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OPINION 6
FAREWELL, MY QUEEN

WORLD 8
CLOSURE OF MORE CHINESE EMBASSIES POSSIBLE: TRUMP

SPORT 12
INTER DRAW CLEARS TITLE WAY FOR JUVE

BHOPAL, FRIDAY JULY 24, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹1.50

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PRIYANKA IMPARTS WORDS OF WISDOM 10 VIVACITY

Pilot scores against Gehlot in SC

Top court refuses to stop Raj HC from announcing decision on petition by Pilot, rebel MLAs challenging disqualification notices for defying Congress

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

With all eyes on the Rajasthan High Court on Friday over the Rajasthan political impasse, Congress rebel leader Sachin Pilot on Thursday scored a point in the Supreme Court in his fight against Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

The Supreme Court refused to stop the Rajasthan High Court from announcing its decision on a petition by Pilot and 18 other rebel MLAs challenging disqualification notices served to them for defying the Congress.

The Rajasthan Speaker, who served the notices last week, had argued that the rebels cannot petition the High Court at this stage. The Rajasthan High Court's ruling will, however, be subject to the final order of the Supreme Court, which will take up the case on Monday.

Gehlot who wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi complaining him about conspiracy to topple his Government, asserted that the alleged audio tapes that has surfaced with allegations of involvement of a Union Minister of payoffs to legislators is very much authentic and can be sent abroad for further authentication.

"It is the matter of just one day. Why can't you wait," the Supreme Court asked the Speaker during arguments on blocking the Rajasthan High Court verdict. The judges also questioned why the Speaker, a neutral person, should approach the court at all.

"Assume a leader has lost the faith of persons. While remaining in party they cannot be disqualified. Then this will become a tool and no one can raise their voice. The voice of dissent in a democracy cannot be suppressed like this," said Justice AK Mishra, one of the three judges hearing the case, without referring to Rajasthan.

Justice Mishra was responding to the arguments of senior lawyer Kapil Sibal defending the Speaker's right to serve disqualification notices and ask the rebels why they skipped party meetings. "The High Court cannot give any protective order at this stage to the other camp. No court can intervene when the Speaker is deciding the case," Sibal said.

Speaker CP Joshi had served notices to 19 rebel MLAs, including Sachin Pilot, after they skipped two meetings of Congress MLAs called by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot last week.

The rebels argued in court that they do not intend to quit the party; they only want a change in the leadership. But Sibal said their act of not joining the meetings amounted to giving up their membership.

The Speaker's sudden move to seek the SC's intervention reflects the Congress's worry that a legal victory for the rebels may endanger its Government in Rajasthan.

Ashok Gehlot's Government has a narrow lead in the 200-member Assembly — just one MLA over the majority mark of 101. If the Rajasthan High Court decides the Speaker can continue the process of disqualifying team Pilot's 19 MLAs, Gehlot can win more easily as the majority mark will come down.

If the rebel MLAs win their case and get protection from disqualification, they can vote against the Congress Government and make it tough for Gehlot to retain power.

- Assume a leader has lost the faith of persons. While remaining in party they cannot be disqualified. Then this will become a tool and no one can raise their voice. The voice of dissent in a democracy cannot be suppressed like this, said Justice AK Mishra
- The Rajasthan High Court's ruling will, however, be subject to the final order of the Supreme Court, which will take up the case on Monday

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- It is the matter of just one day. Why can't you wait, the SC asked the Speaker during arguments
- The Speaker's sudden move to seek the SC intervention reflects the Congress's worry that a legal victory for the rebels may endanger its Government
- Gehlot Govt has a narrow lead in the Assembly

Can send Shekhawat tape to US for test to clear doubts: Gehlot

Jaipur: Targeting Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Tuesday said the audio clips which indicate an alleged plot to topple his Government can be sent abroad for forensic tests. Without taking the minister's name, Gehlot questioned why he is not coming forward to give a voice sample. "We can send it for FSL testing to America if they have no trust in the Rajasthan government," the Rajasthan CM said, adding that the Congress also did not trust the Centre.

Credit society scam: Jaipur court directs probe into complaint against Shekhawat

Jaipur: A city court has directed that the Rajasthan Police should probe a complaint alleging the involvement of Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a credit society scam. The development comes amid allegations by the Congress that the Minister is involved in a bid to topple the Ashok Gehlot Government. The SOG has already sent a notice to the Minister in connection with a probe into audio clips which indicate efforts to lure away Congress MLAs.

India asks China to walk the talk on LAC disengagement

Talks likely today to break logjam, and pave way for another round of Corps Commander-level parleys

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Thursday categorically asked China to "sincerely" work for complete disengagement and de-escalation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

Officials of the two Foreign Ministries under the aegis of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Co-ordination on India-China border Affairs (WMCC) are likely to hold talks on Friday to break the logjam and pave the way for another round of Corps Commander-level parleys.

India's latest assertion came against the backdrop of the Chinese troops not honouring the agreements arrived at in the last round of talks between the two Commanders to withdraw additional troops from the front and "depth" areas.

China is yet to start the process to pull back its 40,000 troops leading to heightened tension on the LAC and India also forced ramp up its troop strength. Moreover, the Chinese side has also not removed its heavy guns and weapons as agreed upon, sources said.

This pact to thin out troops was projected as a major confidence building measure but the Chinese not withdrawing has raised alarm bells in the Indian security establishment, they said.

Given this actual scenario, the Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday said in order to bring restore normalcy, respecting and strictly abiding by the LAC is the basis of peace and tranquility in the border areas. Several agreements concluded by India and China since 1993 firmly acknowledge this, Ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said.

Reiterating the point that China triggered the eight-week old stand offs, he said, "In my statement of June 26, I had noted that the conduct of Chinese forces this year, including the deployment of large body of troops and changes in behaviour, accompanied by unjustified and untenable claims, has been in complete disregard of all the mutual agreements.

Army vehicles move towards Leh along the Manali-Leh highway amid the ongoing India-China border dispute, in Kullu district PTI

Govt bans public procurement from China, other neighbours

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid border row with China, the Government on Thursday imposed restrictions on public procurement from China and other countries with common border.

The Government of India amended the General Financial Rules 2017 to enable imposition of restrictions on bidders from countries which share a land border with India on grounds of defence of India, or matters directly or indirectly related thereto including national security, an official statement said.

The Department of Expenditure has, under the said Rules, issued a detailed order on public procurement to strengthen the defence of India and national security, it said.

As per the order, it said, any bidder from such countries sharing a land border with India will be eligible to bid in any procurement whether of goods, services (including consultancy services and non-consultancy services) or works (including turnkey projects) only if the bidder is registered with the Competent Authority.

"The Competent Authority for registration will be the Registration Committee constituted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). Political and security clearance from the Ministries of External and Home Affairs respectively will be mandatory," it said.

Pak offer of consular access to Jadhav farcical: India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

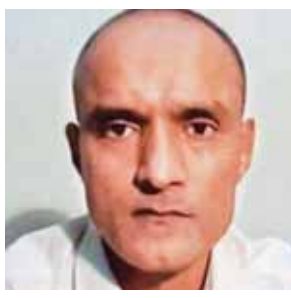
India on Thursday charged Pakistan with blocking all avenues for remedy in Kulbhushan Jadhav case and said it adopted a "farcical" approach in granting consular access.

This strong statement came after Jadhav was denied consular access and Islamabad said July 20 was the last date for filing review petition by Jadhav against death sentence given to him.

Making New Delhi's stand clear, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said India had requested Pakistan 12 times for consular access to Jadhav and Islamabad has not provided "unhindered and unimpeded access".

Srivastava also said Pakistan adopted a "farcical approach" in handling the case, adding India is exploring available options in the matter.

"Pakistan has blocked all avenues for effective remedy available to India. It stands in violation of International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgment and its own Ordinance. India reserves its position, including right to avail of further remedies," the Ministry said on the Pakistan Government moving Islamabad High Court to appoint lawyer for Kulbhushan Jadhav.



The MEA Spokesperson further said India tried to file a review petition on July 18 for Jadhav but the lawyer appointed by India was told he has no "power of attorney."

Pakistan had earlier this month said July 20 is the last date of filing a review petition by Jadhav against the death sentence awarded by a Pakistani military court.

The 50-year-old retired Indian Navy officer was sentenced to death by the Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017.

India approached the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Pakistan for denial of consular access to Jadhav and challenging the death sentence. The Hague-based ICJ ruled in July 2019 that Pakistan must undertake an "effective review and reconsideration" of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav and also to grant consular access to India without further delay.

The Pakistan Government has claimed that Jadhav refused to file a review petition or an application to reconsider the verdict. Pakistan enacted the "International Court of Justice Review and Reconsideration Ordinance 2020" on May 20 under which a petition for the review of a military court's decision can be made to Islamabad High Court through an application within 60 days of its promulgation.

Srivastava said India already shared its concerns to Pakistan in June knowing the "inadequacies and shortcomings" in the Ordinance.

Community transmission in Telangana! It's official now

PNS ■ HYDERABAD/KOCHI

With Telangana recording a bigger spike everyday, the State health officials have admitted that the State was passing through the stage of community transmission of the outbreak.

Director of Public Health Dr G Srinivas Rao on Thursday said there were strong indications to show the presence of Covid-19 in the community across Telangana.

"The virus is in the community and all of us are doing our best to contain it. The State Government is pulling out all stops to prevent the virus from spreading. The general public must be very cautious in the next four to five weeks. Masks, hand washing and physical distancing in every aspect of life are mandatory," Dr G Srinivas Rao said in Hyderabad.

Telangana has over 50,000 positive cases and nearly 450 deaths.

The State faced huge criticism for not carrying out adequate number of test to track positive cases. Even now it is one of the worst States as far as testing numbers go.

Recovered cop tests Covid +ve again, raises fear of reinfection

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The case of a Delhi policeman having a relapse of the coronavirus has baffled experts and the doctors treating him and has raised the question whether a recovered patient can contract the infection again.

The policeman, 50, had tested positive for the virus in May and was treated at the Indraprastha Apollo hospitals between May 15 and 22. Thereafter, he had tested negative and resumed duty.

However, on July 10, he again felt unwell with a fever and dry cough and got himself tested on July 13.

The report came positive through the rapid antigen test as well as the RT-PCR test, said Dr Rajesh Chawla, Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, Apollo Hospitals.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 12,87,083
DEATHS: 30,635
RECOVERED: 8,16,205
ACTIVE: 4,39,816

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	3,47,502	12,854	1,94,253
Tamil Nadu	1,92,964	3,232	1,36,793
Delhi	1,27,364	**3,745**	1,09,065
Karnataka	80,863	1,616	29,310
Andhra Pradesh	72,711	884	37,555
Uttar Pradesh	58,104	1,298	35,803
Gujarat	52,563	2,256	38,059
West Bengal	51,757	1,255	31,656
Telangana	50,826	447	39,327
Rajasthan	33,220	594	23,815
Bihar	31,691	212	20,959
Haryana	28,975	378	22,249
Assam	27,745	66	19,351
Madhya Pradesh	25,474	780	17,359
Odisha	21,099	145	14,393
Jammu & Kashmir	16,429	282	8,709

Joshi deposes, claims Cong Govt implicated him in Babri case

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Veteran BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi on Thursday deposed before a special CBI court in the Babri mosque demolition trial and pleaded innocence and claimed that he was implicated in the case by the then Congress Government at the Centre.

He dubbed the prosecution witnesses in the case as "liars".

While making his statement under section 313 of the CrPC through video conference to the court of Special Judge SK Yadav, the 86-year-old leader accused the then Congress-led Central Government of "falsely" implicating him in the case out of "political vendetta".

Former Deputy Prime Minister LK Advani, 92, too is slated to depose before the Lucknow court through video links from New Delhi on Friday.

"The entire investigation was conducted under the political influence and he was charged on the basis of false and fabricated evidence," Joshi told the court.

At this, the judge asked him why then the prosecution witnesses have deposed against him and Joshi retorted, "All the witnesses are liars. They have deposed due to political reasons and under the influence of police."

Govt goes by SC, OK's permanent commission for women in Army

300 women officers serving in 10 streams of force to be benefited from this decision

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Abiding by the Supreme Court judgment, the Defence Ministry on Thursday issued orders to grant permanent commission to women officers in the Army. This major move will benefit more than 300 women officers right away serving in 10 streams of the force.

The order comes after the apex court in February this year directed the Government that women officers in the Army be granted permanent commission and command postings in all services. However, women officers as of now cannot serve in the combat arms like the infantry, artillery and armored corps.

Following the judgment, Army Chief General MM Naravane had said it was an enabling one and gives a lot of clarity on how to move forward. He had stated that the same procedure for male Short Service Commission (SSC) officers will be followed for women to give permanent commission.

The Defence Ministry order on Thursday also said, "In anticipation, the Army HQ had set in motion a series of preparatory actions for conduct of the permanent commission Selection Board for women officers. The Selection Board will be scheduled as soon as all affected SSC women officers exercise their option and complete requisite documentation."

1 more Cong MLA quits MP Assembly

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Congress party in Madhya Pradesh continues to witness shifting of loyalties by its MLAs, as on Thursday, another Congress legislator from Mandhata Narayan Patel resigned from the Assembly.

Patel joined the BJP late in the evening in the presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. With Patel's departure, the number of Congress MLAs who resigned has risen to 25. Total 22 had left the party under Jyotiraditya Scindia in March this year.

Patel handed over his resignation to Protem speaker Rameshwar Sharma on Thursday.

Recently Bada Malhera MLA Pradyumn Singh Lodhi and Nepanagar MLA Sumitra Devi Kasdekar too had left, resigning from Assembly. With the persistent exodus, the Congress party strength in state assembly has been reduced to 89.

"The BJP is on a spree to buy MLAs and they are investing public money for this," said Congress spokesperson Bhupendra Gupta alleging soon the mafia and corporates will join the nexus.

When asked as why BJP is behaving like a magnet for Congress MLAs, BJP spokesperson Rajneesh Agrawal claimed that it is a query which should be directed to those leaving the Congress party and the opposition also needs to introspect on this. "Our party respects our leaders and workers," added Agrawal.

Meanwhile, early on the day, former BJP minister KL Agrawal joined Congress party in the presence of senior leader Digvijay Singh in Bhopal. He made it clear that the party could opt for anyone in assembly polls but he has a sole aim of defeating Mahendra Singh Sisodia who joined BJP recently.

Accepting that he was feeling ignored in BJP, Agrawal alleged that 'saleable items' left with Jyotiraditya Scindia. Over 400 of his supporters also joined with him.

'Kavu' presented online with its basic information

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

There are over 2,000 well preserved sacred groves, managed by private individuals and Devaswami Trusts

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) launched a new series to display online the exhibits on its 200 acre campus in Bhopal with the aim of digitally connecting everyone with them due to lock-down during the current COVID-19 epidemic. Under this series, on Thursday "Kavu"- a sacred grove from Kerala Exhibition of IGRMS has been presented online with its basic information and photographs and videos.

Praveen Kumar Mishra, Director, IGRMS, said that Sacred Grove is a group of trees of the same species or of several species, which is dedicated by the local communities to their deities and ancestors. Cutting trees or using other vegetation from these forests is completely prohibited.

Besides, the animals living in them are not harmed. IGRMS has been displaying and preserving bio-cultural features of folk and tribal communities since its inception. In the same sequence, the museum has established selected sacred groves from various areas of the country as a Sacred Grove Open air exhibition in its premises.

'Kaavu' are numerous throughout the length and breadth of Kerala. These sacred groves perform a unique role in bio-diversity management in Kerala. There are over 2000 well preserved sacred groves, managed by private individuals and Devaswami Trusts. Many myths, legends and faiths are associated with the sacred groves of Kerala.

'Ayyappan Kaavu', the sacred groves dedicated to Lord Ayyappa, used to be the most common 'in Kerala in the past. The sacred groves in North Kerala are mostly associated with goddesses or ancestral spirits like Amma, Ayalakshi, Ayiravalli, Bhagavati, Durga, Mahishasur Mardini, Vana Durga, Vanadevatha, Marutha, Madan, Yakshi, Gandharvan, Yogeswaran, Muthappan etc, while in south Kerala, these are generally associated with snake worship like Nagam, Nagaraja, Nagini, Sarpam. The rituals and rites, performed in the sacred groves, vary with the region, caste and patron deity of the sacred grove.

A ritualistic recitation called 'Sarpam Pattu' is performed in Central and South Kerala, once every 10 or 12 years, to propitiate the snake gods. In the sacred groves, associated with goddesses in North Kerala, a ritual dance called 'Theyyam' or 'Theyyattam' is performed.

Depressed over prolonged illness, 55-year-old married woman commits suicide

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Depressed over prolonged illness, a 55-year-old married woman committed suicide by jumping from fourth floor storey building at Ruchi Life Escape under Misrod police station area on Wednesday.

According to the police, the deceased, identified as Shruti Das, jumped from the fourth floor of the building. Then, she was rushed to a hospital where she was declared dead.

The deceased had been suffering from diabetes, TB and depression for a long time and was frustrated over the situation as she was not getting relief from the medication.

Police have not recovered any suicide note and her prolonged illness is considered to be the main reason behind taking the extreme step.

The deceased sustained injuries over his body. After the locals spotted the body, the police were informed and on the receipt of the information, a police team reached

The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investigation.

Meanwhile, an 8-year-old boy drowned at Khajuri while playing with cattle at a pit filled with muddy water on Wednesday.

The deceased, identified as Vansh Prajatpati, was playing with cattle and accidentally got drowned as he slipped into muddy water in the pit which was deep and after which the locals rescued him and took to hospital where he was declared dead. The doctors told that the water entered the body and was muddy water which lead to suffocation and resulting in his death.

After the preliminary investigation, the body was sent for the post mortem. Later, the police registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC.

People buying groceries in the market ahead of the ten-day total lockdown ordered by the district administration officials scheduled from July 25 to Aug 3, as a preventive measure against the spread of Covid-19 in Bhopal on Thursday
Pioneer photo

Cong MLA warns of stir if fests are blocked by admin with lockdown orders

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Soon after Madhya Pradesh Government announced a ten-day lockdown in Bhopal in the wake of rising corona cases, Congress MLA Arif Masood openly flayed the move threatening an agitation if the festivals were blocked by the administration with lockdown orders.

Eid-ul-Adha is being observed on July 31, while the festival of Rakshabandhan is on August 3, the last day of the ten-day lockdown announced by Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Wednesday late evening.

After over 125 cases in the last few days, the Government Health bulletin put the number of fresh cases at 217 in Bhopal on Wednesday. Media reports suggested that overall figures of new cases in last 24 hours were around 190. The state reported over 750 cases in a single day on Wednesday.

This had prompted the administration to announce a ten-day lockdown in the city.

Calling it a unilateral decision taken by the administration, Congress Bhopal Madhya MLA Arif Masood claimed that the decision was taken without taking public representatives into confidence.

Festivals like Eid-ul-Adha and Rakshabandhan can not be blocked with lockdown orders, affirmed Masood threatening administration with agitation in case the decision isn't rolled back by 4pm on Thursday.

Locals could observe festivals with social distancing and other safety norms, he claimed.

"Qurbani (sacrifice ritual) will be undertaken on the festival in the State at every cost," affirmed the Congress lawmaker urging everyone to oppose the move on social media.

BJP spokesperson Rajneesh Agrawal said that it was highly shameful that public representatives like Arif Masood are instigating people to break law and order instead of cooperating with the authorities in the hour of crisis.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Masood's threat said that politicising every subject was not good.

"Our topmost priority is to save the public from the virus and whatever we have decided is in the interest of the locals," added Dr Mishra. No decision taken by the State Gsovernment are based on festivals or religion, he added.

Urging that everyone should observe festival inside the home, Mishra affirmed that anyone opposing the lockdown through agitation will be dealt as per the law.

RAPE AND DEATH OF 3-YEAR-OLD GIRL

Chouhan directs admin to ensure death sentence to culprits

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has directed the Police administration to ensure death sentence to culprits involved in heinous crime of rape and death of 3-year-old girl in Chhindwara by trying the case in fast track court. The Chief Minister directed the Director General of Police to conduct a thorough and prompt investigation in the incident and to ensure stringent punishment by trying the case in fast track court.

The Chief Minister said that under the campaign being conducted against mafia, goons and anti-social elements in the state, such criminals will not be spared under any circumstances. Crime against girls is like a crime against all humanity. Such people will not be spared at any cost.

It may be mentioned that while reviewing the law and order situation on July 13 and 20, Chouhan had directed to launch a campaign against mafias. Reviewing the districts through video conferencing, the Chief Minister had instructed the Superintendents of Police and Collectors for action against mafias. The Chief Minister has also conveyed them that they will be held accountable in case of any negligence in action in any district.

Stringent action is being taken against white collar goons and criminals in the state under the campaign being conducted by the Police Administration. A stringent action has been taken by the police against the white collared criminal Pyare Miyan, connected with media, involved in criminal offences with minor girls. He was immediately arrested and his properties, constructed on encroached land were demolished. Thorough investigation is also being conducted in other cases registered against him.

In the campaign against mafias, illegal house built by goon Salman Lala s/o Sheru Lala of Nagda was demolished by the Municipality on July 23. He was a terror in Nagda and people were scared to register their complaints against him. Ten crimes of serious nature i.e. attempt to murder, scuffle, extortion etc. are registered against Salman.

A positive message has been conveyed to the people of Nagda area by demolishing his properties under the campaign. The trust among the people has strengthened that Government will not keep quite in taking stringent action against goons and criminals.

Success has been achieved in a case of smuggling of Dondachoora by notorious smuggler Abdul s/o Babu Billor in Mandsaur. During checking of a trailer on Rahimgarh Suwasra road, 3.1 tonne Dondachoora in 155 bags was confiscated, which was concealed with the bags of wheat. A driver resident of Patiala was arrested in the case. In the above mentioned crime of Dondachoora smuggling, the absconding notorious smuggler Abdul s/o Babu Billor has been made prime accused. A hunt has been launched against him. The police is investigating the connection of Babu Billor with Pyare Miyan.

Shekhar Lodhi, who was carrying a reward on his head, was injured and arrested in an encounter by the Bhopal Police on July 22. Many cases are registered against him. Police was searching him and a reward of ₹25,000 was also declared on his head. The campaign against mafias and goons will continue in future too.

BJP activists pay floral tributes to freedom fighter and revolutionary Pt Chandrashekhar Azad on his birth anniversary in Bhopal on Thursday
Pioneer photo

'Covid-19 transition has brought many new challenges to the normal functioning of police'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Director General of Police Vivek Johri on Thursday released a detailed guide to the work done by the police during the Corona transition. This guide compiles all the instructions-circulars issued by the Police Headquarters to prevent infection during the execution of police work from the initial stages of corona infection till now. This includes all aspects of the Standard Working System (SOP) for preventing corona.

Inspector General of Police D Srinivas Varma said that the Covid-19 transition has brought many new challenges to the normal functioning of the police. There was no prior training on how to deal with them. This guide was prepared by Covid Cell of Special Branch under the guidance of Director General of Police Johri.

It sets new standards for the performance of the state police force. For the first time such a massive effort has been made at the institutional level in the state.

Earlier, guidelines were set for the working parameters for safety and security of police in the field and at every deployed place in the state and which were executed to their best and results were satisfactory in handling the situation of the pandemic and maintaining lockdown with peace and dealing with the citizens in shouldering duties.

Now all such works which have been done with challenges and how the difficulties are overcome have been complied by the department in detail and which has been released by DGP Johri on Thursday.

Online art workshop held with fervour

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

An online art workshop was held on Thursday. It was organised under Art and Beyond learning initiative.

On Thursday Paper Collage workshop was held. It was jointly organised by Child Risghts Observatory, Madhya Pradesh, Art Design Teacher Forum and Srajna Academy of Design and Arts. The workshop was conducted by expert Meeta Johardutta on Facebook Live.

Paper collage is a technique of an art production where the artwork is created using an assemblage of different forms and shapes using paper. These forms and shapes eventually create a whole image.

During the workshop, Meeta explsined how to create an art piece. The participants brought different varieties of papers cut into small pieces, pencil, glue and scissors. First the participants sketch out their favourite shape or drawing and then they had to stick the paper pieces properly on it.

Meeta said that uniformity in sticking pieces is quite important to give a nice finishing touch to the art piece. The participants created some beautiful art pieces during the workshop.

A collage may sometimes include magazine and newspaper clippings, ribbons, paint, bits of colored or handmade papers, portions of other artwork or texts, photographs and other found objects, glued to a piece of paper or canvas.

It is to be noted that the origins of collage can be traced back hundreds of years, but this technique made a dramatic reappearance in the early 20th century as an art form of novelty.

Man attacked with sharp-edged weapons

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 37-year-old man was attacked by three miscreants with a sharp-edged weapon near Agrawal Nursing Home over a property dispute under Bajaria police station area on Wednesday.

According to the police, Waseemuddin was attacked by Salman, Shawar and Shreen after a heated exchange of words. He was attacked in his stomach with a sharp edged weapon.

The victim was rushed to hospital, where the condition of the him is reportedly stable. The accused are still absconding. After the preliminary investigation, the police have registered a case under sections 294, 323 and 34 of the IPC.

BJP leader and former Minister KL Agrawal joins Congress party in presence of Congress State President Kamal Nath at PCC headquarters in Bhopal on Thursday
Pioneer photo

'Azad Katha' performed in honour of Chandrashekhar Azad

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

To remember freedom fighter Chandrashekhar Azad, an online exhibition 'Azad Katha' was featured on YouTube channel. The Department of Culture put up the online exhibition on Thursday.

To observe the birth anniversary of Chandrashekhar Azad, the exhibition was organised by Directorate of Culture and Swaraj Sansthan. The exhibition displayed the important events and incidents from the life of Chandrashekhar Azad.

Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad is a symbol of the valour and sacrifice of the country in the unequivocal heroes of the Indian independence war. He had such a vision of the strong movement on the path of revolution that he challenged death by smiling many times. Despite many struggles, he continued his fight with the determination for free India.

The struggle for the country's independence he put in is worth mentioning.

The crucial steps like the killing of Saunders in protest of the Simon Commission, the bomb blasts in protest of the black law made by the British government and Kakori train loot are some of the major examples.

Batteries, construction material stolen from Barkheded Bondar

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Two batteries and construction material worth ₹90,000 were stolen from Barkheded Bondar under Khajuri police station area on Wednesday.

The complainant, Raj Kumar, lodged a complaint with the Khajuri police after the goods at the spot were found stolen.

In complaint, the complainant stated that he works with Hillwaves company and building construction work was going at Barkheded Bondar. At the construction site two batteries, 25 centring plates and steel bars were kept. In the morning on Wednesday it was found that goods were missing and searched at the site was conducted by the complainant and others but they failed to find the goods and later approached police to lodge a complaint.

The complainant has claimed that the total loss in the burglary is over ₹90,000. Based on the complaint after the preliminary investigation the police have registered a case under section 379 of the IPC and have started further investigation.

One nabbed for strangulating 30-yr-old to death

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Awadhpuri police has nabbed a murder accused who strangulated a 30-year-old youth to death on Tuesday night at Yugantar Colony.

Sensation prevailed in the area after 30-year-old Salman was found dead inside his house at around 10 in the night on Tuesday.

In the initial investigation, Ankit Meshram told the police that he spotted Rahul with Salman last in the evening and later Salman was found dead.

Based on the information in the investigation, police narrowed on Rahul and nabbed him and when he was interrogated he confessed that he killed Salman.

After the incident, the accused went absconding. The accused and the deceased were acquainted and would consume liquor but on the day of the incident they had some dispute and later Salman was killed by Rahul.

The accused identified as Thakur alias Rahul Yadav was having liquor at around 8 pm when Ankit visited Salman and the two had a verbal spate over some issue.

He went to collect money which he had given to Salman.

After sometime Ankit went to his house to have food and returned at around 9.30 in the night and found that Salman was lying unconscious and when he was taken to hospital he was declared dead.

Police said that the accused confessed that he killed Salman.

He had dispute over money with Salman and during having drinks on Tuesday he got infuriated and strangulated Salman to death.

Ankit had provided ₹83,000 to Salman for work and on Tuesday he had gone to return of the money.

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All India webinar held by Embassy of France

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

An All India webinar was organised by the Embassy of France, Institut Français in India and the Alliance Française network, in collaboration with Campus France India, the Ambassador of France to India, H.E. Emmanuel Lenain said on Wednesday.

During the webinar Lenain, elaborated on French as an international language and its rapid rise partly on account of increasing speakers in the African continent.

According to Lenain, "The development of the French language is part of a global scheme presented by President Emmanuel Macron in March 2018. India is a priority in this plan and boasts of the largest network of Alliance Françaises in Asia. We will encourage more Alliances Françaises in the country thanks to a large demand".

The Ambassador also cited COVID-19 as a factor in the speeding up digitalisation of the network enabling access to students including those far away from city centres.

He enunciated the benefits of learning French especially in the context of higher education in France and working for French companies both in India and France.

On this subject the Ambassador mentioned, "Next year will not be a blank year as we will make sure that students go to France to study even if it means a few weeks of online learning in the beginning."

Another speaker, Samuel Berthet, Director of the Alliance Française in Hyderabad highlighted that the Alliances Françaises in India, were actively contributing to the future world. David Petit Jean, Academic Coordinator for French Language at the Alliance Française in Mumbai, highlighted teaching of French as a foreign language which embraced the Common European Framework for language learning, a global standard.

Rhéa Cheryl Shivan, Campus France Manager in Chennai, informed on the 12-city network of Campus France, the agency under the French Ministry of External Affairs and the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Training.

Eric Perrotel, Attaché for cooperation in the French language, based in Chennai, spoke about cooperation with Indian schools especially development of training programmes in teaching French.

Every poor in MP will now get fair price ration: Chouhan

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has taken a big decision in the interest of the poor section of the State, according to which 36 lakh 86 thousand 856 poor people of the State who do not have eligibility slips under the National Food Security Act, will also be given eligibility slips and will be provided fair price ration.

At present there are 5 crore 44 lakh 24 thousand fair price consumers in the state.

In the meeting on "One Nation-One Ration Card" at Mantralaya, Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that every poor in the State will now get fair price ration. In times of Corona crisis, it was found that there are many poor people in the State who have not been able to avail fair price ration due to non-possession of eligibility slips.

First, their ration was immediately arranged along with the ration for migrant labourers in the State. Now all 36 lakh 86 thousand such poor have been identified and the work of issuing eligibility slips to them is being started. Now all these people will be registered as fair price ration consumers and they will be able to get fair price ration from the month of August. No poor will be deprived of fair price ration in the state.

Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Minister Bisahulal Singh said that all 25,490 fair price shops in the state have the facility to register Aadhaar on POS machines. The POS also has the facility of making changes in faulty Aadhaar numbers and numbers registered in other names. While distributing the ration the vendor is also doing the work of aadhar seeding from door-to-door. Aadhaar seeding facility is also being done by local bodies on the Samagra portal.

The beneficiaries, who do not have Aadhaar registration, are being told to get registered.

Chief Secretary Bains said that the work of Aadhaar seeding of all fair price beneficiaries should be completed by prompt implementation of One Nation-One Ration Card scheme. The work of adding all eligible people and distribution of eligibility slips should be done on priority basis.

One Nation - One Ration Card

Principal Secretary Shivshekhar Shukla informed that food grains are to be provided to the eligible families covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013 through inter-state portability. Under this, 100 percent automation and 100 percent Aadhar seeding of fair price shops is to be done.

Fraudster nabbed, 11 cars recovered

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Crime branch of Bhopal police has nabbed a fraudster who used to take vehicles on rent and would earn by keeping vehicles as security. Police have recovered 11 cars worth ₹1 crore from his possession.

The accused, identified as Ajay Ratnakar, was arrested near Pal Dhaba at Hoshangabad road after one on the victims Amar Singh lodged complaint with the crime branch regarding non-payment and not returning his Alto car by the accused.

Based on the complaint, police registered a case under section 406 of the IPC and started to search for the accused.

During the investigation, police found that the accused has cheated near a dozen people whose vehicles he had taken on rent and later took money by keeping them as security.

Amar's car was not returned by the accused and he went missing and victim was not able to contact the accused. He was assured ₹ 15,000 for his car as rent and had made agreement for the same which the victim has provided to the police.

The accused used to offer a hefty amount as rent for the car which was a trap for the victims and those who accepted were duped by the accused.

The victims who were duped by the accused were Anil Sahu, Kishan Lal Mawade, meet Soni, Ramkumar Gautam, Shibbu Ahirwar, Ramashankar Vishwakarma, Kiran Gahia, Amar, Pyarelal, Manoj Kumar and Sumit Kumar.

Punjab approves detailed guidelines for shooting of films, music videos during Unlock 2.0

Post approval by the CM, the Special Chief Secy (Home) Satish Chandra issued comprehensive directions

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Government on Thursday issued the detailed guidelines for shooting of films or music videos during Unlock-2 period in the State, with restriction of 50 persons at the shooting venue, along with strict adherence to other Covid-19 safety protocols.

The guidelines comes a day after the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh had asked the State Chief Secretary Vini Mahajan to formulate clear guidelines in response to the request from a delegation of the film or music industry, which approached the State Government to seek permission for shooting of films or music videos, with necessary clarifications and directions to be issued in this regard to the district authorities.

Post approval by the Chief Minister, the Special Chief Secretary (Home) Satish Chandra issued comprehensive guidelines granting permission to shoot films or music videos in the State, subject to certain conditions.

The applications for grant of permission for shooting of films or music videos etc would need to be submitted to the Deputy Commissioner giving full details of the location, number of days and timings for which such permission, as per the conditions.

Deputy Commissioner would, after consulting the police authorities, grant the permission and a copy of the permission shall be endorsed to the Commissioner of Police or the Senior Superintendent of Police for information and necessary action.

The guidelines also stipulate that the duration of shooting should be restricted to minimum possible time and not more than 50 persons should be present. Shooting would commence only after all the persons involved are thermally scanned and found asymptomatic.

The shooting venue should have sanitizers or soap and water and the members present should frequently wash their hands.

Wearing of masks for all would be essential except for the ones who are in front of the camera. Social distance will have to be maintained except for the ones who being filmed.

To avoid crowding, adequate number of view-cutters (kanats) etc and enforcement of crowd control by private security personnel would be ensured.

RULES FOR SHOOTING

- Strict adherence to all COVID-19 safety protocols of all persons involved, and if found asymptomatic
- Application seeking permission for shooting to be submitted to DCs with full details of location, number of days, and timings
- DC to grant permission after consulting police authorities
- Copy of permission to be endorsed to CP or SSP
- Duration of shooting to be restricted to minimum possible time
- Not more than 50 persons to be present at venue
- Shooting to be commenced only after thermal screening
- Shooting venue should have sanitizers or soap and water
- Members present should frequently wash their hands
- Wearing of masks for all would be essential except for the ones who are in front of the camera
- Social distancing to be maintained except for the ones who being filmed
- Adequate number of view-cutters, enforcement of crowd control by private security personnel to be ensured

Punjab Police withdraws 6,355 cops from non-core duties to boost Covid-19 preparedness

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Police has withdrawn as many 6,355 personnel from non-core duties to create 'COVID Reserves' and reinforce its field force at police stations and in the Armed Battalions.

While 202 COVID Reserves have been created in police stations across 22 districts, another 20 have been constituted in the Armed Battalions, to improve operational readiness for enforcement of the various safety norms and protocols in place in the State.

The manpower mobilization exercise was undertaken from July 17, and as of July 23, 3,669 personnel were part of 202 COVID Reserves in districts while 475 were in the COVID Reserves of the Armed Battalions, said the state Director General of Police (DGP) Dinkar Gupta.

The diversion of force has been done from non-core police duties at District Police Offices, Police Lines, Saanjh Kendras, those attached with Police or Civil officers and threatened persons, and officials on temporary attachment with other units.

"Post the exercise, an additional 1,800 police personnel have been mobilized at the police stations, across the ranks of Constable to Inspector," said the DGP during the COVID review videoconference (VC) meeting chaired by Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh.

As far as the Armed Battalions are concerned, the additional personnel deployment, in addition to 475 in the COVID Reserves, has been made at Shambhu Barrier (118), Security duty in districts (191) and NGOs of Armed Battalions (102).

10 days' complete lockdown will be enforced in Bhopal Municipal limit only: Chouhan

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that 10 days complete lockdown being imposed from 8.00 p.m. of July 24 will be enforced in Bhopal Municipal limit only. The supply of most essential commodities like medicines, vegetables, fruits, milk etc. will be ensured. For the convenience of poor, fair price shops will remain open. All private offices and commercial establishments will remain shut.

All industries will run and identity cards issued by factory owners to their employees for movement in industrial areas will be accepted. E-pass will be issued to people for movement inside the boundaries of Bhopal Municipal Corporation and exit for the most essential work.

The Chief Minister was reviewing the situation of Corona and arrangements in the state through video conferencing at Mantralaya on Thursday.

Minister for Home Narottam Mishra, Minister for Medical Education, Bhopal Gas Tragedy, Relief and Rehabilitation Shri Vishwas Sarang, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary Home S.N. Mishra, Principal Secretary Faiz Ahmed Qidwai and other were present at the meeting. Additional Chief Secretary Mohammad Suleman attended the video conferencing from Indore.

During the review of Anuppur district, the Chief Minister Chouhan instructed that all efforts should be made to increase the contact tracing to control the infection. Balaghat district has been asked to maintain special vigilance in rural areas. Instructions were given for removal of Chief Medical and Health Officer of Chhatarpur district and for making better arrangement in the district.

The Chief Minister instructed to pay special attention to district with high infection like Bhopal, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Morena and Khargone. There is now an increase in number of patients in Ujjain; hence attention should also be paid to the district.

Chouhan said that effective control on corona infection has been gained in Indore and remarkable decline in fatality rate has been recorded there. One hundred 38 deaths in April, 72 in May, 64 in June and 18 in July have been caused due to corona in Indore. Shri Chouhan said to conduct case study of Indore and its best practices should be implemented in other districts.

The Chief Minister has said that to monitor whether best protocol of treatment is being followed in Covid hospitals or not, CCTV cameras should be installed in Covid hospitals without cameras.

In the review of Shahdol district, the Chief Minister instructed that the medical college should be kept ready, to ensure better treatment to covid patients of the vicinity. Minister Narottam Mishra has instructed that the recruitment of class 3 and 4 employees in medical colleges of the state should be done soon.

Punjab Health Min appeals NHM staff not to go on strike

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

In wake of the reports that staff working under Punjab National Health Mission is proceeding on strike, Punjab's Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu on Thursday appealed them not to go on strike or any mass casual leave.

"The entire world is fighting against the crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic and the health employees are on the forefront for the cause of mankind. In such a scenario, Punjab Government is also making untiring efforts to serve its people in this time of crisis. Already, the Epidemic Diseases Act has been enforced and the State Government is making all efforts to combat the menace," said Sidhu.

Sidhu said that at this juncture, the staff working under NHM should not even think of such a move as this would not only be anti-mankind but also against their call of duty. He exhorted the health workers, especially ANMs, staff nurses, to keep serving the people of the State in the manner they have been doing especially after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have to live up to expectations of the people of Punjab as they look upon us at this hour of crisis," he said adding that despite all odds, the Health Department recently gave NHM employees six percent-plus-12 percent special COVID-19 increment about two months back.

The Health Minister urged the employees of the Department not to back out from their moral duty of being forefront COVID-19 warriors. "As done in past, the State Government is always open to any genuine problems being faced by the staff and any one facing any problems can contact me directly," he added.

Sidhu said that he was hopeful that the employees of National Health Mission Punjab, being the backbone of the Health Services, will stand rock solid with the Department and shun away any thought of going on strike.

Plasma Bank at PGIMS Rohtak launched

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Home-cum-Health Minister Anil Vij on Thursday digitally inaugurated a Plasma Bank at Pandit Bhagwat Dayal Sharma Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS), Rohtak.

The Health Minister said that after setting up this plasma bank inside the premises of PGIMS, Rohtak, the State Government is also planning to open more plasma banks in Haryana soon. He said that people recovering from COVID-19 infection should donate plasma so that other patients can be treated easily.

Any person who has been recovered from COVID-19 infection can donate his plasma after 14 days. So far, about 28,000 patients have tested positive for COVID-19 infection in Haryana, of which more than 21,000 have recovered. Such people can now donate their plasma as by donating plasma, atleast two patients can be cured, he added.

About 28,000 patients have tested +ve for COVID-19 infection in Haryana, of which more than 21,000 have recovered

Vij further said that a committee has been constituted for the documentation of the Coronavirus. These will include officers from the Medical College and Health Department. They will write a detailed history of Coronavirus so that a thorough research on the beginning of this Pandemic, problems and methods adopted to prevent it can be done.

The Health Minister also spoke to a person who had come for plasma donation. The plasma donor looked excited and the person said that he would also inspire others to donate their plasma. The Minister also lauded all the officers and health workers of the Health Department for their dedicated efforts to save the people of the state from the Pandemic.

Bill for 50% women's reservation in Panchayats to be introduced in Assembly: Chautala

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala on Thursday said that the bill for 50 percent reservation for women in panchayat will be brought in the upcoming Vidhan Sabha session, so that the participation of women in the development of villages is increased.

"Many states in the country have already given 50 percent reservation to women in panchayat. Haryana Government will also do so and a bill in this regard would be tabled in the next session of the State Assembly. The reservation will be given before the next panchayat polls in the state," said Dushyant while talking to the mediapersons here.

100 women representatives of Panchayat Raj Institutions who have performed well in their wards, Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad will be honoured by giving two-wheelers. He said that 10 scooty will be given to Zilla Parishad, 20 to Panchayat Samiti, 40 to Ward Panches and 30 to other women who have done excellent work in their field during COVID-19, he said.

Dushyant further said that the ordinance related to providing 75 percent jobs to local candidates in private sector and amendments in Industries Act and Factories Act have been sent to the Haryana Governor for approval.

The State Cabinet had on July 6 decided to bring ordinances on Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Ordinance, 2020 and amend the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and the Factories Act, 1948.

Three ordinances have been sent to the Governor. Now, it is Governor's prerogative to take a call on them himself or send it to the President, Dushyant added.

After getting 75 percent reservation for local youth in the private sector, employment opportunities will increase in Haryana, he said.

When asked about the new Enterprises Policy, Dushyant who is also Haryana Industries Minister said that the focus of the State Government is on the expansion of industrial infrastructure in rural areas. The new Haryana Enterprises Promotion Policy-2020, which will become valid from August 15, 2020 to August 14, 2025, and this will be included.

He said that industrial estates will be developed in rural areas where 500 acres of non-agricultural land of the Panchayat is available. Similarly the industrial blocks of Group-C and Group-D zones would get the facilities on the similar lines of Group-A and Group-B so that more and more investors are brought to Haryana by turning post-COVID situation into an opportunity, he said.

During COVID-19 crisis, the State Government has held talks with more than 600 investors through webinar. A base survey is being conducted to establish industrial townships in Faridabad and Yamunanagar which would prove to be the benchmark of the new Enterprises Promotion Policy. He also informed that emphasis will be given to companies like Apple in the IT sector to bring mega and ultra-mega projects, for which talks have been held with the Apple company.

Govt to inquire into the complaints of malpractices in land deals

Dushyant, who also holds the portfolio of the Revenue Departmentsaid that the State Government had a day before taken a decision to temporarily halt registries.

"After complaints of malpractices regarding the current mechanism for registration of deeds for transfer of land under The Registration Act, 1908, directions have been given to the Deputy Commissioners to check the registries made in the controlled area declared under the Municipal Corporation limits in the cities under the Haryana Development and Regulation of Urban Areas Act, 1975 and to submit report within 15 days," Dushyant said.

He further said that the State Government is on the road to modernize its Revenue Department and three major changes will be brought in which will facilitate the people in the land transfer deed works.

All stamps above than Rs 100 would be issued online as e-stamp. Sample copies of all types of deeds would be available on the website of the Revenue Department and anyone can download the copy and fill their forms without depending upon the agent. Within 24-hours of registration of land, an electronic copy would be emailed to the applicant and hardcopy would be sent through a registered post, he said.

On the temporary stoppage of land transfer deeds, he said that those who have already registered land deeds would be given an appointment for the registry in next week.

The work of recent registrations would be completed within a fortnight after verification through the Deputy Commissioner, he added.

BJP-JJP would put up a strong fight in Baroda bypolls

On Baroda by-election, Dushyant Chautala said that people in Baroda want change and despite three-time Congress MLA there, the constituency has not witnessed any development. He said that BJP-JJP would fight the by-poll strongly and its candidate would win the seat with a clear majority.

On his meeting with BJP national president Amit Shah recently, he said that no talks were held on the appointment of state BJP president.When asked about three agriculture related ordinances brought by the Centre, he made it clear that the three ordinances brought by Union Government ensure the farmers would get Minimum Support Price (MSP) irrespective of where in the country they sell their produce.

Hitting out at the congress for politicising the issue by misleading the farmers, he said that one of the ordinances out of three ensures MSP to the farmers.

Addl chief secy visits Indore, reviews corona situation

PNS ■ INDORE

Additional chief secretary Mohammed Suleman visited Indore and reviewed the corona status in Indore district. Indore collector Manish Singh IMC commissioner Pratibha pal were present. ACS Suleman expressed satisfaction on the works done till date to tackle corona pandemic.

He appreciated the work done by Indore commissioner Pawan Sharma for analysing the death due to corona pandemic.

He also appreciated the kill corona campaign, paid quarantine centre and paid isolation centre initiated by Indore collector Manish Singh.

Public participation in kill corona campaign and the opening of private clinics of doctors and fever clinic when the corona pandemic was increasing helped to identify the corona patients on larger scale.

ACS Suleman also told that to check the immunity of the person for corona pandemic an antibody test cero surveillance will be organised under this various teams will be formed who will take the blood samples of individuals.

To break the chain of corona infection in Indore district the participation of the society will be increased.

People should come forward for the test of corona and if any symptoms are found in them, they should get themselves treated.

Paramilitary forces log 9,700 Covid-19 cases

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Central paramilitary forces have clocked over 9,700 Covid-19 cases with 4,300 of them being active ones even as the test reports of about 600 personnel are awaited. As many as 41 personnel have so far succumbed to the infection.

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has breached the 3,000-mark in terms of number of infected personnel and tops the list with 3,241 personnel testing positive for the novel Coronavirus infection till now. Of this, as many as 220 cases of infection were reported during the last 24 hours. Currently, there are 1,583 active cases and 1,643 patients have recovered and 15 have died due to the pandemic.

The Border Security Force (BSF) is just short of 49 cases in touching the 3,000 mark in terms of Covid-19 infection with a total of 2,941 personnel being infected by the viral diseases. Out of 2,941 positive cases reported so far in the BSF ranks, 1,512 are active and 1,429 have recovered besides 10 casualties including patients with comorbidities and a road accident victim who later tested positive for the viral disease.

Likewise, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has a total case count of 1,524 including 413 active cases and 1,101 recovered patients besides 10 casualties.

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has reported 1,038 Covid-19 positive cases till so far of which 606 continue to be active cases and 429 have recovered and three have died.

The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has reported 474 cases of Covid-19 infection in its ranks of which 257 are active cases and 214 have recovered. The Force has reported three casualties due to the viral disease.

The National Security Guards has reported 91 cases of Covid-19 infection of which only seven are active and 84 patients have recovered. The Force has not reported a single casualty due to the disease.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has reported 384 Covid-19 cases in its ranks of which 80 are active and 304 patients have recovered. Like the NSG, NDRF too has not reported any loss of life due to the pandemic.

As many as 9,703 cases of Covid-19 have been reported across the seven Forces till now of which 4,458 continue to be active and 5,204 have recovered from the disease.

Covid-19 test reports of suspected cases of infection of 596 personnel are awaited as on date.

During the last 24 hours, 495 cases of infection have been reported across the Forces with the CRPF alone reporting 220 new cases during the period. The BSF and ITBP reported 62 and 61 new cases respectively during the last 24 hours followed by 25 cases in CISF and 15 cases in SSB. The NSG reported one new case and the NDRF tested six positive cases during the period.

'Reducing dependency on Chinese API import not easy'

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of India's bid to become 'atmanirbhar' (self-reliant), one of the Government's own bodies has maintained that reducing dependency on the import of the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) from China is not going to be an easy affair. API is a chemical compound that is the most important raw material to produce a finished medicine. At present, 68 per cent of India's API need is fulfilled by China.

It pointed out that indigenously-manufactured drugs would be 20 per cent costlier than those available from the neighbouring country.

The Technology, Information Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC), an autonomous body under the Union Science and Technology Ministry, in its report has now called for preparing a national stockpile of generic medicines for critical illness and ensure API security in view of changed global norms due to Covid-19 pandemic and border tiff with China.

The report also suggested that while India has the technology for production of many APIs, the production cost needs to be optimised to match the global norms largely by scaling up of operations. "Towards this, common facilities such as solvent recovery plant, distillation plant, power and steam units etc. should be established in bulk drug parks," said the report "Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients: Status, Issues, Technology "Readiness and Challenges" as it dwelt in detail on the strength and limitation as well as emerging market scenario in the sector.

In 2019, India imported APIs worth ₹249 billion of which around ₹169 billion were from China itself, with the imports increasing steadily from just 0.3 per cent in 1991 to the current 68 per cent.

"Two-thirds of the total imports of APIs and drug Intermediates were from China. Out of the 373 drugs in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), around 200 are imported as APIS, that too mostly from China. The import value of bulk drugs and drug intermediates from China to India increased around 23 per cent from 2016-17 to 2018-19," said the report.

Despite a very strong base, due to low-profit margins and non-lucrative industry, domestic pharmaceutical firms gradually stopped manufacturing APIs and started importing, finding it a cheaper option with increased profit margins on drugs,

Dependence of India on China for the imports of critical key starting materials KSMs, intermediates and APIS has increased over the period. India also imports common raw materials, solvents etc, required for the production of drugs, said the report.

All the drug Intermediates are imported to India, of which 58 molecules are exclusively imported from China

The global pharmaceutical market is USD 12 trillion with API market of USD 1,822 billion.

The pharmaceutical industry in India is third largest in the world, in terms of volume, behind China and Italy and fourteenth largest in terms of value.

The Indian industry has a network of 3,000 drug companies and about 10,500 manufacturing units with Indian domestic turnover reaching ₹1.4 lakh crore (USD 20.03 billion in 2019, with exports to more than 200 countries in the world:

Identifying a list of APIs which need to be taken up for prioritized manufacturing, the report compiled by scientists and pharma experts said that India needs a Mission mode Chemical Engineering with defined targets for uninterrupted synthesis of molecules and to create mega drug manufacturing clusters with common infrastructure.

"For those few APIS, for which we don't have technology, early stage research and development support should be provided for pilot development of APIs.

"At the same time, issues related to land acquisition, ease of doing business. environmental clearance, taxation, and R&D need to be resolved while a single window clearance system and priority license renewal system for companies manufacturing APIS need to be established," said the report.

PM Modi is 100% focused on building his own image: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday once again targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi by alleging that the latter was "100 percent focused on building his own image" and did not have a vision for the country that had allowed China to take advantage.

"India's captured institutions are all busy doing this task. One man's image is not a substitute for a national vision," he tweeted along with his two-minute video as part of his ongoing series on different issues.

Former Union Minister Ajay Maken at a Press conference said since last one week, PLA is not withdrawing from the 'depth areas' as agreed in four rounds meeting of corps-commanders of India and China.

NIT/CFTIs admission criteria relaxed in view of rising corona cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant development, the HRD Ministry on Thursday announced a relaxation in the admission criteria for NITs and Centrally-funded technical institutions (CFTI) in view of the Covid-19 pandemic by doing away with the requirement of minimum 75 per cent marks in Class 12 board exams.

"Due to prevailing circumstances, Central Seat Allocation Board (CSAB) has decided to relax the eligibility criterion for admissions to NITs and other centrally funded technical institutions," Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' tweeted.

"JEE Main 2020 qualified candidates will now only need to obtain a passing certificate in class XII examination irrespective of the marks obtained," he further said.

For admissions in NITs and other CFTIs, apart from qualifying the JEE-Main, the eligibility was to secure a minimum of 75 per cent marks in Class 12 board exams or rank among the top 20 percentile in their qualifying examinations.

The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Mains, which has been postponed twice, will now be held from September 1-6.

Nishank had earlier announced that the eligibility criterion for JEE (Advanced) 2020 qualified candidates are being relaxed and a decision has been taken in this regard by the Joint Admission Board (JAB). Several State Boards have had to partially cancel class 12 exams.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the exams could not be held as per the schedule and the boards had to release the result on the basis of a new assessment scheme wherein the average marks secured by the students in the papers for which the exam was held were taken into consideration. Students who wish to improve their scores will be given a chance later.

Ministry holds maiden Ind-SAT Test 2020

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union HRD Ministry has conducted the first-ever Indian Scholastic Assessment (Ind-SAT) Test 2020 under its 'Study in India' programme. Nearly 5,000 candidates from Nepal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Sri-Lanka, Kenya, Zambia, Indonesia and Mauritius appeared for the exam conducted in the proctored internet mode by the National Testing Agency.

EdCIL (India) Limited, a PSU under the MHRD and the implementing agency of SII, handled the registrations and other aspects of the examination.

Ind-SAT is an exam for grant of scholarships and admissions to foreign students for studying in select Indian universities under the Study in India programme.

North-East regions have immense potential to spur India's growth: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said India's north eastern region has immense potential to become the growth engine of the country. He talked about the potential of the tourism industry in the region and its development as a bamboo industry hub.

Regarding the massive development works taken up in Manipur, the Prime Minister said that the Imphal - Jiribam railways work is going on with an allocation of ₹14,000 crore while ₹3,000 crore has been sanctioned for the development of Imphal International Airport.

Laying the foundation stone of Manipur water supply project via video conferencing, the Prime Minister said that it has been designed to provide safe drinking water to every household of the State for the next 20-22 years and lakhs of people will get access to clean drinking water and thousands of people will get employment.

Modi said that the mantra of peace, progress and prosperity is echoing in the Northeast, and day by day my faith is getting deeper because peace is now being established in the entire region. "While blockades in Manipur have become a part of history and Assam has not witnessed any violence for decades.

In Tripura and Mizoram too, youth have abandoned the path of violence. Now Bru-Reang refugees are moving towards a better life," he said.

EC defers 8 bypolls as Covid, flood unabated

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Due to a huge surge in transmission of coronavirus infections and deteriorating flood situation in several States, the Election Commission (EC) on Thursday announced the deferment of by-polls to one Parliamentary constituency and seven Assembly seats that were scheduled to be held by September 7. Bye-elections are due in 56 Assembly constituencies and one parliamentary seat. The remaining 49 bypolls are due after September 7.

The seats where the bypolls have been put on hold till September 7 are Valmiki Nagar in Bihar, Sibsagar in Assam, Thiruvottiyur and Gudiyattam in Tamil Nadu, Agar in Madhya Pradesh, Bulandshahr and Tundla in Uttar Pradesh and Chavara in Kerala. The EC has clarified that in any case, the deferring of eight by polls is only up to September 7, 2020. Seven of the bypolls had been necessitated by the deaths of the sitting legislators, while in Tundla constituency in Uttar Pradesh, the MLA was elected to Parliament.

As per the electoral law, EC has to hold bye-elections within 180 days (six months) of a seat falling vacant, another official pointed out. The six-month deadline to hold by-elections in these eight seats was ending on different dates in July, August and September respectively. When the EC assessed the situation, it found that it is difficult to adhere to the six-month deadline in these seats, and approached the Union law ministry to defer the polls, EC officials said.

The EC said that the Commission has already taken a decision to hold all bye-elections as per provisions of Section 151A of the Representation of People Act, 1951.

The Commission will be taking up for discussion the matter of timing of the bypolls at its meeting to be held on Friday.

Sources said that flood situation in Assam has deteriorated due to incessant rainfall. Over 56.22 lakh population in over 6,000 villages have been affected in the state. Similarly, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh where the bypolls were due, witnessed huge surge in the coronavirus infections, making it difficult for authorities to engage poll duties and conduct of election precedures.

The continuing coronavirus situation has cast a shadow on the upcoming Assembly polls in Bihar, widely considered the most important electoral event in the country this year.

Political parties had been calling for deferment of the polls in Bihar as many of the opposition leaders in the state have said that having elections during the outbreak will put the lives of people at risk. NDA ally Chirag Paswan also in favour of deferring the assembly polls in the state due to coronavirus infections that will be on peak during elections in November-December.

Apart from these seats, 24 seats in Madhya Pradesh are up for by-elections due to Scindia's rebellion. As per Section 151-A of the Representation of the People's Act, 1951, ECI will conduct by-polls to 22 seats by September 10.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	H.S.A.M.BOARD, ROHTAK	SPECIAL REPAIR OF 4 NO. GROUPS UNDER WORK PLAN 2020-21(PHASE-I)	CLOSING DATE 05.08.2020	As per approved DNIT	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01262-270274 xenroh.hsamb@gmail.com
2	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, KAITHAL	SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR REMEDIATION AND RECLAMATION OF EXISTING DUMPSITE AT KHURANA, KAITHAL.	22.07.2020 11.08.2020	758 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	96717-90078 himanshu_latka@gov.in
3	HVPNL	SURFACE DRESSING AND GRAVELLING IN 132KV AND 33KV YARD AT 132 KV SUB-STATION BHATTU KALAN	CLOSING DATE 10.08.2020	2.66 Lacs	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
4	HVPNL	REPLACEMENT OF 3 NO. 220 KV SF-6 GAS CIRCUIT BREAKER OF 220 KV IA HISAR-MASUDPUR CKT-1&2 AND 220 KV BUS COUPLER AT 220KV SUBSTATION, INDUSTRIAL AREA, HISAR	OPENING CLOSING DATE 11.08.2020	3.98 LACS	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
5	H.S.A.M. BOARD, PANCHKULA.	PDG. IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING SODIUM LIGHTS WITH LED LIGHTS IN OGM/NVM AT SUB YARD JHANSA. + 20 OTHER WORKS	11.08.2020 14.08.2020	4.33 CRORE	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9812100311 xenelectpkl2019@yahoo.com
6	CAD DIVISION, BHIWANI	LINING//EXTENSION OF WATERCOURSES (1 NOS.)	Bid opening Date: 06.08.2020 at 02:00 P.M.	Detail of amount in the NIT published online	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01664-244273 xenbhiwanicad@gmail.com
7	H.S.A.M. BOARD, PANCHKULA.	SHIFTING OF SUB-STATION, 11KV H.T. FEEDER AND L.T. LINES FROM APPLE MARKET PREMISES, PINJORE TO H.M.T. PREMISES, PINJORE (PANCHKULA).	11.08.2020 14.08.2020	13.28 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9812100311 xenelectpkl2019@yahoo.com
8	DHBVN	HIRING OF BOLERO JEEPS/CAR UNDER M&P DIVN., HISAR NIT NO. 02/M&P/HSR/2020-21	21.07.2020 06.08.2020	47.06 LACS	www.dhbvn.org.in	8059888683 xenmphisar@dhbvn.org.in
9	DHBVN	REQUIREMENT FOR REPLACEMENT OF DEFECTIVE VACUUM INTERRUPTER FOR VARIOUS 33 KV S/STN. UNDER (OP) CIRCLE DHBVN FATEHABAD FOR FY 2020-21	22.07.2020 11.08.2020	9.02 LACS	www.dhbvn.org.in	01667-223777 seopfatehabad@dhbvn.org.in
10	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, NANGAL CHOUDHARY	ROUGH COST ESTIMATE FOR BIO REMEDIATION OF OLD LEGACY WASTE OF MC NANGAL CHOUDHARY SITUATED NEAR KRISNAWATI RIVER DUMPSITE.	CLOSING DATE 04.08.2020	EMD 28940/-	https://www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9813397504 secymcnch@gmail.com
11	MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AMBALA CITY	SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR REMEDIATION AND RECLAMATION OF EXISTING DUMPSITE AT VILLAGE PATVI, AMBALA	22.07.2020 17.08.2020	-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0171-2443747
12	MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, GURUGRAM	RE-CONSTRUCTION RMC M-40 ROAD AND RCC SLAB ON STROM WATER DRAIN FROM SHANI MANDIR TO BEVDA CHOWK IN KHERKI DAULA VILLAGE, WARD NO. 24, UNDER M.C. GURUGRAM. + 1 OTHER WORK	OPENING CLOSING DATE 13.08.2020	2.05 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9999558284
13	MUNICIPAL CORPORATION PANCHKULA	CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL AROUND GRAVEYARD, HIMSHIKHA, W. NO. 5, PINJORE. (RECALL)	22.07.2020 04.08.2020	06.06 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
14	KARNAL SMART CITY	TOTAL 9 NOS. OF WORKS TO BE EXECUTE IN KARNAL CITY UNDER KARNAL SMART CITY PROJECT	22.07.2020 29.07.2020	-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	smartcitykarnal@gmail.com
15	UHBVN PANCHKULA	SHIFTING OF BOUNDARY WALL AT 33 KV S/STN. KACHHWA (KARNAL)	CLOSING DATE 04.08.2020	6.49 LACS	www.uhbvn.org.in	9356063248 xenciviluhbvnpanchkula@gmail.com
16	HARYANA LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT BOARD PANCHKULA	PURCHASE OF ICE LINNER (ICE LINED REFRIGERATOR) 220 LITRE	22.07.2020 07.08.2020	EMD 2 LACS	http://pashudhanharyana.gov.in	9416172558 hldb-hry@nic.in
17	HARYANA SEEDS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED	CONSTRUCTION OF SEED GODOWNS AT HSDC, PATAUDI.	22.07.2020 08.08.2020	1.51 CRORE	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9417669911 hsdcl@hry.nic.in
18	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE KALAYAT	CONST OF STREET FROM HAFED ROAD TO SUSHIL SHARMA IN WARD NO. 12 + 4 OTHER WORKS	23.07.2020 07.08.2020	49.10 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	secretarymckalayat@gmail.com
19	UHBVN	HIRING 2 NO OUTSOURCED VEHICLE ALONGWITH DRIVER OPEN FROM BACK SIDE SINGLE SEATER FOR COMPLAINT CENTER S/D DHAND AND VEHICLE FOR OFFICE USE OF S/D PUNDRI NO-1 TO BE USED 24 *7	OPENING CLOSING DATE 14.08.2020	Rs. 6000/ per vehicle	www.uhbvn.org.in	9354726133 xenoppundri@uhbvn.org.in
20	UHBVN, ASSANDH	VEHICLE TENDER	CLOSING DATE 06.08.2020	3.95 LACS	www.uhbvn.org.in	xenopuhbvnassandh@gmail.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 81904

Israeli team working with DRDO to develop 30-second Covid test kit

New Delhi: In an effort to jointly combat the novel coronavirus, Israel Thursday said it will send to India on board a special flight a research team which has been working with the Indian side to develop a rapid testing kit for COVID-19 which can give a result within 30 seconds.

In the coming weeks, Israel's ministries of foreign affairs, defence and health will lead an unprecedented anti-COVID-19 cooperation operation between India and Israel, an Israel Embassy statement said.

A special planned flight from Tel Aviv to New Delhi is set to carry a high ranking Israeli defence ministry research and development team which has been working with India's chief scientist K VijayRaghavan and Defence Research and Development Organisation to develop rapid testing for COVID-19 in under 30 seconds, it said.

Merging Israeli technology with Indian development and production capabilities aims to allow a swift resumption of normal life alongside the virus, the Israeli Embassy said.

The flight will also bring breakthrough emerging Israeli technologies for combating COVID-19, which have been donated by Israel"s foreign ministry and private sector meant to bolster India's response to the outbreak.

"Finally, the plane will deliver mechanical ventilators which were given special permission by the Government of Israel for export to India," the statement said.

The past few years have cemented the strategic relations between India and Israel and have included two historical visits of the prime ministers in Israel and in India, the Embassy said.

Since the outbreak of the global pandemic, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have held three telephonic conversations in which they promised mutual assistance in dealing with the virus and committed to joint technological and scientific research between the countries, the statement said.

Noting that India is currently facing over one million COVID-19 positive cases, the Israeli side said India seeks to integrate advanced technologies in its hospitals as they prepare to treat massive waves of COVID-19 patients on an Indian scale.

The Israeli companies chosen by the three ministries to be sent to India are potentially given unique access to one of the largest economies in the world to provide monitoring and treatment technologies while significantly reducing contact between patients and medical staff, the statement said. **PTI**

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HSIIDC (ELECTRICAL),PANCHKULA.	PROVIDING UNDERGROUND HT CABLE, DISMANTLEMENT OF 11 KV DOUBLE CIRCUIT HT LINE PASSING OVER THE RAILWAY TRACK BOUNDARY WALL OF M/S CONCOR AT PHASE-III, IE BARHI (SONEPAT).	28.07.2020 13.08.2020	20.51 LACS	http:/www.hsiidc.org.in	se.electrical.hsiidc@gmail.com
2	HSIIDC (ELECTRICAL),PANCHKULA.	PROVIDING OF 11 KV OVERHEAD CABLE IN PLACE OF 11 KV OVERHEAD LINEON THE PROPOSED LOCATION OF 132 LILO LINE TOWER AT PHASE-V,IE KUNDLI (SONEPAT).	28.07.2020 13.08.2020	17.15 LACS	http:/www.hsiidc.org.in	se.electrical.hsiidc@gmail.com
3	HARYANA SHEHRI VIKAS PRADHIKARAN	JOB NO. 37/2019	CLOSING DATE 04.08.2020	E/M Rs. 56000/-	etenders.hry.nic.in	01662-245174 ee2hsrhsvp@gmail.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 81905

1,078 more test positive in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the second day in succession, Kerala diagnosed more than 1,000 persons afflicted with Covid-19. "Today also we have tested higher number of patients with covid-19. On Thursday, 1,078 persons were diagnosed with Covid pandemic. The disease claimed five lives across the State during the last 24 hours," said Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in his media briefing on Thursday. On Wednesday, 1,038 persons were found to be affected with Covid-19.

Out of the 1,078 persons tested positive for Covid-19 on Thursday, 798 were infected through contacts, said Vijayan. He also said that Thiruvananthapuram (222), Kollam (106) and Ernakulam (100) were the districts which tested higher number of patients.

The State has 16,110 Covid patients. Hospitals in the State have 9,408 patients undergoing treatment for the pandemic. The day also saw 432 persons getting discharged from the hospitals after they were found to be fully recovered.

The Chief Minister said that the Council of Ministers which met on Thursday morning had asked the Governor to cancel the one-day session of the Legislative Assembly called for next week. "This is because of the unusual situation prevailing in the State and also due to the advanced age of some members of the legislative assembly.

EP Jayarajan, the Minister for industries and the second-in-command to the Chief Minister who briefed the media after the cabinet meeting in the morning blamed the media for spreading fake and false news about the Covid-19 situation in the State.

"There are many Opposition leaders who want the Covid-19 patients in the State should increase. They don't what the pandemic to subside and are interested in making political gains through the sufferings of the poor people," said Jayarajan.

Virus claims 88 lives in TN while 6,472 test +ve

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Hopes of any kind of respite from the coronavirus pandemic remained elusive in Tamil Nadu as 88 persons succumbed to Covid-19 in the last 24 hours while 6,472 new persons tested positive on Thursday.

A release by the Government of Tamil Nadu said the number of active patients in the city reached 52,939 by Thursday evening while the total number of covid-19 cases diagnosed till date crossed the 1.92 lakh.

With Thursday's 88 death, the fatalities in the State reached 3,232. The only news that offered some relied was in the number of patients getting cured and discharged from hospitals- 5,210.

What was Thursday's cause of concern was the hike in the number of persons diagnosed with the pandemic in Chennai and the three neighbouring districts. Despite the claims by the Government officials that the number of patients in Chennai were coming down, the Metropolis tested 1,336 Covid cases on Thursday. For the last one week, Chennai's new covid cases were contained in the 1100-1200 range.

Similarly, the neighbouring districts of Chengalpet (375) Kancheepuram (330), Thiruvallur (416) showed steep hike in the number of patients tested on Thursday.

The southern districts of Virudhunagar (480) and Thoothukudi (415) too tested unprecedented number of positive cases. The pandemic has reached the doors of Raj Bhavan in Chennai. A release by the Raj Bhavan said 84 personnel (mainly security and fire fighting staff) posted in the premises tested positive for coronavirus. But the Governor has not come in contact with those who tested positive for the pandemic, said the release.

Major reshuffle in TMC organisational posts

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Within 48 hours of blowing the poll bugle Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday effected a major reshuffle in the ruling Trinamool Congress by infusing a mix of experience, youth, clean image and loyalty at the organisational level.

North Bengal and Jangalmahal in south-western part of the State where the TMC fared miserably— conceding a large bulk of seats to an emerging BJP in 2019 General elections — have found special focus in the new scheme of things.

Much in the line of the BJP's "Marg Darshan Mandli" a good number of TMC old guards who were functioning as district presidents' have been "elevated" as 'chairpersons' of the respective district units — a new designation with unspecific political potency.

The rejig exercise was conducted via a virtual meeting of senior leaders from the State and district, sources said.

Among the young leaders are former India cricketer and Bengal captain, Laxmi Ratan Shukla the present Sports Minister of Bengal. He has been appointed the president of Howrah city president removing powerful leader and Minister Arup Roy.

MP and senior leader Sudip Bandopadhyay who have been elevated as the chairperson of the North Kolkata district committee has also been asked to continue as the party president of the district until a new appointee takes over.

While in South Kolkata Debashis Kumar continues to remain the party president Nadia finds a new district chief in vocal MP Mohua Moitra.

The BJP has come up in a big way in Nadia which like North Bengal and Jangalmahal has seen the entire former Left leadership switching over to the saffron ranks.

In North Bengal, prominent civil society member and former MP Arpita Ghosh has been removed as the president of South Dinajpur district which went into the hands of BJP in the parliamentary elections.

Further north Coochbehar has seen a new face in Partho Pratim Mitra replacing seasoned leader and Minister Rabindra Nath Ghosh as the district president. Similarly Shyamal Santra, Swapan Debnath and Jiten Tewari have been made the district presidents of Bankura, East and West Burdwan districts while Ajit Maity has been given the charge in West Midnapore.

718 afflicted in J&K on Thurs

Jammu: The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Thursday reported 718 positive cases of coronavirus while nine more patients died taking the total tally of cases to 16,429.

Out of these 718 cases, 98 were travelers while 620 cases were reported from different districts of J&k. Significantly, three districts of Srinagar, Kulgam and Shopian reported 158, 106 and 109 cases respectively.

According to the media bulletin, "the fresh cases include 117 from Jammu division and 601 from Kashmir. According to official sources at least 50 CRPF personnel tested positive before joining their duties.

In Jammu division, Jammu district reported 47 fresh cases followed by Ramban from where 20 patients tested positive while Rajouri district reported 15 cases.

Nine districts of Kashmir valley observed complete lock down while Jammu district will observe weekend lockdown from Friday evening till

Crucial time for Vijayan as NIA begins questioning ex-Secy

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

GOLD SMUGGLING

The National Investigating Agency, probing the gold smuggling through diplomatic route in Thiruvananthapuram airport, on Thursday started questioning M Sivsankar, the suspended principal secretary of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Sivsankar reached the Police Club in capital city where a team of NIA sleuths were waiting for him. The session between the IAS officer and the NIA officials were progressing even at the time of going to Press.

It is after ten days of meticulous planning that the NIA team summoned Sivsankar. Last week saw Sivsankar, an official close to Vijayan being subjected to a marathon grilling by the Customs officials at Thiruvananthapuram which lasted for more than nine hours.

The NIA had interrogated Sarith, Swapna Suresh and Sandeep Nair for many days before they took the decision to summon Sivsankar. Though the Customs and NIA officials remained incommunicado till date about the entire case, it is reported that they got valuable information linking the IAS officer with the trio in the smuggling operation.

The day began with news that Mohammed Yousuf, the Commissioner of Customs, issued an order transferring six superintendents and two inspectors probing the case.

Within minutes news channels aired the news that a cartel of businessmen from Muvattupuzha in Ernakulam district had smuggled 1,500 kg of gold using diplomatic immunity during the last three years. This is being seen as the shadow boxing happening in the Customs House between senior officials.

The Enforcement Directorate too pitched in with their share and registered the arrest of Sarith, Swapna and Sandeep in connection with the gold smuggling, making it the third agency probing the case. Meanwhile the Customs Department has approached the special court in Kochi to slap COFEPOSA charges on the three accused which, if approved would make it difficult for them to get bail for the next one year.

Bengal Police takes stern action against lockdown violators

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

With apparent evidence that the Government meant business in implementing the "broken lockdown" the Bengal Police on Thursday ensured a complete closure of the State arresting about 650 people from various parts of Kolkata for breaking the lockdown protocols.

Bengal entered into a second phase of lockdown which will entail twice-a-week closure of business and offices save essential services. State will remain closed on Saturday too in this week. In the next week Wednesday will be a lockdown day.

The police were seen caning people who had aimlessly ventured out of their houses not only in Kolkata but in districts also. People were either sent back home or cases were registered against them before they were taken into custody. About 350 people were penalized for not wearing or "half-wearing" masks, sources said.

Apart from reinstituting twice-a-week lockdown the Government has been continuing with lockdown in extended containment zones. This apart, full one-week lockdown has been declared in a number of municipalities like Barasat, Bongaon, Baduria, Barrackpore, Baranagar in North 24 Parganaas district which is second to Kolkata in terms of severity of infections.

Pak Army shells areas along LoC in Baramulla

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Pakistan Army on Thursday activated several sectors along the line of control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir and targeted civilian pockets in Poonch and Naugam sector of Baramulla district.

In response, the Indian Army hit back strongly and gave them a befitting reply.

Official sources on ground zero claimed, "for the last couple of days tha Pakistan Army is aiming at upping the ante and desperately trying to push small batches of infiltrators inside the Indian territory". These sources claimed, "the handlers of various terror outfits sitting across the LoC are desperate to send fresh batches of terrorists to execute their sinister plot of targeting security forces and vital installations during the first anniversary of Abrogation of Article 370 and reorganisation of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir on August 5".

To foil their nefarious designs the foot soldiers of the Indian army are maintaining a tight vigil.

Official sources said, "In the Poonch sector, the Pakistan Army is repeatedly targeting several civilian pockets to disturb peace in the region and trigger unrest among the local population". Five civilians have lost their lives in two recent incidents of ceasefire violations in Poonch.

"The Pakistan army is also attempting to push small groups of infiltrators via traditional routes of infiltration in Poonch sector", claimed sources on ground zero. The Pakistan army provides cover firing to these infiltrators to divert attention of the alert Indian soldiers.

Ministry of Defence spokesman in Jammu, Lt-Col Devender Anand said on Thursday, "two incidents of 'unprovoked' ceasefire violations were reported across Poonch district". He said the first violation was reported around 11.00 a.m in Qasba, Kirni sector and the second violation was reported in the evening around 5.15 p.m in Balakote sector.

Bihar Govt starts 'Sahkaari Se Tarkaari Vaarta' initiative

PNS ■ PATNA

In an unique initiative and perhaps the first of its kind in the country, the Bihar Goverment has started a direct connect with the vegetable growers and people involved in farming of vegetables only.

The movement titled 'Sahkaari Se Tarkaari Vaarta' movement has been designed to facilitate the vegetable cooperative unions and federation to regularly monitor the pulse of the farming community and to provide the farmer members a much-needed opportunity to voice their concerns related to vegetable production, pricing and supply chain.

Vegfed Managing Director Anand Sharma said the 'Sahkaari Se Tarkaari Vaarta' is an unique initiative by the Vegfed which comes under the Bihar State Vegetable Processing and Marketing Scheme.

Sharma said with this initiative, the Bihar Cooperative Department is trying to move an inch closer to the farmers. So far such schemes benefitting the farmers are available for food grains, milk production and other agricultural produce. Some of the States like Maharashtra have dedicated initiatives for single vegetable produce like Onions but Bihar has become perhaps the first in the country to start an initiative for vegetable growers.

The scheme was launched early this week by Sharma under the guidance of Bandana Preyashi (IAS), who is the Secretary, Cooperative Department, Bihar Government and also the Chairperson of Vegfed Bihar.

Sharma said the pupose of the scheme is to direct talk with the growers and vegetable farmers, to understand their issues and then address their grievances which will ultimately boost their morale.

"The State level officers as well as District Cooperative Officers (DCOs) of the Department are making efforts in keeping constant touch with the farmer members. Though the Covid-19 has limited the operation, the Department has not lost the zeal, feel and the essence of the Cooperative system," said the 2013 batch IAS of Bihar cadre.

Centre not imported 10k tonnes of milk powder: Min

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Contesting Swambhimani Shetkari Sanghatana leader Raju Shetti's claim that the Centre was not increasing the procurement prices of milk product prices because of its decision to import milk powder, BJP's State Kisan Morcha president and former State Agriculture Minister Anil Bonde on Thursday denied that the Government had imported 10,000 tonnes of milk powder as was being alleged by Shetti.

Reacting to the recent statements by Shetti who had among other things said that the milk business in the state had been affected "because of the policies of the central government", Bonde that Shetty was was spreading "false information" that the Central government has imported milk powder to cover up the failure of the Maha Vikas Aghaadi government to give fair procurement prices to milk producers,

"The BJP had recently staged a statewide agitation to draw the attention of the state government to the demands of troubled milk producers. Raju Shetti, who supports the Maha Vikas Aghadi government, also staged an agitation on July 21 for fair milk procurement prices. \

Shetti had said that because of the import of milk powder by the central government it was not raising the prices of milk producers,"Bonde said.

Bonde said that it was mandatory under the GATT agreement to import 10,000 metric tonnes of milk powder as per the GATT agreement, no importer has been issued with expression of interest and no import license has been issued to anyone.

Maha: 298 die, 9,895 +ve

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra recorded the highest-ever 298 coronavirus deaths on Thursday, even as many as 9,895 more people tested positive in various parts of the State.

With 298 fresh deaths, the state surpassed its earlier record of 295 deaths recorded on July 4. With Thursday's fatality tally, the total number of deaths mounted to 12,854.

With the 9895 positive cases reported on Thursday, the total number of cases inched closer 3.5 lakh mark to touch 3,47,502. Of the 298 deaths, Pune accounted for 78 deaths, while Mumbai recorded 55 deaths.

Apart from 78 deaths reported in Pune and 55 deaths in Mumbai, there were 47deaths in Thane, 25 deaths in Palghar, 15 in Nashik, 14 in Jalgaon, 10 in Aurangabad, 6 in Latur, 5 in Sangli, 4 each in Kolhapur, Nanded and Hingoli, 3 each in Raigad, Solapur, Beed and Jalna, 2 each in Dhule, Ratnagiri, Amravati and Yavatmal and one death each in Ahmednagar, Satara, Parbhani, Osmanabad, Akola and Nagpur. In addition, six persons from other states died in Maharashtra.

With fresh fatalities and infections in Mumbai, the total number of deaths in Mumbai rose from 5,875 to 5,930, while the total number of infected cases rose by 1,245 to touch 105,923.

With 81708 infected cases and 2193 deaths, Thane continued to be the second worst hit district in Maharashtra.

Pune, which has emerged as the third worst affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 66538 infections and 1592 deaths till now.

Brief me about law & order in State: WB Guv to Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In what has added more fuel to the fire burning the bridge between the Trinamool Congress Government and the Raj Bhavan, Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar has asked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to brief him about the "worrisome" law and order situation in the State.

His letter to the Chief Minister comes barely days after he returned from Delhi where he met Home Minister Amit Shah and other leaders expressing his concern about what he called the "worrisome situation" in the State.

Asking the Chief Minister to "urgently" meet him Dhankhar on Thursday tweeted, "given the enormity of decline in law and order I have urged Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to urgently brief me."

Expressing concern on attacks on the leaders of the opposition parties he wrote "political leaders and opposition MPs and MLAs are being virtually hunted out of public space by partisan police acting as political workers. This cannot be allowed in a democracy."

He further wrote that "as a Governor of the state I am extremely worried. I requested the honourable Chief Minister to come forward and have a meeting with me. I hope she will give the highest priority to this."

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client Sanjay Kumar Jha mortaging the Plot no. 18-A, khasra no. 57D, Uttranchal Colony, Sihani, Loni, Ghaziabad with Satin Housing Finance Ltd. Sanjay Kumar Jha has lost original sale deed executed by Krishna Devi in favour of Mithlesh Thakur registered with SR-Ghaziabad, on 28.08.2003. Police complaint dt. 21.07.2020 was lodged with U.P Police. It is informed that any deal with said lost deed by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person found said deed or is having right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned and within 8 days of this publication.

For **AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION**
Ch. No. 760, Dwaka Court
Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
M:-9899013918

OK PLAY INDIA LIMITED
CIN No: L28219HR1988PLC030347
Regd. Office: 17-18, Roz- Ka-Meo Industrial Estate, Tehsil Nuh, District Mewat, Haryana- 122103
Website:www.okplay.in, Email:info@okplay.in
Tel:+91 124 2362335-36 Fax: +91 124 2362326

NOTICE

Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is being convened on Friday, the 31st day of July, 2020, to consider and approve, inter-alia, the Audited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter and year ended on 31st March, 2020.

For OK PLAY INDIA LIMITED
Sd/-
Meenu Goswami
Company Secretary

Date : 23.07.2020
Place : New Delhi

Goyal bats for mix of virtual & classroom education

CHENNAI: Emphasising that technology and innovation will be the key to "democratising development and prosperity" in overcoming the economic and social challenges of a post-Covid-19 world, Union Minister of Commerce, Industry and Railways, Mr. Piyush Goyal, called for a mix of "virtual education and classroom education" in tapping the current potential for online education. Amid the novel coronavirus pandemic unwittingly opening up a huge potential for virtual learning, Mr. Piyush Goyal said the current potential for "virtual education" was huge - estimated at US dollars ten billion-, adding, it would be preferable to "do a hybrid of virtual education and classroom education" in helping the youth cope with the present challenges and global competition.

Naidu nominates new RS members to House panels

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday nominated new members to various Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees, a day after administering the oath/affirmation to them.

Jyotiraditya Scindia (BJP) has become a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Resource Development (HRD), while Congress member Digvijaya Singh has been nominated to the Committee on Urban Development.

NCP leader Sharad Pawar has been made a member of the Committee on Defence. Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge has been nominated to the Standing Committee on Commerce, former Lok Sabha deputy speaker M Thambi Durai to the Committee on HRD, and former Rajya Sabha deputy speaker Harivansh to the panel on Agriculture.

Former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, who took oath as Rajya Sabha member, has been nominated to the Committee on Railways, while former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi has been made a member of the Committee on External Affairs. *PTI*

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Open e-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Engineer-I/Northern Railway, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India invites e-tender on the prescribed form for the under noted work.

Name of work with location, cost of work and Earnest money	1. **SNP**-Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of staff quarters and service buildings etc. from Badli to Ganaur in the section of SSE/W/SNP on DUK section under ADEN/PNP for the period ending 30.06.2021	
	2. **PNP**-Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of staff quarters and service buildings from GNU to KFU in the section of SSE/W/PNP under ADEN/PNP on DUK section for the period ending 30.06.2021	
	3. **JP**-Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of staff quarters and service buildings in the section of SSE/W/PNP under ADEN/PNP on JHI-PNP section for the period ending 30.06.2021.	
	4. **KUN**-Annual Zone work for repair and maintenance of staff quarter and service building etc. and other miscellaneous works in the jurisdiction of SSE/W/KUN on DUK section under ADEN/KUN for the period ending 30.06.2021.	
Approximate Cost	**1.** ₹1,91,99,558.32	**2.** ₹1,51,99,930.10
	3. ₹64,99,640.22	**4.** ₹1,50,99,816.13
Earnest Money	**1.** ₹2,46,000.00	**2.** ₹2,26,000.00
	3. ₹1,30,000.00	**4.** ₹2,25,500.00
Completion Period	**1.** 12 Months	**2.** 12 Months
	3. 12 Months	**4.** 12 Months
	Earnest Money should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. **Note:** FDR or Demand Draft will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited in IREPS as per Railway Boards letter No. 2015/CE-I/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016	
Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs. on 14.08.2020 opening of e-tender at 15:00 hrs. on 14.08.2020.	
Website particulars, published tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and website where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in**	
Tender Cost	For S.No. 1 to 4 ₹5,900.00	
	Tender cost should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. **Note:** FDR or Demand Draft will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited in IREPS as per Railway Boards letter No. 2015/CE-I/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016	
Similar nature of work	**Definition of Similar work:** For S.No. 1 to 4: Any Civil work other than track work	

Note: All attachments must be self-attested by the tenderers and the affidavit should be submitted in the new format attached with tender conditions as per Annexure-XXIII is compulsorily.

No.: 128-W/280/Tender Notice/20-21/W-I(NIT-05)(1-4)/20-21 Dated: 22.07.2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1608/20

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.)
Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & https://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

Fresh-Tender work.

A) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 06.08.2020 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened/downloaded on dated 07.08.2020 at 11.00 AM.

S.N.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	42/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-II/E.T./2020-21	Strengthening & Providing Park light in A, B & C-Block park in sector-19, Noida.	63.86
2.	49/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-I/E.T./2020-21	M/o Transformer at Sector-82, 92, 93, 93A, 93B, sector-110, Noida.	30.15
3.	51/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-I/E.T./2020-21	M/o Park light in sector-80, 81, 93A, 83, 88 and Hosiery Complex, Noida.	49.80
4.	94/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-III/2020-21	M/o Authority Building (AMC of different type of A.C.'s installed in different offices in Main Administrative Office sector-6) Noida.	45.75
5.	10/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-IV/2020-21	M/o Street light from feeder No-1 to 4, Noida.	30.10
6.	11/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-IV/2020-21	M/o Street light from feeder No-5 to 9, Noida.	31.06

Re-Tender work.

B) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 30.07.2020 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened/downloaded on dated 31.07.2020 at 11.00 AM.

S.N.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
7.	42/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-I/E.T./2020-21	Air Conditioning work of Administrative block of Commissioner of Police office Sector-108 Noida.	34.52
8.	08/GM(R)/Sr.M(E/M)-II/E.T./2020-21	M/o Street light in A, B & C-Block at sector-62, Noida.	27.21

General Manager
Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

BHOPAL | FRIDAY | JULY 24, 2020

the pioneer

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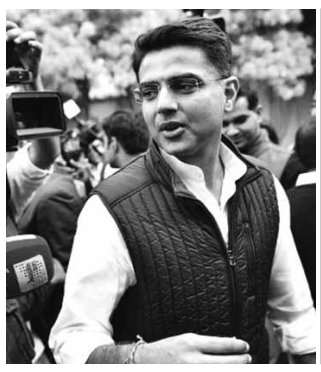
PAPER WITH PASSION

This round to Pilot

SC says disqualification can't be based on dissent, asks why Speaker approached court when he should be neutral



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot may have been a tad too offensive in seeking the court's intervention to deter his one-time deputy Sachin Pilot from challenging the disqualification notice sent to him and his loyalist MLAs under the anti-defection law. But the Supreme Court firmly underlined what democracy is, the kind Gehlot has been claiming to defend, and what constitutional processes are. "Assume a leader has lost the faith of persons. While remaining in the party, they cannot be disqualified. Then this will become a tool and no one can raise their voice. The voice of dissent in a democracy cannot be suppressed like this," said Justice AK Mishra as the top court refused to stop a High Court verdict on a petition by 19 rebel Congress MLAs, challenging their disqualification notices. Clearly, the court laid down the thin line between the democratic right to dissent, that is healthy for building participatory dialogue and one which deserves a listen, and an ego-driven revolt. And it went with Pilot's defence that the notices were an attempt to curb "freedom of speech." For the last few days, the Pilot camp has been challenging the showcause saying the House was not in session and they hadn't done or said anything to indicate they were parting ways with the Congress. Both Gehlot and Pilot camps have been seeking refuge in the interpretation of clause 2(1)(a) of the 10th Schedule of the Constitution. Going by the several Supreme Court judgments in the matter, it could be said that any anti-party activity was tantamount to voluntarily giving up the membership of the party. Gehlot has been building evidence of Pilot's breakaway moves since, like parading MLAs claiming bribery offers and releasing alleged tapes of senior BJP leaders coaxing rebels, to justify this argument. But Team Pilot argues that the clause cannot be overstretched to disallow the right to express one's opinion. Rajasthan Speaker CP Joshi, who served the notices last week, had argued that the rebels cannot petition the High Court before he took action. And that as a constitutional authority, he had the right to do so even when the House was not in session as the rebels had skipped two meetings of the legislature party. In fact, anticipating an adverse verdict, Joshi moved the Supreme Court even before the High Court could declare its ruling on the Pilot camp's plea. The Supreme Court even took note of this impatience to latch on to power. The court asked, "It is the matter of just one day. Why can't you wait?" And reminding the Speaker of his constitutional role, the judges asked why he, as a neutral person, should approach the court at all in a pre-emptive manner or appear partisan? The Supreme Court can anyway hear appeals against High Court rulings but why did the Speaker assume that the latter would be favourable to the rebels? This presumptive tactic might just impact all the other moves of Gehlot. So far, in a bid to save his Government, he has been aggressively taking on the BJP for another version of "Operation Lotus" and poaching a discontented and maladjusted Pilot. He even wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging the BJP's attempts to dislodge his Government, naming Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and making Modi himself complicit in the goings-on in his party. But his adventurism on the rule of law has betrayed the maturity and astuteness with which he acted before the BJP could move in, herding legislators, furnishing numbers to the Governor and gathering evidence against Pilot. Getting the Speaker to defend the disqualification notices has clearly backfired and exposed his anxieties. Gehlot claims he has 106 MLAs on his side, still a narrow lead in a 200-member Assembly. If the High Court disqualifies Pilot and his 18 MLAs, the majority mark of 101 will come down and Gehlot will be safely home. If not, the rebel MLAs can vote against his Government and narrow the margins.

As Gehlot continues to prepare a back-up plan and publicly deride Pilot, it would have been better if he had accommodated him as shrewdly and continued his chief ministership. Now, it looks like he is the one impatient instead of Pilot. The younger Congressman and once an acolyte of the Gandhi scions cannot look back either as he has waded deep into the contest. He is drawing political sustenance from the grassroots where he has worked for the last six years or so. The Gujjars of three States — Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh — have amassed behind him just like they did for his father Rajesh Pilot. This means a sizeable votebank that could make Pilot attractive to the BJP. The fact that he changed his plea in the High Court and made the Centre a party to it is some indication that he will gravitate to the other polarity. That's the sad part, the assumption that Congress' breakaways, most of them talented with fresh ideas, will do better in the BJP than in the party that they had volunteered for. The example of Himanta Biswa Sarma in the Northeast shows that the BJP is consolidating with ex-Congress talent. Old Congresswallahs may say the young are pesky and impatient but the crossovers have meant that the Congress has lost Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Arunachal, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. Is Gehlot's ego turf worth it?

The Rafale arrives

India's long tradition of French fighter jets continues. The game-changer aircraft will boost our capabilities

In 1953, newly independent and democratic India placed a large order for fighter jets. The contract didn't go to the British. Instead, India ordered 70 Dassault Ouragan aircraft from France and a strange love affair developed between Indian fighter jocks and French jets. Over 140 Ouragans served the Indian Air Force (IAF) before they were replaced by Dassault Mystere IV aircraft of which India operated over 100. The latter distinguished itself admirably in the 1965 war with our unfriendly western neighbour. While India did not operate the legendary Dassault Mirage III and Mirage 5, which acquitted themselves with distinction over the skies of the Sinai peninsula during the two Arab-Israeli conflicts, we did order a small number of the Mirage 2000 aircraft. It quickly became a frontline fighter for us and played a critical role during the Kargil war. It even delivered the weaponry that destroyed a terrorist hideout in Balakot early last year. And now, India will start receiving the next generation of French fighting prowess, the Rafale.

The Rafale is a dramatic step up for the IAF. With its supreme weaponry and electronic warfare capabilities, it is far superior to anything that either of the troublesome twosome on India's eastern and western border have. It is an expensive plane and an initial planned order for 126 aircraft has been peeled back to 36. It is but certain that a follow-up order will be placed soon. However, India would do well to remember the acquisition problems it has faced in the past. With the Mirage 2000 and the Boeing C-17 Globemaster, a heavy lift logistics aircraft, India dithered with making its follow-up orders. Both aircraft had seen their production lines close and India was left twiddling its thumbs. We cannot afford to vacillate like this with acquisitions again as the previous UPA administration hesitated for years over military hardware acquisition. As a result, it left gaping holes in India's security apparatus, which are only being patched up today. The Rafale is a great new addition to the IAF and will give India an edge both in weapons delivery and air-to-air combat. But they cannot come fast enough. However, India must not give in to knee-jerk reactions. Instead, we must plan out a thorough acquisition strategy with more domestic manufacturing, which will not only help the local economy but also develop India's military-industrial potential. The events of the past few months have taught us that we cannot trust the Chinese, particularly its President. We have to be prepared for the worst. The Rafales will help.

Farewell, my Queen

The Boeing 747 is being withdrawn from passenger service. It changed aircraft design, made flying affordable and pushed airports to improve their facilities

KUSHAN **MITRA**

The British Airways' announcement that it is going to retire its fleet of Boeing 747s from commercial passenger services hit many aviation fans pretty hard. I have probably flown more passenger miles in the British Airways' 747 aircraft than on any other airline. In the past few months, two other iconic operators of the Boeing 747, Australian airline Qantas and Dutch airline KLM, also announced that they flew their last jumbo flights. In the last couple of years — thanks to the emergence of more point-to-point flying, higher frequency and the sheer efficiency of modern twin-jet aircraft like the Boeing 787 and Airbus A350 — more and more 747s are being retired across the world.

Air India withdrew the jumbo flight's operations a couple of years ago but has been using it for some Haj and Ummah-related duties. Most other American, Asian and European operators have retired the plane from service. However, there are exceptions like Air China, Lufthansa and Korean Air, which operate the newer 747-8 variant, and a couple of other airlines such as Thai Airways that operates the older 747-400. In fact, my last 747 flight was unexpectedly on the Thai Airways from New Delhi to Bangkok and back last year in October.

The global aviation industry is in a meltdown after the Wuhan virus laid waste to the global economy. Global aviation was a primary vector in the spread of the virus and many nations sealed their land borders. Others like India banned all flight operations though limited repatriation flights are still being carried out.

Many airlines have read the writing on the wall and they understand that even if a solution, such as a vaccine to this accursed pestilence is found, traffic will not recover for months, may be even years. The Boeing 747 is too large an aircraft for reduced traffic. This means higher operating costs. As for Airbus A380, airlines are quickly retiring these aircraft, too. Air France, the airline of the nation where the A380 is put together, just retired all of its Airbus A380 fleet, the youngest being a decade-old. Airlines will tell you that it is cheaper to fly two Boeing 787 Dreamliners than a single 747 or Airbus A380.

While cargo variants of the 747 are still flying in great numbers, both those built at the Boeing factory outside Seattle, Washington, and those planes converted from passenger operations to freight, have halted operations. After all, the 747 was initially conceived as a cargo plane and the iconic "hump" on the aircraft was there to allow the nose to be lifted up for the cargo to be loaded. Cargo operations with the 747 are likely to continue for many, many years because there is no direct replacement for it. In fact, most international air cargo operators still follow a "hub and spoke" model for cargo travelling between major airports.

The last convoy carrying fuselage and wing sections of the A380 has reached the final assembly line in Toulouse and the aircraft will be completed in a couple of months. Even then, the single largest operator of the A380 aircraft, the Dubai-based Emirates Airline, is retiring its oldest twin-deck behemoths. But it is ironic that the Boeing 747, which undertook its maiden flight in 1969, would have significantly outlived the Airbus A380, a plane built with typical European arrogance to one-up the US. The A380 is undoubtedly an amazing engineering and technological achievement unlike the Boeing plane, but is an unmitigated commercial disaster.

The Airbus A380 line will close soon as the last nine planes are prepared for delivery. In the 15 years since the factory opened its doors, a mere 251 entered commercial service. Boeing is expected to close its 747 lines in 2022, with 16 aircraft (all cargo variants) remaining to be delivered. Around 1,558 planes have already been delivered since 1970. And while the current options such as the 747-8 have little in common with the earliest model —100 and 200 variants — just one look, and you know that it is 747. I think (I do not believe that I am alone here) this is the single most important reason that the 747 is seared into our memories; it looked unique when it was first flown and it still does with the hump at the front and its sharply swept wings.

There was an aesthetic beauty in the 747, which the A380 simply does not have. The latter is functional but not pretty. Truth be told, I rarely got to fly in 747s of late, the move to withdraw it from service across the world having begun in the early 2010s. Of course, those two flights to Thailand were a pleasant surprise, a couple of British Airways flights across the "pond" stuck in a middle seat less enjoyable. But I did experience that ultimate joy of an aviation fan. I have flown on the upper deck of a 747, which is one of the single most fun things one can do.

The last time I did that was on a British Airways evening service from Chicago O'Hare to London Heathrow. As far as my memory goes, I think I just slept throughout that flight. I never knew it was going to be the last time. Even as global air travel boomed during the past decade, a lot of that was due to the rise of low-cost airlines, hopping and skipping around the world with their gigantic fleets of Airbus A320 and Boeing 737 aircraft.

While it will be interesting to see what happens to these airlines, even Indian ones, in the aftermath of the Chinese contagion, international air travel, too, has changed. In no small part, thanks to the emergence of more point-to-point flying and ultra-long-haul flights.

A decade ago, a non-stop flight to and fro from India to the US was just about possible with a load of penalties. Today's Boeing 777 and 787s and Airbus' A350 can make the crossing with a full load in just 16 hours. Imagine travelling from New Delhi to San Francisco in the 1970s and 1980s when the 747 had just begun service. An Air India or Pan American 747 would have taken you to New York's JFK after stopping at least two-three times. You would have to change planes at JFK and then make the cross-country hop across the US, may be with another stop or two. Travel time with stop-overs may have been around two days.

Before the pandemic started, both Air India and United Airlines had non-stop services between the two cities, 15 hours from take-off to touchdown. Sure, that might seem like a lot of time without any "fresh air" but there was no need to walk bleary-eyed with screaming children across a strange airport, dealing with security and waiting for hours through weather delays and the risk of lost baggage, thanks to the multiple connections. But without the Boeing 747, none of this would have happened. The 747 made large-scale international commercial travel viable; it democratised travel in a way that was previously unimaginable. It is because of the Boeing 747 that there was a huge wave of migration of engineers and doctors out of India in the 1970s and 1980s.

The 747 made flying affordable; it made global airports improve their facilities, jetbridges that connect planes to the terminal became a standard feature at airports as did massive automated baggage handling. Airports built bigger runways and larger infrastructure to cater to the masses that a single jumbo jet brought in. The 747 changed aircraft design; the high-bypass turbofan engines developed for it transformed aviation. It led to the development of the trijets Douglas DC-10 and Lockheed L-1011 Tristar by rival companies.

It is the development of the high bypass turbofan, which literally sips fuel compared to older engines, that led to the creation of all modern planes such as the Boeing 777, which has the largest engine in commercial service. The 747 was the "Queen" and the world of aviation comprised its subjects. Even though fewer and fewer 747s remain in the skies ferrying passengers, the legacy of the Boeing 747 is one that will continue for a long time to come.

(The writer is Managing Editor, The Pioneer)

SOUNDBITE

PM Modi is 100 per cent focussed on building his image. India's captured institutions are busy doing this task. One man's image is not a substitute for a national vision.

Congress leader
—Rahul Gandhi

There's the knowing smile. Not because I know things for sure...but mostly because I am at peace with the idea of not knowing...what's important will reveal itself at the right time...

Actor
—Sushmita Sen

The Trump administration has maintained close contact and tremendous cooperation with India on the latest Chinese border aggression.

US Ambassador to India
—Ken Juster

If you take racism and discrimination in the world, one of the most important things is to teach your children history as it should be and not the sanitised version of it.

Former Sri Lanka captain
—Kumar Sangakkara

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Some succour

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "A glimmer of hope" (July 22). The news that early stage clinical trials of the Oxford University COVID-19 vaccine have proved that it is safe and induces an immune response gives the world hope at a time when we are facing one of the deadliest pandemics in history.

Though more tests have to be done before it is made available for the public, there is hope for mankind even as the pandemic has already claimed more than six lakh lives and infected millions of people around the globe. Many other nations, including India, are also on the path of developing a vaccine. There is something to rejoice as the Serum Institute of India, one of the premium immunobiological drugs manufacturers of the country, has entered into a manufacturing partnership with AstraZeneca once the vaccine trial is successful.

The human trials will be done in August and a confirmed analysis will be possible by October/November, according to the firm. If everything goes well, the vaccine will be ready by December. Let us hope this vaccine and others, that are also being tested, put an end to the mental and physical misery of the people.

M Pradyu
Kannur

Oxford vaccine promising but let's be real

This refers to the editorial, "A glimmer of hope" (July 22). With 15 million cases and six lakh deaths globally, biomedical companies are under tremendous pressure to deliver a safe and effective vaccine for Coronavirus. While the outbreak is peaking by the day, a silver lining on the horizon is also flashing. A new vaccine development technology — RNA vaccine, also known as mRNA — is emerging as the front-runner to alleviate mankind's COVID-19-inflicted miseries. The three leading vaccines by Oxford — AstraZeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna — are mRNA based and are also in the final phase of trials. The technology, capable of faster rollout at affordable prices, is versatile and promising. It is known to produce safe and long-lasting immune response in addition to better management of a class of white blood cells called T-cells. White cells, as we all know, help the body get rid of infected cells. That two dozen of the 150 vaccinations are mRNA driven is not surprising. All the three front-running vaccines score high on "dual immune response" comprising antibodies and T-cells.

Though some euphoria is justified, yet we must understand that vaccine development is a lengthy and painful process. Even the vast amount of data from clinical trials is unable to justify the hypothesis the biomedical community has set out to prove. The durability of the immune response system as also the longevity of the regenerated T-cells together are concern areas. The universal safety of vaccines across age groups remains worrisome as representation of the vulnerable groups in the clinical trials is said to be limited. While the need for a safe and effective vaccine is a given, expediency cannot override quality. Being optimist is good but being one with caution is better.

SK Prabhakar
Gurugram

Futile exercise

Sir — This refers to the article, "Leave Lutyens alone" (July 21) by Yashovardhan Azad. The writer is right to raise alarm over the Government's plan to restructure the Lutyens' zone.

Parts of this area have maintained a distinctive architectural heritage and urban character. The razing of buildings from the Rashtrapati Bhawan to India Gate will rob the Lutyens area of its beauty.

Instead of getting a facelift, the large open spaces may get obliterated. Many beautiful buildings in the Lutyens' zone add grace and charm to the city. One finds it difficult to understand as to why such a restructuring is required at places which are brimming with charm and beauty. The Government should instead focus its energy on redeveloping and beautifying the old city of Delhi and also perking up the economy.

Devendra Khurana
Bhopal

Adapt to changes

Sir — The pandemic has led to several changes. But the judicial system has found it difficult to adapt to changing times. In fact, the pandemic has only made matters worse for our courts. Piled up cases, outdated laws, lengthy legal proceedings and the lack of legal reforms are some of the things that demand immediate attention.

Rati Jain
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRSTCOLUMN

India can exit fiscal tight spot

For this to happen, GDP growth and the economy have to be treated and run like a corporate house, hungry and lean

KUMARDEEP **BANERJEE**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and top Cabinet Ministers have spent the last fortnight talking to numerous stakeholders and potential investors across the globe and at various fora, trying to convince them that India has lifted the shutters and is ready for business. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs, has talked about potential opportunities for investors on the Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi- Meerut highway corridors, the linked and now commercially-available waterways and has gone on record to promise daily, weekly and monthly returns from investments in India's infrastructure. Similarly, Minister of Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad has announced an ambitious production-linked incentive scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing firms, with potential financial incentives and sharp focus on high-value, globally-produced components of mobile phones and air conditioners.

Modi himself, at multiple fora and one-on-one conversations with top CEOs, has made a strong pitch for refuelling India with upgraded, long-term investments for a brighter future for enterprises and the global world order. Much of this effort has been made to keep the money coming in for Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who has been trying to find alternate sources of revenue during one of the biggest economic slowdowns India has seen in recent memory and to ensure that the State fulfils its commitment of providing basic amenities like food and medical care to a large section of the population. These efforts are the need of the hour for India, which is faced with the dual challenges of a raging pandemic and military/economic ambush from an aggressive neighbour, China. And there is still a large track left to be covered to become a larger than $5 trillion economy in a very short period.

So, what can be done? To begin with, GDP growth and the economy have to be treated and run like a corporate house, hungry and lean. Some may argue that it could lead to overlooking the welfare of a vast majority of the population. In a democracy, this could lead to uncomfortable questions in Parliament at a time when elections in some States are around the corner. While I won't comment on the latter part of the argument regarding the politics behind stalling growth projects, the fact remains that there are many enterprises and cooperatives around the world where sustainable development of employees has gone hand in hand with healthy business growth.

To take an example, the Government has access to a vast amount of cash. It can very well enter into minority shareholding or profit-sharing arrangements with private fund managers and sovereign wealth creators, who can be tasked with bringing in high-value returns in a relatively short span of time. Of course, the challenge would be to put the perfect agreement papers in place, as too tight controls on managerial capacity could lead to efficient fund managers losing interest. On the other hand, too less control and the Government could be pulled up for corruption and collusion with wrong parties.

Second, the Government can again, by strategic choice, pick up a bunch of real estate and infrastructure projects stalled across the country due to lack of funds or slowing demand (even before the COVID-19 crisis began). The Government's track record of taking up construction has been much below market standards but it can make a fresh start by bringing world-class builders and infrastructure specialists on board. A leading example of bringing efficiency by smart partnering and teamwork is Delhi Metro, where both the Central and State Governments have an equal ownership but the money to build the 489-kilometre suburban railway network has come from Japan. The corporation thus formed runs with 10 nominees from the State and Central Government and eight (including the Managing Director) full-time Directors. What it ensures is equal say for most stakeholders and also brings the necessary momentum behind the wheels to tunnel through the toughest and most congested lanes of Delhi.

In a similar approach, Smart City, a pet project of the Government that is in tune with Digital India, can be broken into smaller self-sustaining, futuristic enterprises with an independent Board of Directors, equal nominees from the Union and State Government-concerned and a full time professional CEO (with a competitive salary to begin with). This team of approximately 20 people will have the task of converting an available chunk of land and its civic amenities into a global, high-tech piece of excellence, while empowered to raise funds for itself.

Modi has often been praised for his respect for the bureaucracy and bringing in the right talent for implementing projects on a mission mode. If he and his talented team put their mind to converting Smart City projects into globally-marketed profitable ventures in a relatively short span of time, it could be a game changer. It could help the country to come out of the current economic crisis and turn it into one of the biggest opportunities for the nation.

(*The writer is a policy analyst*)

POINT**COUNTER**POINT

ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE TO DESTABILISE ELECTED GOVERNMENTS. I DON'T KNOW TO WHAT EXTENT YOU ARE AWARE OF ALL THIS OR YOU ARE BEING MISLED.
—RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER
ASHOK GEHLOT

IT IS CLEAR FROM THE LETTER OF THE CM TO THE PM THAT HE HAS LOST THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS MLAs AND HIS GOVERNMENT IS IN MINORITY.
—RAJASTHAN BJP CHIEF
SATISH POONIA

FDI through front door

The Govt must allow 100 per cent FDI in retail as this will level the playing field for all, eliminate discretion of bureaucrats whose writ is all-pervasive and help small traders

UTTAM **GUPTA**

On April 22, the California-based US internet giant, Facebook, announced its decision to buy 9.99 per cent stake in Jio Platforms Limited (JPL) paying more than ₹43,450 crore. JPL is a 100 per cent subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and has in its fold a wide spectrum of businesses such as wireless broadband, home broadband, enterprise broadband, narrowband, internet-of-things businesses, a bouquet of digital applications, e-commerce and so on.

This was followed by a flurry of investments with big names such as General Atlantic, Silver Lake, Qualcomm, Intel, Vista, Google and so on, bringing in cumulative investment of over ₹1,00,000 crore, taking the total to ₹1,50,000 crore. In lieu of this capital, they get aggregate shareholding of 30 per cent or ₹5,000 crore for every one per cent, thus valuing the company at a whopping ₹5,00,000 crore.

Even as foreign investors see value in every segment of the business on this platform, at the centre stage is e-commerce, which is being powered by JioMart commerce platform — a unit of JPL. In fact, Facebook has come in primarily with an eye on tapping opportunities in this area and signed a comprehensive agreement with JPL to exploit synergies between the two conglomerates.

The duo intend to offer technology-enabled wherewithal to enable consumers access neighbourhood stores and have products delivered at their doorsteps. About 30 million of these stores will be empowered to digitally transact with every customer in their neighbourhood (over 400 million-strong Indian database of WhatsApp — a 100 per cent subsidiary of Facebook — will come in handy). JioMoney — RIL's payment platform — will be integrated into the JioMart venture to facilitate hassle-free seamless payment for transactions. The model operated by Reliance under JioMart is a combination of online and offline retail. Apart from Reliance Retail Limited (RRL), which has thousands of retail stores spread all over India and gets hooked on to the Jio platform, it will be serving tens of millions of neighbourhood stores in a variety of ways *viz.* handling, procurement, storage, payment, delivery and so on. Since all of this will be powered by a digital eco-system, the model is a hybrid of online and offline.

Two things are abundantly clear: Reliance Industries is deeply entrenched in Indian retail — already through RRL and now increasing its footprint exponentially through the Jio Platform. It is getting a massive injection of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), with Facebook alone having pumped ₹43,450 crore into JioMart. But this is out of sync with the extant policy in regard to FDI in retail. For the purpose of FDI, unlike the international practice where retail is treated as a single homogenous sector without any distinction, the Indian Government has divided retail into several classes. In India, we have Single-Brand Retail (SBR) and Multi-Brand Retail (MBR) and there are sub-categories within each. Here, we deal with MBR or retail — as it is known in common parlance.

Within MBR, there is the "physical" format or offline, which takes two forms: The euphoric mom-and-pop stores, also nicknamed neighbourhood stores, and organised retail. Then, we have the online format, which has two sub-categories, the marketplace model and the inventory-based model.

In the physical format, as per a policy approved by the then UPA dispensation in 2012, as much as 51 per cent FDI is allowed but with a plethora of riders such as 30 per cent local sourcing, minimum investment of $100 million and prior approval of the State where the retail shop is to be set up. In 2016-17, an unprecedented 100 per cent FDI in food retail was allowed, subject to the foreign retailer selling items which are sourced only from Indian farmers and processed locally. Besides, 25 per cent of investment should be in agri-infrastructure like irrigation, farm machinery/implements and so on. In the online format, as per guidelines issued in early 2016, (Press Note 3) 100 per cent FDI is allowed under the so-called marketplace model. The marketplace is a platform where vendors sell their products to consumers even as its owner merely acts as a facilitator. The marketplace owner provides services such as booking orders, raising invoices, arranging delivery, accepting payments, handling rejections, warehousing and so on. But, s/he can't hold inventory and undertake direct selling.

> LOOKING AT WHAT IS HAPPENING ON GROUND ZERO, IT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE MODI GOVERNMENT HAS NO OBJECTION TO PERMITTING FDI IN ONLINE RETAIL AND EVEN IN OFFLINE RETAIL (ALBEIT WITHOUT ANY RIDERS) AS AMPLY DEMONSTRATED BY THE TREATMENT METED OUT TO AMAZON/FLIPKART EARLIER AND NOW TO FACEBOOK RIDING PIGGYBACK ON RIL. WHY SHOULD IT BE ALLOWED TO HAPPEN IN A VAGUE AND CONVOLUTED MANNER? WHY SHOULD THE POLICY NOT BE CLEAR-CUT AND TRANSPARENT?

The permission for 100 per cent FDI in the marketplace is subject to two main riders, that is "the entity cannot permit more than 25 per cent of total sales on its platform from one vendor or its group companies. Further, it can't directly or indirectly influence the sale price." Sans any specification as to "who the vendor is", a firm linked to the marketplace (either its subsidiary or a Joint Venture with an Indian company) is eligible.

Thus, contrary to the real intent of the policy, which disallowed the marketplace owner from direct selling to individual consumers, the fine print permitted them to do so — albeit by its subsidiary or JV. This is precisely what e-commerce majors such as Amazon and Flipkart/Walmart have been doing even though they came in as marketplace operators. They are operating as direct sellers, controlling inventory, giving discounts and so on.

A clarification to Press Note 3 issued on December 26, 2018 has not materially altered the position on ground zero. It says "the owner of the marketplace or its subsidiary or its JV with Indian company can't have ownership of the seller." Further, "a seller/firm on the platform can't source more than 25 per cent of its inventory from a firm connected with the latter." The marketplace owner can get around both. First, by having less than 50 per cent shareholding in the seller firm and argue, he has no control (albeit majority) over the latter and second through the wholesale arm continuing supplies to the seller but within the 25 per cent threshold.

The clarification has not deterred their hold over Indian retail; they are dominant sellers themselves, giving little space to millions of small vendors for whose benefit this unique policy dispensation of the marketplace was designed. Disingenuous bureaucrats allowed them to do so by crafting policy architecture to suit them.

The small vendors, through their umbrella organisations such as All India Online Vendors Association (AIOVA), Retailers Association of India (RAI), Delhi Vyapar Mahasangh (DVM) and so on, have petitioned judicial authorities at various levels seeking action against Amazon/Flipkart for violation of FDI norms and indulging in unfair practices but have not got any relief. The sole reason is that the courts go by the fine print which suits these giants.

Unlike the marketplaces of foreign e-commerce majors, JioMart commerce platform floated by RIL holds the potential of giving a boost to the small vendors, but even this may not gel with the extant policy framework. Even as the main thrust of the policy is on "complete prohibition of FDI in direct selling to individual consumers", JioMart, which is deeply entrenched in direct sales, has received investment from Facebook — a foreign company.

Like Amazon *et al*, Reliance/Facebook may get around by citing that foreign shareholding in the seller firm is less than 50 per cent or a wholesaler linked to JioMart owner Reliance/Facebook will keep its supplies to the vendor within the 25 per cent threshold. Or they may carve out a separate entity entirely for food retail where 100 per cent FDI is allowed. This way, the two would be able to demonstrate that they are not violating the rule book. But this is not the way to go.

Looking at what is happening on ground zero, it is abundantly clear that the Modi Government has no objection to permitting FDI in online retail and even in offline retail (albeit without any riders) as amply demonstrated by the treatment meted out to Amazon/Flipkart earlier and now to Facebook riding piggyback on RIL. If that be so, then why allow it to happen in a vague and convoluted manner? Why should the policy not be clear-cut and transparent? Why should FDI not be allowed through the front door?

The Government should shun the marketplace model. It should allow 100 per cent FDI in retail in both online and offline without any riders (the special categories such as 100 per cent FDI in food retail should go). This will level the playing field for all, online vs offline, food retail vs non-food, marketplace vs inventory and so on and eliminate discretion of bureaucrats whose writ is all-pervasive when it comes to grant of approvals.

It will help small traders by leading to all-round development of infrastructure and offering a wide range of choice for sourcing products. They can and will co-exist with big players — both foreign and Indian. It will be pro-consumer in the long-run with many players catering to their needs at competitive/affordable price. Sans these policy changes, under business as usual scenario, the consumers will pay a heavy price in the medium to long-term as Indian retail will be cartelised by a few players viz. Amazon, Walmart and Facebook/RIL.

(*The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst*)

A flood of urban woes during the rains

Traffic snarls, waterlogging and the loss of lives show that a manageable issue has been allowed to deteriorate

KOTA **SRIRAJ**

Amid the pall of gloom cast by COVID-19 and the oppressive heat, India was earnestly looking forward to the arrival of the monsoon. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) had forecast surplus rainfall in various parts of the country and sure enough, metropolises such as Mumbai and Delhi have received a healthy share of showers.

Mumbai, for instance, received 26 per cent more rainfall as compared to last year, while Delhi received 70 mm of rain on July 19 alone, which is the highest in the last five years. But no matter how heartening the rains might be, every passing year they bring in their wake the ever-growing problem of urban flooding.

This has been experienced for decades in India but sufficient attention has not been given to specific efforts to deal with it. In the past, any strategy on flood disaster management largely focussed on riverine floods affecting large extents of rural areas. Urban flooding is significantly different from rural flooding as urbanisation leads to developed catchments and in the event of heavy/high intensity rainfall, there is higher run-off, which increases the flood peaks from 1.8 to eight times and flood volumes up to six times. Consequently, flooding occurs very quickly due to faster flow times, sometimes in a matter of minutes.

The recent death of a mini-truck driver after his vehicle got submerged under the Minto Bridge after a spell of rain in Central Delhi underlines the growing threat of urban flooding. While most of the time urban India patiently endures huge volumes of

flooding and the resultant traffic snarls, when people start losing lives, it is time for the citizens and the authorities to consider the problem seriously and deal with it effectively.

Though large cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai go through urban flooding annually, the recurrence of the problem suggests that no lessons are learnt and no infrastructure is built or improved to prevent it. Just a few hours of hard rain in metropolitan cities can present a very embarrassing spectacle as daily life is thrown out of gear and the cities become unwitting examples for the developed world to learn from. Another concerning aspect is that urban flooding increases the chances of contagious diseases like typhoid, cholera, leptospirosis, hepatitis and even COVID-19 spreading far more easily. For instance, floodwaters in Assam spread discarded medical waste and used PPE from hospitals and COVID-19 care centres, raising fears of infection among people in inundated areas.

One of the major reasons for urban waterlogging are the archaic sewer systems in our cities that are heavily choked with silt and garbage. Indian metros not only need regular cleaning of sewers and storm water drains, particularly before the onset of the rainy season, they also require an advanced system that is based on the latest technology and satellite data that can calculate the quantities of water run-off every monsoon and accordingly estimate the load factor on the sewerage and storm water system.

Another reason for flooding of cities is excessive concretisation and paved areas in the urban landscape. This has not only resulted in exacerbating the heat island effect and causing a sharp spike in ambient temperatures but preventing rainwater absorption into the ground and recharging of the water table. This, too, increases the rainwater run-off, putting undue pressure on the drainage network.

The efforts to prevent urban flooding will be incomplete unless the ground water absorption rate of rainwater as compared to the run-off rate is balanced. Another issue pertaining to urban flooding is the role played by illegal construction and how it is impacting the storm water drainage system across India's major cities. As urban sprawls increase rapidly, unauthorised construction and unplanned digging by civic agencies are becoming two major issues that are further impacting our already overburdened drainage systems adversely. Flooding will continue to trouble urban citizens unless these impediments are addressed and removed.

We often marvel at infrastructure planning of ancient India, especially the drainage system of the Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa cultures that date back to 2400 BC. Sadly we are unable to replicate the excellence and success of the bygone era in today's time. Urban flooding is avoidable and in order to ensure safety of lives and property, it is essential for the Government to rapidly develop strategies that draw from the best of the world's benchmarking practices in urban rainwater management. We need city-wise protocols that cater to the typicality of the demographics and geography and automatically kick in when the area receives a certain quantum of rainfall.

Traffic snarls, waterlogging and the loss of lives due to urban flooding are a painful indication that a manageable issue has been allowed to deteriorate and get out of hand. It is time authorities around the country wake up.

(*The writer is an environmental journalist*)

FOREIGN EYE

WE ARE NOTHING WITHOUT HISTORY

In an age of tweets and electronic messaging, handwritten letters are as fashionable as wooden spinning wheels. Incidentally, MK Gandhi's collected writings and letters span 98 volumes. Such letters provide historians with a flashlight into the times in which they were written. Bereft of them, historians look at their shoelaces for inspiration.

(*Dawn* editorial)

Closure of more Chinese missions possible: Trump

President Donald Trump said hours after Washington ordered closure of Beijing's consulate in Houston to protect American intellectual property and private information

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US does not rule out the possibility of closing more Chinese diplomatic missions in the country, President Donald Trump has said, hours after Washington ordered the closure of Beijing's consulate in Houston to "protect American intellectual property and private information."

The US move came amid a growing number of disputes between the two countries over Beijing's increasingly aggressive actions that have led Washington to take strong actions, including closing the consulate in Houston, according to senior Trump administration officials.

The consulate in Houston, Texas, is one of five Chinese diplomatic missions in the US, not counting the embassy in Washington DC.

The US move came after the Justice Department said that hackers working with the Chinese Government targeted firms developing vaccines for the coronavirus and stole hundreds of millions of dollars worth of intellectual property and trade secrets from companies across the world.

"As far as closing additional embassies, it's always possible," Trump told reporters on Wednesday during a daily press briefing at the White House when asked if he is looking at closing more Chinese diplomatic missions in the US.

The US State Department in a brief statement on Wednesday said it has "directed the closure of PRC (People's Republic of China) Consulate General Houston, in order to protect American intellectual property and American's private information."

State Department spokesperson Morgan Ortagus said the US will not tolerate the PRC's violations of its sovereignty and intimidation of its people, just as it has not tolerated the PRC's unfair trade practices, theft of American jobs, and other egregious behaviour. She said Trump "insists on fairness and reciprocity in US-China relations."

During the press conference, Trump referred to the news reports of fire in the Chinese Consulate in Houston apparently due to burning of documents in its courtyard.

China cites 'malicious slander' as Houston consulate closes

Beijing: China said "malicious slander" is behind an order by the US government to close its consulate in Houston, Texas, and maintained on Thursday that its officials have never operated outside ordinary diplomatic norms.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said the order to close the consulate "violates international law and basic norms governing international relations," and "seriously undermines China-US relations."

"This is breaking down the bridge of friendship between the Chinese and American people," Wang told reporters at a daily briefing.

The order this week to close the consulate, one of China's six missions in the United States, is seen as escalating tensions between the world's two largest economies while President Donald Trump steers blame and punitive measures against China ahead of the November US election.

AP

FBI: Researcher being harbored at Chinese consulate in SF

Washington: The FBI believes the Chinese consulate in San Francisco is harboring a Chinese researcher who is charged in federal court in California with lying about her military background. Tang Juan lied about her military affiliation in a visa application last October to work at the University of California, Davis and again during an FBI interview last month, according to Justice Department criminal charges.

Agents found photographs of Tang in a uniform of the People's Liberation Army civilian cadre and news articles from China that identified her military affiliation. The FBI last month interviewed Tang, when she denied having served in the military or knowing the significance of the insignia of her uniform, and also found more evidence of her military affiliation when they later searched her home, according to a criminal complaint filed last month that charges her with visa fraud. *AP*

Biden, Obama pair in socially distanced video to decry Trump

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and former President Barack Obama stepped up their attacks on President Donald Trump and defended their time in the White House in a new video showing their first in-person meeting since the coronavirus outbreak began.

The 15-minute video, posted online Thursday, is the latest maneuver to get the former president involved in the 2020 campaign for his former vice president, as Biden tries to rebuild Obama's winning coalition in November.

The former president and vice president used the interview-style conversation to amplify Biden's arguments against Trump, with Obama emphasizing Biden's experience and personal attributes. They pointed to their administration's signature health care law and blamed Trump for stoking division and animosity among Americans from the moment he entered the 2016 presidential race.

Jow Biden calls Trump country's 'first' racist Prez

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Joe Biden said on Wednesday that President Donald Trump was the country's "first" racist President.

The presumptive Democratic presidential nominee's comments came during a virtual town hall organised by the Service Employees International Union.

When a questioner complained of racism surrounding the coronavirus outbreak and mentioned the president referring to it as the "China virus," Biden responded by blasting Trump and "his spread of racism."

"The way he deals with people based on the colour of their skin, their national origin, where they're from, is absolutely sickening," the former vice president said. "No sitting president has ever done this. Never, never, never. No Republican president has done this. No Democratic president. We've had racists, and they've existed. They've tried to get elected president. He's the first one that has." Biden also suggested that Trump is using race "as a wedge" to distract from his mishandling of the pandemic.

Many presidents — including the nation's first, George Washington — owned slaves.

President Woodrow Wilson, the country's 28th president, is having his name removed from Princeton University's public policy school after recent protests against institutional racism and police brutality.

Green Card waitlist for Indian is more than 195 years: US senator

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The backlog for an Indian national to get permanent residency or Green Card is more than 195 years, a top Republican senator has said, urging his Senate colleagues to come out with a legislative resolution to address this problem. A Green Card, known officially as a Permanent Resident Card, is a document issued to immigrants to the US as evidence that the bearer has been granted the privilege of residing permanently.

Senator Mike Lee said on Wednesday that the current Green Card policy did nothing for the child of an immigrant whose dead parent's Green Card application was ultimately denied because his or her job was no longer available.

"Someone from India entering the backlog today would have to wait 195 years to receive an EB-3 green card. Even if we give their children this limbo status, none of them will have a prayer of becoming a US citizen," Lee said on the Senator floor. In fiscal year 2019, Indian nationals received 9,008 category 1 (EB1), 2,908 category 2 (EB2), and 5,083 category 3 (EB3) Green Cards. EB1-3 are different categories of employment-based Green Cards.

Lee, the senator from Utah, was speaking on the legislation moved by Senator Dick Durbin that seeks to protect immigrant workers and their children who are stuck in the green card backlog.

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

US labs buckle amid testing surge; world virus cases top 15M

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Laboratories across the U.S. are buckling under a surge of coronavirus tests, creating long processing delays that experts say are undercutting the pandemic response.

With the US tally of confirmed infections at nearly 4 million Wednesday and new cases surging, the bottlenecks are creating problems for workers kept off the job while awaiting results, nursing homes struggling to keep the virus out and for the labs themselves as they deal with a crushing workload. Some labs are taking weeks to return Covid-19 results, exacerbating fears that people without symptoms could be spreading the virus if they don't isolate while they wait.

"There's been this obsession with, 'How many tests are we doing per day?'" said Dr Tom Frieden, former director of the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. "The question is how many tests are being done with results coming back within a day, where the individual tested is promptly isolated and their contacts are promptly warned."

Frieden and other public health experts have called on states to publicly report testing turnaround times, calling it an essential metric to measure progress against the virus.

The testing lags in the US come as the number of people confirmed to be infected worldwide passed a staggering 15 million, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. The US leads the world in cases as well as deaths, which have exceeded 1,42,000.

New York, once by far the US leader in infections, has been surpassed by California, though that is partly due to robust testing in a state with more than twice the population of New York. Guidelines issued by the CDC recommend that states lifting virus restrictions have a testing turnaround time of under four days. The agency recently issued new recommendations against retesting most Covid-19 patients to confirm they have recovered.

"It's clogging up the system," Adm. Brett Giroir, assistant health secretary, told reporters last week. Zachrey Warner knows it all too well.

The 30-year-old waiter from Columbus, Ohio, was sent home from work on July 5 with a high fever a few days after he began feeling ill. He went for a test five days later at the request of his employer.

Almost two weeks and one missed pay period later, he finally got his answer Wednesday: negative. Though Warner said most symptoms — including fever, diarrhea, chest tightness and body aches — stopped a few days after he was tested, he wasn't allowed to return to work without the result.

It was "frustrating that I've missed so much work due to testing taking forever," Warner said. "It is what it is ... (but) I'm glad I'm negative and happy to be able to get back to work this week." Beyond the economic hurt the testing lags can cause, they pose major health risks, too. In Florida, which reported 9,785 new cases and a rise in the death toll to nearly 5,500, nursing homes have been under an order to test all employees every two weeks. But long delays for results have some questioning the point.

Jay Solomon, CEO of Aviva in Sarasota, a senior community with a nursing home and assisted living facility, said results were taking up to 10 days to come back. "It's almost like, what are we accomplishing in that time?" Solomon said. "If that person is not quarantined in that 7-10 days, are they spreading without realising it?"

Test results that come back after two or three days are nearly worthless, many health experts say, because by then the window for tracing the person's contacts to prevent additional infections has essentially closed. "The turnaround times, particularly across the South are too long," Dr. Deborah Birx of the White House coronavirus task force said on Fox.

Birx said the U.S. had shorter turnaround times in April, May and early June, but that "this surge and this degree of cases is so widespread compared to previously," she said. Dr Leana Wen, a public health professor at George Washington University said it's reasonable to tell people awaiting test results to isolate for 24 hours, but the delays have been unacceptable.

"Imagine you tell a parent with young children to self-isolate for 10 days or more without knowing they actually have Covid? I mean, that's ridiculous. That's actually absurd," Wen said. US officials have recently called for ramping up screening to include seemingly healthy Americans who may be unknowingly spreading the disease in their communities. But Quest Diagnostics, one of the nation's largest testing chains, said it can't keep up with demand and most patients will face waits of a week or longer for results.

India, US and Brazil can 'deal with' this pandemic: WHO

GENEVA: The World Health Organization said on Thursday that the United States, Brazil and India, which are all suffering fast rises in coronavirus cases, can still get on top of the pandemic.

They are "powerful, able, democratic countries who have tremendous internal capacities to deal with this disease", Dr Mike Ryan, head of the WHO emergencies programme, told a Geneva briefing.

US coronavirus cases exceeded 4 million on Thursday, with over 2,600 new cases recorded every hour on average, the highest rate in the world, according to a Reuters tally. *Agencies*

Scientists develop safe, rapid Covid-19 antibody test

SINGAPORE: Scientists have developed a rapid test to detect antibodies in COVID-19 patients that specifically block the novel coronavirus, an advance that may lead to faster methods for estimating the population level infection rate of the disease.

According to the study, published in the journal Nature Biotechnology, a rapid test to detect neutralising antibodies — capable of blocking the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 — is urgently needed to facilitate monitoring of infection rates, as well as to determine vaccine efficacy during clinical trials.

In order to facilitate this, researchers, including those from Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore, developed a new assay which is much faster than conventional tests for neutralising antibodies, taking only one or two hours to complete. *PTI*

Trump points at race protests, bar-goers, Mexico travellers for surge in Covid cases

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump is casting wide blame for a nationwide surge in coronavirus cases, pointing to racial justice protests, travelers from Mexico and young bar-goers. Holding his second briefing on the virus in as many days after a three-month hiatus, Trump sought on Wednesday to explain the rise in confirmed cases across the nation's South, Southwest and West.

Trump says cases among young Americans first started to rise "shortly after demonstrations." He says the protests following the death of George Floyd "presumably triggered a broader relaxation of mitigation efforts nationwide." He also says a "substantial increase in travel" around Memorial Day and summer vacations was also a driver of new cases. *AP*

China launches ambitious attempt to land rover on Mars

AP ■ BEIJING

China launched its most ambitious Mars mission yet on Thursday in a bold attempt to join the United States in successfully landing a spacecraft on the red planet.

Engines blazing orange, a Long March-5 rocket took off under clear skies from Hainan Island, south of China's mainland, as space enthusiasts gathered on a beach across the bay from the launch site.

"This is a kind of hope, a kind of strength," said Li Dapeng, co-founder of the China branch of the Mars Society, an advocacy group. He watched with his wife, 11-year-old son and 2,000 others on the beach. Launch commander Zhang Xueyu announced to cheers in the control room that the rocket was flying normally about 45 minutes later. "The Mars rover has accurately entered the scheduled orbit," he said in brief remarks shown live on state broadcaster CCTV.

China's space agency said that the rocket carried the probe for 36 minutes before successfully placing it on the looping path that will take it beyond Earth's orbit and eventually into Mars' more distant orbit around the sun.

Liu Tongjie, spokesman for the mission, said in a press briefing that the launch was a "key step of China marching towards farther deep space." He said that China's aim wasn't to compete with other countries, but to peacefully explore the universe. It marked the second flight to Mars this week, after a United Arab Emirates orbiter blasted off on a rocket from Japan on Monday. And the U.S. is aiming to launch Perseverance, its most sophisticated Mars rover ever, from Cape Canaveral, Florida, next week.

Around the Globe

- China continues to see newly confirmed coronavirus cases in its northwestern region of Xinjiang, with 18 reported on Thursday. More than 50 people have been infected in China's latest outbreak focused on Xinjiang's regional capital and largest city of Urumqi.
- Three out of four Americans, including a majority of Republicans, favor requiring people to wear face coverings while outside their homes, a new poll finds, reflecting fresh alarm over spiking coronavirus cases and a growing embrace of government advice intended to safeguard public health.
- Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador on Wednesday downplayed the importance of wearing face masks during the pandemic, calling his treasury secretary's assertion that using them would be a factor in reactivating the economy "disproportionate." López Obrador had never been seen publicly wearing a mask until he flew to Washington earlier this month to meet with President Donald Trump.
- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson claimed that the United Kingdom's response to the coronavirus pandemic has shown the country's "sheer might" as he sought during a trip to Scotland on Thursday to underline the bonds that tie the nations of the UK together. Johnson's visit does not include a meeting with Scottish leader Nicola Sturgeon, who countered his upbeat tone with a frosty tweet saying the prime minister's presence "highlights" the arguments for Scottish independence.
- Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte didn't win many friends with his tough negotiating over the course of a marathon four-day European Union summit in Brussels. That didn't bother the three-term leader who is a veteran of plenty of past EU negotiations. "We are not here because we are going to be visitors at each other's birthday party later," he told reporters during a brief lull in the grueling series of meetings.

WHO chief upbraids Pompeo over 'unacceptable' allegations

AP ■ GENEVA

The chief of the World Health Organization (WHO) has upbraided US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for "untrue and unacceptable" comments, responding to reported allegations that included the health agency chief having been "bought" by China.

Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus insisted WHO is focusing on "saving lives" as he lashed out Thursday at the comments British media have reported that Pompeo made at a closed-door event earlier this week in London.

Tedros' response to Pompeo represented some of his most defensive and full-throated statements yet in the wake of the Trump administration's repeated criticism of the UN health agency in recent months.

N K TEXTILE INDUSTRIES LIMITED
Regd. Office: Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola New Delhi-110025
CIN: L17299DL1983PLC163230, Tel: +91 11 61119313
Email Id: n.ktextiles123@gmail.com, website:www.nktil.com

Extract of Audited Financial Results (Standalone) for the quarter and year ended on 31st March, 2020

Standalone (Rs. in lakhs)

SL No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended on 31-03-2020 (Audited)	Quarter Ended on 31-03-2019 (Audited)	Quarter Ended on 31-12-2019 (Unaudited)	Year Ended on 31-03-2020 (Audited)	Year Ended on 31-03-2019 (Audited)
1	Total Income from operations	1.69	1.69	1.70	6.99	6.65
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and /or Extra-ordinary items)	(0.43)	(0.53)	0.45	0.60	0.11
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax					
	(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(0.43)	(0.53)	0.45	0.60	0.11
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax					
	(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(0.56)	(0.38)	0.45	0.47	0.09
5	Total Other Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	-	-	-	-	-
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value Rs. 10 each)	83.98	83.98	83.98	83.98	83.98
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the audited Balance Sheet of accounting Years 2019-20 and 2018-19	-	-	-	3,690.75	4,186.28
8	Earning Per Share (Rs) (Face Value Rs. 10)					
	1 Basic	(0.07)	(0.05)	0.05	0.06	0.01
	2 Diluated	(0.07)	(0.05)	0.05	0.06	0.01

Extract of Consolidated Audited Financial Results for the quarter and year ended on 31st March , 2020

Consolidated (Rs. in lakhs)

	Particulars	Quarter Ended on 31-03-2020 (Audited)	Quarter Ended on 31-03-2019 (Audited)	Quarter Ended on 31-12-2019 (Unaudited)	Year Ended on 31-03-2020 (Audited)	Year Ended on 31-03-2019 (Audited)
1	Total Income from operations	(435.58)	1433.10	593.13	387.67	1932.35
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and /or Extra-ordinary items)	(1,612.34)	1429.35	1659.10	(794.71)	1922.68
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items/ after share of profit of associates)	(1,620.22)	1823.13	1752.20	(535.79)	2514.38
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items/ after share of profit of associate)	(1415.52)	1680.46	1557.81	(405.83)	2367.97
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(5,680.27)	14,647.40	1,564.59	(4,624.11)	15,418.42
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value Rs. 10 each)	83.98	83.98	83.98	83.98	83.98
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the audited Balance Sheet of accounting Years 2019-20 and 2018-19				31,767.57	35,527.43
8	Earning Per Share (Rs) (Face Value Rs. 10)					
	1 Basic	(129.45)	157.98	153.92	(25.04)	224.78
	2 Diluated	(129.45)	157.98	153.92	(25.04)	224.78

Notes:-
1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of audited results filed with the stock exchnage under regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing obligation an and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation, 2015. The full format of the Audited results are available on company's website **www. nktil.com** and on the website of the Stock Exchage **www.msei.in.**
2) The detailed audited results and this extract were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of directors in their meeting held on 23.07.2020

By order of the Board
For **N K Textile Industries Limited**
Sd/-
Balbir Singh
Director
DIN:00027438
Date: 23.07.2020
Place: New Delhi

INDIAN RAILWAYS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAIL MANTRALAYA)
(RAILWAY BOARD)
E-Tender No. 2020RSI1743TC

Executive Director, Railway Stores (Steel), Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), Government of India, invites e-Tender for procurement of 72,000 Nos. Constant Contact Side Bearers (CCSB) for Indian Railways to RDSO specification No. WD-62.MISC-17 & CONTR-01-MISC-07 with latest revision for BOXN & BOBRN type wagons.

2.0 The interested suppliers are advised to visit the website **http://ireps.gov.in** for details of the tender and submission of their e-bids.
3.0 **No manual offers will be accepted against e-tender.**
5.0 **Tender will be closed at 15:00 hours on 27.08.2020**

Director, Railway Stores (Wagon),
Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi
No. 2020RSI1743TC Dated: 23.07.2020 **1617/20**
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of tender through E-tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

S.N	N.I.T. No.	NIT-09-20-21-W-2
1	Name of Work with its location	Hiring of Vehicle for inspection of Sr. DEN-II/ DLI, ADEN/GZB, MUT & SMQL.
2	Approx. Cost of work	As per IREPS Notice
3	Earnest Money	As per IREPS Notice
4	Completion Period	As per IREPS Notice
5	Cost of tender on Cash/by post	As per IREPS Notice
6	Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	07.08.2020 to 21.08.2020 upto 15:00 hrs Opening of tender 21.08.2020 at 15:00 hrs on
7	Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

NIT-09-20-21-W-2 Dated : 21.07.2020 1611/2020
Serving Customers With A Smile

SIMBHAOLI SUGARS LIMITED
CIN : L15122UP2011PLC044210
Website : www.simbhaolisugars.com
Registered Office : Simbhaoli Distt. Hapur, Uttar Pradesh - 245207
Tel. No. : 0120-4806666, Fax: 0120-2427166
NOTICE
Pursuant to Regulation 29 and 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, NOTICE is hereby given that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Thursday, July 30, 2020 through Video Conferencing, inter alia, to consider and approve the standalone and consolidated audited financial statements of the Company for the financial year ended on March 31, 2020.
The said notice may be accessed on the Company's website at www.simbhaolisugars.com and may also available on the website of stock exchanges at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com.
For Simbhaoli Sugars Limited
Sd/-
Date: 22.07.2020 **Kamal Samtani**
Place: Noida **Company Secretary**

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is given to public at large that my client M/s. Profectus Capital Pvt. Ltd., having its registered office at B-17, FOURTH FLOOR, ART GUILD HOUSE, PHOENIX MARKET CITY, KURLA (WEST), MUMBAI-400070. (Lender / Mortgagee) sanctioned credit facility to KATYAL PHARMA (Borrower) and VARUN KATYAL, SOMNATH KATYAL & GEETU KATYAL (Co-Borrower/ Mortgagor) on condition that the Mortgagor shall mortgage the property more particularly described in the schedule hereunder written (said Property).
The Mortgagor has confirmed and declared to my client that the Mortgagor has purchased the said property vide registered Agreement for Sale / Sale Deed dated 26/04/2018 registered under serial no. 10442 from Satinder Pal Singh vendor therein who got the right title and interest in the property by sale deed/Relinquishment Deed dated 16/02/2018 executed by Charan Jit Kaur, Harjit Kaur and Jaspal Singh.
The Mortgagor further confirmed, declared and assured to my client that the said property is not involved in any mortgage, lease, loan, surety, loss, succession, reservation, acquisition, requisition or otherwise howsoever and free from all encumbrance and have clean and marketable title and exclusive right to mortgage and deal with the said property.
Therefore any person(s) having any right, title, interest or claim in respect of property of any part thereof described in Schedule hereunder by way of sale, gift, lease, inheritance, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien, trust, beneficial interest, possession, easement, tenancy, sub-tenancy, licence, hypothecation, maintenance, inheritance, power of attorney, order, decree, award attachment or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to make the same known in writing together with supporting documents to the undersigned at his office G-36, 1st FLOOR, Connaught Place, next to Kotak Mahindra Bank, Central Delhi-110001. within 14 days from the date hereof, failing which my client will proceed to disburse the loan, without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, shall be considered deeded to have been waived and or abandoned. **SCHEDULE**
Built up Shop bearing Pvt No.3, area measuring 9'X22' without Roof Rights on Ground Floor out of Property bearing No. 24/53-A, Situated at Tilak Nagar, New Delhi-110018

RUNGTA IRRIGATION LIMITED
CIN : L74899DL1986PLC023934
Regd. & Head Office : 101, Pragati Tower 26, Rajendra Place, New Delhi- 110008
Ph. 011-40453330/31/32
Fax : 91-11-25716231
E-mail : cs@rungtairrigation.in
Website : www.rungtairrigation.in
NOTICE
Pursuant to the provision of Regulation 29(1)(a) read with Regulation 47(1)(a) of the SEBI(Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulation 2015, Notice is hereby given that the meeting of the Board of Directors of the company is schedule to be held on Wednesday, the 29th day of July, 2020 at 02:00 P.M. at the registered office of the company at 101, Pragati Tower, 26 Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008, inter-alia to consider and approve the Audited Financial Results for the quarter and year ended 31st March, 2020.
Further, in accordance with the Company's Code of conduct to regulate, Monitor and report trading by Designated Persons, the Trading Window for dealing in Securities of the company which had been closed on 29th March, 2020 (vide on letter dated 29th March, 2020) shall remain close till the expiry of 48 hours after the date of declaration of the aforesaid results. The said notice is also available at company's website at **www.rungtairrigation.in**
For Rungta Irrigation Limited
Sd/-
Prateek Sharma
(Company Secreatary & Compliance Officer)
Place : New Delhi
Date : 23rd July, 2020

Sensex reclaims 38,000-mark

RELIANCE RALLIES TO LIFETIME HIGH

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks returned to winning ways on Thursday after a day's breather, propelled by market heavyweight Reliance Industries which soared to its lifetime high.

After a subdued start, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained momentum in afternoon trade before finally closing at 38,140.47, up 268.95 points, or 0.71 per cent.

The benchmark ended above the 38,000-mark for the first time since March 5 this year. The wider NSE Nifty advanced 82.85 points, or 0.74 per cent, to finish at 11,215.45.

Reliance Industries accounted for the lion's share of the Sensex's gains, spurting 2.82 per cent to its record closing high of ₹2,060.65, following reports that Amazon was eyeing a stake in the conglomerate's retail arm.

SBI, ICICI Bank, Tech Mahindra, ITC and Kotak Bank were among the other winners, advancing as much as 3.28 per cent.

On the other hand, Axis Bank, HUL, Infosys, TCS, UltraTech Cement and L&T tumbled up to 3.80 per cent.

"Benchmark indices ended the day with gains, following positivity in the global markets. Global markets set aside the rising US-China tensions and focused on potential vaccine developments and better-than-expected earnings numbers.

"Domestically, except for IT, most major indices were in the gains. Liquidity seems to be driving the markets. Any dip looks like it will be bought into and is likely to be short-lived, especially in the current mood of the markets when the negatives are being overlooked," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

BSE energy, healthcare, realty, auto, oil and gas, bankex and metal indices ended up to 2.36 per cent higher, while IT, teck and telecom closed with losses. Broader BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices surged up to 0.98 per cent.

Global markets were mixed as investors digested corporate earnings amid the overhang of mounting COVID-19 cases and US-China tensions.

Bourses in Shanghai, Seoul and Tokyo ended in the red, while Hong Kong closed higher. Stock exchanges in Europe were trading on a positive note in early deals. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude futures rose 0.93 per cent to USD 44.70 per barrel. In the forex market, the rupee settled on a flat note at 74.75 against the US dollar.

₹ gives up gains to end flat at 74.75 against $

Mumbai: The rupee gave up day's gains to settle on a flat note at 74.75 against the US dollar on Thursday amid concerns over growing tensions between the US and China. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened on a strong note at 74.65, but erased the gains to finally close at 74.75, unchanged from its previous closing.

During the session, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 74.52 and a low of 74.87 against the US dollar.

Forex traders said the uptick in the rupee during the day was supported by weak greenback, foreign fund inflows and positive domestic equities, but rising tensions between the US and China weighed on investor sentiment and restricted the gains.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.01 per cent to 94.99.

'No employee of Air India will be laid off'

No reduction in the basic pay, dearness allowance and house rent allowance of any employee

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After strong reactions from its pilots, Air India on Thursday said that no employee of Air India will be laid off. "The meeting reiterated that unlike other carriers which have laid off large number of their employees, no employee of Air India will be laid off," the national carrier said on Twitter. It further added that there has been no reduction in the basic pay, dearness allowance and house rent allowance of any employee.

"Allowances had to be rationalised owing to the airline's difficult financial situation already exacerbated by the novel coronavirus pandemic, the statement added.

Air India further clarified that its flying crew will be paid as per the actual number of hours flown and the Board's measures regarding allowances will be reviewed as domestic and international flight operations expand gradually.

Earlier this month, India's national carrier approved a scheme enabling its Chairperson and Managing Director Rajiv Bansal to place employees on compulsory leave without pay for six months or a period of two years, extendable up to five years. The scheme was approved during the 102nd meeting of Air India's Board of Directors.

GST, I-T mop up in Q1 very encouraging, indicates economic recovery: Finance Secy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tax mop up in first quarter of the current fiscal is "very encouraging" and indicates that the economy is recovering sooner than what was anticipated at the time of imposition of lockdown, Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said on Thursday.

He said the Revenue Department wants to bring in self-compliance among taxpayers by making available data of all financial transactions via Form 26AS at the time of filing income tax (I-T) return.

Pandey, who is also the Revenue Secretary, said about 70 per cent of the ₹ 91,000 crore Goods and Services Tax (GST) collected in June is on account of transactions in May.

"For the month of June, going by the current trends, we have certain trend about how many people have made payment so far, and also the e-way bill...Truck movement...All these things are giving encouraging signals that the economy is coming back to the realm sooner than what was being anticipated when the lockdown was started in March," he said while addressing a Ficci event here.

Besides, income tax collection, by way of advance tax and TDS, in the April-June quarter was about 80 per cent of what was collected in the same period last year. "These two numbers - GST and income tax - are encouraging numbers and also gives us some hope that wherever possible businesses are finding ways to get started. But there were certain sectors like hospitality, education, tourism, which are facing difficulty," Pandey added.

The Government had in May notified revised Form 26AS which would have additional details on taxpayers' high-value financial transactions like cash deposit/withdrawal, property purchases undertaken during a financial year, and would facilitate voluntary compliance and ease of e-filing of I-T returns.

Pandey said if a person sees all his transaction at one place, it makes return filing easy and helps honest taxpayers. It also sends a message to those persons who are on the borderline, and they would also try to be on the right side of law.

"What we want to promote is self-compliance instead of somebody being sent a notice and then somebody going through some kind of harrasment or difficulty, we are making all those information available," he added.

With regard to digital lending by banks, Pandey said if tax-payment profile of a loan applicant is made available to the banks, it would make it easier for lenders to assess how much loan can be extended.

"...We have all these informations, these information can be shared in a secured manner...We are working on that, we had several sounds of meetings with several stakeholders and we are working on this," he added.

Indian economy set for post-Covid-19 rebound as FDI remains buoyant, says IHS Markit

New Delhi: The Indian economy is likely to rebound in the second half of 2020 as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic recedes, and is projected to grow by 6.7 per cent in the next financial year, IHS Markit said on Thursday.

The pandemic resulted in severe disruptions in industrial production and consumption spending in India during April and May.

"The severe negative impact is expected to result in a significant contraction in GDP in the April-June quarter of 2020, resulting in a recession in the 2020-21 financial year with GDP expected to contract by 6.3 per cent year-on-year," it said in its outlook on the Indian economy.

However, as lockdown conditions have been progressively eased, early signs of recovery were evident in the most recent economic data.

The IHS Markit Purchasing Managers' surveys for India showed that economic momentum improved in June, reflecting the easing of COVID-19 related restrictions during May and June.

India imposed a total lockdown beginning March 25 and restrictions were eased from May. "IHS Markit forecast that the Indian economy will rebound as the impact of the pandemic recedes, with improving economic growth momentum in the second half of 2020 and positive GDP growth of 6.7 per cent in the 2021-22 financial year," said Rajiv Biswas, Asia Pacific Chief Economist at IHS Markit.

Despite the negative short-term shocks from the pandemic, total foreign direct investment into India has remained buoyant. Foreign direct investment by technology firms in the first seven months of 2020 has already reached around USD 17 billion, boosted by the USD 10 billion new investment announced by Google in mid-July. *PTI*

Jio tops Trai's 4G chart with 16.5 mbps download speed in June

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Jio topped 4G speed chart with an average download speed of 16.5 megabits per second (mbps) in June, while Vodafone and Idea led in terms of upload speed, according to Trai data.

Idea followed Jio in download speed chart with 8 mbps speed, the latest data published on Trai's Myspeed portal showed.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) recorded average download speed of 7.5 mbps and 7.2 mbps on 4G network of Vodafone and Bharti Airtel in June.

For upload speed, Vodafone and Idea led the chart with speed of 6.2 mbps each. Jio and Airtel recorded average upload speed of 3.4 mbps each.

Download speed helps in accessing messages, pictures, videos, etc., sent by others, while upload speed helps subscribers in sending messages, pictures, etc., to their contacts.

Govt wants PSUs to trigger change in investment climate hit by Covid

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Government has asked Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to complete all their planned capex for FY21 on time and become vehicles of growth for the economy hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

With private investment on a standstill, the Govt wants companies administered by it to change the mood in the country by stepping up expenditure and generating economic activity that results in income generation and job creation.At a review meeting held by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday with Secretaries of Ministries of Civil Aviation, Steel, and the Chairman Railway Board along with the CMDs of 7 CPSEs belonging to these Ministries, the Finance Minister said that better performance of CPSEs can help the economy in a big way to recover from the impact of COVID-19.In this regard, she said it is important that CPSEs ensure that capital outlay provided to them for FY21 is "spent properly and within time". Sitharaman asked secretaries to closely monitor the performance of CPSEs in order to ensure capital expenditure to the tune of 50 per cent of capital outlay by Q2 2020-21.

She said that to achieve this planning should be done in advance and all unresolved issues should be brought before the ministry for immediate solution.The concern this year is that sluggish economic activities on account of COVID-19 and sagging demand conditions may also push PSUs to step back on their investments.In FY 2019-20, against the CAPEX target of ₹30,420 crore for the 7 CPSEs, the achievement was ₹25,974 crore i.e. 85%. In Q1 (FY 2019-20) achievement was ₹3,878 crore (13%) and achievement of Q1 (FY 2020-21) has slowed down to ₹3,557 crore (14%).

Green shoots of recovery to sprout faster in non-metro markets, says EY survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The green shoots of recovery are expected to grow faster in non-metro markets due to "higher resilience" shown by non-metro cities during the COVID-19 pandemic, says a survey by consultancy firm EY.

The EY survey, which polled over 4,000 respondents equally divided between metro and non-metro markets, was conducted to ascertain the potential impact of pandemic-related disruptions on consumer sentiments, its report said.

Categories like consumer goods, travel, entertainment, automobiles and white goods are all expected to see increased and faster recovery of demand from non-metro markets post the lockdowns, it added.

"Non-metro markets have shown higher resilience than metro markets in our study and could recover faster. The percentage of respondents who expected to spend more than before on a majority of categories was much higher in non-metro markets, indicating that when the lockdowns end, green shoots of recovery would probably sprout faster in these markets," EY said.

Respondents in non-metros are expected to spend much more on consumer goods, travel, outdoor and automobiles as compared to their metro counterparts, it said.

According to EY India Partner and Media & Entertainment Leader Ashish Pherwani, the COVID-19 pandemic has radically shifted way of life.

"However, despite uncertain and challenging conditions, our research shows that non-metros express a higher degree of resiliency and a resolve to bounce back quicker compared to metros. We may see long-term and even permanent changes in consumption patterns," he said.

Extend by 2 years compulsory gold 'hallmarking', urges CAIT

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Citing higher prices and low supply, the Confederation of All India Traders on Thursday urged the Centre to extend the provision for compulsory gold Hallmarking by two years, so that leftover stock can enter the market.

On Thursday, gold prices went up to ₹51,500 per 10 gram, while silver ended at ₹62,000 per kg, CAIT said adding that the safe asset class has gained demand as an outcome of the Covid-19 induced economic turbulence.

Accordingly, the confederation expects a sustained demand for gold and silver during the festive season starting from Raksha Bandhan on August 3.

The confederation expects gold prices to touch ₹55,000 per 10 grams on Diwali.

According to Praveen Khandelwal, Secretary General, CAIT and Pankaj Arora, National Convenor of All India Jewelers and Goldsmith Federation, silver price is expected to be in a range of ₹72,000 to ₹75,000 per kilogram. He was quoted as saying in a statement: "Gold has always been the best and safest choice of investment for the customers as gold prices generally keep on increasing whereas on the other hand, it is also the most important invest ment for traders which is quite safe."

Prior to the lockdown, gold prices stood at ₹41,000 per 10 grams and that of silver was at ₹40,000 per kg and now in a period of just 4 months there is an increase of 28-30 per cent in gold and in silver the increase is of about 45 per cent, he said.The confederation said that to allow the jewellers to liquidate their old stocks, the Centre should provide a further extension of 2 years, in the view of Covid-19 disruption. Earlier, the Centre had made 'Hallmarking' on every gold item compulsory from January 15, 2021.

Prior approval must for sale: IRDAI

Pledge of over 5% equity in insurance company

New Delhi: IRDAI on Thursday said sale, purchase and pledge of equity in excess of 5 per cent of an insurance company's paid-up capital will need the regulator's prior approval, and any violation of the guidelines will attract action. Issuing a clarification on the 'transfer of share of the insurance companies', the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) said the provisions related to sale and purchase of equity will also apply on creation of pledge or any other kind of encumbrance over shares of an insurance company by its promoters.

Gold crosses ₹51,000 mark, up by ₹502

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices went past ₹ 51,000 mark in the national capital, rising by ₹502 on Thursday on strong international prices, according to HDFC Securities.

The precious metal rose by ₹502 to ₹51,443 per 10 gram from ₹50,941 per 10 gram in the previous trade.

Silver, however, declined by ₹69 to ₹62,760 per kg from ₹62,829 per kg on Wednesday.

"Spot gold prices for 24 carat gold in Delhi hit new high trading above ₹51,000, gaining ₹502 on strong international gold prices," HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said. In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,875 per ounce, while silver was flat at USD 22.76 per ounce.

Reliance breaks into top 50 most valued cos globally, ranks 48

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd has broken into the top 50 most valued companies globally after it became the first company with market capitalisation of over ₹13 lakh crore.

The oil-to-telecom conglomerate is ranked 48th in market cap globally, according to stock market data.

Globally, Saudi Aramco is the company with the highest market cap of $ 1.7 trillion, followed by Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, and Alphabet.

Reliance on Thursday closed at ₹2,060.65 on the BSE, up 2.82 per cent over the previous day's close.

Rossari Biotech makes blockbuster stock market debut, zooms 77 pc

New Delhi: Shares of specialty chemicals manufacturing firm Rossari Biotech made a stellar debut on the bourses on Thursday, and closed nearly 77 per cent higher against its issue price of ₹ 425 per share. The stock touched its highest trading permissible limit for the day on the BSE as well as NSE.

The stock listed at ₹670, registering a gain of 57.64 per cent on its issue price on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 89.17 per cent to ₹804 - its upper circuit limit. It finally closed at ₹742.35, up 74.67 per cent.On the NSE, it closed at ₹752, a gain of 76.94 per cent. During the day, it jumped 88.96 per cent to ₹803.10

The company's market valuation stood at ₹3,854.98 crore on the BSE. In terms of volume, 30.27 lakh shares were traded on the BSE during the day, while 3.57 crore shares changed hands on the NSE.

"It has been a long hiatus in IPO for many months since COVID epidemic started. Rossari Biotech's success in retail, HNI and institutional segments brings a good omen and shows tremendous appetite for good quality equity paper in Indian markets," BSE CEO Ashishkumar Chauhan CEO said on the listing. *PTI*

Ashok Kumar is New Additional General Manager of East Central Railway

Hajipur: Ashok Kumar has taken over the charge of Additional General Manager, East Central Railway,Hajipur on 23.07.2020. Prior to this assignment, he was working as Chief Administrative Officer (Construction) in this Railway itself.Shri Ashok Kumar belongs to IRSE(Indian Railway Service of Engineers) batch of 1984 exam batch.

Shri Ashok Kumar has began his career on Indian Railways asAssistant Divisional Engineer at Hapur, Northern Railway in July 1986.

During his 34 years of long illustrious career, Shri Kumar held important at Executive and Managerial posts on Indian Railways.These include Chief Engineer/North Western Railway, Jaipur;Additional Divisional Railway Manager/North Western Railway, Jodhpur Division and Divisional Railway Manager/South Central Railway, Vijayawada Division.

SUPRANEET FINANCE AND CONSULTANTS LIMITED
Regd. Office: C-55/2, Wazirpur Industrial Area, Delhi-110 052
Ph: 011-42952500, Fax: 011-42952555
E-Mail: info@sfclindia.com
Website: www.sfclindia.com
CIN : L65921DL1989PLC035261

NOTICE

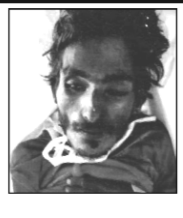
Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to Regulation 29(1)(a) read with Regulation 47(1)(a) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015 (the Listing Regulations) that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the company will be held on **Friday, the 31st July, 2020 at 3:30 p.m.** at Regd. Office of the company, inter-alia, to consider & approve the audited Financial Results for the Quarter / Year ended 31st March, 2020 and any other matter with the permission of chair.

It is further notified in pursuance of Regulation 47(2) of the Listing Regulations that the further details may be accessed on Company's website (www.sfclindia.com) and may also be accessed on website of Metropolitan Stock Exchange (www.msei.in)

Pursuant to SEBI (Prohibition of Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015 the "Trading Window" for dealing in shares of the Company has been closed from 1st April, 2020 till 48 hours after the said financial results are declared to the Stock Exchanges.

For **Supraneet Finance & Consultants Ltd.**
Sd/-
Place : Delhi **(Deepti Jain)**
Date : 23.07.2020 **Company Secretary**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that this person **Named:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** Approx 45 Years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5'3", **Face:** Round, **Built:** Thin, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Red colour Shirt, Black colour Pant, has been found dead in front of 1561 Novelty Cinema SPM Marg, Delhi -06 in the area of PS. Lahori Gate, Delhi on 12.07.2020.

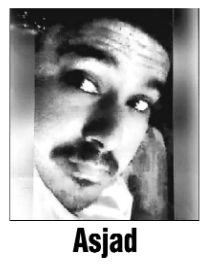
In this regard a DD No. 24A dated 12.07.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following.

SHO
P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi
DP/392/N/2020(UIDB) Ph.: 011-23953776, 8750870122

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON



Asjad

General public is here by informed that this person namely Asjad S/o Mohd. Jama R/o H.No. 153, 1st Floor, Gali Mata Wali, Chhata Lal Miyan, Chandni Mahal, Delhi **Age :** About 35 years, **Height :** 5'8", **Face :** Round, **Complexion :** Fair, **Build :** Medium, **Identification:** Mentally weak, wearing white colour shirt & payjama and plastic chapple in feet, has been missing since 18.07.2020 at about 08:00 P.M. from his house. In this regard DD No. 38-A dated 19.07.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Fax: 24368639,
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

SHO : P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi
Ph. : 011-23279338, 23271751, 23263967

DP/223/CD/20

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an **unidentified dead body of a male namely Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, was found on 16.07.2020 at Trauma Center, Civil Lines, Delhi.** In this regard **DD No. 43-A U/s 174 CrPc dated 16.07.2020** has been lodged at Police Station, Kashmere Gate, Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

Name: Unknown, Age: 26 Years, Height: 5'8", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Normal, Wearing: Hospital Clothes, UIDB Sr No.: UND20KG0139.

If anyone has any information or clue about this deceased male may kindly be inform undersigned.

SHO
Police Station, Kashmere Gate, Delhi
DP/395/N/2020(UIDB) Ph.: 011-23967889, 8750870123

Trend Blazer

Priyanka imparts words of wisdom

Actor **PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS** shared a motivational post on Instagram for her fans.

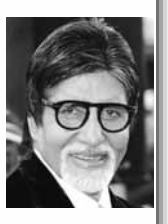
"Don't let the challenges of today stop us from achieving our dreams of a better tomorrow. She captioned the post as, 'You got this!'," Priyanka wrote.

It seems several fans were waiting for such motivation to inspire them.

"Your journey has always inspired me. You are an idol for so many people," a user wrote.

Priyanka will soon complete 20 years in showbusiness. A few days ago, she shared a video in which she spoke about her plans of sharing "20 monumental moments" of her career in the coming days to celebrate 20 years in the entertainment business.

***'Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior* is a film that every Indian should watch. It is significant because it's the story of an unsung hero who played an important part in Indian history. I know Tanaji's bravery and his dedication to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj will resonate. He was a warrior who must be celebrated even today.**
—Ajay Devgn



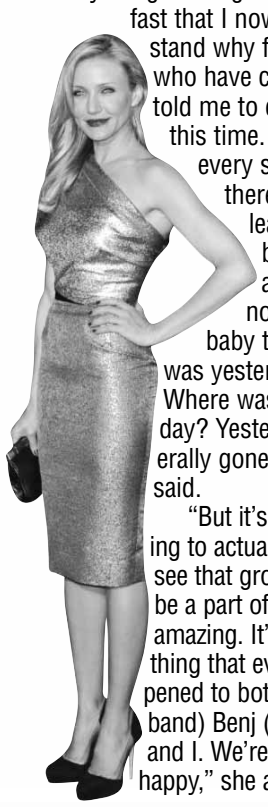
AMITABH BACHCHAN has shared a message on religious harmony. He, who is undergoing COVID treatment in a hospital, took to Twitter to post the message.

Big B shared two photographs of himself, one with folded hands and the other where he stretches his palms in prayer.

"*Mazhab toh yeh do hatheliyaan batati hain, jude to 'puja' khule toh 'dua' kehlaati hain.* (The two hands describe religion. Whenever they are folded it is called puja and when they are stretched it is called dua)," he wrote.

Motherhood is heaven: Cameron

Actor **CAMERON DIAZ** says daughter Raddix is the best thing that has ever happened to her.



"My daughter is growing so fast that I now understand why friends who have children told me to cherish this time. Literally every single day, there's just leaps and bounds... and she's not the same baby that she was yesterday. Where was yesterday? Yesterday is literally gone," Diaz said.

"But it's so gratifying to actually get to see that growth and to be a part of it. It's just amazing. It's the best thing that ever happened to both (husband) Benj (Madden) and I. We're just so happy," she added.

TOUCHLESS BEAUTY

While beauticians are taking necessary steps to ensure safety at their parlours, many cosmetic companies are modifying their products to empower salons to be touch-free

Perhaps a visit to the salon for some self-grooming was the only thing one never felt lazy about in the pre-COVID era. However, over the past few months, with a pandemic at hand, the touch therapy involved was enough to scare many of us into depending on household hacks. But they have not been salon-perfect.

With salons getting back to business post an ease in lockdown restrictions, many have been waiting to return. However, risk-averse as we are, there is certainly a great feeling of anxiety. So salons too are responding to the changed mindset and bringing in a major transition in their set-ups and functioning to assure that their services are safe. New hygiene protocols have been developed to ensure safety of the customer as well as that of the technician's. New tools and accessories are being used for contact therapies. Here are a few ways how salons have gone for a makeover themselves before throwing the door open.

THE ZERO-TOUCH FACIAL

The don't-touch-me policy has become the new normal in public spaces and is here to stay. Which brings many to the question — how will salons do their usual chores without touching the customer? For instance, while combing the hair or a facial clean-up.

Experts suggest that a new safety protocol — zero-touch facial — can ensure that the beautician doesn't touch your skin with bare hands. Rather, the beautician needs to be enabled to deliver the same kind of service with the same efficiency by using certain professional tools and techniques. Many brands are coming up with specially customised products like disposable applicators, gloves and a mask, which can ensure that skin problems are attended to in a hygienic manner. The sanitised tools also allow for advanced exfoliation and radiant skin.

Vaijayanti Bhalchandra, co-founder, CTO Head HR YLG Salons, YLG @ Home, talks about her use of new zero-touch products. She says, "The past few months have been extremely tough for the business and we have missed work. The Cheryl's cosmeceuticals have helped us adapt to the new normal with its zero-touch facial kit. Since gaining confidence of customers for facial treatments is a major necessity in these times, we also make sure the beautician maintains a certain distance from the customer while working and minimise talking at all times. It has been only a few weeks since we have re-opened and now, we are increasingly getting responses for clean-ups and exfoliation facials."

NEW WAY FOR HAIR COLOUR

DP Sharma, director, Professional Products Division at L'Oréal India, says, "Our network of salons is key to our business and we have always believed in them to offer only the best of services to consumers. As salons have slowly begun re-opening across the country, we have trained and upskilled our network with the strictest of hygiene and safety norms to be followed while interacting with the consumer. We have also introduced Express Hair Color Services, which not only support our salons to get back to business safely but also offer an innovative professional hair colour solution with sophisticated techniques to our consumers."

As per Sharma, the service only takes 60 minutes, which is as less time as it could take to colour the hair. It not only "minimises a customer's time at salon" but also "erases all signs of the bad hair days you may have faced in the last few months."

THE SAFE SALON INITIATIVE

Beauty brands like Matrix have also introduced programmes to ensure the safety of consumers, anxious about returning to a salon. Its 'Safe Salon' initiative begins with an increased sanitisation and fumigation of salons arranged by it. All partner salons are equipped with a comprehensive hygiene practice guide that includes the pre-booking of an appointment, temperature checks, sanitisation of surfaces, regular washing of hands by staff, contactless and digital payments, sterilisation of tools before and after a service, availability of sanitisers and clean masks and gloves worn by the staff.

VIRTUAL SKIN DIAGNOSES THE WAY OUT

To minimise contact, experts have recommended a virtual consultation session via smartphone with your beautician that should be mandated for every customer, prior to stepping in the salon. Through this practice, if the service isn't provided on the given day, an unnecessary visit could be avoided and in turn, crowding. Also, one can always get the technician to diagnose the issue through an online consultation.

Niraj Killa, owner of Head Turner's Hair Spa & Beauty Salon, Kolkata, says, "All our staff has taken part in the Salon Hygiene and Safety E-Learning module offered by the brand to ensure we can adapt to the newer requirements of the changing world. It's better if we now move towards more digital practices while customers consult us."

SAFETY TRAINING

Many salons have also used the lockdown period to upskill and train their network to be equipped with all the required protocols, to enable them to get back to business, following proper guidelines. Digital educational training has helped salon owners and their teams prepare a detailed hygiene checklist that they must adhere to while re-opening.The distribution of safety kits by many cosmetic brands include disposable masks, gloves, bed sheets, shower caps and bed gowns to make the facial service hygienic and safe.

What is up with car design?

Aesthetics are a very personal thing but what is with car designers and big wide grilles?

Can you spot the similarity?

KUSHAN MITRA

DELHI DRIVER

When I look at some modern cars, I get reminded of sharks. If you, like me, are an amateur shark scientist and loved Discovery Channel's *Shark Week* shows, you would know that there are over a thousand species of them. When you think of sharks, you tend to think of the Great White, leaping into the air a seal tightly grasped inside its jaw. Isn't it? The fact is that the 'agape' look on so many car grilles that I see today, reminds me of the Whale, the largest fish in the world. An impressive one, of course, but thoroughly harmless with a massive mouth at the tip of its head, not below like predatory sharks, but at the tip.

When you see a picture of a whale shark feeding and then look at what Hyundai has been giving us of late — the new Elantra coming in 2021 — will be interesting to say the least. Even Maruti, the facelift on the Dzire, makes things bigger. The MG Hector and Kia's 'tiger nose' on the Seltos and Sonet as well. Heck, Honda might stick a chrome slab through its mouth like braces on teeth, but they also have big mouths. And of course, there are the Germans. BMW's signature 'kidney grilles' have gotten a bit out of hand. Have you seen the BMW 4-series concept? I actually don't mind it on the 7-series and X7 because of their huge size, so there is a bit of proportionality. And then there is Audi, the carmaker that started the trend of wide-mouthed sedans and SUVs with their 2004 line-up redesign starting with the A4 and A6.

Of course, larger grilles allow for more area where designers can play around or stick a humongous logo, like MG and Mercedes-Benz do. Or like in the case of BMW, where the kidney grilles are a signature of the Bavarian carmaker. With three-dimensional light design killing off the other signature 'Corona' headlights, the grille is it. While I know that in India today, China-bashing is in vogue and I have personally also been guilty of that, here I really have to blame the Chinese. When they buy a product, they are not subtle about it. The Ralph Lauren logo on t-shirts grew bigger once that brand took off in China. Similarly, the brash Louis Vuitton logo, also thanks to that market. The tragedy of Montblanc putting their logo on everything from belts to wallets, yes, you guessed it, China. BMW once admitted this to me, during the 7-series refresh international drive in Algarve, that the bigger kidneys and the "12 per cent larger" nose logo was for the Chinese market. And you know what? When that one market accounts for a third of your global sales, making those changes is perfectly logical for a carmaker.

There are friends of mine in automotive journalism who like the big kidney grilles on BMW. At the end of the day, we all have different aesthetic sensibilities. One lesson that I have learnt is that in India, we seek 'value' from a car rather than looks. The first-generation Santro, particularly early builds of that car were, for lack of any other word to describe it, ugly. The first generation WagonR seemed as if the design team was only given a ruler and a brief to avoid any sort of curve. These cars were not at all aesthetically pleasing. The Daewoo Matiz on the other hand, was quite cute. But you know the story, the Santro launched Hyundai allowing them to dazzle our eyes with the next-generation Elantra that you will see next year. Don't get me wrong, I love the product, but the next Elantra just like the facelift on the Verna looks like a Whale shark out of water.

Here is the funny thing, large grilles made sense when you had large naturally aspirated engines, big steel blocks with eight cylinders inside them. Those engines needed air and also a lot of cooling. But thanks to emissions norms, those engines are dying out in all but some supercars. And BMW themselves have the F90 5-series which is by far and away the best looking car they make because it doesn't look like it went through rhinoplasty to get a boxer's nose. It is an aesthetically pleasing car. At a level this is a bit like planes, the Airbus A380 is a tremendous piece of engineering, but it isn't pretty. The Boeing 747 just has something about it, which is why it is called the 'Queen' of the skies and the A380, well, that is a whale (nothing against cetaceans by the way). When electric cars come along, what will happen to all these large grilles? Just look at Tesla's — a clean, proportionate design, no frills or huge kidney grilles. I mean, even BMW's electric warrior the i3 is not overdone on the nose front. So why on god's green earth did BMW give us the Concept 4-series?

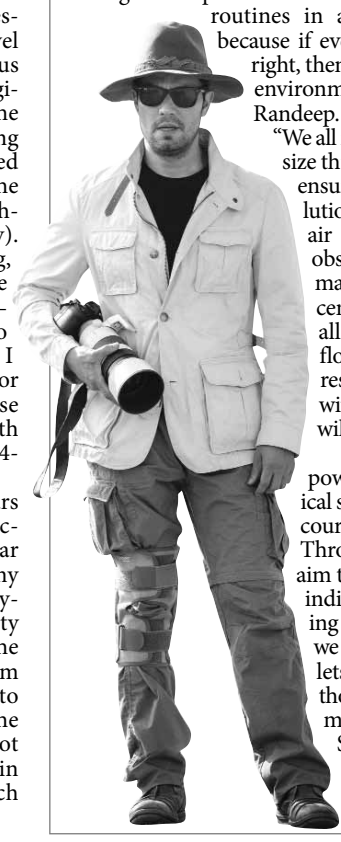
Being passionate about cars and writing about them will necessarily make you ardent about car design. I do not like the way many cars look these days. I'm not saying that there are not some pretty cars out there but the attack of the large grilles is upon us. While I'm sure I will be pummelled into acceptance, as we all accepted the first-generation Santro, I'm not going down without a fight. Or in my case, without writing such columns.

For a better tomorrow

Actor RANDEEP HOODA says we all need to play our part to ensure a healthy planet because if everyone does small things right, then the overall impact on the environment will be huge

Actor Randeep Hooda hopes people will restart responsibly after the COVID-19 lockdown, and feels everyone has a part to play in making the planet healthy. Discovery India has brought him on board to urge India to exit the lockdown in a responsible manner with a unique campaign titled *Restart Responsibly.* The campaign video has Randeep taking daily routine, but important actions, including placing water for birds, riding a bicycle, taking care of his pet and much more while enlightening citizens about the impact that human action has had on environment.

"This campaign is close to my heart as we are not asking people to take a pledge without any specific outcomes. The campaign aims to inspire people to take thoughtful steps which can easily be added to their daily routines in a more thoughtful way because if everyone does small things right, then the overall impact on the environment will be huge," said Randeep.



"We all need to, and I can't emphasize this enough, play our part to ensure that we create less pollution to ensure better quality air and water. An important observation we all need to make is that humans are not centre of the universe, we are all a part of it, along with all flora and fauna. If we all just respect this fact and get on with life, I am sure tomorrow will be better," added he.

"We wanted to present a powerful platform to tell critical stories, elevate cultural discourse and do the right thing. Through this campaign, we aim to bring the importance of individual behaviour in shaping our environment. Often, we look at others for solutions, lets do our part — simple yet thoughtful steps — is our key message," said Vednarayan Sirdeshpande, Head of Marketing, South Asia, Discovery.

FROM CASK TO GLASS

ANGAD SINGH GANDHI talks about the evolution of single malt whisky, what makes it relevant and Glenfiddich's journey

People nowadays don't want to just clink glasses with their friends and family over an evening get together, rather they want to know more about the dram, the whisky notes, food pairings and so much more. Here is the history, evolution of single malt whisky, its relevance and Glenfiddich's journey in the making.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Popularly referred to as 'water of life', whisky has a long and adventurous story to tell. Whisky became an innate part of Scottish life and was even used for medicinal purposes during the long cold harsh Scottish winters, apart from being there in the everyday social life of Scotland.

Gradually with the rise of whisky production, five groups of single malts emerged from Scotland, including Highland, Lowland, Speyside, Islay and Campbeltown. The banks of the River Spey on the eastern side of the Highlands became home to around 50 distilleries with many of them offering guided tours and the chance, of course, to sample their produce. The malts of Speyside were loved for their elegance and complexity whilst the malts from the most beautiful Isle of Islay are described in terms of their peaty quality.

It was in the late eighteens, a single malt brand known today, was born from one man's dream, William Grant. In 1886 with the help of his nine children, Grant put the first brick in Glenfiddich distillery. Water, air and malted barley, a trinity expertly crafted to make a Glenfiddich whisky, created in a radical design of the time, the triangular bottle. Up until 1960s, the world was consuming blended whisky and cognac while single malt was a Scottish secret. In 1963, the single malt whisky was taken outside Scotland.

The malt whisky was first called 'Pure malt' and then 'Straight malt'. Eventually the term 'Single malt' was coined which has stuck with us ever since then in our hearts (and glasses, of course).

HOW DID THE WHISKY GET ITS FLAVOUR?

Where a whisky is born, what it's matured in and how old it is, all affects the flavour of the final product. With age comes character and complexity. To qualify as a Scotch whisky, it must be aged in an Oak barrel in Scotland for minimum of three years.

Water also plays a significant role in the making of the whisky. The William Grant & Sons family have owned the lands around the Robbie Dhu spring for a very long time, safeguarding the water for all its whiskies including the The Balvenie, Monkey Shoulder and others. Whisky is made entirely from barley. Barley from our specialist maltsters is ground into rough flour and mixed with heated Robbie Dhu springwater.

The key is in the cask. With a lot of flavour coming from the cask, the quality of the whisky depends on the quality of the wood it's matured in. A single malt may see several casks. It's a common misconception that single malt whisky is the product of one cask. In fact, two thirds of the flavour in a single malt comes from casks its matured in and is the product of a single distillery and may come from several casks within the same distillery.

A lesser-known thing about single malts is the angel's share. Angel's share is that portion of whisky which evaporates during the maturation process. The name comes from a tongue-in-cheek belief that those 'greedy angels' must be blamed for the diminishing level of tightly sealed whisky barrels. The approximate rate of loss of whisky due to evaporation is two per cent per annum in Scotland and nine to 10 per cent in India because of the warm weather conditions. This means one can age a single malt in Scotland for 50-60 years while in India they can be aged for only 10-12 years.

Skills, craftsmanship, specialist knowledge and wisdom, all go into the making of a whisky.

BUILDING IT ON

Today, even in the twenty-first century, single malts continue to be a preferred spirit and are growing year-on-year. But the way the spirit is perceived and approached has changed radically. While the single malt drinker continues to be one who enjoys the finer things in life, they are no longer restricted to an older audience. Women are becoming an integral part of the category not just as consumers but also as distillers, enthusiasts, brand ambassadors and bartenders. The love for whisky is rising in younger people as well, they are replacing other spirits with whiskies. We see a growing curiosity and interest among the younger drinkers in knowing more about their spirit. This is due to the increased relevance being created by brands promoting cocktails and serves that make it intriguing and aspirational for the younger generation to opt for whiskies.

Innovation within the single malt category has been one of the key reasons for it to remain relevant through decades. Innovation across distilling, manufacturing, packaging and marketing have together played a crucial role. Experimental single malt variants have gained high prominence with the new age whisky drinkers that are willing to play with their single malts. Distillers too have kept up with this demand by introducing unique cask finishes such as beer, ice wine, tequila, mezcal and French cuvée casks, that add to the varied notes of the single malt.

The brands new experiments' which have been done keeping in mind India's rich culture, have brought to life a special India specific initiative that refined the rules of traditional single malt serve by exploring and handpicking unique and exotic Indian ingredients.

It is great to be on the lookout to create out-of-the-ordinary experiences that challenge people's perception and enthuse consumers to try something different.

SAVOURING THE DRINK

While, the art of truly enjoying your single malt is a beautiful experience, it differs for everyone. Experiential tastings and pairings have helped in continuous consumer awareness and interest in the single malt category. Consuming your single malt with food opens a world of aroma and flavour opportunities. The goal is to pair with ingredients and spices that enhance the flavour of the single malt rather than overpowering it. Single malts surprisingly work well with desserts and fine teas. The varied styles of enjoying your single malts today are endless, be it through food or unique serves, that have kept the spirit from being enjoyed by both whisky and non-whisky drinkers alike.

Neat or Not? It's entirely up to you! Going neat may be the 'purest' way to enjoy a single malt, but it's not the only way.

I strongly believe, 'To each its own!' Therefore, whatever you like is the best one for you. However, the best dram is the one enjoyed with friends and family over lots of banter and fun.

(The writer is Glenfiddich India brand ambassador.)

RECIPES

CHICKEN KRAPOW

WHAT YOU NEED

- Chicken boneless: 130 gm
- Ginger (chopped): 4 gm
- Garlic (chopped): 5 gm
- Lemon grass : 3 gm
- Celery (chopped): 3 gm
- Onion (chopped): 8 gm
- Fresh red chillies: 3
- Boiled rice: 150 gm
- Salt: 3 gm
- Five spice powder: 2 gm
- *Degi mirch* powder: 3 gm
- Spichi stir fry sauce: 40 gm
- Basil leaves: 10 gm
- Refined oil: 10 ml
- Vinegar: 3 ml
- Chilli paste: 4 gm
- Cornflour: 5 gm
- Egg: 1

METHOD

- Marinate chicken in five spice powder, salt, sugar and *degi mirch.*
- Heat oil in wok.
- Add chopped garlic sautee, ginger, celery, lemon grass and onion.
- Then add chicken and sautee.
- Add little water and allow chicken to cook.
- Add chilli paste and spichi sauce.
- Adjust seasoning.
- Adjust consistency with corn flour.
- Served topped on above boiled rice.
- Garnish with fresh basil leaves, fresh sliced red chillies and fried single egg.

Courtesy: Tanuj Nayyar, Executive Chef, Jaypee Residency Manor, Mussorie.

EGGLESS CARROT CAKE

WHAT YOU NEED

For cake:

- Oil: 75 ml
- Milk: 50 ml
- Flour: 70 gm
- Brown sugar: 85 gm
- Baking soda: 2 gm
- Salt: 1 gm
- Cinnamon: 2 gm
- Carrots (grated): 90 gm
- Walnuts: 25 gm

For cream cheese filling:

- Cream cheese: 62 gm
- Vanilla essence: 7 gm
- Sugar: 22 gm
- Whipping cream: 20 gm
- Butter: 25 gm
- Lemon zest
- Lemon juice

METHOD

For cake:

- Mix together all ingredients except carrots and walnuts.
- Then add in the grated carrots and walnuts.
- Pour into the mould and bake at 160 degree celsius for 45 minutes.

For cream cheese filling:

- Cream together all the ingredients except whipping cream.
- Whip the cream separately and fold into the cream cheese mixture.
- Pipe into the centre of the cake.
- Serve chilled.

Courtesy: Kanak Soneja (Alumni Gurgaon), Academy of Pastry & Culinary Arts.

SWEET BANANA FRAPPE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Chilled coffee: 2 cups
- Chocolate ice cream: 1 cup
- Banana (riped): 1
- Chocolate shavings (for garnishing)

METHOD

- Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
- Pour into a glass and garnish with chocolate shavings.

Courtesy: Sherri John, Coffee specialist and Head Judge at Araku Coffee.

SWEETCORN CORIANDER FRITTERS WITH A LEMON MAYO DIP

WHAT YOU NEED

- Cake flour: 300 ml
- Baking powder: ½ tsp
- Full-cream milk: 150 ml
- Eggs (large, lightly beaten): 2
- Frozen sweetcorn kernels (thawed and drained): 400 gm
- Spring onions (finely sliced): 3
- Red chilli (seeded and finely chopped): 1
- Fresh coriander (chopped): 2 tbsp
- Cheddar cheese (finely grated): 1 cup
- Ground black pepper (Salt and fresh)
- Sunflower oil: 1 tbsp
- Mayonnaise: 150 ml
- Fresh parsley (chopped): 1 tsp
- Lemon juice

METHOD

- Sift the flour and baking powder into a large bowl. Make space in the centre and add the milk and eggs.
- Gradually, drawing in the flour from around the edges, beat together to form a smooth and thick batter.
- Add the sweetcorn, spring onions, chilli, coriander and cheese to the batter and season with salt and black pepper. Mix well.
- Heat a large, heavy-based frying pan and brush with oil.
- Drop large spoons full of the batter into the pan, making about four fritters at a time.
- Cook over medium heat for two minutes or until golden and firm on the underside. Flip the fritters over and cook for further two minutes until golden brown. Remove the cooked fritters from the pan, drain on paper towels and keep warm.
- Repeat until all the batter has been fried off.
- Mix the mayonnaise, chopped parsley and a little lemon juice, and adjust the seasoning to taste.
- Arrange the warm fritters on a platter and serve with the mayonnaise dressing plus extra lemon wedges (optional).

Courtesy: Le Creuset.

On Klopp of the world!

Dreams turn into reality as Jurgen's Liverpool lift Premier League trophy at the Kop

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said having the opportunity to lift the Premier League trophy at Anfield meant the world to him despite having to do so in an empty stadium with fans shut out due to coronavirus.

The Reds sealed a first top-flight title for 30 years last month, but had to wait until after a thrilling 5-3 win over Chelsea in their final home game of the season to lift the Premier League trophy for the first time.

"You make the best of what you can," Klopp told *Sky Sports*. "Today our families are allowed to be there which is incredible. It means the world to me. Everything would be better with fans but for months we knew that would be impossible. A few months ago I thought it was impossible that we play football.

"I couldn't be happier to be honest, it would be perfect if the stadium would be full but we cannot change it. What we tried to do is make it clear to the people that we really do it for them. It's an absolutely great moment."

Despite pleas for fans to stay away on the night Liverpool finally got their hands on the trophy, supporters crowded around the stadium even prior to kick-off, while the second half was accompanied by the constant crackling of fireworks lit by fans outside the ground.

Liverpool players celebrate with the Premier League trophy after they beat Chelsea 5-3 in the final home game of the 2019-2020 season AP

On the field, Klopp's men ensured a memorable night was accompanied by a positive result after just two wins in five previous games since they clinched the title. And the German again promised the fans a proper party with a parade planned through the city once restrictions are lifted.

"You have to prepare for a party," he added. "When I don't know, when this virus is gone then we will have a party all together."

The result had far bigger consequences for Chelsea as they slip to fourth and leaves Frank Lampard's men still needing a point at home to Wolves at Stamford Bridge on Sunday to secure a place in the Champions League.

'IN OUR HANDS'

"It's huge, we know the situation," said Lampard. "It's in our hands to get a result against a very good Wolves team."

Chelsea have already bolstered their attacking options for next season with the signings of Timo Werner and Hakim Ziyech, while they are reportedly closing in on a deal for the 90-million euro ($103 million, £81 million) rated Kai Havertz of Bayer Leverkusen.

But it is at the other end Lampard clearly has to find solutions as they completed an entire league season with just one clean sheet away from home and have now conceded 54 times in the Premier League this season.

Liverpool were 3-0 up inside 43 minutes as sweet strikes from Naby Keita, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Georginio Wijnaldum gave Chelsea a mountain to climb.

They nearly did so even after Roberto Firmino scored his first league goal at Anfield all season restored Liverpool's three-goal cushion to cancel out Olivier Giroud's strike just before half-time for the visitors.

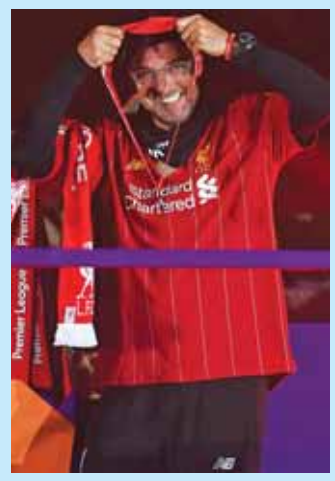
Christian Pulisic was surprisingly left on the bench by Lampard from the start and he changed the came after he was introduced alongside Tammy Abraham and Callum Hudson-Odoi.

The American skipped past four challenges before squaring for Abraham and then fired powerfully into the roof of the net with the Liverpool defence all over the place.

But Chelsea were undone again at the other end as a blistering break from inside their own box saw Liverpool surge forward and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain smashed home Andy Robertson's cross at the back post.

We should not stop because others will not sleep: Klopp

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL



Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp believes his side will need to keep improving to hold off the chasing pack next season after lifting the Premier League trophy.

Chelsea have already strengthened ahead of next season with the signings of a long-term Liverpool target Timo Werner and Hakim Ziyech.

Klopp also expects Manchester City and Manchester United to bolster their squads. But the German believes there is still improvement for his players to make despite becoming English, European and world champions over the past 14 months.

"We should not stop, we have internal challenges to improve," said Klopp. "We have the chance to make another step, but we have to because the others will not sleep. Chelsea is such a talented team, we had to bring everything on the pitch tonight. Man Utd, Man City (will contend), there are no guarantees for anything, but we will try."

Liverpool also beat Chelsea to lift the Uefa Super Cup at the start of the season to go with the Premier League, Champions League and Club World Cup and Klopp admitted he will take time for a special momento after an incredible run of success.

"We are champions of England, Europe and the world. We won four trophies, really big ones, so I couldn't be more proud," he added. "I'm usually not a person who needs pictures but I will have a picture with all four trophies because it doesn't happen often, so we should."

Jordan Henderson had the honour of becoming the first Liverpool player to lift the Premier League trophy and the Reds' captain believes the manner of victory over a Chelsea side, who needed a result to confirm their place in the Champions League next season, bodes well for what can be achieved next season.

"It's been a journey and to finish it off like this is really special," said Henderson. "After this, next season is going to be a big challenge for us. But I thought tonight we showed the mentality to come and perform again and get the result we did."

Lampard tells Liverpool not to get 'too arrogant'

Liverpool: Chelsea manager Frank Lampard has said Premier League champions Liverpool should not become too arrogant after being left unimpressed with the behaviour of their bench during Wednesday's 5-3 defeat.

Lampard was involved in an exchange with Liverpool's bench after a free kick was awarded against Chelsea's Mateo Kovacic. Trent Alexander-Arnold found the net from the free kick to make it 2-0.

"For me it wasn't a foul from Kovacic," Lampard told *Sky Sports*. "There were a lot of things that were ongoing and on the bench ... I've got no problem with Jurgen Klopp, he's managed this team and it's fantastic.

"Some of the bench, it's a fine line between when you are winning — and they've won the league, fair play to Liverpool Football Club — but also don't get too arrogant with it.

"That was my thing, but (it's) done. In match play you get emotional and that was it." **AP**

Man Utd just a point away from CL

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer urged his Manchester United stars to seize a "fantastic opportunity" to qualify for the Champions League after Mason Greenwood rescued a 1-1 draw against West Ham on Wednesday.

Solskjaer's side fell behind to Michail Antonio's penalty in the first half at Old Trafford.

But teenage forward Greenwood struck after the interval to lift United into third place in the Premier League.

They are ahead of fourth-placed Chelsea on goal difference after the Blues lost 5-3 later at champions Liverpool.

United will finish in the top four if they draw or win in their decisive showdown with fifth-placed Leicester on Sunday.

They are one point ahead of Leicester going into their last game of the season at the King Power Stadium.

Solskjaer's team were well below their best against West Ham, but they are now unbeaten in 13 league matches and will complete an impressive surge into the Champions League if they emerge unscathed at Leicester.

They can also qualify for Europe's elite club competition if they win the Europa League in August.

West Ham's point ensured they are mathematically certain to avoid relegation.

West Brom promoted as Brentford blow chance

Manchester: West Bromwich Albion won promotion back to the Premier League after a two-year absence, joining Leeds United in the top flight next season after a 2-2 home draw with Queens Park Rangers in a dramatic finale to the Championship season on Wednesday.

The point for Slaven Bilic's side was enough to ensure second place in England's second tier after Brentford blew their chance by losing 2-1 at home to lowly Barnsley.

A win for Brentford would have sent them into the top division for the first time since 1947.

Brentford will go into the play-offs along with Fulham and Cardiff City but in a huge swing in fortunes, Nottingham Forest missed out on goal difference with Swansea City grabbing the last slot in astonishing fashion.

At the bottom, Hull City and Charlton were relegated along with Wigan Athletic.

SINGLES

B'DESH TO RESCHEDULE SL TEST TOUR

New Delhi: Bangladesh is planning to tour Sri Lanka in October for their rescheduled three-Test series, following the postponement of this year's T20 World Cup. According to a report in *ESPNcricinfo*, BCB are currently in talks with its Sri Lankan counterparts (SLC) and if everything falls into place "Bangladesh men's pending three-Test series against hosts Sri Lanka could be rescheduled to October."

CARLSEN BEAT ANAND IN LEGENDS OF CHESS

Chennai: India's Viswanathan Anand suffered his second consecutive loss, going down to world No 1 Magnus Carlsen in the second round of the $150,000 chess24 Legends of Chess online tournament. The former world champion had kept the Norwegian ace in check in three games of the best-of-four contest before slipping 1.5-2.5 by in the final game late on Wednesday.

EMERY TO COACH VILLARREAL FOR 3 SEASONS

Villarreal: Spanish club Villarreal on Thursday announced Unai Emery as manager for the next three seasons. Emery was sacked as Arsenal's coach in November 2019 after 18 months at helm. Emery, who has coached Almeria, Valencia and Sevilla in the Spanish top-flight before, will be presented as Villarreal manager at the their home ground on Monday.

HALEP SIGNS UP FOR PRAGUE EVENT

Prague: World No 2 Simona Halep on Wednesday said that she will play the WTA Prague clay court tournament in August, adding further doubt to her participation in the US Open. "Hi everyone. I can't wait to take part in the tournament in the magnificent city of Prague. See you in August," the reigning Wimbledon champ said in a video message. The Prague tourney runs from August 10-16.

ICC POSTPONES TWO QUALIFYING EVENTS

Dubai: The Covid-19 pandemic continued to take a toll on the sporting calendar with ICC on Thursday postponing this year's qualifying events for two separate tournaments due to the global health crisis. The ICC has postponed September's Men's World Cup League 2 series to be hosted in Namibia and the U19 World Cup Regional Qualifier Division 2 due to take place in August in Tanzania.

FIDE ONLINE CHESS OLYMPIAD FROM JULY 25

Chennai: The FIDE Online Chess Olympiad, which will feature top players like world No 3 Ding Liren and IViswanathan Anand among others, will be held from July 25 to August 30. Teams from 163 countries will take part in the first-ever online Olympiad. Russia is the top-ranked team, followed by China, USA, Armenia and Ukraine. The India team, captained by Vidit Santosh Gujrati, is the seventh-seed in the prestigious competition.

MANANGOI SUSPENDED IN DOPING CASE

Monaco: Former 1,500-meter world champion Elijah Manangoi was provisionally suspended on Thursday for missing doping tests. The Athletics Integrity Unit said the Kenyan runner has been charged with "whereabouts failures." No timetable for his disciplinary case was given.

MÁRQUEZ DECLARED FIT TO RACE

Jerez De La Frontera: Six-time defending MotoGP champion Marc Márquez will race at the Andalucia Grand Prix this weekend despite a broken arm. Team Honda said on Thursday that Márquez passed a physical and was declared fit to race despite undergoing surgery to fix a broken right humerus on Tuesday. Agencies

Archer, Anderson, Wood return for series decider

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

Fast bowler Jofra Archer has returned to the 14-member England squad alongside James Anderson and Mark Wood for the series-deciding third and final Test against the West Indies starting at the Old Trafford here on Friday.

The 25-year-old Archer was dropped from the second Test for breaching the Covid-19 bio-secure protocol and slapped with a financial penalty of an undisclosed amount.

While Archer was dropped from the series-levelling second Test, Anderson and Wood were rested from the game.

Archer, Anderson and Wood will compete with the pace trio of Stuart Broad, Chris Woakes and Sam Curran for places in England's playing XI.

It will be interesting to see England's pace attack for the third Test as the trio of Broad, Curran and Woakes has performed well in the second Test.

Inter draw clears title way for Juve

AFP ■ MILAN

Inter Milan's goalless draw against Fiorentina on Wednesday left Juventus needing just one more win to claim a ninth consecutive Serie A title.

Juve are six points clear of second-placed Atalanta and can claim their 36th Scudetto on Thursday with a win at struggling Udinese.

Antonio Conte's Inter are third, one point behind Atalanta with three games to play, despite having dominated for long periods under the rain at the San Siro.

"Second place is for losers," said Conte, who coached Juventus to three of their current run of eight titles and then went on to win the Premier League and FA Cup with Chelsea.

"I understand that there are those who are satisfied with this, but for me it is meaningless. When you leave points, it means that there are shortcomings."

A Romelu Lukaku header hit the woodwork after 18 minutes with Alexis Sanchez also missing a chance for the winner just after the break.

Fiorentina goalkeeper Pietro Terracciano pulled off a string of saves denying Nicolo Barella and Lukaku from close range.

Inter's place in the Champions League next season is assured but they could now finish fourth, with Lazio four points back ahead of their match with 13th-placed Cagliari on Thursday.

Roma, meanwhile, move back fifth ahead of AC Milan, who beat Sassuolo on Tuesday, after routing already-relegated SPAL 6-1.

Bruno Peres scored a second-half brace with Carles Perez scoring his first Serie A goal for the visitors with Nikola Kalinic and Nicolo Zaniolo also on target.

Roma are two points ahead of Milan, with the two teams already assured of Europa League football next season.

Amir cleared to join side in Eng

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan left-arm pacer Mohammad Amir on Thursday was cleared to join the national side in England after his second test also returned negative for coronavirus.

"The PCB will now be making arrangements to send Amir and masseur, Mohammad Imran to England as soon as possible so that they can join the training camp in Derbyshire," the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said in a release.

Amir, 28, left many people disappointed including the national team's head coach and chief selector, Misbah-ul-Haq when he announced his sudden retirement from Test cricket last year.

Former players are of the opinion that if Amir is available and fit, then he should also be considered for the Test series against England.

Amir in a recent interview had said that he had made a mistake playing all three formats after his comeback after a five-year ban for spot-fixing. "I should have first played one or two formats and checked to see how my body is doing and whether I could take the strain.

I erred in playing immediately in all three formats and it led to injury and fitness problems. "At least now I am confident that I can now carry on playing for another four to six years if I take care of myself," he had said.

NZC leave decision to join IPL on players

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) will issue No Objection Certificates (NOCs) to all its six internationals set to compete in the IPL but said the "due diligence" on health safety protocols will have to be done by the players themselves.

The six New Zealand players who are set to play in the IPL are Jimmy Neesham (Kings XI Punjab), Lockie Ferguson (Kolkata Knight Riders), Mitchell McClenaghan and Trent Boult (Mumbai Indians), Kane Williamson (Sunrisers Hyderabad) and Mitchell Santner (Chennai Super Kings).

"Regarding the IPL, NZC will be issuing NOCs to the relevant players and it's up to them to decide," NZC spokesperson Richard Boock said.

While the NZC will be updating its players about the health safety protocols and latest Covid-19 related developments, the onus will be on the six individuals to do due diligence.

"Well, yes, the issuing of NOCs is considered on a case-by-case basis and it's rare that they are ever refused. However, the due diligence is something for the respective players to shoulder — although we are happy to pass on as much info as we can to assist in these matters," Boock added.

Recently, New Zealand skipper Williamson, who plays for Sunrisers Hyderabad, spoke about wanting to know more about the safety protocols that will be employed considering that the event is likely to be shifted to the UAE, which has a lesser Covid-19 case load than India.

Boock also confirmed that New Zealand A team's tour of India has been cancelled. "My information is that the A tour of India will not be happening. It was decision taken by mutual agreement between both the boards," Boock said.

Japanese swimmer Ikee Rikako holding the lantern containing Olympic flame poses during a photo session at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo AP

Akhtar blames BCCI for T20 WC postponement

Lahore: Former Pakistan speedster Shoaib Akhtar has slammed the BCCI, alleging that the Indian cricket board played a role in the ICC postponing the T20 World Cup later this year to make room for the Indian Premier League. Akhtar also felt that the Asia Cup could have taken place.

"Asia Cup could have definitely happened, it would have been a great chance for India and Pakistan to play against each other. There are many reasons behind this. I don't want to get into that," Akhtar said while speaking to *Geo Cricket* on *YouTube*.

"T20 World Cup could have also happened, but I had already said earlier that they won't let it happen. IPL should not be damaged, let the World Cup go to hell," Akhtar said.

Indian mixed relay team's Asiad Silver upgraded to Gold

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian 4x400m mixed relay team's Silver medal in the 2018 Asian Games has been upgraded to Gold following the disqualification of original winners Bahrain on account of a doping ban handed to one of its runners.

Bahrain, which had topped the 4x400 mixed relay final, was disqualified after Kemi Adekoya was handed a four-year ban by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) for failing a dope test.

Besides this, Anu Raghavan's fourth-place finish in the women's 400m hurdles event has been upgraded to Bronze medal after the AIU annulled the results of Adekoya, who originally won the race.

The Indian quartet of Mohammed Anas, MR Poovamma, Hima Das and Arokia Rajiv had clocked 3:15:71 behind Bahrain (3:11:89). Raghavan had clocked 56.92 to finish fourth in the final race in Jakarta.

"The additional medal takes our tally to 20, including eight Gold and nine Silver," said AFI President Adille J Sumariwalla.