and senior Congress leader Prakash Hukkeri, reported a turnout of 80% and the Karnataka South Graduates constituency reported 70% turnout.

Earlier in the day, polling began on a slow pace but picked up later. The counting of votes will be taken up on Wednesday.

In Belagavi, BJP MLA Anil Benake reportedly violated model code of conduct by entering a polling station and used his mobile phone to speak to his acquaintances. Belagavi Deputy Commissioner Nitesh Patil has said that a case would be filed on the receipt of complaint from polling officials.

(With inputs from Mysuru, Hubballi and Belagavi)

AAP faces popularity test in Sangrur

Party highlights its 'pro-people' initiatives amid allegations of breakdown of law and order in Punjab

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

Three months after it swept the Punjab Assembly polls, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is locked in a multi-cornered electoral battle with the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the Sangrur Lok Sabha seat.

All the major parties in the fray are sparing no effort in ensuring that their candidates emerge victorious in the bypoll, which is scheduled for June 23.

Vacant seat

Amid growing criticism from the Opposition over the law and order situation in the State, the bypoll will be a test of AAP's popularity since it formed the government in March.

The seat fell vacant after Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann contested and won from the Dhuri seat in the



The chosen one: Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann (right) with AAP candidate Gurmil Singh after filing papers for the Sangrur byelection. • FILE PHOTO

Assembly polls.

On Monday, the party deputed six Cabinet Ministers to seek votes for its candidate, Gurmil Singh, by highlighting the 'pro-people' initiatives of the government over the past three months.

Mr. Singh, who is the party's Sangrur district in-charge, has started door-to-

door campaigning with party MLAs. He is also addressing 'nukkad meetings' in villages and towns in the constituency.

'CM abandoning voters'

Seeking votes in favour of the joint SAD-Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) candidate, Kamaldeep Kaur Rajoana, Akali chief Sukhbir Singh Badal

at a meeting in Sangrur accused Mr. Mann of abandoning the people of the constituency after taking over the reins of the State.

Mr. Badal said Mr. Mann had outsourced the State's governance to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. He also accused Mr. Mann of failing to conduct a tour of Sangrur to thank the voters that elected him twice to the Lok Sabha in 2014 and 2019.

"No development work has been initiated in Sangrur and even ongoing projects have been stopped. This AAP government has given nothing and taken the State to the brink of disaster with the total breakdown of law and order," Mr. Badal said.

The Congress, which has fielded former Dhuri MLA Dalvir Singh Goldy, has termed Mr. Mann a "weak and helpless" Chief Minister remote-controlled from Delhi.

State unit chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring said Mr. Mann had miserably failed Punjab and its people. He said Mr. Mann should explain who is actually governing the State.

"Be sincere to your conscience and tell the Punjabis if you are really in control of things or being controlled by someone else," he said.

'Atmosphere of fear'

Mr. Warring said there was an atmosphere of fear in Punjab as the police had failed to nab the culprits in all major crimes.

The BJP, which has placed its bet on former Barnala MLA Kewal Dhillon, who joined the party on June 4, has also cornered the AAP government over the law and order situation.

Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) chief Simranjit Singh Mann is also in the fray for the bypoll.



Voice of dissent: Police using water cannons against Youth Congress activists in Palakkad on Monday. • K.K. MUSTAFAH

'Pinarayi stalling gold scam probe'

Kerala CM using State machinery: BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday stepped up its attack on Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over the gold smuggling scam that has hit his government, alleging that Mr. Vijayan was using "all means to block the investigation", fearing that there was "a firm needle of suspicion pointing at him and his family".

Addressing a press conference, Union Ministers Rajeev Chandrasekhar and V. Muraleedharan alleged that Mr. Vijayan was using State machinery to obstruct the investigation.

Citing Mr. Vijayan's letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in July 2020, Mr. Chandrasekhar said the Chief Minister had termed the crime a serious one that warranted a thorough investigation and assured him full assistance of the State government. "From that day to today, he has done everything to block the investigation in this crime. He used the State police to road block the Central agencies who have expertise," he alleged.

He further said that recent revelations by [gold smuggling case accused] Swapna Suresh, which are basically sworn statements in court, were "explosive

and unprecedented". "It has firmly pointed the needle of suspicion to Mr. Vijayan and his family," he said.

Last week, Ms. Suresh had alleged that Mr. Vijayan, his family members, besides some top bureaucrats, were involved in the case.

Discussing the situation in Kerala in the aftermath of the revelations, Mr. Muraleedharan accused the Chief Minister of being wary of the protests due to which he had banned black colour in the State. "From last week, what we are seeing in Kerala is unprecedented. The situation is that black colour is banned. This is the height of fascism," he said.

Protest on aircraft

On Mr. Vijayan's flight to Thiruvananthapuram from Kannur on Monday, two Congress activists, one sporting a black shirt, allegedly staged a protest soon after it touched down at the State capital.

Videos captured by co-passengers showed LDF convener E.P. Jayarajan, who was on the same flight, preventing the protesters from moving towards Mr. Vijayan's seat. One of the Congress workers fell on the cabin floor in the melee. Later, the police detained the duo.

Actor Siddhanth Kapoor held for consuming drugs

Raid conducted at a Bengaluru hotel

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Bollywood actor and DJ Siddhanth Kapoor was among five persons arrested after the Halasuru police conducted raid at a star hotel here and detained 35 people allegedly having a rave party on Sunday night.

The detained people were subjected to medical examination, and among them five were confirmed to have consumed drugs, the police said. According to the police, among the five was Mr. Siddhanth, son of Bollywood actor Shakti Kapoor.

Others who were found negative in the medical ex-

amination have been released. The police have seized mobile phones of the accused and are analysing the CDR to ascertain the source of drugs and their network. "There were around 100 people at the party, including some highly influential personalities, who had vacated the premises minutes before the raid. We are also verifying their identities," sources said. The police combed the area to check for drugs and found some amount of contraband on the premises.

The accused have been booked under various sections of the NDPS Act.

Swapna Suresh moves Kerala HC to quash criminal case

Revelation of statement in public not illegal, she contends

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

Swapna Suresh, an accused in the gold smuggling case, on Monday approached the Kerala High Court seeking to quash the case registered against her based on a complaint by MLA K.T. Jaleel.

The complaint is that she had conspired with some others and given a false statement before the Magistrate Court in a case pending before the Principal District Sessions Court, Ernakulam, and spread false news to the media, tarnishing the image of the CM, the State govern-



Swapna Suresh

ment and Mr. Jaleel. She contended that the revelation of some of the contents of her statement in public was not an illegal act. Once the affidavit formed part of the record of the Ses-

sions Court case, it was a public document and therefore, there was absolutely no secrecy in the contents of the affidavit.

Therefore, she had not done any illegal acts. Shaj Kiran, who allegedly acted as an interlocutor and asked Swapna to withdraw her statement, also filed an anticipatory bail plea fearing arrest in "an unknown case" registered by the police.

He said he was entrapped as part of a larger conspiracy by publishing the audio clip of a friendly conversation between him and Swapna.

Jaishankar visits Paderu, promises aid to tribals

Disparities will be corrected, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM

Union Minister for External Affairs S. Jaishankar, who visited Paderu in Alluri Sitaramaraju district of Andhra Pradesh on Monday, said he would take the problems being faced by the locals to the notice of the Centre.

Mr. Jaishankar chaired a review meeting with senior officials at the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) office in Paderu as part of his visit to the tribal areas on Monday.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi is making all-out efforts for the development of aspirational districts. Measures will be taken to address problems of power supply, drinking water, education, health, roads and connectivity, apart from the development of agriculture in the district," he said.

The Union Minister said

that he would talk to his counterpart in the Rural Development Ministry and initiate measures for the development of rural areas.

The disparities in various sectors would be corrected, he said.

Development activities

District Collector Sumit Kumar gave a presentation on the developmental activities being taken up in the district. He gave an overview of the district to the Minister, including its area, population, and penetration of medical services and education.

The Collector said that pattas for over 1 lakh acres were distributed to beneficiaries under the Forest Rights Act.

Earlier, Mr. Jaishankar went round an exhibition of tribal products organised under the aegis of Velugu.

Celebrating 70 years



President Ram Nath Kovind, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavraj Bommai and Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot during the platinum jubilee celebrations of the Rashtriya Military School in Bengaluru on Monday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Monsoon enters parts of Telangana, says IMD

Heavy rain forecast in several districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has informed that the southwest monsoon has entered parts of Telangana and Rayalaseema and is likely to progress further in the next couple of days on Monday.

Heavy rain forecast has been sounded in several districts across Telangana with thunderstorms and lightning in some places. Rain has been recorded in the following areas on Monday: Kotapalli (Mancherial) 7 cm, Banswada & Tadwai (Kamareddy) 5 cm, Madnur (Kamareddy) 4 cm, Kotagiri (Nizamabad) 4 cm and Kaleshwaram (Bhupalapally) 4 cm.

Although the maximum temperatures have eased a bit, Khammam recorded 41.6 degree C, Adilabad 40.3 degree C and Nalgonda too

recorded 40 degree C. It has been 36.6 degree C in Hyderabad.

For the twin cities, the forecast is one or two spells of rain or thundershowers and the day temperature is likely to be around 37 degree C and night temperature 25 degree C.

Highest rainfall

Telangana State Development Planning Society stated in its weather report that during the last 24 hours, highest rainfall of 9.7 cm was recorded at Rajampet (Kamareddy). Light to moderate rain/thundershowers are expected at a few places for next three days with heavy rain at isolated places for next few days. Maximum temperatures are expected to be in the range of 37-40 degree C, while the minimum temperatures to be in the range of 24-27 degree C.

'Snapping' footwear to help prevent complications

It can aid those who suffer from nerve damage caused by diabetes which leads to loss of sensation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A unique self-regulating footwear has been developed by researchers for persons with diabetes.

It has been developed by the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Indian Institute of Science (IISc.), in collaboration with the Karnataka Institute of Endocrinology and Research (KIER).

Foot injuries or wounds in persons with diabetes heal at a slower rate than in healthy individuals, which increases the chances of infection, and may lead to complications that require amputation in extreme cases. The footwear developed by the IISc-led team is 3D printed and can be customised to an indi-



The footwear is 3D printed and can be customised to an individual's foot and walking style. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dual's foot and walking style. Unlike conventional therapeutic footwear, a snapping mechanism in these sandals keeps the feet well-balanced, enabling faster healing of the injured region and preventing injuries from arising in other areas of the

feet, a IISc. release said. The footwear can be especially beneficial for people who have diabetic peripheral neuropathy - those who suffer from nerve damage caused by diabetes, leading to a loss of sensation in the foot, said the release.

Ineffective off-loading

"Regions of the foot where the pressure exerted is high are at greater risk of developing ulcers, corns, calluses, and other complications. Most of the therapeutic footwear available in the market is ineffective at off-loading the uneven pressure exerted

by the abnormal gait cycle of persons with diabetes," it said. To address this, the researchers designed arches in their sandals that 'snap' to an inverted shape when a pressure beyond a certain threshold is applied.

"When we remove the pressure, the arch will automatically come back to its initial position - this is what is called self-offloading. We consider the individual's weight, foot size, walking speed, and pressure distribution to arrive at the maximum force that has to be off-loaded," explained first author Priyabrata Maharana, PhD student in IISc.

The team is collaborating with start-ups Foot Secure and Yostra Labs to commercialise their product.

Rapido accuses Karnataka govt. of violating court's order

State refutes charges; says vehicles were seized before order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Roppen Transportation Services Pvt. Ltd., which operates bike taxis under the brand name Rapido, has complained to the Karnataka High Court that the State authorities are seizing its vehicles in violation of an interim order passed by the court. The court in August last year had directed the State not to take any coercive action against Rapido.

The allegation was made during the hearing of a contempt of court petition filed by the company. However, the government counsel refuted the allegation, saying bike taxis of the petitioner

were seized prior to interim order passed by a single judge on August 11, 2021.

Also, the government counsel told the Bench that the interim order passed by the judge virtually resulted in "grant of licence" to the company while pointing out that the government was yet to frame rules for grant of licence for the operation of bike taxis.

The counsel also contended that the company could not operate bike taxis without obtaining licence, while pointing out that the government had recently moved the single judge to hear the writ petition filed by the company, in which the com-

pany had questioned rejection of its application for grant of licence.

The company last year had filed a writ petition pointing out that its application for grant of bike aggregator's licence was rejected while issuing an endorsement that the company had to apply under the Karnataka Electricity Bike Taxi Scheme 2021.

It pointed out that its application was not for operation of electric two-wheelers but general bikes and hence rejection of its application was erroneous.

The court adjourned further hearing on the petition by two weeks.

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Beyond the numbers

The Rajya Sabha polls brought out internal dissension in both the BJP and the Congress

lections for 57 Rajya Sabha seats in the latest round that concluded on June 10 provide notable signals about the political winds in several States. Forty-one seats had single candidates who were elected unopposed from 11 States, while contests for 16 in four States – Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan – were eventful, and accompanied by charges of horse-trading, sabotage, and misuse of power by incumbents at the Centre and State. The BJP's continued emphasis on backward classes and weaker sections was evident in its selection of candidates – reflected in at least half of the 22 new members the party brings into the Rajya Sabha. Three Muslim BJP MPs who have their terms ending in July were not renominated, and the ruling party will not have a single Parliament member from the community now. The Congress, on the other hand, continued to be tone deaf to the clamour for increased representation by weaker sections – eight of its 10 candidates were from dominant communities. The party pointedly lost the first opportunity to demonstrate that its Udaipur declaration that promised reforms in the party such as the 'one family, one person' principle in allotting tickets was indeed a serious effort.

The BJP's manoeuvring capacity yielded good results in Maharashtra and Haryana but in Rajasthan, it had to eat humble pie, losing an MLA to the Congress camp. In Karnataka, the elections saw the Congress distancing itself from the JD(S), trying to emerge as the singular opposition to the ruling BJP ahead of the Assembly election next year. The new situation makes the possibility of an alliance distant, if not impossible. The BJP's show of strength in Maharashtra has upset the calculations of the ruling tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), and threatens its government. In 2019, the strength of the MVA, comprising the Shiv Sena, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Congress along with a few independents and smaller parties, stood at 169, comfortably above the halfway mark of 145. Two-and-a-half-years later, the BJP secured 123 votes in the Rajya Sabha elections, while the MVA's tally came down to 161 votes. Two NCP MLAs were in jail and could not vote, one Sena vote was declared invalid; one Sena MLA had died a month ago. Though the MVA government faces no immediate danger, the shift of at least 10 votes to the BJP has brought it closer to the majority mark amid murmurs of discontent within the three parties. Fresh talk of welcoming 'disgruntled' and 'dissatisfied' MLAs could well be possible in the coming days. Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot and Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel have reinforced their positions within the Congress amid demands for their exit. In Haryana, the loss of one winnable seat due to internal feuding shows the inability of the Congress high command to enforce discipline.

Choosing sides

As the U.S. and China intensify their rivalry, other countries are faced with hard choices

By speaking out last week on the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), two top American officials have sent a clear message that Washington views the on-going India-China border tensions as part of the broader geopolitical contest underway in the region. On a visit to New Delhi, General Charles A. Flynn, Commander of the U.S. Army Pacific, described the level of Chinese activity in Eastern Ladakh as "eye-opening" and questioned its intentions. Then, at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, the region's most high-profile security event, U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd J. Austin said Beijing was continuing to "harden its position" along the border. He drew a connection between China's fishing activities in the East China Sea, the placing of advanced weaponry on man-made islands in the South China Sea, and its LAC actions as part of a "coercive and aggressive approach" to territorial claims. He underlined that the Biden administration saw the Indo-Pacific as its "priority theatre of operations" and at the "heart of American grand strategy". The LAC comment predictably led to China's Foreign Ministry accusing the U.S. of "adding fuel to the fire".

June 15, 2022, will mark the second anniversary of the violent Galwan Valley clash, which also marked the lowest point in bilateral relations in many decades. Leaving aside the curious detail that American officials have recently had more to say publicly than their Indian counterparts about the as-yet-unresolved crisis, there appears to be little prospect of an imminent resolution after two years and 15 rounds of talks. At the Shangri-La Dialogue, to which New Delhi puzzlingly did not send high-level political representation, the Chinese Defence Minister, Gen. Wei Fenghe, alleged it was India that "sent people to the Chinese side of the territory". He did add that both sides were working on maintaining good relations, but with India and China continuing to fortify forward areas, a full de-escalation remains increasingly unlikely. By highlighting the border, the U.S. appears to be making its case to the region that its allies and partners need to band together to restrain China's behaviour. New Delhi, for its part, will likely face ever greater expectations to take a stand on China's actions, beyond the bilateral domain. India, so far, is the only one among the four Quad countries to refrain from taking public positions on issues such as Taiwan and Hong Kong. Beijing, meanwhile, is pointing to the U.S. and the Quad as destabilising forces, viewing the Quad as a nascent "Asian NATO", a label that its members reject. New Delhi might like to say it has already chosen its side in this geopolitical tussle – that is, its own. But the reality is that countries are likely to face increasingly hard choices as they navigate an intensifying rivalry between the world's two biggest powers.

Tackling the crisis of rising global food prices

Analysis shows factors outside agriculture to be responsible, with lessons for the world and in food system management



RAMESH CHAND

Global food prices are characterised by year-to-year volatility and periodic sharp spikes. While year-to-year volatility is easily managed by most countries through changes in their trade and domestic policies, it is steep and severe periodic price shocks that can lead to some sort of a crisis at the global and national levels. The crisis can emerge in the form of food shortages, trade disruptions, a rise and spread in hunger and poverty levels, a depletion of foreign exchange reserves for net food importing countries, a strain on a nation's fiscal resources due to an increase in spending on food safety nets, a threat to peace, and even social unrest in some places. Because of these widespread ramifications of food price shocks, it becomes imperative to understand the real causes of such shocks and devise effective mechanisms to deal with them.

Crises and history

Historical data on food prices compiled by international agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Bank/International Monetary Fund show that since the onset and the adoption of Green Revolution technology in the early 1960s, the world has been struck thrice by food price crises. The first shock was experienced during 1973-76 when the food price index (based on prices in U.S. dollars) doubled in nominal terms and increased by one third in real terms compared to the pre-shock average of four years. This shock moved up the nominal prices of commodities (including food) into a new trajectory. However, for the next two decades, food prices in real terms followed a declining trend and were at their lowest around 2002. After this, nominal as well as the real prices of food began rising; this momentum built up to culminate in the next food

price crisis of 2008, which was further intensified by 2011. While the price shock began softening after 2014, food prices did not move back to their pre-2006 level. The lull in global food prices stayed for a short duration, from 2015 to 2019, and food prices again began moving above the trend by the third quarter of 2020. This time the increase in the food price index happened very quickly and it turned out to be very big - it has taken the food price index to its historically highest level.

This increase in global food prices which manifested itself in the three food price crises since the 1960s offers some pertinent lessons for global food systems and the international community. All the three food price crises during 1973-1976, 2007-12, and the recent one which began towards the end of 2020 have one thing in common – they were triggered by factors outside agriculture. They were not caused by any serious shortfall in agriculture production. Second, the interval between two consecutive price shocks has narrowed down considerably and the severity of shock is turning stronger.

The recent spike

Let us return to the recent spike in food prices which has been triggered by supply disruptions due to COVID-19 and further aggravated by the Russia-Ukraine war. Some other important factors that have also contributed to a rise in food prices and the build-up of price shocks can be discerned from the trade patterns and composition of the usage of food commodities.

The current food price spike first began in vegetable oils and then expanded to cereals. The trade patterns of these commodities show that around 38% of the vegetable oil produced and consumed is globally traded. In the case of wheat, dependence on trade to meet global demand forms 25%, while only one tenth of rice output or consumption is traded. Trade dependence for maize is 16%. It is evident then that the effect of global trade disruption will be higher for commodities that are traded more and vice-versa.

Another factor underlying the



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rising trend and spikes in food prices is the diversion of food for biofuel needs. The proportion of vegetable oil used for biodiesel increased from 1% in 2003 to 11% in 2011; it went up to more than 15% in 2021. This is further related to energy prices. When crude prices increase beyond a certain level it becomes economical to use oilseeds and grains for biodiesel and ethanol, respectively. The second reason for the use of food crops for biofuel is the mandates to increase the share of renewable energy resources.

Food prices are also expected to go up in the current and next harvest season because of an increase in the prices of fertilizer and other agrochemicals. The international price of fertilizer has increased by 150% between April 2021 and April 2022. The international price of a bag of urea (50 kg) has increased from less than ₹1,000 to more than ₹3,000 in the last 15 months.

Implications for India

Export and import in the agriculture sector constituted 13% of gross value added in agriculture during 2020-21. Therefore, some transmission of an increase in global prices on domestic prices is inevitable. (Transmission of international prices to domestic prices can be prevented only if there is no trade.) This transmission of global prices to the domestic market can be moderated through trade policy and other instruments. This is precisely what India has been doing to balance the interests of producers and consumers and in protecting the economy against excessive volatility in international prices. When international prices go too low, India has checks on cheap imports to protect the interests of producers; and when international prices go too high, the country liberalises imports and

imposes checks on exports to ensure adequate availability and reasonable food prices for domestic consumers. The policy of having a buffer stock of food staples has also been very helpful in maintaining price stability especially in the wake of global food crises.

The importance of agriculture exports to mop up food and agriculture surplus from the country is increasing. Ongoing trends in domestic demand and supply imply that India will be required to dispose of 15% of its domestic food output in the overseas market by 2030. This is more than double the current ratio of export to output. This underscores the need to maintain India's image as a reliable and credible exporter. However, it is important to differentiate between the two situations: disturbing normal export and regulating exports exceeding the normal level.

Wheat export restrictions

The recent ban on wheat exports and restrictions on the export of other food commodities by India need to be seen in the light of an abnormal situation created by spikes in international prices. Some experts see it as a setback to India's image as a reliable exporter as this move is seen to disrupt (regular) export channels. A closer examination of data reveals that India's action to ban or restrict food exports is not disrupting its normal exports. India was a very small exporter of wheat, with its share in global wheat trade ranging between 0.1% to 1% during 2015-16 to 2020-21. Despite the ban, the export of wheat this year will be much higher than the average wheat export from India in recent years.

The international market is looking for around 50 million tonnes of wheat to compensate for the disruption in wheat exports from Russia and Ukraine. This is close to half the wheat production in the country and more than two-thirds of the wheat that comes to the market. If India had not imposed a ban on wheat export, it would have resulted in a severe shortage of wheat within the country. No responsible country would jeopardise its own food security by allowing excess exports.

India should continue with a policy of strategic liberalisation, as followed in the past, to balance the interests of producers and consumers. The policy of buffer stock has also been very helpful in maintaining price stability in the face of global price shocks.

Global impact

The Green Revolution technology which spread in developing countries from the 1970s to the 1990s helped in keeping food prices low and relatively stable. As the steam of Green Revolution technology slowed down with the start of the 21st century, food prices began increasing in real terms. At the same time, the resilience of the food sector against price shocks has also weakened.

The world requires new breakthroughs such as Green Revolution technology, for large-scale adoption in order to enable checks on food prices rising at a faster rate. This in turn requires increased spending on agriculture research and development (especially by the public sector and multilateral development agencies). There is a need to strengthen and rejuvenate the global agri-research system under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) which is heading towards disarray.

Biofuel protocols have contributed to the global food crisis for the second time in the last 15 years. Diversion of land under food crops and food output for biofuel should be carefully calibrated with implications for food availability. In most cases it requires serious rethink.

The last three food price crises were primarily caused due to an increase in energy prices and disruptions in the movement of food across borders. Factors related to climate change are going to be an additional source of supply shocks in the years ahead. Therefore, the global community must plan to have a global buffer stock of food in order to ensure reasonable stability in food prices and supply.

The situation requires coordinated and timely action by the global community.

Ramesh Chand is Member, NITI Aayog. The views expressed are personal

The influenza pandemic and 'nations within a nation'

Disease outbreaks can cause unanticipated and disruptive changes, affecting the business environment and policy

ARZI ADBI,
CHIRANTAN CHATTERJEE &
ANANT MISHRA

Few questions in business and public policy are as complex as the question of how to save lives. Lives matter, not only of those who are fortunate to live in more developed regions, but also of those who live in less developed regions. Many governments around the world struggle to address the problem of inequity in access to life-saving products such as vaccines. The struggle becomes even more complex when there is a sudden increase in demand for such life-saving products, for example, during a pandemic. When there is a sudden increase in demand for life-saving products (e.g., flu vaccines during the 2009-10 H1N1 pandemic), how do firms respond across the more versus less developed regions within a nation? Why might foreign incumbents and rival domestic firms respond differently?

To answer such intricate questions, it is crucial to first understand the sources of competitive advantage under normal conditions, i.e., in the absence of the pandemic. Product demand is central to the development of capabilities and the resources of firms as it incentivises their engagement in the high-fixed-cost research and development activities required to produce life-saving products such as vaccines. Typically, in developing economies, relatively muted demand for prophylactic products (i.e., products for which consumer pays now for some uncertain benefits in future) due to lower dis-

posable income and present bias serves as a disincentive for domestic firms as they fear they may not sell enough vaccines at a price sufficient to recover their costs. In contrast, large foreign multinationals (henceforth MNEs) originating from developed economies can still generate additional economic returns by selling their products in developing economies so long as they can recover the variable costs of their products. Therefore, ceteris paribus, greater demand for prophylactic products in developed economies relative to developing economies enable MNEs from developed economies to become dominant incumbents in prophylactic product markets in developing economies.

Outbreaks and impact

However, sudden disease outbreaks can bring unanticipated changes in the business environment that could give rise to within-country spatial heterogeneity in business opportunities and challenges for MNEs and domestic firms. It is not straightforward to predict how these different kinds of firms will strategically respond to such changes. On the one hand, incumbent MNEs may be in a better position to leverage their global scale and reinforce their market dominance across regions within a nation.

On the other hand, however, MNEs may face greater opportunity costs in serving the underdeveloped regions under a condition when there is a spike in global demand. Not only capacity constraints but also opportunity costs of different kinds of firms may li-



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mit the extent to which additional product supplies can be distributed across various regions in response to the sudden increase in pandemic-induced demand. Therefore, in a recent paper (Adbi, Chatterjee, Mishra, 2022; <https://bit.ly/39rlhPF>) published in Management Science, we carefully investigate how MNEs and domestic firms respond in different local markets to a global demand shock.

Vaccine market

Our research analytically leverages the 2009-10 H1N1 influenza pandemic as a source of a sudden increase in global demand for flu vaccines. In the wake of this demand increase, we examine how subnational heterogeneity in health-care infrastructure and political alignment between the federal/central and regional governments in India influence the market share and revenues of MNEs and domestic firms in the influenza vaccine market relative to non-influenza vaccine markets.

We find strong evidence of a decline in the market share of MNEs in regions on an average. Intriguingly, however, the market share of MNEs fell much more in regions low in per capita public health expenditures and a lack of political

alignment between federal-regional governments. It was not as if the revenues of MNEs decreased. The revenues of MNEs increased post pandemic, as one would expect should happen in the wake of a pandemic-induced sudden demand increase. The market entry of de alio domestic firms (that were selling other vaccines) was the core driver of the erosion of the market share of MNEs following the pandemic. Unlike domestic firms, foreign firms did not enter the influenza vaccine market or expand in underdeveloped regions.

The defining factors

In sum, our findings demonstrate that direct costs and opportunity costs are two defining features that can lead to heterogeneity across regions within a nation in the choice sets of foreign and domestic firms. Our findings directly speak to the tensions, which policymakers across several developing economies face; that is, the complex challenge of attracting foreign firms to supply vaccines while also seeking self-sufficiency in domestic vaccine production. The findings of our research enable identifying what type of regions within a nation may require additional policy support to attract different kinds of firms to deliver life-saving products. To encourage the capability development of domestic firms in markets with positive externalities (such as vaccines), policymakers can award advance market commitments to reduce demand uncertainty for firms.

We propose that making such

awards contingent on distribution to underdeveloped regions could be a vital step toward incentivising managers of both foreign and domestic firms in considering the dual imperatives of innovation and inclusion.

Our findings also bring useful insights for transnational organisations (e.g., the World Health Organization, the Gates Foundation, GAVI). Typically, transnational organisations use the country's per capita income as the cut-off line to determine a country's eligibility to receive vaccine donations. While this criterion is a less controversial heuristic, an underdeveloped region within a nation, made worse by the lack of health infrastructure and the lack of political alignment between federal and regional governments, may deserve additional attention during pandemics. Given the subnational heterogeneity within large developing economies, rather than classifying an entire nation as ineligible for vaccine donations, recognising how different subnational regions may fare in health infrastructure and political alignment may lead to a more equitable allocation of supplies for managing the challenges stemming from competitive dynamics in the wake of a pandemic.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Project in Sri Lanka
The rapid rise of a certain business house in India, and in a short span of time, will always raise suspicions. The perception is that this is impossible without government support. Allegations are now being raised about a particular power project in Sri Lanka associated with this

business group having gone through after the Indian Prime Minister's "pressure" on the Sri Lankan President (Page 1, June 13). Though the charge has been subsequently withdrawn, there will always be an element of doubt about the truth of the charge. One can expect stout denials from the ruling party in

India and support for the Prime Minister from the entire ecosystem, but doubts will persist.
ANTHONY HENRIQUES,
Mumbai

Flattened out
Are we living in a nation of democracy or dictatorship? The 'bulldozer culture' raises questions: is the

Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh the Chief Minister or is he the king of Uttar Pradesh, whose word is the law? Even if the house of the arrested political activist was an "illegal construction", the law should have taken its own course. The bulldozer culture is reminiscent of the terror reign of Idi Amin.

There seems to be a new India where hate speech is 'achievement', protests are 'crimes' and bulldozing is 'justice'.
A. JAINULABDEEN,
Chennai

Norms for endorsement
The Government tightening norms for endorsements is welcome (June 12).

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Endorsements should not become a mere money-making business or for gaining further popularity. The new norms will make endorsers more responsible, discerning and accountable.
C.G. KURIKOSSE,
Malappuram, Kothamangalam, Kerala

Environmental governance at centre stage

Indira Gandhi's insights have shaped global institutional response to climate change



JAIRAM RAMESH

It was the noted Pakistani economist, Tariq Banuri, who, in the run-up to the ill-fated Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change in December 2009, first pointed to me that the global environmental discourse has been shaped by four events. The first three were the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962, Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* in 1968, and the Club of Rome's *The Limits to Growth* in early 1972. The fourth was Indira Gandhi's speech at the first-ever United Nations Conference on the Human Environment at Stockholm 50 years ago today. She was the only head of government to speak at that conclave (other than the host, Olof Palme). Her address, which looked at environmental issues from a development perspective and at developmental challenges from an ecological standpoint, has gone into history as a milestone.

A naturalist
Indira Gandhi had already established her credentials as a naturalist when she spoke at Stockholm. She had reactivated the Indian Board of Wildlife in July 1969 and had hosted the Tenth General Assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature five months later. She had started paying attention to protecting sanctuaries and in 1971, had deputed the famed ornithologist Salim Ali to Ramsar, the Caspian Sea site in Iran where the convention to protect wetlands was finalised. The National Committee on Environmental Planning and Coordination had been established under the stewardship of the redoubtable Pitambar Pant. She had launched India's first species conservation programme at Gir for the Asiatic Lion in January 1972 and had started preparations for Project Tiger, which came into being in April 1973. The Wildlife Protection Bill was ready to be enacted by Parliament and it became law in September 1972. Discussions with States to bring legislation to deal with water pollution had been initiated and this



Indira Gandhi giving her address at Stockholm on June 14, 1972. • UNITED NATIONS

would materialise two years later when pollution control boards would also come into being.

A speech for all times

One line in that historic speech – perhaps her greatest and most quoted – continues to get attention. One version has her saying “Poverty is the greatest polluter”. In another version, she is recalled as declaring “Poverty is the worst form of pollution”. Actually, she said no such thing. The line in her speech added at the last minute reads, “Are not poverty and need the greatest polluters?” She said this to bring home to the West that developing countries like India have their own pressing challenges to raise the standard of living of millions of their citizens. She underscored the injustice and inequity in the fact that countries with a small fraction of the world's population consumed the bulk of the natural resources causing far greater environmental degradation than what countries like India were doing. Her speech was wide-ranging and dealt with the environmental effects of war as well, the ongoing conflict in Vietnam being uppermost in people's minds especially with the use of horrific chemical weapons. Quoting from the *Atharva Veda*, she ended by drawing attention to how ancient Indians had recognised the need for ecological balance: What of thee I dig out/Let that quickly grow over/Let me not hit thy vitals/Or thy heart.

The many themes covered in Indira Gandhi's speech, including the need for international cooperation, became very much part of the Stockholm Declaration issued two days later. They were also to provide intellectual ammunition for developing

countries during the discussions and negotiations at the famed Rio Earth Summit in 1992 that resulted in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Thus, while many speeches of political leaders are of the times in which they live and work, Indira Gandhi's Stockholm speech has continued to resonate across the globe. For instance, it was widely commented upon in the months prior to the Paris Summit of December 2015.

Immediately following her speech, Indira Gandhi and Norman Borlaug, the Nobel Laureate and widely considered to be the scientific guru of the Green Revolution, exchanged letters. Borlaug applauded the speech and her firm emphasis on developmental needs, especially the rapid increase in the production of foodgrains. But he wanted her to raise her voice against what he called “eco-maniacs” who were against the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides and against the use of modern science. Indira Gandhi, who knew and admired Borlaug, acknowledged that the Green Revolution in India depended crucially on expanding the application of “fertilisers, insecticides and weed-killers”. But she also expressed concern on the “adverse side effects and the long-term disadvantages of the indiscriminate use of some of these chemicals”. She advised Borlaug (and this was 50 years ago) that “the scientific community, of which you are a leader, [should] develop integrated methods combining biological and agronomic controls with the judicious use of chemicals to raise crop yields and fight insect and pest menaces with minimum damage to nature's balance...

with the aim to maintain a higher environmental quality along with a decent material standard of living”.

Had Indira Gandhi shown any interest, the UN Environment Programme that was established following the Stockholm Conference may well have been headquartered in New Delhi. The momentum generated by her speech would have ensured that. The choice was, in fact, between New Delhi and Nairobi. India did not press its case; Kenya did. Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta was a good friend of India's Prime Minister and had been a classmate of her top aide P.N. Haksar at the London School of Economics. In early November 1972, India gracefully withdrew citing its fraternal links with Kenya. Nine years later, Indira Gandhi was in Nairobi as one of the five heads of government to address the first UN Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy. Her speech there brought renewables into the mainstream of the environmental debate.

A sense of discomfort

Over the last half a century since the Stockholm speech, India has put in place laws, regulations and standards, established institutions and announced numerous policies, programmes and projects to ensure ecological balance as it pursues high economic growth. Nothing can and should remain frozen. Even so, while the rhetoric in international forums has stressed India's environmental commitment and while dramatic declines in costs have enabled a huge expansion in renewable energy capacity, a sense of discomfort on the current regime's actions at home will not be unjustified. In the name of ease of doing business, the regulatory edifice is under systematic assault and enforcement, always weak, has further slackened. When Indira Gandhi spoke at Stockholm, the public health consequences of environmental (mis)governance did not occupy centre stage. They do today. It is because of this that the domestic walk of the Narendra Modi government and not its global talk should be cause for anguish and worry.

Jairam Ramesh, MP, is Chairman of Parliament's Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change

Upholding the right to repair

It is time to not only acknowledge the right to repair of consumers, but also respond to the rights of manufacturers



VERSHIKA & MEHAK BAJPAI

The U.S. state of New York recently passed the Fair Repair Act, which requires manufacturers to supply repair information, tools, and parts to independent repair shops and not just their own stores or partners. This provides consumers with the right to repair and refurbish their purchased goods. With access to relevant tools and repair manuals, independent repair shops will finally be able to compete with manufacturers. While this is a victory for consumer rights, privacy, security and quality concerns along with blatant intellectual property (IP) rights violations of the manufacturers cannot be sidelined.

What should be the scope of the right?

The scope of the right can only be determined in the domestic context of the country. We use complex machinery as compared to the past. For instance, air conditioners have largely replaced fans and coolers. An entire repair class is, in effect, denied its right to conduct business as it does not have the tools, parts, guidelines and technical know-how to repair these high-tech products. Further, the lack of certification/licensing of repair workers is seen as a reflection of their lack of skills. But a repair certification/licence can be allotted to those who pass certain criteria and skill tests. In addition to protecting their right to livelihood, it may also prove beneficial as tech companies are required to share their repair manuals with certified technicians.

Manufacturers claim that the quality and functioning of the product might be adversely affected if they allow repairs by consumers and third parties. These claims are not baseless, for in the absence of supervision, who will ensure the quality of spare parts and even the repair technique? The fear of manufacturers is so potent that they incorporate warranty clauses which lapse when the product is repaired by a third party. While necessary clauses to maintain the quality of the product can be included, a blanket waiver should be avoided. For instance, the quality assurance clause can be incorporated for use of company-recommended spare parts and certified repair shops. Making repair manuals available to certified business owners could go a long way in balancing the rights of consumers and manufacturers.

Additionally, manufacturers can sign a

non-disclosure agreement to protect the IP with the certified repairers/businesses. Customers with access to genuine parts may also approach independent repair providers who may not offer the original manufacturer's warranty but their own warranty. The aim is to protect the rights of all stakeholders.

Adequacy of Consumer Protection Act

Often, manufacturers reduce the durability of the product, compelling consumers to either repurchase the product or get it repaired at exorbitant prices affixed by the manufacturers. Specifically, this tramples upon the right to obtain information about the quality of the product, the right to procure products at reasonable prices, and the right to seek redress against unscrupulous practices. When read closely, the ‘right to repair’ can be said to be implicit in Section 2(9) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. This warrants some relief. Its apparent disregard merits an explicit insertion of a ‘right to repair’ clause in the said provision. This would make consumers more aware, provide tooth to an already implicit right, and aid in advancing repair-related liability on various stakeholders, including policy recommendations, pertinent amendments and even a specific law incorporating the right to repair to better implement it.

For instance, the product liability clause under Section 84 can be amended and expanded to impose product liability concerning various reparability parameters of the product. France requires manufacturers to display a reparability index on their products which consists of five parameters. This helps consumers understand if the products are repairable, difficult to repair or not repairable at all. The duration of imposing product liability may vary depending on the product and its longevity. Here, we can rely on the EU's guidelines on Ecodesign for Energy-Related Products and Energy Information Regulations, 2021, which mandate manufacturers to provide spare parts for up to 10 years to avoid premature obsolescence.

The New York legislation is a reminder that it is time to not only acknowledge the right to repair of consumers but also respond to the corresponding rights of the manufacturers. This warrants some expedited policy changes to recognise the ‘right to repair’, be it through amendments in the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 or through a separate law.

Vershika is a Research Associate at the Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab, and Mehak Bajpai is a Research Scholar at National Law University, Delhi. G.S. Bajpai, the Vice-Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab, contributed to the piece

STATE OF PLAY

Leaving no stone unturned

While the Congress is steadily losing ground, the BJP in Uttarakhand is showing no complacency

NAMITA SINGH

Almost two months after forming the government in Uttarakhand, the BJP has registered a big victory in the Champawat Assembly bypoll. By bagging about 94% of the polled votes, the BJP has shattered the hopes of the Congress of reviving its electoral fortunes in the hill State. The AAP, which is still looking to find its feet in the State, received a setback after Colonel (ret'd) Ajay Kothiyal, its chief ministerial face in the Assembly elections, joined the BJP.

Despite being the captain of the BJP's ship in the Assembly election, Pushkar Singh Dhami had faced defeat in his home turf Khatima (Kumaon). Later, Champawat MLA Kailash Gahtori resigned from his seat, paving the way for Mr. Dhami's entry into the State Assembly.

In Uttarakhand's political history, Mr. Dhami's win is the biggest in a bypoll. All the BJP's star campaigners, including U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, created momentum in favour of Mr. Dhami. The bypoll victory has strengthened both the party and Mr. Dhami's grip over the State.

Mr. Dhami is now taking steps to fulfil the promises made in the party manifesto or ‘Drishti Patra’. The party's promises include providing three free gas cylinders for ‘Antyodaya’ ration card holders and zero tolerance towards corruption. The government has promised to tighten the rope on the land law and anti-conversion law as well. In a controversial move, the Chief Minister has constituted a five-member committee to draft a Uniform Civil Code for implementation in the State amid opposition from the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. In another contentious move, the government has also launched a drive for verification of people from outside the State. The justification for this is that Uttarakhand is a “spiritual capital” and the government “can't allow unwanted elements to cause disturbances and hurt the religious sentiments of the people of Devbhoomi.”

It is because of its development

work that the BJP, which was going through a churn, registered a massive victory in the Assembly election. Better air, railway and road connectivity, development of religious centres like Kedarnath and Badrinath, better health facilities and the establishment of a satellite centre of AIIMS in Udham Singh Nagar are the key projects of the Central government. The Uttarakhand government has also sought withdrawal of the ‘inner-line permit’ system in Niti Valley of Chamoli district and Nelang Valley of Uttarkashi district for better border management and expansion of tourism and other economic activities in villages located there. It is providing necessary assistance under the

‘Him Prahari Yojna’ to settle ex-servicemen and youth in the districts. By promoting tourism and developing religious circuits to attract more and more tourists, the government aims to strengthen the economy and provide employment.

Despite its successive victories, the BJP is not being complacent. At the BJP State Working Committee meeting, the party expressed concern over its poor performance in 4,000-odd booths. All the MPs and MLAs were given the responsibility of strengthening them. During the discussion, the party leaders emphasised that necessary steps must be taken in order to repeat the party's 2019 win in the 2024 general election. On the other hand, the Congress seems to be steadily losing ground. It won 19 seats in the Assembly election, but has failed to address internal differences. It recently appointed 29 observers for its district workshops. But such piecemeal measures may not help the party make inroads into a State where the BJP is leaving no stone unturned to ensure successive victories.

Namita Singh is a journalist based in Dehradun

DATA POINT

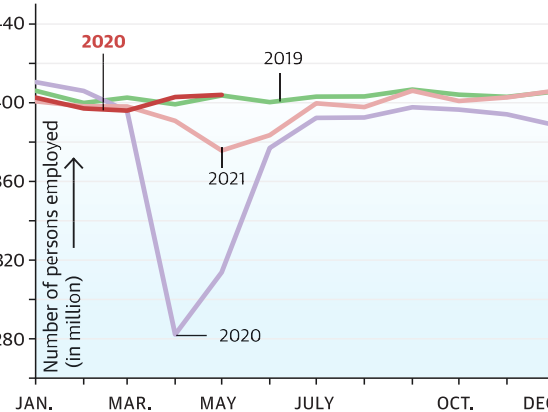
Steady recovery in employment

The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's (CMIE) employment data for May show signs of stability and recovery in the labour sector. Employment rose to 404 million during the month, which was marginally higher than May 2019 and significantly higher than the lows recorded in 2020 and 2021. In the past few months, while the agriculture sector has been shedding jobs, industry has been the biggest gainer. Within industries, employment has been on a rising trend in both manufacturing and construction. The metal industry, which is the biggest employer in the manufacturing sector, has also witnessed rapid recovery

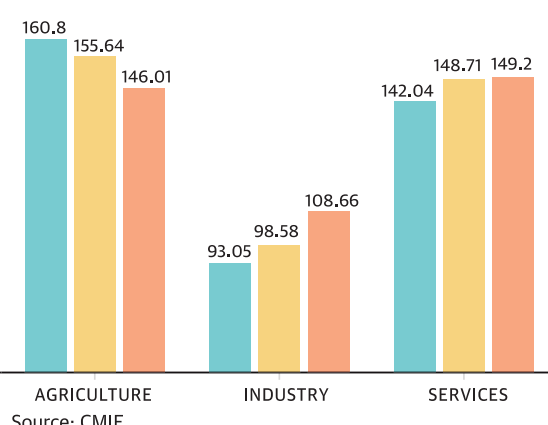


Stable growth: Workers assemble metal rods to make a concrete pillar at a flyover construction site in New Delhi. ■ AFP

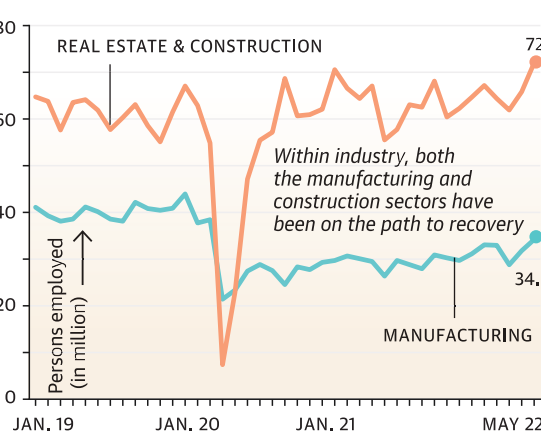
BOUNCING BACK | The chart shows the number of persons employed in the past four years month-wise. About 404 million persons were employed in May, which was close to pre-pandemic figures and significantly higher than the lows recorded in 2021. For the second consecutive month, an increase in employment was recorded even though the pace was relatively slow compared to April



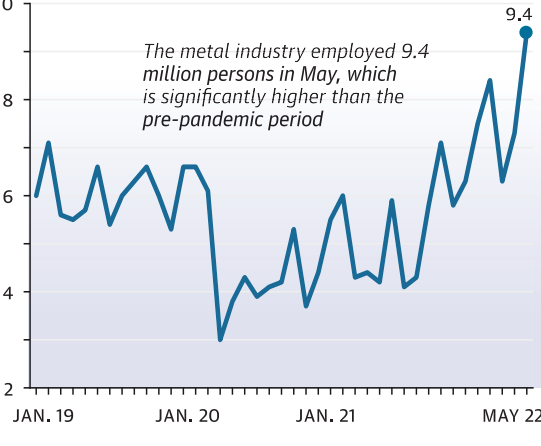
SHIFT IN JOBS | The chart shows the number of persons employed (in million) in agriculture, industry, and services in March, April, and May. The labour market witnessed a shift in employment from agriculture to industry in the past two months. Between March and May, agriculture shed nearly 14.8 million jobs while industry added 15.6 million



ROAD TO RECOVERY | The chart shows the number of persons employed in the manufacturing and construction sectors. In May, about 34.2 million persons were employed by the manufacturing sector, which is the highest since the pandemic started. The construction sector employed 72 million, which is higher than the pre-pandemic levels



HIGHER SHARE | The chart shows the number of persons employed in the metal industry month-wise. As of May 2022, the metal industry employs close to 27% of persons employed in the manufacturing sector. The industry has seen a rapid recovery since the lows recorded in April 2020 and May 2022.



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 14, 1972

Popularity of India-made garments

New Delhi, June 13: India-made ready-made garments are becoming popular in a large number of countries including the United States and Soviet Union. Export earnings from ready-made garments amounted to Rs. 16.5 crores during the first half of 1971-72 registering a 15 per cent increase over the earnings of the corresponding period in 1970-71. The highest earnings came from woollen sweaters and cardigans amounting to Rs. 6.8 crores. The next places go to outer garments (Rs. 2.1 crores), cotton trousers (Rs. 1.4 crores), cotton shirts (Rs. 1.3 crores) and girls' dresses (Rs. 1.3 crores). The Soviet Union took the largest share of the purchases of woollen cardigans, sweaters and outer garments amounting to Rs. 5.5 crores followed by Czechoslovakia with Rs. 60 lakhs. The bulk of the purchases of cotton trousers also was made by the Soviet Union (Rs. 1.1 crores). Cotton dresses for girls were mostly imported by the United States. Nigeria showed a preference for Indian ties and bought Rs. 19 lakhs worth of them.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 14, 1922

Chauri Chaura case

Gorakhpur, June 13: To-day three more prosecution witness and 14 more accused were examined including Shyam Sundar who is alleged to have played a leading part in Non-Co-operation activities and in the Chaura riot. He stated that he was a volunteer and he used to enlist volunteers. He went to the first Dumri Sabha in which Hakim Arif (a local non-co-operator) was also present. The accused did not join any Chaura riot. He went to Prayag to bathe in the holy water of the Ganges. Having received the news of his maternal uncle's illness he returned to the village Pratappgarh where his maternal uncle lived. Soon after, his maternal uncle died and he was arrested there. On being asked the reason why the witness implicated him in the riot, the accused alleged enmity with Sardar Harcharan Singh Shaikari and Thakur (approvers). He told a long story as to how the enmity arose between him and the 2 approvers. The bone of contention was that Shyam Sundar who stood for Congress and used to collect subscription in its name did not allow Shaikari and Thakur to collect subscriptions in the name of Khilafat. As to the remaining witnesses who implicated him in the riot he said that they identified him because they all saw him in the first Dumri Sabha.

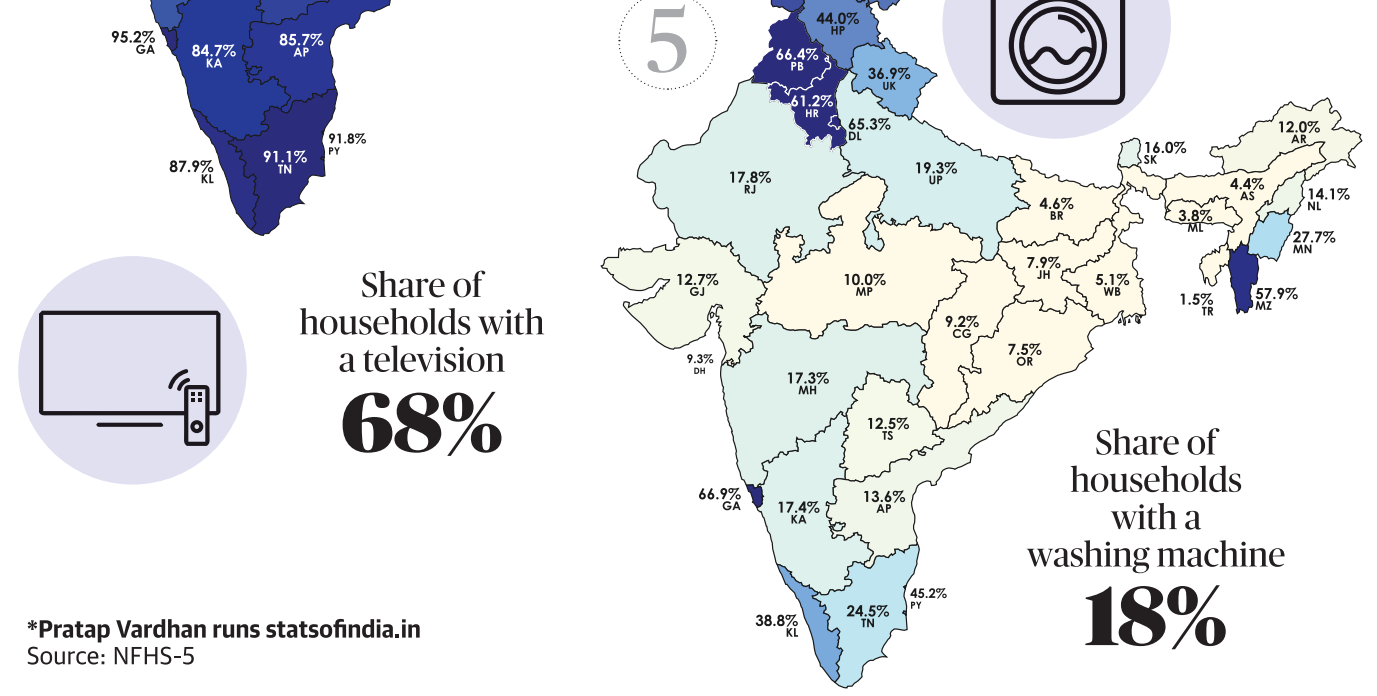
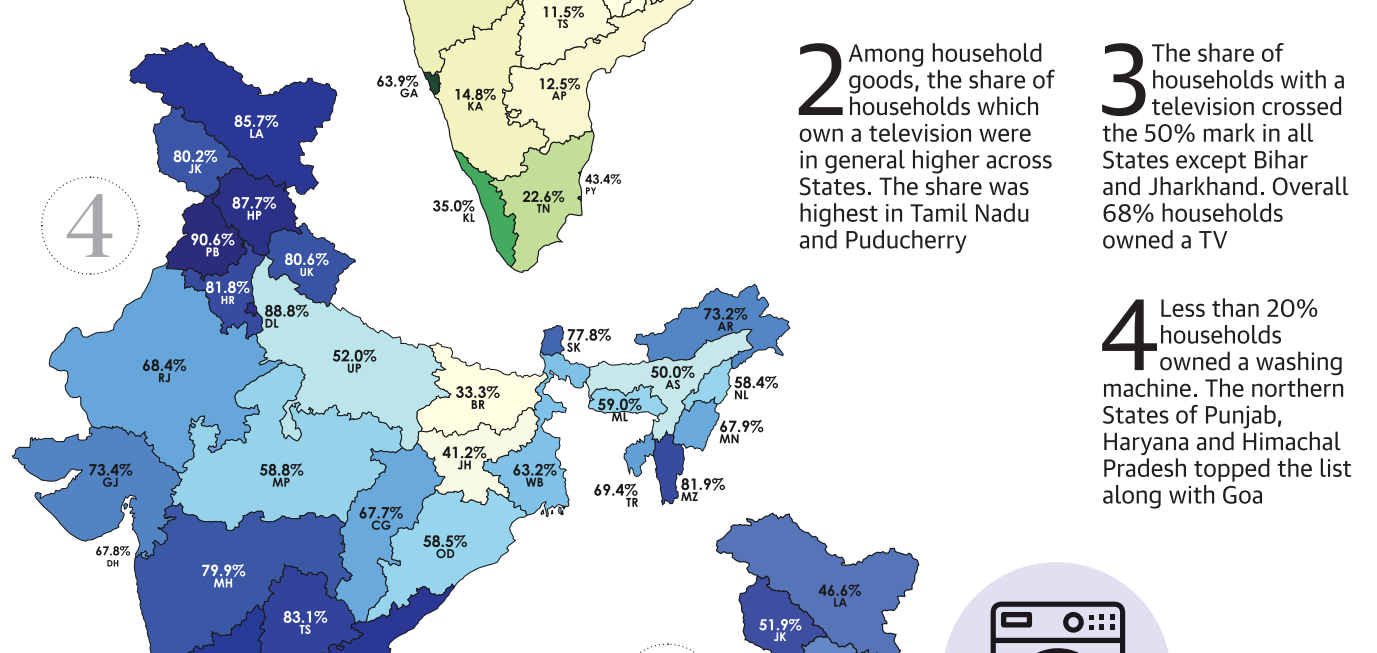
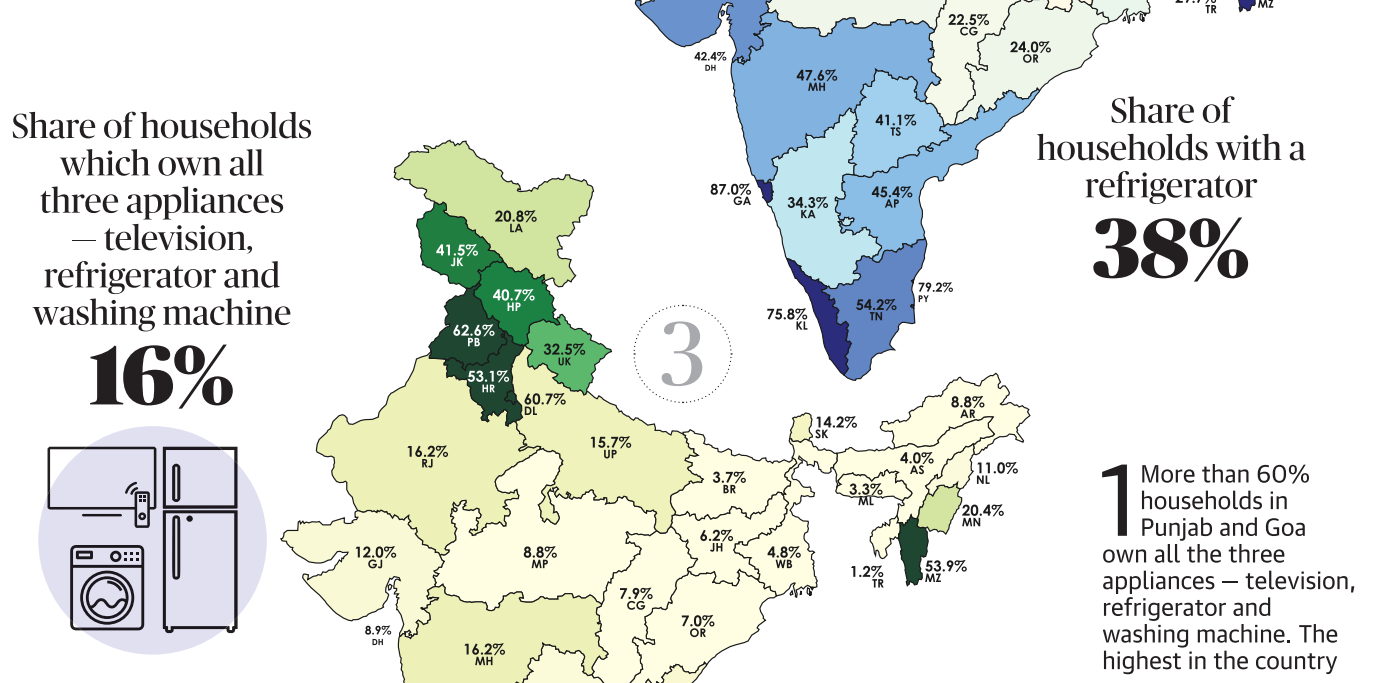
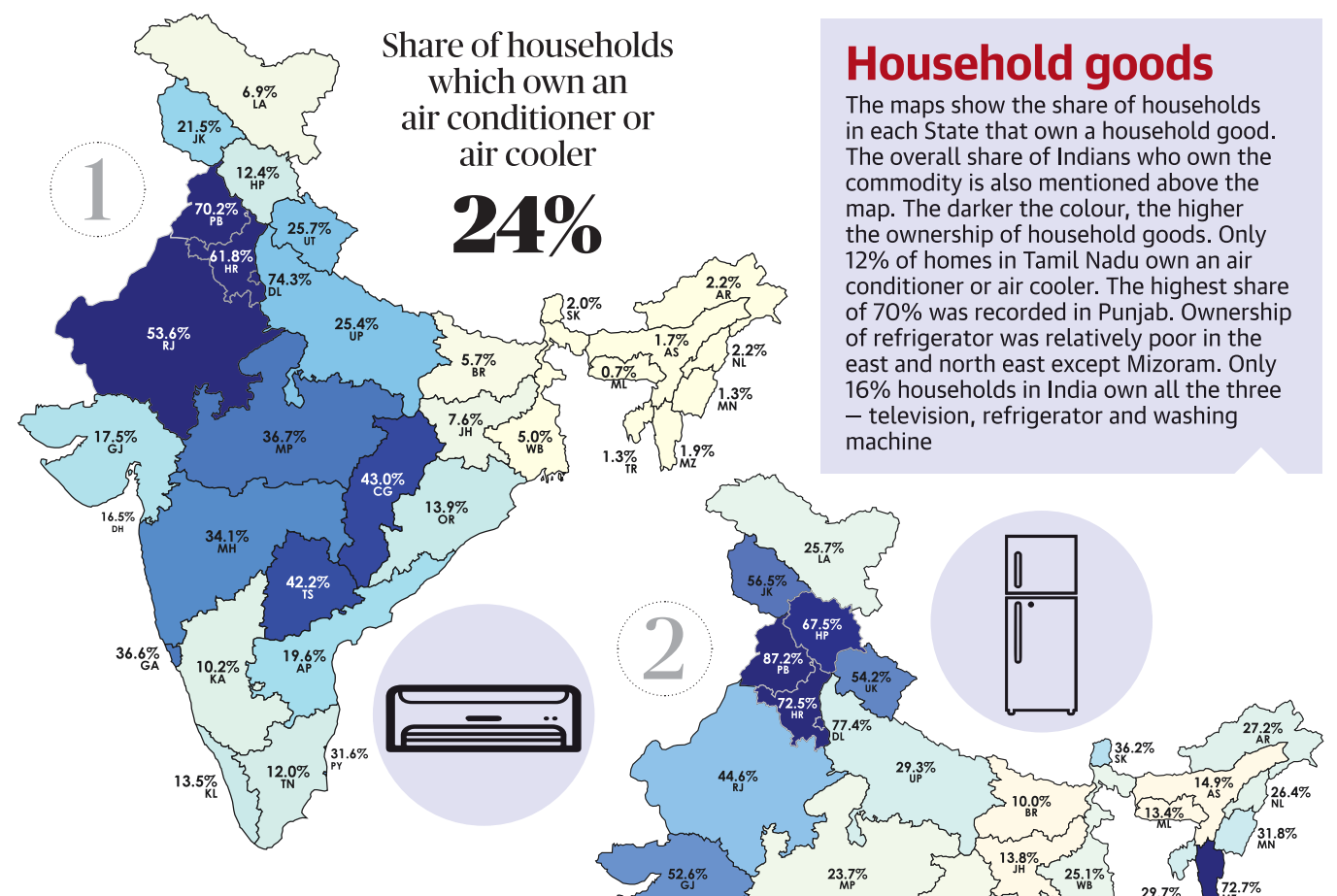
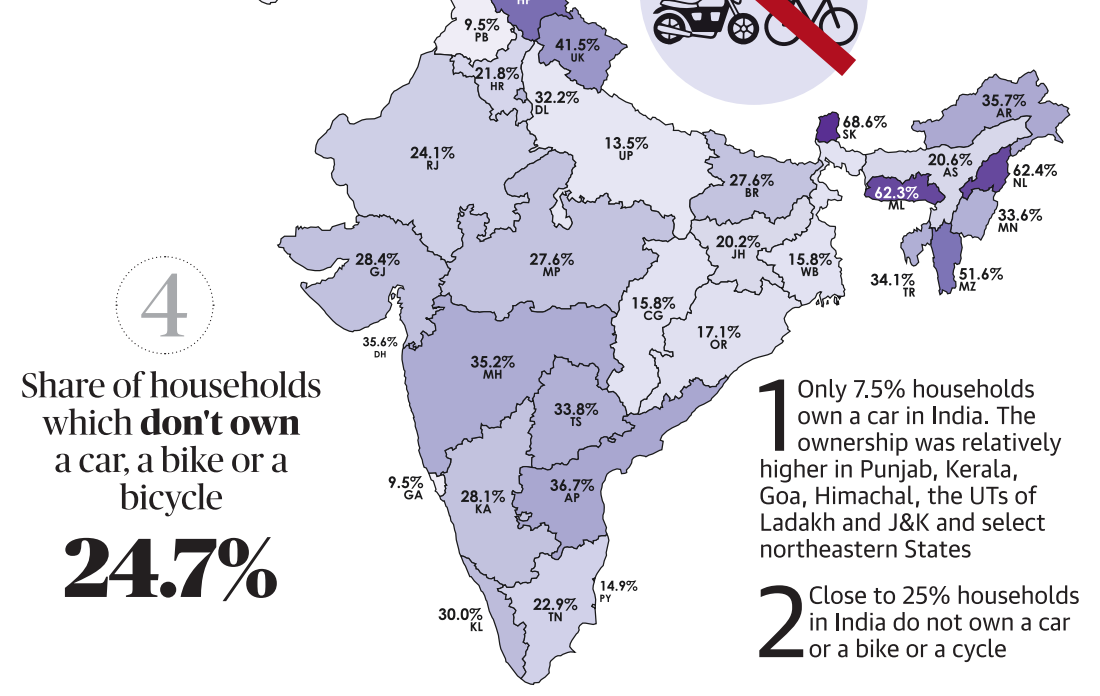
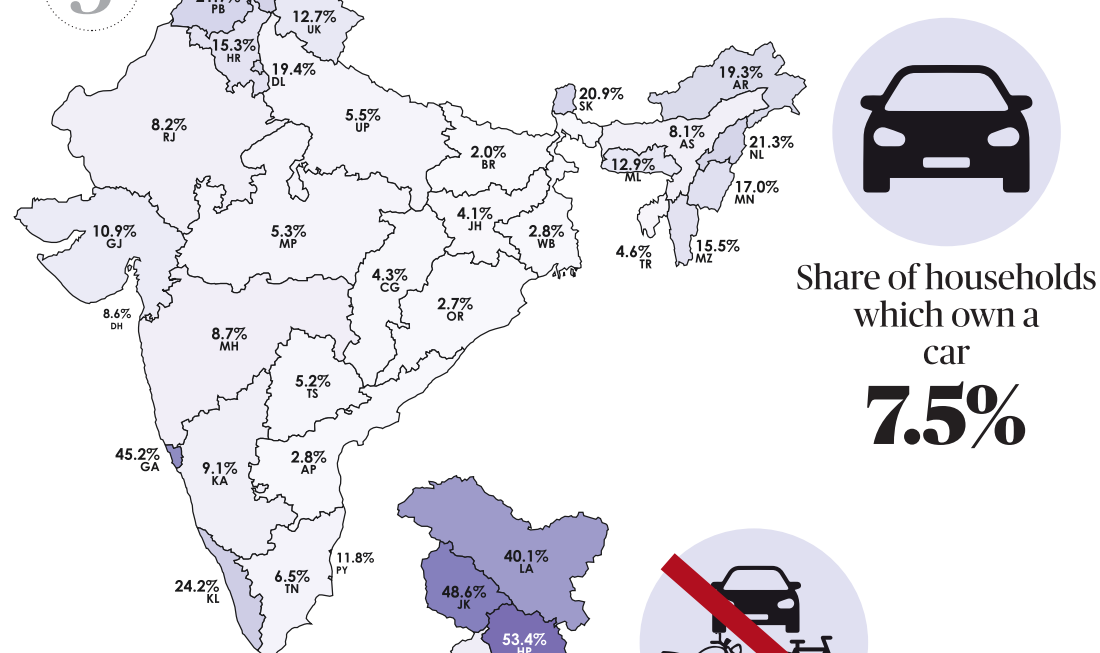
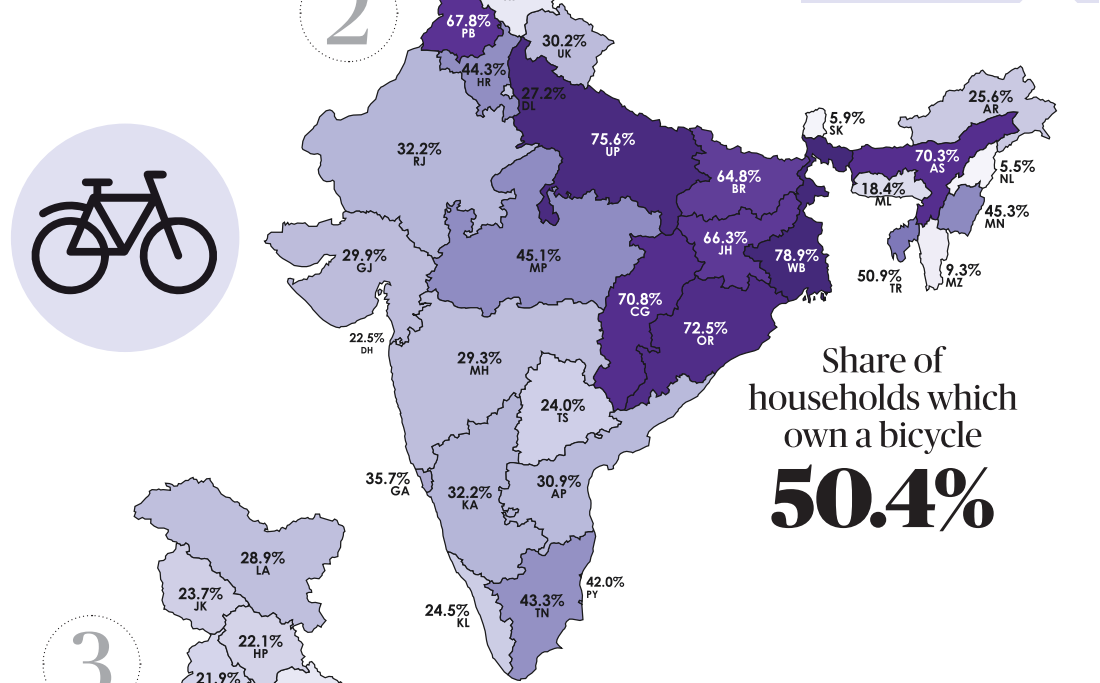
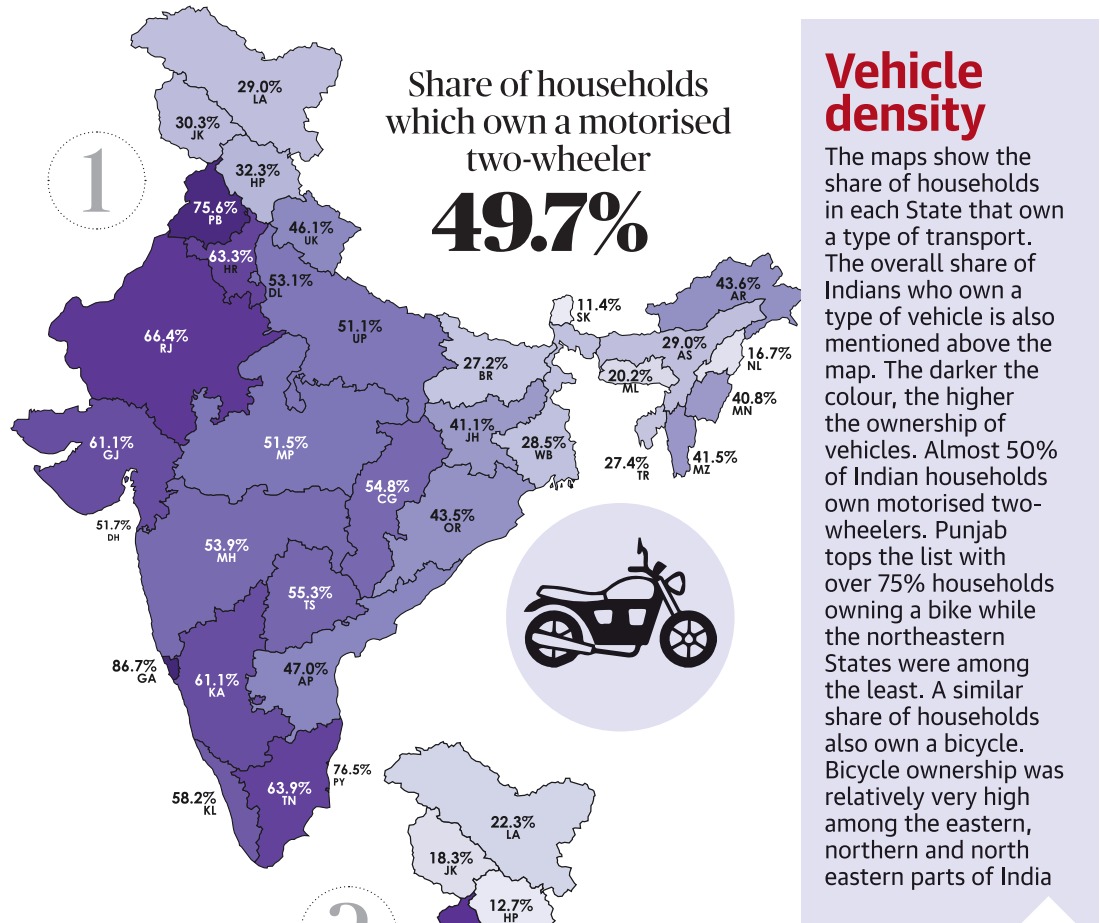
Text & Context

GRAPHICALLY SPEAKING

What Indians own

Nearly two-third of the households in Uttar Pradesh and close to half in Rajasthan endured the searing heat wave this summer without air-conditioners or air-coolers, **NFHS-5 (2019-21)** data reveal. In fact, only 15% of households in rural India owned one of these, whereas in urban areas the ownership was significantly better at around 40%. The data also showed that only 7.5% of households own a car, whereas 50% own a bicycle. Ironically, bicycle lanes are a rarity in India. Notably, only 16% of households own a television, a refrigerator, and a washing machine — showing that the trio are still luxury commodities.

By **Pratap Vardhan*** and **The Hindu Data Team**



*Pratap Vardhan runs statsofindia.in
 Source: NFHS-5

NEWS IN NUMBERS



Falling crypto

>1 In trillion \$, the level to which the value of the cryptocurrency market fell on Monday. This is the first such instance since January 2021, according to data site CoinMarketCap, with the level reaching as low as \$926 billion. The global cryptocurrency market peaked at \$2.9 trillion in November 2021, but it has faltered so far this year. It has lost \$1 trillion in value in the last two months alone as investors ditched riskier assets in the face of high inflation and fears that interest rate raises by central banks will hamper growth. REUTERS

Dino-mite ticket sales

143 In million \$, is how much *Jurassic World Dominion* brought in in its domestic box office debut, securing it's spot at the top of box office charts. Despite blistering reviews, the sixth film in Universal's dinosaur saga is looming large over a sizzling weekend at the domestic box office. It's only the third time in the pandemic era that ticket sales have collectively eclipsed the \$200 million mark, according to Comscore. This is also due to the enduring popularity of *Top Gun: Maverick* which is still flying high in second place. REUTERS

Inflation eases

7.04 In percentage, India's May retail inflation level — a slight ease compared to the eight-year high of 7.79% in April. This figure, however, remains above the central bank's tolerance band for a fifth month in a row, suggesting it would continue with rate hikes in August. A surge in crude oil prices since Russia invaded Ukraine has pushed up consumer prices globally, forcing central banks to raise interest rates to tame inflation. May's print was marginally lower than the 7.10% forecast by economists. REUTERS

Spreading illness

126 The number of cases of dengue along with the 21 cases of malaria reported in Delhi, according to a civic report released on Monday. No death has been reported due to the vector-borne disease so far. Cases of vector-borne diseases are usually reported between July and November, but the period may stretch till mid-December. Civic officials said this year, dengue cases are being recorded early due to a congenial weather for mosquito-breeding. Delhi has also reported eight cases of chikungunya so far this year. PTI

Ukraine opens probe

12,000 The number of Ukrainians killed nationwide during Russia's war for which police have opened criminal investigations. Authorities in the Kyiv region reported discovering the bodies of several victims whose hands were tied behind their backs. Since the withdrawal of Russian troops from the region, authorities say they have uncovered the bodies of 1,316 people. Reporters saw a mass grave just behind a trench dug out for a military vehicle. AP



In ruins: A bulldozer demolishes the house of a Muslim man, who Uttar Pradesh State authorities accuse of being involved in riots, in Prayagraj on June 12. • REUTERS

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Demolition drives violate international law

The bulldozing of houses was to impose collective punishment on the alleged rioters

PRABHASH RANJAN
AMAN KUMAR

In the context of the Uttar Pradesh government bulldozing 'illegal properties' of protestors who took to the streets to condemn the comments made by erstwhile BJP spokespersons, this article dated April 20, 2022 by Prabhash Ranjan and Aman Kumar explains how arbitrary destruction and eviction of houses are against international laws.

Communal clashes broke out during Ram Navami processions in several parts of the country including at Khargone in Madhya Pradesh. Subsequently, the Madhya Pradesh government bulldozed the houses of those who were allegedly involved in rioting. The State government claims that these demolitions are in response to illegal encroachments. However, the fact that these arbitrary demolitions are being carried out against the alleged rioters of one particular community and in the immediate aftermath of the riots shows that their purpose seems to be to impose collective punishment.

The bulldozing machines— the new symbols of brute state power — are not just demolishing houses and shops but also bulldozing rule of law and our constitutional order. This idea of serving 'justice', quick and cold, through bulldozers emanated in Uttar Pradesh. In the wake of protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 the Uttar Pradesh government passed orders to recover damages from those who were allegedly involved in destroying public property. This process has been further institutionalised through the enactment of the Uttar Pradesh Recovery of Damages to Public and Private Property Act, 2020.

Several commentators have already pointed out that the use of such brute state power violates various domestic legal provisions. Our purpose is to illustrate that the act of bulldozing houses without due process and legal sanction also amounts to a breach of India's international law obligations.

Right to adequate housing

The right to housing is not only a fundamental right recognised under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, it is also a well-documented right under the international human rights law framework, which is binding on India. For instance, Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights (UDHR) states that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care..."

Likewise, Article 11.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) recognises "the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions". Furthermore, under Article 11.1, countries are under an obligation to take "appropriate steps" to ensure the realisation of these rights such as the right to adequate housing.

The rights recognised under ICESCR, according to Article 4, can be restricted by States only if the limitations are determined by law in a manner compatible with the nature of these rights and solely to promote society's general welfare. However, any limitation imposed on the rights given in the Covenant such as the right to adequate housing cannot lead to the destruction of these rights. This is categorically recognised in Article 5 of ICESCR.

Besides, international law also prohibits arbitrary interference in an individual's right to property. For instance, Article 12 of the UDHR states that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation". Article 12 also stipulates that "everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks". This same right is also provided under Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Article 17 further provides that everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others and that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property. Thus, arbitrary interference with an individual's property is a gross violation of the ICCPR.

Forced evictions

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) commonly known as the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Office — whose mandate is to promote and protect human rights guaranteed under international law — has elaborated on the content of the right to adequate housing.

According to the UN Human Rights Office, an integral element of the right to adequate housing

is 'protection against forced evictions'. Building on the right to adequate housing, given in Article 11.1 of ICESCR, the UN Human Rights Office defines 'forced evictions' as 'permanent or temporary removal against the will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection'. The right to adequate housing also entails freedom from arbitrary interference with one's home, privacy, and family.

The bulldozing of the houses by the Madhya Pradesh government of the alleged rioters amounts to forced eviction and arbitrary interference with an individual's home, thus a breach of Article 11.1 of the ICESCR. This action can be defended under international law only if it can be shown that the forced eviction is as per the law and in conformity with the provisions of the human rights covenants. Also, other requirements such as whether the state action was necessary and proportionate will have to be examined. It is unlikely that these forced evictions can be lawfully defended given the timing of the eviction.

One wonders that if these demolitions were against illegal encroachments, then did the authorities get the eviction order on the day of the riots, or did they have an eviction order earlier, but decided to act only after the riots? Also, were the eviction orders limited to the Muslim locality?

Judicial incorporation

Moreover, the international human rights law identified above has been judicially incorporated by the Supreme Court of India into the Indian legal system. The apex court in cases like *Bachan Singh vs State of Punjab*, *Vishaka vs State of Rajasthan*, and recently in the famous *Puttaswamy vs Union of India* has laid down the principle that the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution must be read and interpreted in a manner which would enhance their conformity with international human rights law.

As the custodian of India's constitutional order, it is high time that the judiciary acted and imposed necessary checks on the unbridled exercise of power by the executive. Courts should use international law to counter the nationalist-populist discourse.

Prabhash Ranjan is Professor at O. P. Jindal Global University. Aman Kumar is Assistant Professor at IFIM Law School

THE GIST

■ The right to housing is not only a fundamental right recognised under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, it is also a well-documented right under the international human rights law framework, which is binding on India.

■ International law also prohibits arbitrary interference in an individual's right to property. For instance, Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation".

■ The above identified international human rights law has been judicially incorporated by the Supreme Court of India into the Indian legal system. Therefore, the bulldozing of houses of the alleged rioters amounts to forced eviction and arbitrary interference with an individual's home which is a breach of national as well as international law.

THE DAILY QUIZ

The 44th Chess Olympiad will take place next month in Tamil Nadu. How well do you know your chess champions?

- Who became the youngest World Chess Champion at the age of 22 years and 210 days?
- Who was the youngest to become a Grandmaster in chess at the age of 12 years 4 months and 25 days?
- Who was India's first International Master?
- Who in 2016 became the youngest international master in history, at the age of 10 years, 10 months, and 19 days?
- If a chess player is starting with a 1.e4 move (one of the most popular opening moves), which piece on the chess board is he moving and where?



◀ What was the name of the computer that defeated the chess world champion Garry Kasparov on May 1997? It, thereby created a record of being the first computer to win a match against a world champion.

Please send in your answers to the dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

- Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:**
- This king was the longest-reigning monarch in history. **Ans: Louis XIV**
 - In 1993, the Buckingham Palace was opened to the public for the first time because of this incident. **Ans: A fire broke out at Windsor Castle. Money raised from the entry fee to Buckingham Palace was used to restore the castle**
 - The Prime Minister Queen Elizabeth enjoyed meeting the most. **Ans: Winston Churchill**
 - The Queen's greatest regret remains her delayed response to this disaster which killed nearly 150 people. **Ans: The Aberfan disaster.**
 - During the Queen's last visit to India, this Indian Prime Minister reportedly called Britain a "third-rate power". **Ans: I.K. Gujral**
 - This King was the shortest reigning British monarch; he was never crowned. **Ans: Edward VIII. He abdicated over the controversial decision to marry an Australian divorcee.**
 - The Queen technically has the right to claim ownership of this particular bird and two aquatic mammals in British waters. **Ans: Swans (unmarked mute swans) and whales and dolphins**
- Visual: The three men in the picture with the Queen. **Ans: Michael Collins, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin**

Early Birds: Aaryan Kumar| Adya Upasana Routray

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Perfect hostess, imperfect life

The memories of war looms over Virginia Woolf's 1925 novel about a day in June

ANUSUA MUKHERJEE

"Mrs. Dalloway said that she would get the flowers herself." A contemporary reader might put the eye-roll emoji beside this sentence, which introduces us to Mrs. Dalloway, the eponymous protagonist of Virginia Woolf's 1925 novel. The first meeting is off-putting in a way — can we be invested in a woman so privileged that she usually has people fetching flowers for her? Do we care if she has decided to venture out by herself this one time? The word 'care' is pivotal, because Clarissa Dalloway, the posh, middle-aged wife of an MP, apparently seems to care only about flowers, parties and her genteel friends. The unfolding novel reveals that she is weighed down with cares — about her old friends, failed relationships, her rebellious daughter and above all, the state of the world, which has changed radically. Clarissa walks down London one day in the middle of June 1923, when the Great War has just about ended and another one is looming over the horizon.

The war never leaves

"The War was over" we are told. Ostensibly yes, but actually it is everywhere — in the buildings still bearing the scars of Zeppelin raids, in the minds of traumatised people who fight darkness even on that bright sunny day in June. Just beneath the surface of sparkling London is the "unreal city", with grey streets, broken people and a sickly yellow fog that T.S. Eliot spoke of in *The Waste Land*, published three years before Mrs. Dalloway. "I had not thought death had undone so many./ Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,/ And each man fixed his eyes before his feet."

On her flower-hunting mission, Mrs. Dalloway walks along Piccadilly towards Bond Street. The Royal Academy of Arts on Piccadilly had suffered considerable damage during an air-raid in September 1917. Members of its staff were enlisted in the army as soon as the war began. Ernest E.V. Wright, the sub-librarian, served at Gallipoli and the Somme, and resumed his career at the Academy after the war. Others weren't so lucky. Francis E.F. Crisp, a painter, volunteered for the Artists Rifles and went to the front in 1914. He was dead within 10 weeks. Virginia Woolf's youngest brother-in-law Cecil was killed in 1917 at the battle of Cambrai just after he turned 30.

One of the fearsome after-effects of the carnage was that it made stories impossible. War veterans returned with PTSD, trapped forever in the horror they have witnessed, unable to move ahead. Septimus Warren Smith, suffering from shell-shock, still talks to his fallen friend Evans. He has retreated to his inner world because he fears that people outside have lost the capacity for love and kindness. Locked up in his personal inferno, he can seek release only through death.

The end of love and art

Clarissa, who has never met Septimus, understands his compulsions perfectly when she hears about his death by suicide towards the end of her party. Earlier in the novel, the mind of these two strangers unified briefly as they both found solace in Shakespeare's lines: "Fear no more the heat of the sun/Nor the furious winter's rages." The beauty of the lines is like a talisman protecting them from mortality by transmuting it into something rich and strange. This is the very possibility that war threatens to negate each time it strikes. It shatters art, beauty and love.

Clarissa carries Septimus within her but unlike him, she must go on, in a nod to life, to art. The novel carrying her name is the fragment salvaged from the ruins of war. In its pages, "The War was over" and life has won.

Mrs. Dalloway moves us because not much has changed in human nature since 1925. The world is still at war, victims' bodies are piling up, minds are getting twisted out of shape by grief. Mrs. Dalloway, the woman and her novel, stands like a lone figure choosing life, rebuffing death.

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to letters@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Text & Context'

FROM PAGE ONE

Retail inflation eases marginally to 7.04%

Six other sub-groups of food and beverages recorded a decline in the pace of price rise, led by edible oils and fats (13.26% in May from 17.28% in April), while pulses and eggs recorded negative inflation of 0.42% and 4.64%, compared with 0% and 1.86% in April, respectively. Inflation in cereals cooled only slightly to 5.33% in May from 5.96% in April.

On a month-on-month basis, the Consumer Price Index was up 0.94% in May compared with April, while the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) rose 1.59%. Within the CFPI, the rural food price index rose 1.34% and urban prices rose 1.84%.

“Unfortunately, higher food and fuel prices are likely to impact rural demand and core inflation edging up sharply is a concern. Supply-side constraints are likely to keep prices high for long despite tightening monetary policy,” said Deloitte India economist Rumki Majumdar.

Fuel and light inflation eased slightly to 9.54% in May from 10.8% in April and inflation in transport and communication also fell to 9.54% from almost 11% in April. Inflation in household goods and services as well as miscellaneous items, which indicated that price rise pressures had become all-pervasive and generalised in April, moderated marginally from 7.97% to 6.85% and 8.03% to 6.82%, respectively, in May.

“The miscellaneous category of goods and services was also high with only health and education regis-

tering less than 6%. The indication is that the transfer of higher input costs to consumers is still playing out for household goods and personal care products,” Mr. Sabnavis noted.

Highest in Telangana
Eleven of the 22 States and Union Territories, for which the National Statistical Office released disaggregated inflation trends, reported price rise at a faster pace than the all-India rate of 7.04%.

The highest inflation rates were reported from Telangana (9.45%), Maharashtra (8.52%), Andhra Pradesh (8.49%), West Bengal (8.27%), Jharkhand (7.51%) and Gujarat (7.48%). Kerala continued to record the lowest inflation rate at 4.82% (from 5.08% in April), followed by Delhi (5.57%), Himachal Pradesh (5.63%), Tamil Nadu (5.72%) and Punjab (5.77%).

Price rise in clothing and footwear also remained high at 8.85%, only one percentage point lower than April’s 9.85%. Inflation in footwear prices remained in the double digits at 10.72% (compared with 12.12% in April), while clothing inflation fell to 8.53% in May from 9.51% in April.

“If inflation undershoots RBI’s quarterly estimate, it should assuage fears of a sharp tightening in the August 2022 monetary policy review,” Ms. Nayar said, adding that ICRA continues to expect rate hikes of 35 and 25 basis points, respectively, in the central bank’s next two bi-monthly policy reviews, followed by a pause.

Rahul quizzed by ED for 11 hours, summoned again

Mr. Chowdhury, who is the party’s leader in the Lok Sabha, formally lodged a complaint with the Tughlaq Road police station about suffering an injury because of alleged manhandling, while visuals of Mr. Venugopal being forcibly lifted by the police personnel went viral.

Party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra dropped in at the Tughlaq Road police station to check on the senior leaders who were detained by the police after stopping their march.

Late at night, around 11.25 p.m., Mr. Chowdhury and Mr. Venugopal dared the police personnel to formally arrest them or release them as they were detained for more than 12 hours without a formal charge.

The Congress leaders and MPs, who were detained at various police stations such as Mandir Marg and Sarojini Nagar, besides Tughlaq Road, were let off only after Mr. Gandhi left the ED office. “This [Narendra Modi] government has unleashed the terror of Central agencies on people. That’s why I called up the offices of CBI Director, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman to meet them and convey my feelings as a citizen and as a Chief Minister about how low their credibility is now,” Mr. Gehlot said. Mr. Baghel questioned why the Central agencies

targeted only Opposition leaders and never anyone from the ruling party.

“Not one leader from the BJP or any of their allies has been questioned. The Central agencies are being used to suppress the Opposition. Whenever a raid takes place on an Opposition leader, first the case is highlighted as a very big one. Then when the same leader joins the BJP, the case is dismissed,” Mr. Baghel said.

The leaders of the G-23, the ginger group pushing for internal reforms, were conspicuous by their absence.

Most of the lanes and arterial roads leading to the ED office were barricaded and prohibitory orders under CrPC Section 144 were imposed in the area by the Delhi Police.

The police had reportedly cited the recent communal tensions and the law and order situation to deny permission for the march and parts of central Delhi were converted into a fortress with anti-riots police, the Rapid Action Force and the CRPF deployed on the route to the ED office.

The investigating officer of the case, in the rank of an Assistant Director, is understood to have put questions about the incorporation of Young Indian, a not-for-profit company that now owns Associated Journals Ltd. (AJL) which publishes the *National Herald* newspaper.

Vaccinate more people, Centre tells States

The States were also told to focus on implementing the guidelines on surveillance of incoming international travellers and surveillance through health facilities, labs, community etc.

Stressing on the importance of COVID vaccination among the vulnerable age groups, Dr. Mandaviya urged the State Health Ministers to personally review the status and progress of the special month-long drive Har Ghar Dastak 2.0 (door-to-door) campaign, which began on June 1.

“Let us accelerate our efforts to identify all beneficiaries in the 12-17 age group for the first and second doses, so they can attend schools with the protection of the vaccine,” the Minister said.

He urged States for focussed coverage of 12-17 age groups through school-based campaigns (govt/private) informal Schools like madrasas, day care centres), along with targeted coverage of non-school going children during the summer vacation.

Pandits refuse to rejoin duty in Valley

Community members say government measures are insufficient to address their security concerns

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

More than 5,000 Kashmiri Pandit employees, recruited under the Prime Minister’s special employment package since 2008, continued to stay away from offices in the Valley on Monday, even after a month has passed since a Pandit employee was shot dead by militants in Budgam.

However, top government officials were hopeful that the employees will rejoin duty within the next two weeks. Most of the employees termed the recent government measures,

which included posting to district headquarters and safer places, as insufficient to address their security concerns. The community was frightened by the back-to-back targeted killings in May, which included one Kashmiri Pandit, two Hindus from Jammu, one Hindu from Rajasthan and three local Muslim policemen.

“I have not rejoined the duties like others. Our prime demand is relocation and at-



Demanding justice: Members of the All Migrants Employees Association Kashmir protesting in Jammu on Monday. ■PTI

tachment with the Relief Commissioner’s office till the situation improves in Kashmir. Selective killings have left us scared,” Sanjay Koul, a Kashmiri Pandit employee from south Kashmir, told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Kaul termed the recent measures such as redesignating supernumerary posts as divisional-level posts of the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) administration as service-related. “The service-re-

lated issues have nothing to do with the agitation of Pandits. We never demanded promotions or safe locations. They should have been addressed earlier,” Mr. Kaul from Vessu transit colony in Kulgam, said.

“I am not going to school anymore. Our children are also home-bound and skip classes unlike others. The future of our children is at stake,” he added.

The government had di-

rected secure posting for Kashmiri Pandits at the district headquarters and in safer zones. At least 177 employees have been posted to safer zones in Srinagar.

Vinod Kaul, an engineer in Srinagar, said none of the 300 employees living at the Sheikhpura colony in Budgam, where the deceased Bhat lived before he was killed in May 12, have joined their duties. “Rahul was also posted at the district head-

BSF exchanges fire with armed men

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAMMU

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday “exchanged gunfire with armed men” on the International Border (IB) in the Arnia Sector of Jammu, a statement said.

“Alert Border Security Force (BSF) troops observed suspicious movement close to the International Border in Arnia sector Sunday night at about 09:30 p.m.,” the Border Security Force (BSF) said in the statement on Monday.

“The BSF troops challenged, on which the miscreants fired and BSF retaliated by firing few bursts towards them due to which they ran back,” the BSF said.

Search operation on
The border force said it carried out a search operation on Monday morning “but nothing has been recovered so far.”

Further investigation is under way.

Five policemen suspended over ‘custodial death’ in Chennai

Magistrate holds inquiries; DGP transfers case to CB-CID

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Five police personnel, including the Inspector of Police, Kodungaiyur, have been placed under suspension following the reported custodial death of a history-sheeter on June 12.

S. Rajasekar, alias Appu, 33, of Mundhiri Thoppu in Thiruvallur district, died under suspicious circumstances after he was picked up from Manali by a special team under the Inspector of Police, Kodungaiyur, in connection with an investigation into a theft case in Kodungaiyur police limits. The police said Rajasekar had over two dozen criminal cases against him for offences including house break-in, theft, robbery and attempt to murder. He had a history-sheet in his name at the Sholavaram police station, besides cases in Manali New Town, Vyasaripadi, MKB Nagar, Avadi Tank Factory and Thirunindravur police



S. Rajasekar

stations. The police said he was also questioned in connection with the recovery of stolen properties, and had disclosed everything. While he was kept in a police outpost, he complained of uneasiness and fainted. He was taken to a private hospital and later rushed to the Government Stanley Hospital, where he was declared dead.

On the orders of the City Police Commissioner, MKB Nagar police registered a case. “As per the procedure

stipulated in Section 176(1) (A) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, when a person dies in the custody of the police, the nearest magistrate is empowered to hold an inquiry into the cause of death, in addition to the investigation conducted by the police officer,” a senior police officer said.

On Monday, Metropolitan Magistrate S. Lakshmi held inquiries at the Government Stanley Hospital, the Kodungaiyur police station and an outpost, besides speaking to the relatives of the deceased.

Inspector of Police, Kodungaiyur, George Miller Ponraj, Sub-Inspector of Police Kanniyappan, head constables Jayasekar and Manivannan and Grade I police constable Sathiyamoorthi were placed under suspension.

Director General of Police C. Sylendra Babu issued orders transferring the case to the CB-CID.

Centre urged to extend GST compensation

MSME is struggling to survive: Mitra

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

Former West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra has written a letter to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman urging her to continue to provide GST compensation to the States for the next three to five years beyond June 2022.

Mr. Mitra, who is now the Principal Chief Adviser to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, wrote, “I hope you will agree that it would be most logical to continue to provide GST compensation to the States for the next three to five years beyond June 2022, to provide much needed relief to the State finances.”

He argued that “unforeseen battle against this pandemic” has put the fiscal health of the States under huge stress alongside which massive inflationary pressures have severely aggravated and impaired the economies of the States. “The GDP level has not yet reached the pre-pandemic

Tribal groups slam Manipur CM’s remark

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Tribal groups in Manipur have slammed Manipur Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh for allegedly saying “land belongs to Mother Nature and not to any particular community”. Five organisations, including Tangkhul Naga Long, reminded the CM that the identity of the tribal people had a “sacred” connection with their land.

“We are indigenous to our land and thus, the sole owners of our land. The British, having understood this right from the early days, created laws to honour the tribals’ relationship with land,” they said. They pointed out that Clause (B) of Section 2 of the Protection of Manipur People Bill defines ‘Manipur people’ as ‘persons whose name are in the NRC, 1951, Census Report 1951 and Village Directory of 1951 and descendants who have contributed to social, cultural and economic life of Manipur’.



Amit Mitra

level and is not likely to reach a desirable trajectory anytime soon,” he wrote on June 11. Mr. Mitra said he was chairperson of the Empowered Committee of Finance Ministers of States.

He added that all the political parties had decided to adopt GST on the condition that the Centre agreed to compensate the States for revenue loss for five years. Mr. Mitra argued that the MSME sector is struggling to survive and the unorganised sector that provides employment to 90% of the labour force remains severely fractured.

Smriti flays Cong. stir; calls it ‘pressure tactics’

‘Protest is not bid to save democracy, but to protect assets of Gandhi family worth ₹2,000 crore’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Minister and Amethi MP Smriti Irani described the street protests launched by the Congress on Monday, as party leader Rahul Gandhi went for questioning by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), as a move undertaken “to pressure an investigating agency openly” because “their corruption has been exposed”. She said it was an attempt to “protect the assets of the Gandhi family”.

At a press conference at the BJP’s national headquarters, Ms. Irani said, “Congress leaders have taken to the streets to pressure an investigating agency openly



Up in arms: Congress cadre protesting against the summoning of Rahul Gandhi by ED in New Delhi. ■SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

because their corruption has been exposed.”

“The impasse that Congress leaders and workers are doing today on the call of Rahul Gandhi, I would like to

tell the country that this is not an attempt to save democracy, but an attempt to protect the assets of the Gandhi family worth ₹2,000 crore,” Ms. Irani said.

The Minister said that in the 1930s, the company Associate Journals Ltd. was formed with funds from 5,000 freedom fighters as shareholders. “Today, a company that was to be run by freedom fighters has been usurped by the Gandhi family,” she said.

“Today, I will draw the attention of those who want to put pressure on the investigating agency, on the sentence of a 2019 judgment of the Delhi High Court, ‘The ownership of Rahul and Sonia Gandhi ji over the AGL is an attempt to illegally take possession of the property,’” she added. Ms. Irani further alleged that the entire Gand-

hi family was fascinated by real estate.

“Why is Gandhi family interested in a former newspaper publishing company which is now running real estate business... This shows that not just Jijaji [Rahul Gandhi’s brother-in-law Robert Vadra] but the entire Gandhi family is fascinated by real estate,” she added.

Mr. Gandhi appeared before the ED office in Delhi in connection with the *National Herald* case. Earlier, the Congress leader surrounded by hundreds of party workers marched to the ED office to appear before the agency from the party headquarters.

Sena MLA moves HC over his invalidated vote in RS polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena MLA Suhas Kande on June 13 moved the Bombay High Court challenging the decision of the Election Commission of India (ECI) declaring his vote as invalid in the Rajya Sabha elections held on June 10.

Mr. Kande, 46, filed a petition through advocate Ajinkya Udane, aggrieved by the ECI order which caused prejudice to his dignity and rep-

utation. The plea relied upon the provisions of the Representation of the People Act as well as the conduct of election rules and urges the court to take a look at the handbook for returning officers.

The petition says that “Yogesh Sagar, BJP MLA, has alleged that Mr. Kande showed his ballot paper to the whip of another political party. This is not true and that Mr. Kande had shown his ballot

paper only to Sunil Prabhu and no other whip.”

Mr. Kande contended that no notice was given to him and without seeking his response, the ECI thought it fit to interfere with the decision taken by the election officer and held his vote invalid. The petition wants the court to quash the ECI’s decision.

A Division Bench of Justices S.V. Gangapurwala and D.S. Thakur said it would hear the petition on June 15.

Bombay HC asks Nawab Malik to file fresh plea

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday directed Maharashtra Cabinet Minister Nawab Malik to file a fresh plea seeking release for one day to cast his vote in the Legislative Council polls on June 20. The court had on June 10 rejected a plea by the leader seeking one-day bail to cast his vote in the Rajya Sabha polls.

Mr. Malik’s lawyers sought to amend the earlier

petition in which he requested to be released for a day to cast his vote in the RS elections. However, Justice P.D. Naik asked to file a new plea.

The court said, “You have to file a fresh petition. New prayers cannot be inserted. Something which is against the procedure, this court will not allow. Take instructions whether you want to withdraw it or I will say it is infructuous.” The lawyers agreed to file a fresh plea.

Haryana gets notice over polluted water

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Monday issued notice to the Haryana government after taking cognisance of a report in *The Hindu* on June 8 about hazardous waste contaminating groundwater near the Bandhwari landfill in Gurugram.

“The State government has been asked to submit a report in the matter within six weeks. It should include the steps taken/proposed to be taken to deal with the hazard. The Commission has observed that the contents of the media report, if true, amount to violation of human rights due to negligence of public authorities,” an NHRC statement read.

The Central Pollution Control Board had in 2017 found that the groundwater of three villages near the landfill was contaminated.

The contamination had spread to two more neighbouring villages, the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute confirmed.

However, there had been no improvement in the situation that was threatening the health of the residents as well as the flora and fauna of the forest area.

Plea in SC to stop U.P. demolitions

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A prominent Muslim body urged the Supreme Court on Monday to step in against officials in Uttar Pradesh who have violated the "rule of law" by using bulldozers to raze the homes of people linked to riots which broke out in the State following objectionable remarks allegedly made by two leaders against Prophet Mohammad.

"The demolition of properties carried out by the State government in retaliation was in breach of the laws enacted by the state legislature itself," Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, represented by advocate Kabir Dixit, argued.

Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind alleged that authorities began to demolish the houses without even giving the people an opportunity to be heard.

Opposition floats the idea of Pawar as consensus candidate

Parties are keen on putting up strong fight but divided on who should take lead

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar could emerge as a consensus candidate for the Presidential election if other Opposition parties manage to convince him, a source familiar with the developments said on Monday.

Mr. Pawar has not revealed his mind yet, but the source cited above said the situation will be clear by June 15 when leaders of 22 Opposition parties meet to formulate a joint strategy.

A day after West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee invited Opposition leaders for a meeting in Delhi to formulate a joint strategy for the Presidential election, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay



The Trinamool Congress is said to be pushing for Sharad Pawar as he can reach out to all parties. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

Singh called on Mr. Pawar in Mumbai on Sunday.

Hours after the Election Commission announced the presidential poll notification, Congress president Sonia Gandhi had also called Mr. Pawar apart from other leaders such as Ms. Banerjee and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge also met Mr. Pawar soon after Ms. Gandhi made him the key point person to coordinate with other Opposition parties.

As reported by *The Hindu* on Monday, Trinamool Congress is said to be pushing for a political person who can also reach out to Opposition parties that have never been

a part of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA).

Mr. Pawar fits the description as he is known to share cordial relations with the Telangana Chief Minister and Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) chief K. Chandrashekar Rao as well as Biju Janata Dal (BJD) chief and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

"It's not about winning or losing but putting up a fight for the principles we stand for. Parties like AAP or TRS won't support a Congress candidate. But if Mr. Pawar agrees, it's game on," said an Opposition leader, who didn't wish to be quoted.

While the Opposition parties are united in their desire for putting up a strong fight, they seemed divided on who should take the lead.

MVA-BJP fight for 10 Council seats in upcoming elections

Lack of communication in MVA, claims BJP leader Fadnavis

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

Even as the Bharatiya Janata Party-backed Independent Sadabhau Khot withdrew from the June 20 Maharashtra Legislative Council polls, the party on Monday said it would contest with five candidates, paving the way for yet another fight after the Rajya Sabha polls. Eleven candidates are in the fray for 10 seats.

"There is unrest within the ruling parties. We have chalked out a plan. Based on that we are going to contest the fifth seat. I am aware that this is not an easy task. But I have faith that we will win five seats," said Leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnavis.

When asked about the reason to withdraw the sixth candidate, he said that after discussions, our State presi-

dent Chandrakant Patil took the decision to contest only five seats.

Mr. Fadnavis claimed that individuals from the ruling parties held discussions with him to make this an unopposed election.

"They also discussed the possibility of withdrawing the Congress candidate for which they received a negative reply [from the Congress]," he said, adding that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) not only has unrest, but also lack of communication.

Eleven candidates

With the BJP nominating five candidates, Pravin Darekar, Ram Shinde, Shrikant Bharatiya, Uma Khapre and Prasad Lad, three parties of the MVA have fielded two candidates each.

The Sena has given ticket

to Sachin Ahir and Amshya Padvi, while the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) has fielded Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar and Eknath Khadse. The Congress has given ticket to Chandrakant Handore and Bhai Jagtap. The June 20 election is likely to be between Mr. Lad and Mr. Jagtap.

The quota for secret ballot is set as 27. As per the calculation, the Congress has 44 MLAs which will ensure victory of one of its candidates. Mr. Jagtap, who is the Mumbai Congress chief, will require 17 more votes to ensure his berth in the Council.

Going by original party strength numbers, the BJP and its allies have 113 MLAs, ensuring smooth victory to its four candidates. The fifth candidate will require 22 more votes, which the party hopes to get.

Uneasy calm in Saharanpur

Residents hesitant to speak up

SAMRIDHI TEWARI
SAHARANPUR (U.P.)

Days after violence erupted in Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur over the controversial remarks made by now-suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on Prophet Muhammed, an uneasy calm prevails in the city amid filing of FIRs and arrests. "We don't know, maybe our child, or we are next to get arrested, while our house will get demolished," the residents said.

The demonstration took place after the afternoon prayers on June 10, when a crowd of more than 1,000-1,500 people marched from Jama Masjid to Ghanta Ghar. The people chanted slogans and demanded the arrest of Ms. Sharma, a senior police officer deployed at the location said.

"The situation was brought under control in a few hours. We had heavy police deployment in the area; shops at the market were shut, and the shopkeepers were asked to leave," he added.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Saharanpur, Akash Tomar, on Monday said three cases were registered on June 10 by the police, in which, a total of 84 people had been arrested in connection with Saharanpur violence.

While the violence was leading the headlines, Mr.



People marched from Jama Masjid to Ghanta Ghar on June 10. ■ PTI

Tomar on Monday said 18 people (12 Hindus and six Muslims) had been arrested in the city for hate speech in the last week.

Masked protesters
Shamshuddin, 44, owner of a phone repair shop at Nehru Market, said, "The protesters wore face masks and a piece of cloth on their face, hence they weren't recognisable." According to him, the crowd did not throw stones and did not damage anything.

While Mr. Shamshuddin claimed the protest was peaceful, Raju Bhutani, 49, a retailer at Nehru Market, was attacked during the demonstration. He said that he was attacked with stones, while the entrance table of his shop was damaged. "I was trying to safeguard myself, but I was aware the demonstrators would dismantle the entrance," he added.

West Bengal limps to normalcy

All shops have downed their shutters; several have been set on fire

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
HOWRAH

Mohammad Ainul (45) and Aurangzeb (34) rummaged through a pile of debris that was once their shop in Panchla Bazaar on Monday afternoon. Both of them are fruit vendors, and travel from Bauria in the district to the busy Panchla market and make a living by selling fruits. "There is nothing left here. Who do we blame for this, Muslims or Hindus? Both are responsible for this," Aurangzeb said. Ainul said that when the mob came rushing towards the shops from Panchla crossing, all the shopkeepers — both Hindus and Muslims — ran for their lives.

"I covered my stall which had all kinds of fruits. See, everything has been turned to ashes," Ainul said.

An uneasy calm prevails over Panchla Bazar, where violence had erupted on Saturday. Almost all the shops have downed their shutters. Several shops in the market have been set on fire. Panchla Bazaar has shops of both Hindus and Muslims, which is clear from boards and signage on them.

A security guard at an ATM says that another ATM of a nationalised bank few metres away has been vandalised. "What is the fault of the poor ATM? Doesn't everyone use it?" the guard asked and hurriedly left the market.

Protesters did not spare



At the receiving end: Aurangzeb (left) and Ainul rummaging through the remains of their shop at Panchla market. ■ DEBASISH BHADURI

even a club called Netaji Sangha that stands at the entrance of the market. Not only photographs of national icons including Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose were destroyed, even the ambulance of the club was not spared by the protesters. While traders and shopkeepers stayed away from the market, scores of policemen stood guard to the rows of closed shops at Panchla Bazaar.

Protests over offensive remarks made about Prophet Muhammed by former BJP spokespersons had started in Howrah on June 9.

Muslims flee

About 20 km away at Salap crossing on the National Highway 6, rows of charred vehicles still bear testimony to the violence. Rita Porel,

who works in a plastic factory, said that her house was surrounded by vehicles on fire when she returned from work on Saturday evening. The house which is nothing more than a cubicle wrapped by polythene sheets is home to four persons and a goat. "All the Muslim neighbours have fled, maybe they fear arrests," she said pointing out to small houses located next to hers.

A pile of charred motorbikes are lying next to an armoured vehicle in front of the office of the Superintendent of Police, Howrah Rural. Not only in Howrah but violence also was witnessed at Rejinagar and Beldanga in Murshidabad, where Internet service has been suspended. On Sunday evening, protesters attacked a local

train at Bethuadahari railway station in State's Nadia district.

On Monday, the situation turned volatile in Bethuadahari and the police had to resort to baton-charge to disperse the mob that gathered near the station.

200 arrested, 42 FIRs

Senior officials of the West Bengal police said that so far, 200 people have been arrested and 42 FIRs have been registered. Additional Director General (Law and Order), West Bengal Police Jawed Shamim said that there has been no loss of life or serious injury; people have been booked for road blockade, assault, rioting, and damage to public property and spreading communal hatred.

Kolkata police summon Nupur Sharma for questioning

Multiple organisations have come out in support of her

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Suspended Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Nupur Sharma, who is facing multiple cases for her controversial remarks, has now been summoned by the Kolkata Police to appear at the Nar-keldanga police station on June 20 for questioning.

Ms. Sharma has also been summoned by the police in Mumbai and Thane, Maharashtra. The Mumbai police, which registered a case following a complaint lodged by a Raza Academy office bearer with the Pydhonie police station, has asked her to appear on June 25.

The Mumbai police has sent a notice for her appearance on June 22, while the Bhiwandi police had issued summons against her for joining the probe on Monday.

The suspended BJP leader, through her lawyer, has sought four weeks' time from the Bhiwandi police to record her statement in the case registered on May 30.



Nupur Sharma

The Delhi Police have also named her in one of the FIRs.

Ms. Sharma's comments, made during a TV debate last month, sparked a series of violent protests in different parts of the country this past week and drew sharp reactions from countries like Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bahrain.

Support for Ms. Sharma
At the same time, she is also getting support from a large number of people on social media from different parts

of the country.

At a Dharma Parishad in Kashi on June 10, Hindu saints condemned the violent protests and also demanded legal action against those who issued threats to Ms. Sharma.

On June 11, a procession in support of the suspended BJP leader was taken out in Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi despite prohibitory orders. A case was registered in this regard.

The same day, many supporters gathered on Sarkhej Gandhinagar Highway in Ahmedabad, but were not allowed by the police to take out a march.

An organisation named Hindu Sena on June 11 said the Delhi police detained its 12 volunteers while they were trying to take out a march in favour of Ms. Sharma.

On June 10, Bharatiya Janata Party MP Pragya Singh Thakur had tweeted, "If telling the truth is a rebellion, then understand that I am also a rebel..."

Kuwait to deport expats for 'illegal' protests

DUBAI

The Kuwait government has decided to arrest and deport an unspecified number of expats who participated in a protest against the controversial remarks by two former BJP functionaries against Prophet Muhammed, as the Gulf nation's laws do not allow such demonstrations, according to a media report. ■ PTI

കേന്ദ്രീയ മത്സ്യ മത്സ്യകർമ്മ അന്വേഷണ കേന്ദ്രം
(National Institute of Aquaculture Sciences)
Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)
(Indian Council of Agricultural Research)

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Tender for Annual Rate contract of designing works at CMFRI, Kochi.
(Tender Reference ID:2022_DARE_693444_1)

Details are available in CMFRI website www.cmfri.org.in or www.eprocure.gov.in
This Institute reserves the right to accept or reject any tender as abandon/cancel the entire process without assigning any reason.
Sd/-, Assistant Administrative Officer

MISSING
Chandradathan, Age 68, S/o. Kunjipulla, Karayamvettathu Veedu, Kavanad, P.O, Kollam District, Kerala was missing from S.S Samithy Charitable Trust, Mayanad since 2009. In this regard a case in Crime 542/2021 U/s 57(1)(A) of KP Act was registered at Kottiyam Police station. If any information obtained regarding the above person, please inform to the below mentioned phone numbers.
ASST. COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, CHATHANNOOR : 9497990022
STATION HOUSE OFFICER, KOTTIYAM : 9497987033
KOTTIYAM POLICE STATION: 0474-2530100
RO/01372/F2/2022/I&PRD

भारत सरकार / Government of India, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / Department of Space
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संविदा के आधार पर स्थानिक सहायक होस्टल (महिला) प्रबंधक की आवश्यकता
REQUIREMENT OF RESIDENT ASSISTANT HOSTEL MANAGER (FEMALE) ON CONTRACT BASIS
संविदा के आधार पर स्थानिक सहायक होस्टल (महिला) प्रबंधक की आवश्यकता (संविदा के आधार पर) (महिला) प्रबंधक के पद के लिए आवेदन आमंत्रित किया है। तिरुवनन्तपुरम के तिरुवनन्तपुरम में स्थानीय आवश्यकता है।
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ABSTRACT "e" TENDER NOTIFICATION
Bids in two covers are invited through "e" Procurement Portal (Website URL: <https://proc.karnataka.gov.in>) from reputed bidders with proven track record of successful completion of similar works. 1) KPCL/2022-23/PS/ WORK_INDENT 12376
Dt: 08.06.2022 Design, Engineering, manufacture, quality surveillance, testing at supplier's works, supply, transportation, delivery on FOR destination basis, Arranging transit insurance, Dismantling of existing Governor and Sequencer system and associated equipments complete including supply, laying, testing, termination of cables, networking, communication, etc., for 2MW Bhadra Left bank Generating Unit. EMD: Rs. 2,16,000/- 2) KPCL/2022-23/PS/WORK_INDENT 12450 Dt: 07.06.2022 Erection, Testing & Commissioning of M/s SAEW, Chennai supplied 15MVA, 66KV/11KV Generator Transformer, Supply & Installation of Transformer instruments at BGS. EMD: Rs. 50,000/- Last Date & Time for online submission of tenders: For Sl. No. 1: 05.07.2022 upto 16.30 Hrs. For Sl. No. 2: 21.06.2022 upto 16.30 Hrs. Opening of the Technical Bid: For Sl. No. 1: 07.07.2022 at 10.30 Hrs. For Sl. No. 2: 23.06.2022 at 10.30 Hrs. Further details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer, (O&M), Bhadra, BGS, KPCL, B.R. Project - 577115, Bhadravathi-Tq., Shivamogga-Dist., Karnataka.

Russia seeks to encircle Severodonetsk

Ukrainian forces were pushed out of the city centre; Zelensky says fighting going on for 'every metre'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KRAMATORSK

Ukraine said on Monday its forces had been pushed back from the centre of key industrial city Severodonetsk, where President Volodymyr Zelensky described a fight for "literally every metre".

The cities of Severodonetsk and Lysychansk, which are separated by a river, have been targeted for weeks as the last areas still under Ukrainian control in the eastern Luhansk region.

Regional Governor Sergiy Gaiday said on Monday Russian forces were "gathering more and more equipment" to "encircle" Severodonetsk, and that they had "pushed our troops from the centre and continue to destroy our city". The local Azot chemical plant, where hundreds of civilians have reportedly taken refuge, was being "heavily shelled", Mr. Gaiday said. Severodonetsk had been "de facto" blocked off after Russian forces blew up



Burnt to bits: A house destroyed during the shelling of Lysychansk in Donbas in Ukraine on Monday. *AFP

the "last" bridge connecting it to Lysychansk on Sunday, Eduard Basurin, a representative for pro-Russian separatists, said on Monday. "The Ukrainian units that are there, they are there forever. They have two options: to surrender or die," Mr. Basurin said.

On Sunday, Mr. Zelensky said the latest fighting in Se-

verodonetsk was "very fierce", adding that Russia was deploying undertrained troops and using its young men as "cannon fodder".

Russia's amassed artillery in that region gave it a tenfold advantage, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian military, Valeriy Zaluzhny, said on Sunday. "Every metre of Ukrainian land

Amnesty accuses Moscow of war crimes in Kharkiv

REUTERS
PARIS

Russia's relentless shelling of the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv with cluster munitions and scatterable land mines amounts to a war crime that indiscriminately killed hundreds of civilians, Amnesty International said on Monday.

there is covered in blood – but not only ours, but also the occupier's."

The capture of Severodonetsk would open the road for Moscow to another major city, Kramatorsk, in their steps toward conquering the whole of Donbas, a mainly Russian-speaking region partly held by pro-Russian separatists since 2014.

Ukraine's second-largest city Kharkiv was under near-constant bombardment from the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24 until Ukrainian forces pushed the Russians away from the city in May. Ukraine has said 606 civilians were killed there and 6,00,000 evacuated.

Russian forces said on Sunday they had struck a site in the town of Chortkiv in western Ukraine storing U.S.- and EU-supplied weapons. Russia's Defence Ministry said the strike destroyed a "large depot of anti-tank missile systems, portable air defence systems and shells provided to Kyiv by the U.S. and European countries".

Sri Lankan official resigns amid Adani project row

Ferdinando withdraws his statement, offers an apology

MEERA SRINIVASAN
JAFFNA

Chairman of the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) M.M.C. Ferdinando has resigned, days after he told a parliamentary committee that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had "pressured" Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to clear an Adani Group project in the island nation.

The senior Sri Lankan official subsequently withdrew the statement and apologised after President Gotabaya himself "vehemently denied" it. Minister of Power and Energy Kanchana Wijesekera said in a tweet on Monday afternoon: "I have accepted the letter of resignation tendered to me by the CEB Chairman Mr MMC Ferdinando. Vice-Chairman Nalinda Ilangakoon will take over as the New Chairman CEB."



MMC Ferdinando

The outgoing CEB Chairman's remarks pertained to a renewable energy project that the CEB, in March 2022, agreed to execute with the Adani Group, in Mannar and Pooneryn in Sri Lanka's Northern Province.

The agreement was finalised about five months after Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani's visit to Sri Lanka, when he met President Gotabaya and explored possible investments in the power and renewable ener-

gy sector. Mr. Ferdinando's statement to the Committee on Public Enterprises, broadcast by a private television channel, has drawn attention not only in Sri Lanka, but also in India. In a tweet on Sunday, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi said: "BJP's cronyism has now crossed Palk Strait and moved into Sri Lanka."

Higher rate Meanwhile, Champika Ranawaka, Opposition lawmaker and a former Minister of Power and Energy, said the Adani Group had proposed a price of around 7.8 U.S. cents per unit, close to double the market rate. Opposition MP Harsha De Silva in a tweet asked President Gotabaya to instruct his office to release the MOU signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and Adani Green to the public.

U.K. to tweak post-Brexit trade rules

EU threatens action; Irish PM calls Britain's act of reneging on treaty 'regrettable'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Britain's government on Monday proposed new legislation that would unilaterally change post-Brexit trade rules for Northern Ireland, despite opposition from some U.K. lawmakers and EU officials who say the move violates international law.

The proposed Bill seeks to remove customs checks on some goods entering Northern Ireland from the rest of the U.K. That will override parts of the trade treaty that Prime Minister Boris Johnson signed with the Euro-



Boris Johnson

pean Union less than two years ago.

Britain's government maintains it is acting within international law, but the Eu-

ropean Commission said it could take legal action against the U.K.

European Commission Vice President Maros Sefcovic said the EU's executive arm will consider launching new infringement procedures to "protect the EU single market from the risks that the violation of the protocol creates for EU businesses and for the health and safety of EU citizens."

In Ireland, Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Coveney said the Bill "marks a particular low point in the U.K.'s approach to Brexit." The Irish Prime Minister, Micheal Mar-

tin, said it was "very regrettable for a country like the U.K. to renege on an international treaty."

'Trivial changes'

Brushing aside criticism, Mr. Johnson told reporters that the proposed change is "relatively simple to do."

"Frankly, it's a relatively trivial set of adjustments in the grand scheme of things," he told LBC Radio.

He argued that his government's "higher and prior legal commitment" is to the 1998 Good Friday agreement that brought peace and stability to Northern Ireland.

Meeting with Wei Fenghe vital: Austin

REUTERS
BANGKOK

U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Monday that his meeting with China's Defence Minister was an important step in efforts to develop lines of communication between the two militaries.

Mr. Austin and Chinese Defence Minister General Wei Fenghe met on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue security summit in Singapore for nearly an hour on Friday, with both sides standing firm on their opposing views over Taiwan's right to rule itself.

Despite tensions between the United States and China, U.S. military officials have long sought to have open lines of communication with their Chinese counterparts.

"It was an important step in our efforts to develop open lines of communication with PLA leadership ... It was an important opportunity to raise our concerns about the potential for instability in the Taiwan Strait," Mr. Austin told reporters during a visit to Thailand.

Google to pay women employees \$118 million

Gender discrimination suit settled

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

Google said on Sunday that it was "very pleased" to be settling, without admission of wrongdoing, a class-action lawsuit that argued it underpaid women employees and assigned them lower-ranking positions.

The \$118 million settlement covers about 15,500 women employees who have worked for the company in California since September 2013, the law firms Lief Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein LLP and Altshuler Berzon LLP said.

The company also agreed for a third party to analyse its hiring and compensation practices.

In a statement to AFP, Google said that "while we strongly believe in the equity of our policies and practices, after nearly five years of litigation, both sides agreed that resolution of the matter."

In 2017, several former Google employees sued the company in a San Francisco court, accusing it of paying women less than men for equivalent positions and as-



The tech-giant has refused to acknowledge any practices of wrongdoing.

signing women lower positions than men with similar experiences because they had previously earned smaller salaries.

According to a copy of the agreement released by the law firms, "Google denies all of the allegations in the lawsuit and maintains that it has fully complied with all applicable laws, rules and regulations at all times."

A judge must still approve the agreement, the two law firms for the plaintiffs said.

Google previously agreed in 2021 to pay \$3.8 million to the U.S. Department of Labor over accusations it had discriminated against women and Asians.

UAE bans exhibition of Pixar movie

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI

The United Arab Emirates on Monday banned the upcoming Pixar animated feature *Lightyear* from showing in movie theaters after its inclusion of a kiss between two lesbian characters.

The decision by the UAE comes as Malaysia also reportedly will ban the film, raising the possibility other Muslim-majority nations could follow suit on one of Disney's biggest animated films of the year as the film industry comes out of the depths of the pandemic.

The film "is not licensed for public screening in all cinemas in the UAE, due to its violation of the country's media content standards," announced the Media Regulatory Office of the country's Ministry of Youth and Culture.

The movie, with actor Chris Evans voicing the inspiration for the Buzz Lightyear action figure from the *Toy Story* films, includes a female character voiced by actress Uzo Aduba kissing her female partner.

Gunmen kill 55 people in Burkina Faso

ASSOCIATED PRESS
OUAGADOUGOU

Gunmen killed at least 55 people over the weekend in northern Burkina Faso, authorities said on Monday, the latest attack in the West African country seeing mounting violence blamed on Islamic extremists.

Suspected militants targeted civilians in Seytenga in Seno province, government spokesman Wendkouni Joel Lionel Bilgo said at a news conference. While the government put the official toll at 55, others put the figure far higher.

Belongings of missing scribe, expert found in Brazil: police

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ATALAIA DO NORTE

Personal items belonging to a missing British journalist and an indigenous expert have been found in the Amazon region where the men disappeared one week ago, the Brazilian Federal Police said on Sunday.

The latest advancement in the case came just hours after friends and relatives of the pair – freelance journalist Dom Phillips and respected specialist Bruno Pereira – held a vigil on a beach in Rio de Janeiro, with one family member saying she had lost hope that they would

emerge from the jungle alive.

"Objects belonging to the two missing persons have been found: a health card, black pants, a black sandal and a pair of boots belonging to Bruno Pereira, and a pair of boots and a backpack belonging to Dom Phillips containing personal clothing," the Federal Police in Amazonas state said in statement.

Fears have been mounting over the fate of Phillips, 57, a veteran contributor to *The Guardian* newspaper, and 41-year-old Pereira, an expert with Brazil's govern-

ment agency for indigenous affairs (Funai) since they disappeared last Sunday after receiving threats during a research trip to Javari Valley.

The far-flung jungle region has seen a surge of illegal fishing, logging, mining and drug trafficking.

The Amazonas Fire Department had previously told local media that personal effects possibly belonging to the missing men had been found "near the house" of Amarildo Costa de Oliveira, the only person arrested so far in the case and who witnesses say pursued the men upriver.

Rohingya to mark 5 years in camps

Refugees say they are waiting for repatriation to Rakhine, their home state

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
KUTUPALONG, COX'S BAZAR

Nurul Amin has spent nearly five years in the Kutupalong refugee camps near the border of Bangladesh and Myanmar where green hills meet the Bay of Bengal. Five years ago, he worked with a Norwegian NGO in Maungdaw of Rakhine state, where the Myanmar military carried out a campaign that made normal living impossible for the members of the Rohingya community.

To escape the daily threat of murder and violence, Mr. Amin rowed his way along with others crossing rivers and the Bay of Bengal. "We could not use boats with engines because the Myanmar military would shoot at the boats. To survive, we took the boats with oars," Mr. Amin said, recollecting his escape.

He has been living with his family of six in Kutupalong, where they took refuge after crossing the waters. But five years later, they see no hope for a return.

Rohingya left behind in August 2017 has changed.

On February 1, 2021, Myanmar witnessed a military coup and the previous government led by Aung San Suu Kyi was dislodged by the military junta. Ms. Suu Kyi, a Nobel peace prize winner, was criticised for being cold toward the Rohingya crisis but the future appears bleaker during the military's rule as the country remains caught in a violent internal conflict and is boycotted in international platforms.

Exodus from Rakhine Beginning with the early 1990s, the Rohingya left Rakhine in multiple waves to escape the violent campaigns launched by the military.

Over the years, the situation became increasingly difficult for the community. Mohammed Amin, who worked as a teacher in a madarsa, remembered that the Myanmar military would raid homes and demand money. "We had to pay the local officials even if we wanted to own cattle," he said.



Rohingya have been living in the relative safety of refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

The haunting memories refuse to go away for the Rohingya who have been living in the relative safety of the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar but they have become part of another kind of problem. Security officials in Bangladesh have observed that some community members have become a safe conduit for the smuggling of Yaba, an expensive recreational drug.

Yaba, a combination of methamphetamine and caffeine, produces powerful effects and the Rohingya who

are proficient in languages on both sides of the border provide an efficient way to disseminate this drug, say security officials.

Many within the community, like Nurul Amin, are working to address the problem the community faces, which includes the denial of education, influence of radicalism and links with criminal gangs.

The hills in Kutupalong were deforested to make space for the Rohingya but over the last five years, refugees have planted trees that have brought the green cover back to some degree.

The world may be busy dealing with the war in Ukraine but the Rohingya are waiting for repatriation to Rakhine state, where they want to live in safety, with dignity.

"Every one of us wants to return. The international community should come forward to help," Mr. Nurul Amin said.

The writer was in Bangladesh on an invitation from the government.

राजस्थान स्कूल शिक्षा परिषद्
सर्वलिंगी शिशु शैक्षणिक विकास संस्थान, जयपुर
फोन: 0141-2700366, E-Mail: rajssa_acct@yahoo.co.in

कर्मचारी-एच.06 / सार्वजनिक/सामाजिक/शैक्षणिक/विकास/परिषद्/राजस्थान/2022-23/2562 दिनांक 10.06.2022

बोली आमंत्रण सूचना 09 / 2022-23

इच्छुक बोलीदाताओं से डेस्कटॉप कम्प्यूटर, एम.एफ.पी. कलर, एम.एफ.पी. कम्प्यूटर प्रिन्टर, यू.पी.एस. एवं लेपटॉप के उपकरण हेतु दिनांक 20.06.2022 को समय 6.00 P.M. बजे तक ई-बोली आमंत्रित की जाती है। बोली के अन्य विवरण स्टेट पब्लिक प्रोक्योरमेंट

www.spp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in तथा विभागीय पोर्टल

www.rajssa.nic.in पर देखे जा सकते हैं। UBN: RSE2233LO800354

Est. Amount: 39.70 Lakh

राज.सं.सद/सी/22/3325 राज्य परियोजना निदेशक

National Forensic Science University
An Institution of National Importance (Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India)

The last date of applying for admission to all the programmes under National Forensic University is extended up to 20th June 2022. For further details on eligibility, admission form, and others, please visit www.nfsu.ac.in

Executive Registrar
INF/585/21-22

Date: 10/06/2022

भारतीय ताराभौतिकी संस्थान
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ASTROPHYSICS
(भारत के ताराभौतिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार के अखिल भारतीय संस्थान)
(An Autonomous Body Under Department of Science & Technology, Government of India)

2nd Block, खैरलाहरी, कोरमंगला, बंगलूरु - 560034.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Tender Notice No.54/IIA/CIVIL/CREST/HOSAKOTE/CONCERTINA COIL/2022-23 Dated 17th May 2022.

Sealed Tenders are invited for the following work:
1. Providing and Fixing Concertina Coil Fencing with Razor / Punched Tape Concertina Coil 600 mm Dia over existing compound wall at IIA, CREST Campus, Hosakote, Bengaluru Rural Dist, Karnataka.

Detailed Tender Document can be downloaded from Institute's Website: www.iiap.res.in/tenders.htm. Last date for receipt of bid is on or before 13th July 2022 at 15:00 hours.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

भारतीय अन्तर्देशीय जलमार्ग प्राधिकरण
INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
(Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India)
A-13, Sector-1, Noida - 201301 (U.P.)
Tel: (0120) 2522971, Email: ce.iwai@nic.in

Expression of Interest

IWAI intends to invite EOI application from reputed & eligible firms to develop waterways infrastructure and other works along Padanipal – Paradip & Padanipal –Dhamra Stretch of NW-5 and Maradhaghai – Paradip Stretch of NW-64, Odisha on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer Basis. EOI document download starts date :13-06.2022 at 1700 hrs (IST). Last date for date for submission of EOI: 28.07.2022 up to 1500 hrs (IST). EOI and detailed eligibility criteria can be downloaded from IWAI website: www.iwai.nic.in & portal : <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.

Chairman, IWAI

Wheels India Limited
Regd Office : 21, Patullo Road, Chennai – 600 002
CIN : L35921TN1960PLC004175
Phone : 044-2623 4300; Fax : 044-26257121
Website : www.wheelsindia.com

Invites offers from interested parties for purchase of Mild Steel scrap items, for the two month period JULY -AUGUST 2022.

Details of the items available for disposal and tender terms and conditions can be had from the Company on written request.

Sealed offers can be submitted to the Vice President (Supply Chain), Wheels India Limited, Padi, Chennai - 600 050 to reach on or before 29th JUNE 2022.

RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, KARNATAKA
4th "T" Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru – 560 041.
Ph No.080-26961928 Fax-080-26961929

No.RGUHS/LIB/HELINET-RFP/03/2022-23 Date: 03.06.2022

E-Tender for Providing e-resources for RGUHS Library

Request for Proposal from publishers of E-books, E-journals, e-learning or multimedia or interactive learning materials/devices including proprietor of the established aggregated products, search tools, discovery tools for 12 months - Tender Notification for Procurement of e-resources.

The Registrar, RGUHS, invites proposals from the original Publishers of e-resources (from India and abroad) for Licensing/subscription/one-time purchase, based of the types of the materials like e-books, e-learning devices, multimedia materials, virtual dissection tables etc related health sciences (Medical, Dental, Nursing, Pharmacy and AYUSH) for RGUHS HELINET consortium. The proposals should include full list of e-journals, e-books, e-learning / multimedia materials/devices.

No agents, channel partners or distributors are allowed.

The proposal should include list price and proposed consortia/multiple unit price like 1-50, 50-100, 150 and above. Committee may consider bundle, customized bundle or pick-and-choose titles and accordingly committee will decide or call for discussion. The decision of the committee is final.

The proposal addressed to the Registrar, RGUHS, Bengaluru shall be submitted within 15 days from the date of announcement. The envelop should be super-scribed "Proposals for e-resources, e-learning for HELINET, RGUHS, 2022".

Format of the proposal may be downloaded from www.rguhs.ac.in

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

DIPR/862/2022-23

MARKET WATCH

	13-06-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,847	-2.68
US Dollar	78.04	-0.14
Gold	51,270	0.93
Brent oil	122.1	-

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	695.25	-31.15
Apollo Hosp	3651.90	-48.60
Asian Paints	2660.75	-48.00
Axis Bank	648.95	-11.75
Bajaj Auto	3881.25	0.25
Bajaj Finserv	11386.05	-867.45
Bajaj Finance	5358.25	-309.25
Bharti Airtel	671.30	-2.05
BPL	317.95	-13.05
Brimania Ind	3359.00	-3.85
Cipla	954.75	-12.05
Coal India	191.05	-7.45
Divis Lab	3474.15	-53.90
Dr Reddys Lab	4267.20	-84.35
Eicher Motors	2700.80	-12.05
Grasim Ind	1292.55	-33.95
HCL Tech	991.80	-23.55
HDFC	2128.45	-51.35
HDFC Bank	1326.60	-24.50
HDFC Life	582.00	-11.10
Hero MotoCorp	2598.80	-3.15
Hindalco	366.45	-19.30
Hind Unilever	2196.90	-3.00
ICICI Bank	688.00	-32.00
IndusInd Bank	865.45	-47.75
Infosys	1424.50	-52.30
ITC	264.65	-5.50
JSW Steel	564.00	-8.50
Kotak Bank	1737.35	-54.45
L&T	1532.00	-53.05
M&M	1004.30	-32.20
Maruti Suzuki	7901.60	-33.50
Nestle India Ltd.	16854.45	79.55
NTPC	148.90	-6.35
ONGC	159.55	-5.10
PowerGrid Corp	222.35	-2.10
Reliance Ind	2662.90	-51.35
SBI Life	1133.70	-21.20
State Bank	445.85	-16.00
Shree Cement	19135.65	-43.20
Sun Pharma	829.50	-16.20
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	735.95	-20.65
Tata Motors	406.70	-21.35
Tata Steel	991.95	-31.75
TCS	3219.60	-140.30
Tech Mahindra	1051.95	-57.90
Titan	2102.40	-39.85
UltraTech Cement	5356.15	-154.90
UPL	726.40	-8.00
Wipro	446.10	-14.85

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except when at 4 p.m. on June 13, 2022

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	77.84	78.16
Euro	81.37	81.70
British Pound	94.76	95.15
Japanese Yen (100)	57.90	58.14
Chinese Yuan	11.56	11.61
Swiss Franc	78.35	78.67
Singapore Dollar	55.95	56.19
Canadian Dollar	60.50	60.76
Malaysian Ringgit	17.61	17.69
Australian Dollar	54.18	54.41

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Cryptocurrency market value falls below \$1 tn
LONDON
The cryptocurrency market's value on Monday fell below \$1 trillion for the first time since January 2021, according to data site CoinMarketCap. It has lost \$1 trillion in value in the last two months alone as investors ditched riskier assets in the face of high inflation and fears that interest rate raises by central banks would hamper growth. REUTERS

Foxconn unit gets SEBI nod for ₹5,000-crore IPO

NEW DELHI
Bharat FIH, a subsidiary of FIH Mobiles and a Foxconn Technology Group firm, has received SEBI's nod to raise ₹5,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The initial share-sale comprises fresh issue of shares worth ₹2,502 crore and an offer for sale of up to ₹2,502 crore by the promoter group and Foxconn unit Wonderful Stars, as per the draft red herring prospectus. Bharat FIH makes devices for Xiaomi and Nokia. PTI

Amara Raja to start green hydrogen outlet in Leh

HYDERABAD
Amara Raja Power Systems will set up a green hydrogen fuelling station, the first such in the country, in Leh, Ladakh, for the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC). The pilot project will produce a minimum of 80kg/day of 99.97% pure hydrogen that will be compressed, stored and dispensed, the firm said. NTPC, which has awarded the contract, plans to ply 5 hydrogen fuel cell buses in the region.

AAI seeks waiver of annual dividend for FY22

NEW DELHI
The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has requested the government to waive the compulsory dividend payment requirement for the financial year ended March 2022, in lieu of the waiver of Air India's dues done prior to the sale of the carrier. State-owned AAI, which is in the red mainly after the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, is expected to post a loss of ₹800-900 crore in 2021-22 fiscal. PTI

Rupee weakens past 78, stocks slide eyeing Fed rate increase

Finance, tech shares drag; rupee hits record low of 78.04 against dollar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices plunged more than 2.6% on Monday and the rupee weakened past 78 to a fresh low against the dollar on anticipation that the Federal Reserve would further raise interest rates to curb soaring U.S. inflation.

The S&P BSE Sensex, dropped 1,457 points, or 2.68%, to 52,846.70 points. Stocks that fell the most include Bajaj Finserv (7.02%), Bajaj Finance (5.44%), IndusInd Bank (5.27%), Tech Mahindra (4.845), ICICI Bank (4.46%) and TCS (4.31%).

"U.S. markets are weak on worse-than-expected infla-



Dip, dip, dip: The 78.50 mark could offer support to the rupee in the near term, says Religare's Sachdeva

tion (8.6%) and markets expect aggressive monetary tightening by the Fed [in the policy meeting this week]," said V.K. Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

"This is unfavourable to risky assets like equities. Rising dollar and bond yields in U.S. will force more selling by Foreign Portfolio Investors in India," he added. The NSE Nifty 50 too lost

427 points, or 2.64%, to 15,774.40. Due to continued and more aggressive selling by FPIs, the rupee breached the 78 level against the dollar for the first time, to close 11 paise lower at 78.04.

"The outlook on the rupee is negative for the near term given the concerns about the aggressive rate hike campaign by the U.S. Fed and the advance seen in the U.S. dollar towards a four-week high," said Sugandha Sachdeva, VP, Commodities & Currency Research at Religare Broking.

In the near term, "the 78.50 mark is likely to provide support to the local unit," she added.

NCLAT junks Amazon appeal against CCI suspending FRL deal

Tribunal upholds ₹200-crore penalty imposed on U.S. firm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

In a major setback to Amazon, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) rejected the U.S. e-commerce company's appeal against an antitrust suspension of its investment deal with Future Group, saying the retailer had not made full disclosures at the time of seeking approval.

NCLAT also upheld a ₹200-crore penalty imposed on Amazon by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and asked the e-commerce firm to deposit the same in 45 days.

It supported the CCI findings that Amazon didn't make full disclosures regard-



ing the deal with Future Retail subsidiary - Future Coupons Pvt. Ltd. (FCPL).

In its order, NCLAT said, "Amazon has not made full, whole, forthright and frank disclosures of relevant materials."

"It had furnished only limited disclosures pertaining to acquiring its strategic

rights and interest in FRL (Future Retail Ltd.)" and executing the commercial contract.

"In this regard, this appellate tribunal is in complete agreement with the view arrived at by the first respondent (CCI)," said the NCLAT.

The competition watchdog had on December 17, 2021, levied a ₹200-crore penalty on Amazon and suspended its deal with Future, stating that the U.S. firm had deliberately suppressed the actual scope and purpose of the 2019 investment and made false and incorrect statements. Amazon had challenged the decision, arguing that it had not concealed any information.

Debt MFs saw ₹32,722-cr. outflow in May: AMFI

'Rising rates, volatility alter priorities'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Mutual funds focussed on investing in fixed-income securities witnessed a net outflow of ₹32,722 crore in May in the wake of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) stance on monetary policy turning hawkish to tackle inflation driven by global factors.

Inflows to the tune of ₹54,656 crore were seen in April, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed.

In addition, there has been a reduction in the number of folios from 73.43 lakh to 72.87 lakh folios between April and May.

Debt funds have always been considered as a safer investment option, especially during volatile markets.

The number of folios dropped from 73.43 lakh to 72.87 lakh between April and May

However, rising interest rates, a volatile macro environment and higher yields have likely impacted investors' investing preferences within debt markets.

Kavita Krishnan, senior analyst - Manager India, said rising food, commodity and fuel prices, among other macro factors like the Ukraine war, likely led to the rate hikes of 40 basis points in May. Moreover, RBI's focus on curbing inflation led to expectations of further rate hikes going forward.

LIC shares tumble almost 6%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Shares of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) continued to fall for the tenth day running on Monday and tumbled almost 6%.

The stock tanked 5.85% to settle at ₹668.20 apiece on the BSE. On the NSE, it slid 5.66% to end at ₹669.50 apiece.

Shares of the company have been falling for the past ten days, losing 20.17%.

The stock has declined 29.6% so far from its issue price of ₹949.

"LIC tumbles as anchor lock-in ends," said Mohit Nigam, head - PMS at Hem Securities.

India's coal imports likely to drop 11% to 186 mt in FY23

Non-coking coal imports may touch 130 mt, forecast shows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's coal import is likely to decline by 11.4% to 186 million tonnes (mt) in the current financial year, even as the state-owned firm has issued import tenders to source the dry fuel from overseas.

Coal India Ltd., which accounts for more than 80% of domestic coal output, last week issued tenders to import coal in a bid to build up the stock of fossil fuel at the indigenous power plants, as mandated by the government. The country imported 210 mt of coal in 2021-22.

According to the medium-term projections of the Ministry of Coal, of the 186 mt



of coal that the company is expected to import in the ongoing fiscal, 130 mt is non-coking coal and 56 mt is coking coal.

India may import 172 mt of coal in 2024-25, 173 mt in 2027-28, and 170 mt in 2029-30. The country imported 215 mt of coal in FY21 and 249 mt in FY20, the Coal Ministry said.

Coal India Ltd. (CIL) last week floated its maiden tender to import 2.416 million tonnes of coal and two international competitive bidding e-tenders of 3 million tonnes each to source coal from overseas.

The import tender was floated after the government asked the company to build up stock of the fossil fuel to avoid the recurrence of power outages, which happened in April on account of shortage of the fuel.

Though CIL is on full steam in augmenting production to meet demand, this is a step towards a state of readiness to combat a coal-supply crunch in future, if any, the PSU said.

Russia is now 2nd-biggest oil vendor to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Russia has overtaken Saudi Arabia to become India's second-biggest supplier of oil behind Iraq as refiners snap up Russian crude available at a deep discount following the war in Ukraine, industry data showed.

Indian refiners bought about 25 million barrels of Russian oil in May, or more than 16% of all their oil imports.

Russian-origin crude hit 5% of India's total seaborne imports in April for the first time, rising from under 1% throughout 2021 and Q1 2022, the data showed.

Iraq remained the top supplier to India in May and Saudi Arabia is now the third-biggest supplier.

Railways eyes start-ups to raise efficiency

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The Indian Railways on Monday announced an Innovation Policy to leverage technologies developed by Indian start-ups to improve its operational efficiency and safety.

Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said about ₹50 crore had been earmarked to fund such start-ups annually, adding that the intellectual property rights (IPR) for any innovations would remain with the innovator.

The Railways would invest in start-ups to get solutions to problems such as rail fracture, headway reduction, automation of track-inspection activities, development of analytical tool by using digital data for improving passenger services and track cleaning machine, among others.

Srei transaction auditor flags ₹3,025-crore fraud

Transactions pertain to FY20, FY21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Srei Equipment Finance on Monday said its administrator has received a report from the transaction auditor about certain fraudulent transactions in FY20 and FY21, bearing a monetary impact of more than ₹3,025 crore on the Srei group.

The Reserve Bank had, in October last year, superseded the boards of Srei Infrastructure Finance Limited (SIFL) and its wholly owned subsidiary Srei Equipment Finance Limited (SEFL).

It then appointed a committee to assist the administrator of the two firms. The Srei group companies, which are undergoing corporate insolvency resolution process, came under duress during the Coronavirus-induced lockdown, as non-payment from its cus-



tomers led to asset-liability mismatches.

"The administrator received an initial report from the professional agency appointed as the transaction auditor, indicating there are certain transactions which are fraudulent in nature, as per Section 66 of the [Insolvency and Bankruptcy] Code. Basis the investigation, the administrator has filed an application in respect of disbursements made to certain entities," SIFL said in a filing.

Govt. may pursue recovery of \$3.85 bn from Reliance, partners

'Centre has right to seek leave of court to challenge judgment'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The government on Monday said it would pursue recovery of \$3.85 billion from Reliance Industries and its partners in the Panna/Mukta and Tapti oil and gas fields case and is mulling an appeal against an English court order over cost recovery dispute in the same fields.

Reacting to an English High Court last week dismissing India's appeal against a \$111 million international arbitration award in favour of Reliance Industries Ltd. and Shell-owned BGC Exploration and Production India Ltd (BGEPI), the government in a statement said it had the right to seek leave of the English commercial court to

challenge this judgment. Reliance and BGEPI had in December 2010 dragged the Centre to arbitration over cost-recovery provisions, profit due to the state and amount of statutory dues including royalty payable.

Arbitration award
A three-member arbitration panel by majority issued a final partial award in October 2016 upholding the government view that profit from the fields should be calculated after deducting prevailing tax of 33% and not the 50% rate that existed earlier.

The government used this award to seek \$3.85 billion in dues from Reliance and BGEPI.

Reliance-BGEPI chal-

lenged the award - under nine heads - before the English Commercial Court.

"In April, 2018 the English Court passed a judgment, in favour of Union of India," the Centre said, dismissing 8 out of 9 challenges.

Both parties challenged the 2018 award before the English Commercial Court. The court disagreed with the tribunal's denial of cost of \$259 million and in March 2020, remitted this part of the 2018 award back to the Tribunal. "The Tribunal heard the matter again and in January 2021 awarded a further sum of \$111 million in favour of the contractors. This was challenged by the Government before the English Commercial Court."

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