OPINION 6

FAREWELL,

MY QUEEN

CLOSURE OF MORE CHINESE

EMBASSIES POSSIBLE: TRUMP

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PRIYANKA IMPARTS WORDS OF WISDOM 10 VIVACITY

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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

"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 Iustice 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

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 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

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

giving up their membership.

The Speaker's sudden move to seek the SC's inter-

vention reflects the Congress's

worry that a legal victory for

the rebels may endanger its

Government has a narrow lead

in the 200-member Assembly

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 major

If the rebel MLAs win their

case and get protection from

disqualification, they can vote

Government and make it tough

for Gehlot to retain

ity mark will come down.

against the

- just one MLA over the

Government in Rajasthan.

Ashok

Assume a leader has

The Rajasthan High Court's ruling will, however, be subject to the final order of the Supreme

suppressed like this, said Justice AK Mishra Court, which will take up the case on Monday

Gehlot's

Congress

Gehlot Govt has a narrow lead in the Assembly **Can send Sekhawat** tape to US for test to

clear doubts: Gehlot

Jaipur: Targeting Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashala Callata 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

The Speaker had

argued that the rebels

Court at this stage

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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

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 Congres MLAs.

India asks China to walk the talk on LAC disengagement

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,

Rao said in Hyderabad.

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



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

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 spokesper-

son 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.
"We have also made it

clear that India is fully committed to observing and respecting the LAC and that we will not accept any unilateral attempts to change the status quo along the LAC."

Referring to important talks between National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on July 5, he said both the sides then agreed to work towards complete disengagement of the troops along the LAC and deescalation from India-China border areas for full restoration peace

tranquility.

Doval and Wang Yi are Special Representatives of their respective countries to address the boundary issue.

Pak offer of consular access | Community transmission in to Jadhav farcical: India

PNS NEW DELHI

 $\mathbf{I}^{ ext{ndia}}$ on Thursday charged Pakistan with blocking all avenues for remedy in Kulbhushan Jadhav case and said it adopted a "farcical" 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 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 tence. 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.

Telangana! It's official now

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

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 com- criticism for not carrying out our best to contain it. The State

Government is pulling out all it is one of the worst States as stops to prevent the virus from far as testing numbers spreading. The general public must be very cautious in the next four to five weeks. Masks.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The case of a Delhi police-■ man 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 negand resumed

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.



A health worker takes a swab sample of a boy for Covid-19 test at medical camp in Mumbai on Thursday

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 12,86,314 **DEATHS: 30,635 RECOVERED:** 8,15,969

ACTIVE: 4,39,293



TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
3,47,502	12,854	1,94,253
1,92,964	3,232	1,36,793
1,27,364	3,745	1,09,065
80,863	1,616	29,310
72,711	884	37,555
58,104	1,298	35,803
52,563	2,256	38,059
51,757	1,255	31,656
50,826	447	39,327
33,220	594	23,815
31,691	212	20,959
28,975	378	22,249
27,745	66	19,351
25,474	780	17,359
21,099	145	14,393
16,429	282	8,709
	3,47,502 1,92,964 1,27,364 80,863 72,711 58,104 52,563 51,757 50,826 33,220 31,691 28,975 27,745 25,474 21,099	3,47,502 12,854 1,92,964 3,232 1,27,364 3,745 80,863 1,616 72,711 884 58,104 1,298 52,563 2,256 51,757 1,255 50,826 447 33,220 594 31,691 212 28,975 378 27,745 66 25,474 780 21,099 145

Highest surge of 126 +ve cases in BBSR; total 1,469

PNS BHUBANESWAR/

 $B^{\rm hubaneswar\ on\ Thursday}_{\rm registered\ a\ record\ number}$ of 126 Covid-19 cases. With this, the capital city's total positive tally reached 1,469 with 651 active ones.

While 93 cases were from home quarantine, 33 were local contacts. The quarantine cases included as many as 35 cases linked to a single flour mill at Mancheswar linked to an earlier positive case. On Wednesday, 26 staffs of the same mill had tested positive.

Besides, nine cases, all men of Chandrasekharpur near 7th Battalion, linked to an earlier positive case, seven cases on Unit-2 MG Road linked to an earlier positive case, four cases, three men and a woman of Rasulgarh, near OCC Colony linked with an earlier positive case, two cases, 30-year-old man and 38 year-old woman, both employees of a private hospital linked with an earlier positive case also tested positive in quarantine. The local contacts includ-

ed a 34 year-old man of Patia, a 25-year-old man of Unit-9 Gridco Colony, a 25-year-old male security guard of a Central Government hospital a 47-year-old man of Ashok Nagar PHD Colony, a 41-yearold man of IRC Village N-6, a 59-year-old man of Unit-2, a 21-year-old woman of Lewis road near Ravi Talkies, a 36vear-old woman of the New Forest Park area, two cases of Unit-1 near Kasturba Nari Mahal, two cases of Unit-4 MLA Colony, four cases, all employees of another private hospital and two women

hospital and a 36-year-old man of Pokahriput Lingaraj Vihar. However, 81 patients recovered from the disease on

the day in Bhubaneswar.

employees of another private

Record single-day spike of 1,264 Covid cases in State woman, a 69-year-old man Kalahandi seven each, **Total now**

21,099; day's highest 540 in Ganjam again 6 more deaths, total toll now 114

Highest recoveries of 643; total recoveries 14,392

PNS BHUBANESWAR

ix more patients succumbed to coronavirus infections in the State on Thursday, taking the total toll to 114. Out of the six new deceased, five were from hotspot Ganjam district

and one from Khordha district. The deceased of Ganjam included a 41-year-old man, a 63-year-old man, a 51-year-old

and a 57-year-old man. The deceased of Khordha was an 86-year-old woman, who was also suffering from diabetes and hypertension, the Health Family Department said. On Thursday, the State

registered a record 1,264 new positive cases. With this, the total number of positive cases rose to 21,099. Of the new cases, 847 were reported from quarantine centres and 417 were local contacts. Ganjam district reported

the day's maximum 540 cases, followed by Khordha 137, Rayagada 84, Gajapati 74, Nayagarh 61, Sundargarh 60, Cuttack 47, Bhadrak 30, Kandhamal 29, Koraput 27, Keonjhar 25, Bargarh 24, Puri 22, Sambalpuir 20, Jajpur 17, Mayurbhanj 15, Baleswar nine, Kendrapada eight, Angul and Dhenkanal six, Jagatsinghpur and Nabarangpur four each, Iharsuguda three, Boudh two and Balangir and Nuapada one However, as many as 643 ients recovered on

oatients Thursday, taking the total recoveries in the State to 14,392. It was the highest single-day recoveries registered so far. The highest 407 patients recovered in Ganjam district, followed by 44 in Khordha, 31 in Baleswar, 28 in Mayurbhanj, 27 in Cuttack, 15 in Jagatsinghpur, 14 each in

Bargarh and Kandhamal, 11 each in Dhenkanal and Keonjhar, eight in Bhadrak, six in Gajapati, five each in Balangir and Jharsuguda, four each in Jajpur and Sundargarh, three each in Kendrapada and Koraput, two in Sambalpur and one in Angul.

'Nothing to worry much about Covid cases' surge'

It has happened due to massive house-tohouse survey: Govt

PNS BHUBANESWAR

llaying concerns over the Asurge in Covid-19 cases in the State, the Government on Thursday said this has come to light due to the ongoing massive door-to-door survey and the people need not worry much about it.

Department Health Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra said ASHA, Anganwadi and ANM Workers across the State are conducting the house-to-house survey to identify persons with suspected Covid-19 symptoms and test them. "Our strategy is not to ignore a single potential case. We are 'chasing the virus from

house to house," he said. With a 65% recovery rate, Odisha is at a far better posi-

tion compared to other States. Odisha's fatality rate is 0.54% against 2.5% in India, he pointed out. During the house-tohouse survey, apart from symptomatic cases, persons with co-morbid conditions are being identified, he said.

The State Government has decided to set up another six testing facilities in next 10 days. At present, 19 testing facilities have been operationalised in the State, he informed. Besides the district Collectors have been directed to prepare vision documents for next six months.

A plasma bank would be set up at the MKCG Medical College Hospital in Brahmapur and the Capital Hospital I Bhubaneswar soon, he said, adding that the decision has been taken on the basis of a report of a technical team on the success of plasma therapy, which was first launched at the SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack on July 15.

2 Maoists killed in Kandhamal

Two Maoists, including a woman, were killed in a gunfight with police personnel n Kandhamal district on Thursday evening.

Official sources said that when SOG and DVF personnel were carrying out a combing operation in a forest area, the Leftwing extremists opened fire at them. In retaliation, the security personnel fired at the Maoists. Later, the security personnel recovered two bodies of Maoists. Besides, the security per-

sonnel seized an INSAS rifle, a carbine and two country-made weapons from the spot.

Notably, on July 5, the security personnel had also gunned down four Maoists in Kandhamal district.

Don't make UG, PG exams | FIR lodged mandatory: State to Centre

 $H^{igher\;Education\;Minister}_{Arun\;Kumar\;Sahoo\;on}$ Thursday wrote to Union Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank urging the latter not to make UG and PG examinations in the Sstate mandatory.

The State Government had also earlier written to the Centre over the issue. Sahoo again wrote the letter mentioning that there was no response from the Ministry of Human Resource Development

to the previous letter.
Sahoo opined that it is neither possible nor advisable to conduct the examinations due to the COVID-19 situation. "The number of UG and PG final semester/year students in Odisha is about 2 lakhs. Most of them belong to the low and middle-income group and do not have a desktop or laptop or decent smartphone at home. Most of them also stay in rural areas not having a reliable internet connection. Therefore, conducting online examination for such a large number of stu-dents is simply not possible," he

students, the college staffs and their family members to the risk of Covid-19. As public transportation is now virtually nonexistent, it is not possible on the part of the students to come to their colleges. For hostellers, it would be a herculean task to accommodate themselves in hostels maintaining all the Covid-19 protocols, Sahoo said in the letter.

As the hostel accommodation is limited, many students used to stay in private rented hostels/houses. As colleges are closed down since March 24, all of them have gone back to their native places. The house owners would now not allow them to stay in their houses/hostels considering the Covid-19 risk,

A number of colleges are presently being used by the district administrations for quarantine centres, Covid Care Homes, Covid Care Centres, etc. Students coming to these colleges for examinations would be exposed to the Covid-19 risk, he said.

Conduct of examination in September 2020, as advised

against 'touch by the UGC would get further delayed as the Covid situation therapy' Baba is worsening in India. In that case, the academic calendar would go off the rail completely jeopardising the future career



November/December once the

Trouble has mounted for self-styled godman Artatrana Das alias Baba Artatrana after a lawyer filed a complaint against him with the Chandrasekharpur police over his claims of curing Covid-19 by touch therapy.

Complainant Tapan Kumar Harichandan has accused Baba Artatrana of cheating people by collecting money from them with fraudulent commitments of curing Covid-19 and other fatal dis-

The illegal activities are being carried out by Baba Artatrana at Lumbini Vihar, Chandrasekharpur. People are being victimised with his superstitious act of curing disease by touch therapy and selfclaimed supernatural power endowed with him which has no scientific evidence, the complainant said in the FIR.

He also urged the police to ascertain the amount of property and money gained by the 'Baba' by cheating cheating

'Remedial classes needed for disadvantaged students'

In a virtual discussion series on MISSION 3-5-8, a nationwide campaign on edu-cation, experts urged the State Government to focus on school infrastructure and use lockdown as an opportunity to start remedial classes to help weaker students learn faster and be like other

Organised by the Odisha Shramajeebee Mancha, the Mahila Shramajeebee Mancha and the Atmashakti Trust, the discussion entitled "Policy, planning and approaches of school education during Covid-19" was joined by more than 100 CSO representatives across the State.

The representatives decried the lack of required school infrastructure and the woes of online education that has left lakhs of rural children in the

Participating in the discussion, , national manager of ActionAid and advisor on RTE to Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Ghasiram Panda said, "Covid

As online classes not accessible to all, say civil society members

19 has made us comprehend once again that we are far behind in fulfilling the norms and standards for our schools as envisaged in RtE. It has been the major bottleneck in achieving the minimum level of

learning."
"Children, mostly from the poor-families, who study in Government-run schools, are the worst sufferers as their learning has taken a halt. Though the State Governments have offered several online classes, both teachers and students are facing challenges as there is an absence of physical classrooms and proper digital infrastructure. The disparity in access from smartphones, computer, electricity and internet connections also pose a challenge to mitigate the learning gap", the participants in the dis-

According to the information shared by School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash, more than 20 lakh children are attending the online classes so far, offered by the Government, which stands at only 33.33 %. However, data from the secondary sources claim that only 6 lakh children have so far benefited from the programme. Online classes cannot ensure the education of all children, especially the marginalised children who do not have a smartphone or a laptop added with the costly affair of buying an internet pack, they

"Therefore, the State Government should immediately start remedial classes for the students so that the learning gap of the disadvantageous children can be bridged," the participants urged.

'14K cured of Covid sans treatment in city'

BHUBANESWAR: A serological survey conducted in Bhubaneswar by the Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC) has, in its interim report, stated that an average of 1.42 per cent of people in the State capital city have created antibody against coronavirus.

This means that they have been infected with the virus without knowledge and got cured automatically without undergoing treatment.

If the total population in Bhubaneswar is 10 lakh, around 14,200 residents have been recovered from Covid-19 so far, according to the interim report. They did neither develop Covid-19 symptoms nor undergo any test to detect infection.

The ICMR, Bhubaneswar unit had conducted a serological survey to indentify the prevalence of Covid-19 in the population as well as antibodies developed in them. Out of 951 samples collected for the test, 15 were found sero-posi-

However, the report conshared by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). As per BMC report, total 1,343 infected persons detected in Bhubaneswar so far, of which 724 have recovered.

On the contrary, the RMRC serological survey interim report showed that around 1,285 persons infected with the deadly virus have recovered in the city so far.

Assn plead for reopening of amusement parks in State

of students, he said.

If the alternative evaluation

system can be accepted for

intermediate year/semester stu-

dents, it should also be accept-

ed for final semester/year students. Students not happy with

the alternative evaluation sys-

tem (the number will be very

less) would anyway get a

chance to appear in the physi-

cal examination to be con-

Covid-19 situation improves.

Through the alternative evalu-

ation system, the final semes-

ter/year result can be pub-

lished by August 31 which

would not derail the academ-

Minister to reconsider the mat-

ter and allow the State univer-

sities to adopt the alternative

evaluation guidelines issued

by the State Government

instead of conducting exami-

nations as per the revised MHRD/UGC guidelines.

Sahoo requested the HRD

ic calendar at all, he said.

To ease people's mental stress during Covid pandemic

this regard and requested to consider opening up of the social infrastructure.

While appreciating and acknowledging the e humon-gous efforts taken by the State Government to control the pandemic, the IAAPI has equested to unlock the lock-

parks would play a pivotal role in this regard as they are spread across large areas of open land surrounded with lots of plantations and land-

They have safer distance between the rides and attrac-



PNS BHUBANESWAR

With people's mental health being affected due to Covid-19, the Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries (IAAPI) has requested the State Government to reopen the amusement parks.

The IAAPI has approached the Department of Tourism in

down in a phased manner with a controlled Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

The IAAPI has pointed out that the mental health of the population is severely affected and the stress levels need to be lowered. It is essential to de-stress the population by active outdoor and indoor activities giving them holistic

tions which would ensure maintaining social distancing. The IAAPI has prepared

the SOP under guidance of professionals from medical However, State officials are

worried over opening the parks as Covid-19 is extending its tentacles in a vigorous way and positive cases are on the

--City social worker death--

Report says suicide note written by him

PNS BHUBANESWAR

In a significant development in the probe into the death of social worker Aditya Dash in the city, the forensic report regarding the examination of the 'suicide note' confirmed that it was written by him. "The handwriting of the

note was similar to that of Aditya's earlier handwritings, Railways AĎG Pranabindu Acharya on Police had seized a hand-

written diary of Aditya, in which it was mentioned on a page that no one was responsible for his death.

On the other hand, the GRP wrote to Facebook seek-



ing details about the last post from the deceased's account on July 6. Incidentally, his last Facebook post was regarding a quote over death.

Aditya was found dead on the railway track near Lingaraj Temple Road station in the city on July 7. He had gotten married on June 9. He was running an old-age home at Sundarapara in the city and was involved in social service through an NGO 'People For

The postmortem report had revealed that he died due to grievous injuries on his head. Aditya's wife, family members and friends have already been questioned during the investigation by police.

Centre praises anti-Maoist op in Kandhamal

PNS BHUBANESWAR

he Centre has praised the The Centre has praised the Odisha Police for its anti-Maoist operation in Kandhamal district in which four Leftwing extremists were killed earlier this month.

In a letter to the State Chief Secretary and DGP, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla complimented the team

of officers and police personnel for the successful operation in Kandhamal on July 5.

He applauded the Odisha Police in conducting operation in a professional manner without any casualty of the security personnel.

The works of the Odisha LWE intelligence unit and specialised anti-Maoist force (SOG) were also appreciated.



 $T^{
m he}$ "Capital-80", an association of old students of the passed matriculation in 1980, on Thursday donated Rs 1 lakh to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for utilisation in Covid fight.

A team comprising association president Er Saroj Kumar Sahoo, general secretary Baikunthanath Tripathy, vicepreisent Shiba Prasad Das and Jnana Ranjan Das and members Bhagaban Mishra and



dential office here, informed vice-president Bobin Mohanty. The Minister praised the

Capital-80 members for undertaking various social works.

Lockdown: Road mishaps down by 65%

PNS BHUBANESWAR

There has been a steep fall in I the number of road accidents and, consequently, a sharp decline of 65% in deaths due to road mishaps during the Covid-19 lockdowns between March 25 and May 31.

According to a senior State Transport Authority (STA), during the lockdown period, 384 persons were killed and 722 injured in 836 road accidents compared as many as 1,087 deaths and 2,175 cases of injury in 2,107 accidents during the corresponding period of 2019,

In April this year, the number of deaths due to road accidents was 118 against 485 in the same period in 2019, registering a decline of about 74%

Total 231 road mishaps were reported in April 2020 against 7 in April last year.

In May 2020, the number deaths was 243 against 494 in May 2019, recording a decline of about 51%. Total 551 road accidents were reported in May this year against 953 in May last year.

The lockdown also had its impact on motor vehicle revenue collection. The STA official said Rs 159.8 crore has been collected in the first quarter from April to June this year against Rs 384 crore in April-June 2019, about a 58% decline.

However, in June it picked up with a collection of Rs 96 crore against Rs 112.7 crore in June 2019, a decrease of 14.8% in real terms.

SOCIAL CANVAS

Covid woes: Betel farmers facing sale hurdles



MANAS JENA

housands of small betel farmers in coastal Odisha have been constantly facing the brunt of frequent natural calamities that damage their betel vines but while they donot get adequate and timely compensation against their loss, the Covid-19 pandemic has added to their misery. In the ongoing time of lockdown and shutdown, the sale of their crop in local market as well as outside has been badly hit. These farmers also have

reeling under issues of lack of institutional support under agriculture sector such as input subside, credit, MSP and a host of other facilities available for other crops Rabindra Bhoi and Santosh

Bhoi from Raghuagarada village in Balipatana block of Khurda district are small betel farmers. They manage their livelihood by betel vine cultivation but these days they are continuously incurring loss due to frequent visits of cyclones, erratic rains and tornadoes. The lockdown and shutdown have almost damaged their livelihood in the absence of adequate and timely Government support to compensate their frequent losses. Both Dalit small farmers have no other means of livelihood. Similar problems are also faced by Tuku Behera and Basant Behera and hundreds of small Dalit farmers and sharecroppers in costal districts,

who are in dire straits. Akshya Das, a betel farmer

and farmer leader of Dhenkia in Jagatsighpur district, told that about 7,000 betel farmers of Erasama block were not being compensated in spite of their losses and for last five months their condition had been worse due to the lockdown and shutdown owing to

A large chunk of these farmers is Dalit and daily wage earners in betel gardens and many of the betel gardens are in common land yet to be recorded in the names though they have been in possession of the land since generations. In spite of long time protests by peasants, there is no survey and settlement to ensure the landless are allotted land in these

These farmers used to send betel leaf to Mumbai and Kalkota by trains with special arrangement. Late Loknath Choudhury, former CPI MP, had made a request to the

Govt yet to compensate their losses caused by frequent cyclones

Government of India for allocating special compartment to export betel to Mumbai. But unfortunately, these days, leaders are not much interested in issues of betel farmers and their plight seems to be no man's concern. Hundreds of betel farmers were displaced and lost their livelihood for land accusation by the Government in the name of industries in Jagatsingpur district and this process is still continuing without any industry. Rather, the traditional livelihood of people has been minimized which threw many

Sanjit Swain, a betel framer organizer of Nuahata market in Kakatpur block of Puri district told that about 10,000 betel farmers in the block were silently suffering without any help from the Government. He also told that last time the meagre amount of compensation against heavy loss due to cyclone was not through proper survey by officials. Rather the beneficiaries were selectively chosen who were supporters of the ruling party, he alleged.

These days due to the pandemic, the farmers have started destroying their crops and are under tremendous pressure to pay off loan. The harvesting period of betel is within two weeks and after harvesting it has to be sold immediately, otherwise it will perish soon due to lack of storage facility. The intermediary businessman and exporter are getting better price than the farmer in the absence of better storage and transport

facility though there is a good demand for export of betel outside the local market within India and South Asia.

The coastal areas of Odisha have remained backward without much industrialisation and urbanisation and lack of communication links due to rivers and their small tributaries criscrossing the area. Water logging and insufficient irrigation have continued as a major impediment relating to agriculture in coastal areas. Mostly the costal farmers are dependent on paddy, betel and fish cultivation, apart from seasonal vegetables. Still betel continues as a major cash crop here. Considering the gravity of the issue of the betel farmers, the State Government must come out to help them financially in restoration of shades of their betel vine and take steps for resolving the marketing problem during Covid-19, feel

(manasbbsr15@gmail.com)

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Ganjam sees record spurt of 540 new cases

Death toll rises to 67 as five more die DM mourns **Covid warrior's** demise due to virus

PNS ■ BRAHMPAUR

Ganjam district reported the highest single-day surge of 540 coronavius cases and five Covid deaths during the last 24 hours, according to the data furnished by the Government on Twitter on Thursday.

While the State registered 1,264 cases during the period, the district shared 42.72% of it.

With the new cases, the total number of Covid positives in the district rose to 6,902 and

The deceased include four males aged 41 years, 57 years, 63 years and 69 years and a

woman aged 51 years.

Besides being infected with the virus, the 41-year-old and the 63-year-old were suffering from hypertension, while the 57-year-old male was suffering from diabetes and hypertension. But the 69-year-old man had no other health complex-

The female deceased was also suffering from diabetes and diabetic ketoacidosis.

While 4,076 patients have recovered, 2,754 are under going treatment in different Covid Hospitals in the State.

Meanwhile, a Covid warrior of the Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) died due to coronavirus infection on Thursday, informed district Collector

Vijay Amruta Kulange. Kailash Chandra Nayak

was working as an Assistant Engineer at the BeMC. He lost his life under treatment at the KIMS Covid Hospital in Bhubaneswar.

"We lost our Covid warrior.
Entire district administration is
with his family. We request all people in Ganjam to follow social distancing norms. By doing this, you will help our Covid warriors in fighting this war," Kulange

Through a message, the Collector extended his deepest sympathy to the bereaved fam-

ily members.

Kulange wrote, "The dedication and devotion shown by him while discharging his duty definitely set an example for others and indeed inspire others in the war against Covid-

son killed in Subarnapur

Motive behind crime yet unknown

PNS ■ SONEPUR

A couple and their son were killed by unidentified miscreants at Śilati village under the Binika police station in Subarnapur district on Wednesday night.

The deceased were identified as Bulu Bhoi (65), his wife Baidehi Bhoi (55) and son

While Shiva was found lying dead outside of the house, bodies of Bulu and his wife were found in the house by locals on Thursday morning. On being informed, police

reached the spot, sent the bodies for post-mortem and initiated an investigation. It is being suspected that the trio was killed with sharp weapons as the bodies bore grievous injury

However, the motive behind the brutal murders was yet to be ascertained. A relative of the family said the family members led a simple life and had no enmity with anyone in the village.

Further investigations were underway by the police, who have questioned a number of

Elderly couple, Jatra actress now a fruit vender in BBSR

Apopular Odisha Jatra Aactress is now vending fruits on the streets of Bhubaneswar thanks to the ban on mass cultural events, including opera shows, in the Covid-19 situation.

Pratibha Maharana, better known to her audience as 'Rinky', is running a fruit shop at Tata Ariana Square in Kalinga Nagar here to eke out a living for herself and family after seeking financial help from her former employer to set up the shop. Hailing from Haldipadia in

trict, Rinky is currently residing in Kalinga Nagar with her parents and is the only breadwinner in her family after her father lost his finger in an accident and mother suffered paralysis. Her elder sister, who earlier ran the family, is now

Rajsunakhala of Khordha dis-

Rinky had started her career as an Odia album artist and worked with popular mother's treatment. actors like Sabyasachi before switching to acting in Jatras. She joined the Rangamahal

Actor Sabyasachi has helped Rinky's family with two

troupe and carved a place for

herself in no time with the roles

financial assistance for her

Rinky said her family does not even have a ration card. When she approached a local leader regarding this, she was asked to wait till the pandemic is over. So, she had to resort to fruits vending to get through the pandemic situation.

Doctor denied dignified burial in K'mal

PNS PHUI BANI

A homoeopathic doctor of Kandhamal district, who died due to other health complications other than Covid-19, was denied a dignified burial by his fellow

The doctor, hailing from Mallikpadi in the district, fell sick on Wednesday morning. He was initially admitted to the CHC at G Udayagiri and later referred to the District Headquarters Hospital following his health condition worsened.

However, the doctor died on the way to the hos-

His body was brought back to his village by his family members to give him a traditional burial. But the locals fearing that the doctor succumbed to coronavirus did not allow for bur-

His family then informed the local police. The cops reached the spot but failed to convince the

Later, on the advice of Tehsildar, the body was then taken to a Government allocated burial ground near Kendagiri where the burial was finally held.

B'swar DHH yet to have psychiatric indoor facility

Even as it functions as hospital for FM MC

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■

 $T^{
m he\ District\ Headquarters}$ Hospital (DHH), which also functions as the hospital of the FM Medical College, is lacking an indoor treatment facility for the patients suffering from psy-chiatric disorders. As a result, the patients coming to this DHH for treatment of mental illness are often referred to

the SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack.

According to reports, in 2015 in the DHH while a department for treating mental patients was opened, it was running with the help and consultations of a clinical psychologist who was assisted by a community nurse and a worker.

Ever since the DHH became the hospital of Government medical college, a separate department was opened with a head of department and senior and junior resident doctors.

The department is near TB ward. opened Although the department is functioning, yet it doesn't have an indoor treating facility. Sources said that in a month, about 800 patients seek mental treatment from

the department while about 500 receive treatment regu-

According to a doctor of the department, Manas Ranjan Sahu, "The treatment and consultations to the patients are given in both morning and afternoon. At times the patients are referred to the SCB Medical College Hospital when it is observed the case as serious, requiring more intensive care since we don't have indoor treating facilities. The patients during Corona lockdown period are being provided advice through audio and video calling. About 10 patients on an average are availing the service." He added that a proposal would be given to the Government to build a fullfledged ward indoor treating facility in the DHH.

31 Ganjam cops to donate plasma

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

As many as 31 police personnel in Ganjam district, who have recovered from coronavirus infection and rejoined duty, have decided to donate plasma for treatment of serious Covid patients, informed Ganjam SP Brijesh Kumar Rai. Meanwhile, Chief Minister

Naveen Patnaik has appreciated the police personnel, saying their gesture would encourage other recovered people to donate plasma and save pre-

ma therapy in the district.

Notably, a plasma bank has been created in the MKCG Medical College Hospital recently. A few serious patients have also been provided plas-

Amit Shah lays stone of MCL 'Utkal Upvan'

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday laid the foundation stone of Utkal Upvan being developed by the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) in Jharsuguda as a site of tourist attraction in Jharsuguda district. The event was held through videoconferencing from New Delhi. MCL CMD BN Shukla

also participated in the launch of a Vriksharopan Abhiyan by the Home Minister. The CMD and other Directors planted saplings of fruit-bearing trees at townships Jagruti Vihar and Anand Vihar in Sambalpur. Similar functions were

organised at 19 places across

company. Over 17,000 saplings were planted while over 37,000 saplings were distributed for

The MCL has targeted plantation of 1.22 lakh trees in financial year 2020-21. It has planted progressively around six million trees in the State

plantation in and around the

over the years.

cops felicitated

after recovery

Corona-hit

S'pur hospital sealed after patient tests +ve

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

■ on Thursday sealed a private hospital in Sambalpur town for five days after a woman of the Sunapali area, who underwent three-day treatment at the facility tested Covid-19 positive.

The Sanjeevani Hospital at Cheruapada was sealed by the Sambalpur Municipal Corporation and police personnel following the woman's samples tested positive during

Also, 32 persons from the hospital including owner Purusottam Agarwal were sent on quarantine. Most of the patients undergoing treatment at the hospital were discharged.

Patients who are in critical condition at the hospital would be shifted to other hospitals with the help of the district administration, said a doctor of Sanjeevani Hospital.

So far, a total of 214 persons from the district have tested positive for the virus.

NHRC, OHRC moved in denial of treatment case

B'pur activist seeks licence cessation of hosp, indemnity for deceased's kin

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Human rights activist and BJP leader Srikant Padhi has moved the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), seeking cancellation of the licences of private Apollo, AMRI and KIMS Hospitals for allegedly denying admission to a patient, Narsingha Kundu, leading to his death in an ambulance at Bhubaneswar.

Kundu, a 76-year-old cloth trader from Brahmapur, following a brain stroke, had been taken to the three hospitals in Bhubaneswar on July 13, admit him on the plea that he a daily worker.

was form a corona- affected hotspot area.

Due to lack of timely treatment, he died same day in an ambulance in which he had carried to Bhubaneswar.

Padhi too demanded adequate compensation for the next kin of the deceased.

Padhi too filed a similar petition before the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC), seeking compensation for the mother of a Plus Three student, who allegedly committed suicide on the railway line near Huma in Ganiam district on July 13 after being denied treatment by the MKCG Medical College and Hospital.

The deceased was identified as D Mohan Reddy (19) of Nandanapalli under the Ganjam police station. His father and elder brother had a 2020, but all of them refused to died a year back. His mother is

5-day shutdown Villagers imposed in Bargarh district

RAKESH JOSHI ■ BARGARH

In view of the increasing Covid-19 cases in Bargarh district, the administration on Thursday imposed a fiveday shutdown in the entire area of Bargarh Revenue subdivision, Sohela and Bijepur blocks of Padampur subdivision and the five ULBs, Attabira, Bargarh, Barpali, Bijepur Padampur.

The shutdown would remain in force till 9 pm on July 28. There would be restrictions on intra-district movement of public and private transport with closure of shops and business establishments, Government and

Only hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, medicine Central and State Government offices on emergency duty, fuel stations, agriculture, water and electricity supply, industrial

establishments, marriages and funerals with permis-

local authority, ATMs and financial institutions, LPG distribution, milk booths have been exempted from restrictions.

So far, the district has reported 324 positive cases with 113 active cases, while 210 patients have recovered from the disease. One has succumbed to the virus, informed Collector J y o t i r a n j a n

oppose Covid crematorium

PNS ■ PAR-ALAKHEMUN-

I Gajapati district administration's move to create a spe-cial Covid 19 graveyard at Jatalajitha u n d e r

Goshani block was resisted and halted villagers Tuesday.

According to information, Covid Hospital has been functioning at R Sitapur on the Paralakhemundi city outskirts. To cremate dead bodies of patients who die at this Covid Hosptial, the district administration had proposed to establish a crematorium at nearby



Jatalajaitha.

On Tuesday evening, the administration had planned to cremate a body there. However, villagers, hearing about the move, gathered and staged a protest on the road. Though Tehsildar Achyutananda Jani along with police reached the spot and

tried to convince villagers, but

SUNDARGARH: The Covid Health Center at NTPC Sundargarh, witnessed an emotional scene on Sunday evening as the hospital authorities, staff and district administration officials cheered for the 34 police personnel who recovered

The police personnel were given flowers, chocolates and other tokens of appreciation for winning the fight against Covid

from Ĉovid 19 in the campus.

Among others, Sub-Collector Abhimanyu Behera, BDO Sadar Anamika Singh and DPHO Dr Kanhu Charan Nayak were present on the occasion to cheer the Covid 19

"Following a swab test, we were found positive and today while getting discharged, we would like to thank the hospital staff for taking care of us during our recovery period and the administration for everything," said Inspector In-Charge of Town Police Station, Sundargarh Bibatsa Pradhan.

Better nutrition now core focus of rice science

SK MOSHARAF/SWATI NAYAK

 $R^{
m ice,\ the\ staple}$ for more than 65% of Indians, has so far been purposed for food security of the nation. But since we attained self-sufficiency in rice requirement, recent trend in rice research and development is now more aligned to produce nutrition dense rice varieties which offer both calorie and other vital nutrients. This strategic shift is in sync with SDG mandates.

A normal inbred rice generally contains 70% carbohydrate, 6-7% protein, 14-16 ppm Zinc and 4-5 ppm iron, and zero level of B-carotene (precursor) of Vitamin D.With the advent of cutting edge technologies like genetic engineering, gene editing-through the bio fortification-

--nutritional quality of rice has been enhanced significantly for better health outcomes for people who consume rice 2-3 times a day and cannot afford other pricy sources of these nutrients. Significant research breakthroughs on this front have been achieved in recent past as rice research objectives are now realigned and having enhanced emphasis on nutritional security rather than just food security. Current rice research programme in the country has bred a handful of varieties that provides higher proportion of microelement like protein, zinc, vit A, iron These elements are pivotally important to alleviate malnutrition.

Rice varieties (CR 310, 311) developed by ICAR-National Rice Research Protezin another variety Institute (NRRI) with height-

ened level protein content (11%) provide cheap solution to mitigate protein deficiency in diet for economically disadvantaged sections. These recently bred varieties are of medium duration with good yield potential and adaptation across States. Zinc is another micro

nutrient, which plays a vital role for boosting immunity and normal physical growth. Daily requirement of zinc for an adult is 12-15mg which can be availed from multiple sources like whole grains, nuts, beans, meat etc. The recent development of rice varieties like DRR 45, CGZR-1, Zinco Rice, Swarna Shakti Dhan offer atleast 23-27 ppm zinc (in polished rice) against 14ppm in normal varieties. comes with a combo offer of

high protein (9%) and zinc (21ppm) content. Regular consumption of these varieties will help fulfil requirement of this trace element. Besides this high zinc content, these varieties with other important traits like high yield, low requirement of water etc will find rapid adoption if promoted strategically.

Iron deficiency is one of the major reasons that push children and adult alike to be anaemic. The alarming rate of anaemia can be arrested and reversed through adequate intake of iron which is commonly found in poultry, red meat, dark fruits, beans, eggs, oyster etc. But recent innovations in rice research bring much cheaper source for iron. Swarna Shakitdhan has 15 ppm iron much higher than traditional inbred varieties (45ppm), thus stands as a potential alternate source for reducing incidence of anaemia, especially in low income population. Vitamin A-deficiency

(VAD) is public health concern in third world countries. Rice researchers in recent years have found a potential solution through invention of golden rice which differs from its parental strain by the addition of three beta-carotene biosynthesis genes. Beta carotene content in normally inbred rice is nearly zero. Beta carotene being precursor of Vitamin A, enhanced level of Vit A (10-12mg/kg) is observed in golden rice. This can significantly reduce Vit A deficiency symptoms in rice consuming areas. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) with its

national research partners have developed golden rice to complement existing interventions to combat vitamin A deficiency. But this golden rice is currently under biosafety approval process. On clearance of bio-safety review process, this rice can be a game changer in fighting VAD (Vitamin A deficiency) in south many Asian countries.

A noteworthy research outcome was also attained in developing rice varieties with low Glycaemic Index (GI) that helps better manage blood sugar level for diabetic patients. Swarna, Mashuri, RNR15048, etc are recent innovations on this front.

Systematic and intensive efforts are to be directed to generate mass awareness about these varieties through a

robust agriculture extension services of the State machinery. This may be strategically integrated into other antimalnutrition interventions. Odisha's millet mission is one such shining example. Bio fortified varieties of

other crops (pearl millet, wheat, maize, mustard etc) should be promoted along in unison with these rice varieties in accordance with dietary diversity of a geography for better nutrition. This will ensure maximum benefits from this process of bio-fortification of major crops. Taking a right variety

within the reach of farmers in a time bound manner is a huge challenge owing to several shortcomings in State run seed systems. Hence, system should be streamlined in such way that access to seeds of

Increased ratio of micronutrient is an added advantage of these bio-fortified varieties. In order for

these rice varieties improves.

promotion, a special market linkage with price advantage is to be established. This will get farmers a better price and diffusion of such varieties will be boosted which eventually contribute to eradication of malnutrition. Experimentation on rice based nutrition is relatively

new phenomenon. In order to harness further possibility and potentials, more research in this domain should be incen-

(The authors are rice seed system experts and work with Philippines-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). Views are personal)

Paramilitary forces log 9,700 Covid-19 cases

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

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

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

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

'Reducing dependency on Chinese API import not easy'

that while India has the tech-

nology for production of many

APIs, the production cost

needs to be optimised to

match the global norms large-

ly by scaling up of operations.

ities 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 2019, India imported APIs worth ₹249 billion of

which around ₹169 billion

were from China itself, with

the imports increasing steadi-

ly from just 0.3 per cent in

1991 to the current 68 per

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

"Two-thirds of the total

in the sector.

Towards this, common facil-

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. Åt 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.

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 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 bilpharmaceutical The industry in India is third largest in the world, in terms

Italy and fourteenth largest in terms of value. The Indian industry has a

of volume, behind China and

panies 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

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 uninter-rupted 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,"

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 twominute video as part of his ongoing series on different

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

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

"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.

"JÉE 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.

Ministry holds maiden Ind-SAT Test 2020

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union HRD Ministry has conducted the firstever 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 proc-

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

tored 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.

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.

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

 $P_{\text{Narendra Modi on}}^{\text{rime Minister}}$ 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

EC defers 8 bypolls as Covid, flood unabated Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Uttar

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

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 sixmonth deadline to hold byelections 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, 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,

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

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.

Israeli team working with DRDO to develop 30-second Covid test kit GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE OPENING DATE **EMD** NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL WEBSITE OF THE BOARD NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER (APPROX.) BOARD/CORP./AUTH CORP./AUTH (TIME) RUPEES As per SPECIAL REPAIR OF 4 NO. GROUPS UNDER WORK CLOSING DATE 01262-270274 H.S.A.M.BOARD, ROHTAK https://etenders.hry.nic.in

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

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 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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi have held three telephonic conversations in which they promised mutual assistance in dealing with the virus committed to joint technological and

scientific research between the countries, the statement Noting that India is cur-

rently 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

	iic isracii Eiii	bassy said. giobai pani	delilie, 151	acii i iiiiic	Statement S	aid.
	GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE					
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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 8190						

PLAN 2020-21(PHASE-I) SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR REMEDIATION MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, 22.07.2020 96717-90078 AND RECLAMATION OF EXISTING DUMPSITE AT 758 LACS http://etenders.hry.nic.in himanshu_latka@gov.in KHURANA, KAITHAL SURFACE DRESSING AND GRAVELLING IN 132KV AND CLOSING DATE 0172-2583789 2.66 Lacs https://www.hvpn.org.in 33KV YARD AT 132 KV SUB-STATION BHATTU KALAN REPLACEMENT OF 3 NO. 220 KV SF-6 GAS CIRCUIT OPENING CLOSING BREAKER OF 220 KV IA HISAR-MASUDPUR CKT-1&2 0172-2583789 3.98 LACS https://www.hvpn.org.in AND 220 KV BUS COUPLER AT 220KV SUBSTATION. pro@hvpn.org.in 11.08.2020 INDUSTRIAL AREA, HISAR PDG. IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING SODIUM LIGHTS WITH LED LIGHTS IN OGM/NVM AT SUB YARD https://etenders.hry.nic.in 4.33 CRORE xenelectpkl2019@yahoo.com PANCHKULA 14.08.2020 JHANSA. + 20 OTHER WORKS Detail of Bid opening Date: amount in 01664-244273 CAD DIVISION, BHIWANI LINING//EXTENSION OF WATERCOURSES (1 NOS.) 06.08.2020 at 02:00 https://etenders.hrv.nic.in xenbhiwanicad@gmail.com P.M. published SHIFTING OF SUB-STATION, 11KV H.T. FEEDER AND H.S.A.M. BOARD, 11.08.2020 9812100311 L.T. LINES FROM APPLE MARKET PREMISES, PINJORE 13.28 LACS https://etenders.hry.nic.in PANCHKULA 14.08.2020 xenelectpkl2019@yahoo.con TO H.M.T. PREMISES, PINJORE (PANCHKULA). 21.07.2020 8059888683 HIRING OF BOLERO JEEPS/CAR UNDER M&P DIVN. DHBVN 47.06 LACS www.dhbvn.org.in HISAR NIT NO. 02/M&P/HSR/2020-21 06.08.2020 xenmphisar@dhbvn.org.i REQUIREMENT FOR REPLACEMENT OF DEFECTIVE 22.07.2020 11.08.2020 VACUUM INTERRUPTER FOR VARIOUS 33 KV S/STN 01667-223777 DHBVN 9.02 LACS www.dhbvn.org.in UNDER (OP) CIRCLE DHBVN FATEHABAD FOR FY seopfatehabad@dhbvn.org.in 2020-21 ROUGH COST ESTIMATE FOR BIO REMEDIATION OF OLD LEGACY WASTE OF MC NANGAL CHOUDHARY MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, CLOSING DATE 9813397504 https://www.etenders.hrv.nic.in secymcnch@gmail.com NANGAL CHOUDHARY 04.08.2020 SITUATED NEAR KRISNAWATI RIVER DUMPSITE. SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR REMEDIATION MUNICIPAL CORPORATION 22.07.2020 https://etenders.hry.nic.in 11 AND RECLAMATION OF EXISTING DUMPSITE AT 0171-2443747 AMBALA CITY 17.08.2020 VILLAGE PATVI, AMBALA RE-CONSTRUCTION RMC M-40 ROAD AND RCC SLAP OPENING CLOSING MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, ON STROM WATER DRAIN FROM SHANI MANDIR TO https://etenders.hry.nic.in 2.05 LACS DATE 9999558284 BEVDA CHOWK IN KHERKI DAULA VILLAGE, WARD **GURUGRAM** 13.08.2020 NO. 24, UNDER M.C. GURUGRAM, + 1 OTHER WORK CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL AROUND 22.07.2020 MUNICIPAL CORPORATION 13 GRAVEYARD, HIMSHIKHA, W. NO. 5, PINJORE. 06.06 LACS https://etenders.hry.nic.in EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (RECALL) TOTAL 9 NOS. OF WORKS TO BE EXECUTE IN KARNAL 22.07.2020 14 KARNAL SMART CITY https://etenders.hrv.nic.in smartcitykarnal@gmail.com CITY UNDER KARNAL SMART CITY PROJECT SHIFTING OF BOUNDARY WALL AT 33 KV S/STN. 9356063248 CLOSING DATE UHBVN PANCHKULA 6.49 LACS www.uhbvn.org.in KACHHWA (KARNAL) 04.08.2020 xenciviluhbvnpanchkula@gmail.com HARYANA LIVESTOCK PURCHASE OF ICE LINNER (ICE LINED 22.07.2020 9416172558 16 DEVELOPMENT BOARD http://pashudhanharyana.gov.in REFRIGERATOR) 220 LITRE 07.08.2020 2 LACS HARYANA SEEDS CONSTRUCTION OF SEED GODOWNS AT HSDC, 22.07.2020 9417669911 DEVELOPMENT 1.51 CRORE https://etenders.hry.nic.in CORPORATION LIMITED CONST OF STREET FROM HAFED ROAD TO SUSHIL 23.07.2020 49.10 LACS secretarymckalayat@gmail.com https://etenders.hry.nic.in KALAYAT SHARMA IN WARD NO. 12 + 4 OTHER WORKS 07.08.2020 HIRING 2 NO OUTSOURCED VEHICLE ALONGWITH OPENING CLOSING 9354726133 DRIVER OPEN FROM BACK SIDE SINGLE SEATER FOR Rs. 6000/ UHBVN www.uhbvn.org.in COMPLAINT CENTER S/D DHAND AND VEHICLE FOR xenoppundri@uhbvn.org.ir 14.08.2020 OFFICE USE OF S/D PUNDRI NO-1 TO BE USED 24 *7 CLOSING DATE 3.95 LACS xenopuhbvnassandh@gmail.com www.uhbvn.org.ir FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 81904



1,078 more test positive in Kerala

the pioneer

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

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 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

"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

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-

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.

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

Similarly, the neighbouring districts of Chengalpet (375)

Kancheepuram (330), Thiruvallur (416) showed steep hike

(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

North Bengal and Jangalmahal in southwestern 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

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 power-

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

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 respec-

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

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

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

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

GOLD SMUGGLING

officials at Thiruvananthapuram which lasted for more than nine

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

The day began with news that Yousuf, the Commissioner of Customs, issued an order transferring six superintendents and two inspectors prob-

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

> 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 lock-The police were seen caning people who had aimless-

ly 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

Pak Army shells areas along LoC in Baramulla **MOHIT KANDHARI** ■ JAMMU diers of the Indian army are maintaining a tight

he Pakistan Army on Thursday activated The Pakistan Army on Thursday, accounted 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

To foil their nefarious designs the foot sol-

Official sources said, "In the Poonch sec-

tor, 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

"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 vert attention of the alert Indian soldiers.

Ministry of Defence spokesman in Jammu, -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

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

The movement titled 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 The scheme was launched

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.

Goyal bats for mix of virtual Related Parliamentary Standing Committees, a day after administering the oath/affirmation to & classroom

education" was huge - estimated

at US dollars ten billion-, adding,

it would be preferable to "do a

hybrid of virtual education and

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 education 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. **CHENNAI:** Emphasising that technology and innovation will be the key to "democratising days of this publication.

For AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION

Of the Zeo Dwaka Court development and prosperity" in Ch. No. 760, Dwaka Cour Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 M:-9899013918 overcoming the economic and social challenges of a post-Covid-19 world, Union Minister of Commerce, Industry and OK PLAY INDIA LIMITED
CIN No: L28219HR1988PLC030347 Railways, Mr. Piyush Goyal, called for a mix of "virtual Regd. Office: 17-18, Roz- Ka-Meo education and classroom Industrial Estate, Tehsil Nuh. District Mewat, Haryana- 122103 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

Centre not imported 10k tonnes of milk powder: Min

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

ontesting 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 pres-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 pro-

ducers,

"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 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.

Name of

Earnest

Maha: 298 die, 9,895 +ve | Brief me about law & order

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 With Thursday's fatality 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 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

in State: WB Guv to Didi ed, "given the enormity of **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 "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 tweet-

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 opposivirtually hunted out of public space by partisan police acting as political workers. This cannot be allowed in a democra-

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

vaigs NORTHERN RAILWAY Naidu nominates **Open e-Tender Notice**Sr. Divisional Engineer-I/Northern Railway, New Delhi for and on behalf of Presiden new RS members

to House panels cost of work New Delhi: Rajya Sabha money Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday nominated new members to various Department

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 panel on Agriculture.

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 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

of India invites e-tender on the prescribed form for the under noted work . SNP-Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of staff or tepair and maintenance of stain 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

quarters and service buildings in the section of SSE/W/PNP under ADEN/PNP on JHI-PNP section for the period ending 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

JP-Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of state

ADEN/KUN for the period ending 30.06.2021 1.₹1,91,99,558.32 **2.** ₹1,51,99,930.10 3. ₹64.99.640.22 4, ₹1.50.99.816.13

2. ₹2,26,000.00

e-tender at 15:00 hrs. on 14.08.2020.

www.ireps.gov.in

3. ₹1,30,000.00 4. ₹2,25,500.00 Completion 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 Upto 15:00 hrs. on 14.08.2020 opening of Date and time of submission

Website particulars, published tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and website where the tender form can be downloaded Tender Cost For S.No. 1 to 4 ₹5,900.00

of tender and opening of tender

1.₹2,46,000.00

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 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

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.		
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-	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. Job No Name of Work Tender Amount

0	000 NO.	Nume of Work	(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

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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 Financia Results of the Company for the quarter and year ended on 31st March, 2020

Date: 23.07.2020 Place : New Delhi www.dailypioneer.com

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This round to Pilot

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



ajasthan 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 can-

not 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 200member 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 Guijars 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



n 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 distinc-

tion 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.

opinion

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

he 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

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 air-

craft 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 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 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 ultralong-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 there was no need to walk blearyeyed 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 largescale 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 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

(The writer is Managing Editor, The Pioneer)

BI

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



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

-Sushmita Sen



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

US Ambassador to India



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



obliterated. Many beautiful build-

ings 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 beau-

ty. The Government should

instead focus its energy on rede-

veloping and beautifying the old

city of Delhi and also perking up

Adapt to changes

Devendra Khurana

the economy.

Oxford vaccine promising but let's be real

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

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

his refers to the editorial, "A glimmer of hope" (July

22). With 15 million cases and six lakh deaths glob-

ally, biomedical companies are under tremendous

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" compris-

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 clin-

M Pradyu

Kannur

ing antibodies and T-cells

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.



ical 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

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

goes well, the vaccine will be **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

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.

restructure the Lutvens' zone.

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



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and top Cabinet Ministers have spent the last fortnight talking to numerous stakehold notential investi 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 busi-

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 highvalue 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

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 selfsustaining, futuristic enterprises with an independent Board of Directors, equal nominees from the Union and State Governmentconcerned 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. POINTCOUNTERPOINT

analysis

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





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



n 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 central, they get aggregate constructions are \$\text{\$\ 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 etween 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 hasslefree 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 dig-ital eco-system, the model is a hybrid of online and

Two things are abundantly clear: Reliance Industries is deeply entrenched in Indian retail already through RRL and now increasing its footgetting 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-



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?



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.
The permission for 100 per cent FDI

in the marketplace is subject to two main riders, that is "the entity cannot permit 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

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 compa-

ny 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 thresh-

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), 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 ecommerce 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 round 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 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 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 coexist 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

mid 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

(The writer is a policy analyst)

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

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 erage 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

(The writer is an environmental journalist)





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

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

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 experi-ence 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.

SL Particulars

Rs. 10 each)

1 Basic

2 Diluated

(after tax)]

Rs. 10 each)

1 Basic

Date: 23.07.2020

Place: New Delh

1 Total Income from operations

Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax,

(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)

(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)

period [Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period

(after tax) and other Comprehensive Income

Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value

as shown in the audited Balance Sheet of

Earning Per Share (Rs) (Face Value Rs. 10)

Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax

Exceptional and /or Extra-ordinary items)

Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax

after share of profit of associates) Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax

(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary

items/ after share of profit of associate)

[Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period

Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value

Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve

as shown in the audited Balance Sheet of

accounting Years 2019-20 and 2018-19

8 Earning Per Share (Rs) (Face Value Rs. 10)

tors in their meeting held on 23.07.2020

(after tax) and other Comprehensive Income

(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items

Extract of Consolidated Audited Financial Results for

accounting Years 2019-20 and 2018-19

Total Income from operations

Total Other Comprehensive Income for the

Exceptional and /or Extra-ordinary items)

3 Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax

Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax

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 diplo-

China cites 'malicious

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

said the order to close the consulate "violates inter-

national law and basic norms governing international

relations," and "seriously undermines China-US rela-

"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.

Toe Biden said on Wednesday

that President Donald

Trump was the country's "first"

Democratic presidential nom-

inee's comments came during

a virtual town hall organised by

the Service Employees

mentioned the president refer-

ring to it as the "China

virus," Biden responded by blasting Trump and "his spread

people based on the colour of

their skin, their national origin,

where they're from, is absolute-

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

31-03-2020

(Audited)

(0.43)

(0.56)

83.98

(0.07

31-03-2020

(Audited)

(1,612.34)

(1,620.22)

(5,680.27)

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

Quarter Ended on

31-03-2019

(0.53)

(0.53)

(0.38)

83.98

(0.05)

(0.05)

Consolidated

Quarter Ended on

(Audited)

1429.35

1823.13

1680.46

14.647.40

157.98

31-03-2019 31-12-2019

The way he deals with

When a questioner complained of racism surrounding the coronavirus outbreak and

International Union.

presumptive

AP ■ WASHINGTON

racist President.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin

slander' as Houston

consulate closes

diplomatic norms.

The US State Department 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.

Department State spokesperson Morgan Ortagus said the US will not tolerate the PRC's violations of its sover**President Donald Trump** said hours after closure of Beijing's consulate in Houston to protect American intellectual property and

eignty 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.

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.

Jow Biden calls Trump **Green Card** country's 'first' racist Prez ly sickening," the former vice president said. "No sitting pres-

ident has ever done this. Never,

never, never. No Republican

president has done this. No

had racists, and they've exist-

ed. 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 — includ-

ing the nation's first, George Washington — owned slaves.

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

(Rs. in lakhs)

0.11

0.11

0.09

83.98

4,186.28

(Audited)

1932.35

1922.68

2514.38

2367.97

15,418.42

224.78

0.01

0.01

Year Ended or

6.99

0.60

0.60

0.47

83.98

3.690.75

0.06

(Audited)

(794.71)

(535.79)

(405.83)

(4,624.11)

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year Ended on

31-03-2020 31-03-2019

31-03-2020 31-03-2019

police brutality.

31-12-2019

(Unaudited)

0.45

0.45

83.98

0.05

0.05

(Unaudited)

1659.10

1752.20

1,564.59

153.92

153.92

he quarter and year ended on 31st March , 2020

President Woodrow

Democratic president. We've

The backlog for an Indian I 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

of residing permanently.
Senator Mike Lee said on Green Card policy did nothing for the child of an immigrant 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 employ-

Lee, the senator from Utah,

waitlist for Indian is more than 195 **vears: US senator**

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

issued to immigrants to the US as evidence that the bearer has been granted the privilege

Wednesday that the current whose dead parent's Green denied because his or her job

ment-based Green Cards.

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

China launches ambitious attempt to land rover on Mars

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

aboratories across the U.S.

Lare buckling under a surge

of coronavirus tests, creating

long processing delays that experts say are undercutting the

pandemic response.
With the US tally of con-

firmed infections at nearly 4

million Wednesday and new

cases surging, the bottlenecks

are creating problems for workers kept off the job while await-

ing results, nursing homes

struggling to keep the virus out

and for the labs themselves as

they deal with a crushing work-

load. Some labs are taking

weeks to return Covid-19

results, exacerbating fears that

people without symptoms could

be spreading the virus if they

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 with-

in a day, where the individual

tested is promptly isolated and their contacts are promptly

Frieden and other public health experts have called on

states to publicly report testing

turnaround times, calling it an essential metric to measure

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.

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 recom-

mendations against retesting

most Covid-19 patients to con-

New York, once by far the

The testing lags in the US

progress against the virus.

'There's been this obsession

don't isolate while they wait.

hina launched its most on state broadcaster CCTV. 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-yearold 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

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.

WHO chief upbraids Pompeo over 'unacceptable'

AP ■ GENEVA

allegations

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.

wake of the Trump adminis-

tration's repeated criticism of

Tedros' response to Pompeo represented some of his most defensive and fullthroated statements yet in the

ing 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

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

"It's clogging up the system," Adm. Brett Giroir, assis-

tant health secretary, told

reporters last week. Żachrey

Warner knows it all too well.

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

missed pay period later, he final-

ly 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 was-

n't allowed to return to work

missed so much work due to

testing taking forever," Warner

said. "It is what it is ... (but) I'm

lad 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, nurs-

India, US and Brazil

can 'deal with' this

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

democratic countries who

have tremendous internal

capacities to deal with this

disease", Dr Mike Ryan, head

of the WHO emergencies

programme, told a Geneva

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

US coronavirus cases

They are "powerful, able,

the pandemic.

pandemic: WHO

It was "frustrating that I've

without the result.

Almost two weeks and one

the request of his employer.

The 30-year-old waiter

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 short-

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

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

 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 saving 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 fourday 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 arueling series of meetings

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

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 threemonth 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.

SIMBHAOLI SUGARS LIMITED CIN: L15122UP2011PLC044210 Website : www.simbhaolisugars.com Registered Office : Simbhaoli Distt. Hapur Uttar Pradesh - 245207 Tel. No.: 0120-4806666, Pax: 0120-2427166 NOTICE Pursuant to Regulation 29 and 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure

Requirements) Regulations, 2015, NOTICE is Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Thursday, July 30, 2020 through Video Conferencing, inter alia, to conside udited financial statements of the Compan for the financial year ended on March 31 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 an /ww.nseindia.com For Simbhaoli Sugars Limited

Kamal Samtani Date: 22.07.2020

Company Secretary

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is given to public at large that my client Ms. Profectus Capital Pvl. Ltd., having its registered office at B-17, FOURTH FLOOR, ART GUILD HOUSE, PHOENIX MARKET CITY, KURKETS, MURBA-400970. (Lender / Mortgage) sanctioned cradif facility to KATYAL PHARMA (Borrower) and VARUN KATYAL, SOMNATH KATYAL & GEETU KATYAL (Co-Borrower/ Mortgagor) on condition that the Mortgagor shall mortgage the properly more particularly described in the schedule hereunder written (skall Pmoerty) written (said Property). The Mortgagor has confirmed and declared to my client that the

Mortgagor has purchased the said property vide registere Agreement for Sale / Sale Deed dated 2604/2018 registere under serial no. 10442 from Satinder Pal Singh vendor therein wh got the right little and interest in the property by sal 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 r

The Mortgagor further confirmed, declared and assured to my client that the said property is not involved in any mortgage, lease, loan, surely, loss, succession, reservation, acquisition or otherwise howsoever and free from all encumbrance and have dean and markalebal 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 heraunter by way of sale, gift, lease, inheritance, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien, futus, beneficial interest, possession, easement, tenancy, sub-lenancy, licence, hypothecation, mantenance, inheritance, power of attorney, order documents to the same known in willing together with supporting documents to the undersigned at his office G-36, 1st FLOOR, Connaught Place, next to Kotak Mahndra Bank, Central Dehi-110001, within 14 days from the date hered, falling which my clearly into proceed to

next to Adlax Manifurar Barik, Cerinal Defini-TOUTI. William 14 days from the date hereof, falling which my client will proceed to disburse the loan, without any reference to such claim and the same, fany, shall be considered deceded to have been waived and or abandoned. SCHEDULE Built up Shop bearing Pvt No.3, area measuring 9%22 without Roof Rights on Ground Floor out of Property bearing No. 24/53-A, Schemat 2016-Missen Seven Dake 15 Situated at Tilak Nagar, New Delhi-110018

RUNGTA IRRIGATION LIMITED CIN: 1.74899DL1986PLC023934
Regd. & Head Office: 1.01, 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 Rejendra 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 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

available at company's website at www.rungtairrigation.in For Rungta Irrigation Limited Prateek Sharma

(Company Secreatary & Compliance Officer) Place : New Delhi Date : 23rd July, 2020

on company's website www. nktil.com and on the website of the Stock Exchage www.msei.in. The detailed audited results and this extract were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of direc-By order of the Board

For N K Textile Industries Limited

Balbir Singh DIN:00027438

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.

INDIAN RAILWAYS

2.0 The interested suppliers are advised to visit the website http://ireps.gov.in for details of the tender and submission of

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 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-IDLI, 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 of		
	Website particulars notice boar	rd location		

and address of the office from where the IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.i NIT-09-20-21-W-2 Dated : 21.07.2020

complete details of tender can be seen

Above tender available on

Serving Customers With A Smile

the UN health agency in recent

1611/2020

GST, I-T mop up in Q1 very

recovery: Finance Secy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Thursday.

I of the current fiscal is "very

that the economy is recovering

sooner than what was antici-

pated at the time of imposition

of lockdown, Finance Secretary

Ajay Bhushan Pandey said on

Department wants to bring in

self-compliance among tax-

data of all financial transactions

via Form 26AS at the time of

filing income tax (I-T) return.

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.

going by the current trends, we

have certain trend about how

many people have made pay-

ment so far, and also the e-way

bill...Truck movement...All

these things are giving encour-

aging signals that the economy

is coming back to the realm

sooner than what was being

anticipated when the lock-

down was started in March," he

said while addressing a Ficci

lection, 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 pos-

sible businesses are finding

Besides, income tax col-

event here.

"For the month of June,

Pandey, who is also the

He said the Revenue

encouraging, indicates economic

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

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

Indian economy set for

post-Covid-19 rebound

as FDI remains buoyant,

New Delhi: The Indian econ-

omy is likely to rebound in the

second half of 2020 as the

impact of the COVID-19 pan-

demic recedes, and is project-

ed to grow by 6.7 per cent in

the next financial year, IHS

severe disruptions in industri-

al production and consumption spending in India during

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 progres-

sively eased, early signs of recovery were evident in the

most recent economic data.

The IHS Markit

Purchasing Managers' surveys for India showed that eco-

nomic momentum improved

in June, reflecting the easing of

COVID-19 related restrictions

lockdown beginning March 25

and restrictions were eased

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

term shocks from the pan-

demic, 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

SUPRANEET FINANCE AND

CONSULTANTS LIMITED

Google in mid-July.

Despite the negative short-

India imposed a total

during May and June.

The pandemic resulted in

"The severe negative impact is expected to result in

Markit said on Thursday.

April and May.

says IHS Markit

ing high of ₹2,060.65, following reports that Amazon was eyeing a stake in the conglom-

Bank were among the other winners, advancing as much as 3.28 per cent.

On the other hand, Axis

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-thanexpected earnings numbers.

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



Bank, HUL, Infosys, TCS, UltraTech Cement and L&T tumbled up to 3.80 per cent. "Benchmark indices ended

"Domestically, except for



Research at Geojit Financial

2.82 Infosys

-0.88

2.28 TCS

Kotak Mahi 2.14 UltraTech Cen 0.67

Reliance

Tech Mahi

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.

3.26 Infosys

Reliance 3.59 HUL

Tech Mahi 3.47 TCS

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

'No employee of Air India will be laid off' Brent crude futures rose 0.93 per cent to USD 44.70 per bar-No reduction in the basic rel. 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

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

uptick in the rupee during

the day was supported by weak greenback, foreign fund inflows and positive domes-

tic equities, but rising tensions between the US and

China weighed on investor

sentiment and restricted the

index, which gauges the

greenback's strength against

a basket of six currencies,

rose 0.01 per cent to 94.99.

Meanwhile, the dollar

Forex traders said the

against \$

pay, dearness allowance and house rent allowance of any employee

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After strong reactions from tits 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

"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

ways to get started. But there were certain sectors like hosax mop up in first quarter pitality, education, tourism, which are facing difficulty," encouraging" and indicates 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 vear, and would facilitate volpayers by making available untary 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

"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 extend-

"...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

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

Reliance Jio topped 4G speed 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

IANS I NEW DELHI

avirus pandemić.

change in investment

climate hit by Covid

Govt wants PSUs to trigger

speed chart with 8 mbps speed,

Government has asked Public Sector

Undertakings (PSUs) to com-

plete all their planned capex for

FY21 on time and become

vehicles of growth for the economy hit by the coron-

on a standstill, the Govt wants

companies administered by it

to change the mood in the

country by stepping up expen-

diture and generating eco-

nomic activity that results in

income generation and job

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 per-

formance of CPSEs can help

the economy in a big way to

recover from the impact of

With private investment

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

For upload speed, Vodafone and Idea led the

COVID-19.In this regard, she

said it is important that CPSEs

vided to them for FY21 is

'spent properly and within

time". Sitharaman asked secre-

taries 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.

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 activ-

and sagging demand condi-

tions may also push PSUs to step back on their invest-

ments.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%).

She said that to achieve this

ensure that capital outlay pro-

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 con-

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $T^{
m he}$ 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

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 pandemicrelated disruptions on con-

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-met-

ros 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 COVID-19 pandemic has radically shifted way of life. "However, despite uncertain

and challenging conditions, our research shows that nonmetros 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 pat-

Extend by 2 years compulsory gold 'hallmarking', urges CAIT from Raksha Bandhan on

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

Prior

approval

must for

sale: IRDAI

in insurance company

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 provi-

sions related to sale and pur-

chase of equity will also apply

on creation of pledge or any

other kind of encumbrance

over shares of an insurance

company by its promoters.

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

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 liq-uidate 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

Gold crosses Reliance breaks ₹51,000 mark, into top 50 most up by ₹502

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices went past ₹ 51,000 mark in the nation-Pledge of over 5% equity al capital, rising by ₹502 on Thursday on strong international prices, according to HDFC Securities. New Delhi: IRDAI on Thursday said sale, purchase

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

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. international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,875 per ounce, while silver was flat at USD 22.76 per ounce.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI $B^{\text{illionaire Mukesh Ambani's}}_{\text{Reliance Industries Ltd has}}$ broken into the top 50 most valued companies globally after it became the first company with market capitalisation of

globally, ranks 48

valued cos

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

over ₹13 lakh crore.

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

zooms 77 pc New Delhi: Shares of special-ty chemicals manufacturing

on the BSE as well as NSE.

During the day, it jumped 88.96 per cent to ₹803.10

changed hands on the NSE.

said on the listing.

Ashok Kumar is New Additional General Manager of East Central Railway

Hajipur: Ashok Kumar has taken over the charge of Additional General Manager, batch of 1984 exam batch.

Shri Ashok Kumar has began his career on Indian Railways as Assistant Divisional

lodged at P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi.

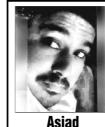
may kindly inform to the following.



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.

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON



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:-SHO: P.S. Chandni Mahal,

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Website: http://cbi.nic.in Ph.: 011-23279338, Fax: 24368639. Tel.: 24368638/24368641 23271751, 23263967

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

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.

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

Regd. Office: C-55/2, Wazirpur Industrial Area, Delhi-110 052 011-42952500, Fax: 011-42952555 E-Mail: info@sfclindia.com 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 permissio

Regulation 47(2) of the Listing Regulations that the further details may be accessed or 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 Stoci

It is further notified in pursuance o

For Supraneet Finance & Consultants Ltd

(Deepti Jain)

Rossari Biotech makes blockbuster stock market debut

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

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.

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 '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

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)

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

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

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out

information about this person but no clue has come to light

Any person having any information or clue about this person

DP/392/N/2020(UIDB) Ph.: 011-23953776, 8750870122

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

P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi

front of 1561 Novelty Cinema SPM Marg



Trend

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 lit-

> "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.

erally gone," Diaz





TOUCHLESS BEAUTY

enough to scare many of us into depending on household hacks. But they have While beauticians are taking necessary steps to ensure safety at their parlours, many cosmetic companies are modifying their products to With salons getting back to business post an ease in lockdown restrictions, empower salons to be touch-free 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 accurate that their services

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

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 prebooking 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 ockdown 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 reopening. 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?



erhaps 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

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 techni-

cian'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 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-

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 deliv-

er the same kind of service with the

same efficiency by using certain profes-

sional tools and techniques. Many

THE ZERO-TOUCH FACIAL

not been salon-perfect.

the door open.





Can you spot the similarity?

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 signa-ture '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 7series 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 carmak-

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 differnt 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 ike the facelift on the Verna looks ke a Whale shark out of water.

Here is the funny thing, large rilles 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-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, Î'm not going down without a fight. Or in my case, without writing such

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 Aresponsibly 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

"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

eople 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.



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

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



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

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 sev-



eral 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.)

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
- Then add chicken and

Basil leaves: 10 gm

Refined oil: 10 ml

Chilli paste: 4 gm

Cornflour: 5 gm

Egg: 1

METHOD

degi mirch.

Heat oil in wok.

Vinegar: 3 ml

sautee.

- Add little water and allow
- Adjust seasoning.
- corn flour. Marinate chicken in five spice powder, salt, sugar and
 - boiled rice.
- leaves, fresh sliced red Add chopped garlic sautee, ginger, celery, lemon grass Chef, Jaypee Residency Manor,



- chicken to cook. Add chilli paste and spichi
- Adjust consistency with
- Served topped on above
- Garnish with fresh basil
- chillies and fried single egg. Courtesy: Tanuj Nayyar, Executive



EGGLESS CARROT

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
- Walnuts: 25 gm For cream cheese filling:
- Cream cheese: 62 gm

- Sugar: 22 gm
- Whipping cream: 20

Vanilla essence: 7 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.

pepper. Mix well.

Heat a large, heavy-

based frying pan and

over and cook for further

two minutes until golden

cooked fritters from the

brown. Remove the



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.

pan, drain on paper towels and keep warm.

Repeat until all the

- brush with oil. batter has been fried off. Drop large spoons full Mix the mayonnaise, of the batter into the pan, chopped parsley and a
- making about four fritters little lemon juice, and at a time. adjust the seasoning to Cook over medium heat taste. for two minutes or until Arrange the warm golden and firm on the underside. Flip the fritters
 - fritters on a platter and serve with the mayonnaise dressing plus extra lemon wedges (optional). Courtesy: Le Creuset.

SWEETCORN CORIANDER FRITTERS WITH A **LEMON MAYO DIP** WHAT YOU NEED

- Cake flour: 300 ml Baking powder: ½ tsp
- Full-cream milk: 150
- 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

(Salt and fresh)

- (finely grated): 1 cup Ground black pepper
- 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
- 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

On Klopp of the world!

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

iverpool 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

"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 stav away on the night Liverpool finally got their hands on the trophy, supporters crowded around the stadium even prior to kick-off, while the sec-ond half was accompanied by the



constant crackling of fireworks lit by

fans outside the ground.
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

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

"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 Zivech, while they are reportedly closing in on a deal for the 90-million euro (\$103

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-Ódoi.

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

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

We should not stop because others will not sleep: Klopp

iverpool manager Jurgen Klopp Lbelieves his side will need to keep improving to hold off the chasing pack next season after lifting the Premier League trophy.
Chelsea have already strength-

ened ahead of next season with the signings of a long-term Liverpool target Timo Werner and Hakim

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

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

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."

not to get 'too arrogant'

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 Kovacic. Trent Alexander-Arnold found the net from the free kick to make

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 fan-

"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 "That was my thing, but

(it's) done. In match play you get emotional and that was it." AP

Lampard tells Liverpool | Man Utd just a point away from

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. Solskjåer's side fell behind

to Michail Antonio's penalty in the first half at Old Trafford. But teenage forward Greenwood struck after the

third place in the Premier League.
They are ahead of fourth-

placed Chelsea on goal differinterval to lift United into ence 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

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



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.

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 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 topflight 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.

Archer, Anderson, Wood Inter draw clears title way for Juve return for series decider



PTI MANCHESTER

Past 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

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

▼nter Milan's goalless draw 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.

Champions League next season is assured but they could now 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

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

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 PCB said in a release. PTI

New Zealand Cricket leave decision to join IPL

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 them-

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

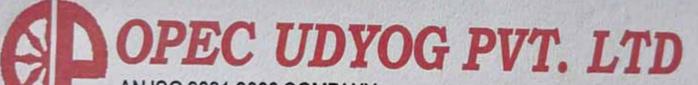
"Regarding the IPL, NZC will be issuing NOCs to the relevant players and it's up to them to decide," NZC spokesperson Richard Boock

While the NZC will be updating its players about the health safety protocols and latest Covid-19 related developsix individuals to do due diligence.
"Well, yes, the issuing of

NOCs is considered on a caseby-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 maton players ters," 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

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B-7,8.9, NEW INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, JAGATPUR, CUTTACK - 754021 (ODISHA) TEL: 0671-2491599. FAX: 0671-2490858, E-mail: opecudyog@yahoo.co.in