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VIJAYAWADA DELHI LUCKNOW

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SAMANTHA SHARES SELF-CARE **SECRETS** 

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# the pioneer www.dailypioneer.com

#### **DOCTOR HELD FOR RAPE BID ON** CORONA PATIENT IN UTTAR PRADESH

Agovernment doctor at Aligarh's Deen Dayal hospital was arrested on Wednesday on charges of molesting and attempting to rape a 25year-old woman, who was recuperating in the isolation ward after being tested positive for coronavirus. According to reports, Doctor Tufail

quarantined himself after completing his duty in the isolation ward. The victim said in her complaint that Tufail visited the women's ward on Tuesday night and allegedly touched the private parts of the patient on the pretext of examining her.



#### FAKE NEWS: AMITABH BACHCHAN **DENIES REPORTS OF TESTING NEGATIVE**

 $M_{
m has}$  egastar Amitabh Bachchan on Thursday dismissed reports that he has tested negative for coronavirus and called the piece of news "an

#### AFRICAN-ORIGIN SIDDI TRIBAL ELATED ON BECOMING K'TAKA LAWMAKER

 $S^{\text{hantharam Budna Siddi, a 55-year-old African-origin Siddi tribal, is elated on being nominated as a Karnataka Legislative Council (MLC)}$ member by Governor Vajubhai Vala. Siddi is among 5 persons nominated on Wednesday to the upper house to fill vacancies caused after the term of the incumbents lapsed in the 75-member legislative council. The four others are former ministers A.H. Vishwanath and C.P. Yogeeshwar, academician Talwar Saban and BJP women's wing president Bharathi Shetty. "I am grateful to the state government for giving our community a voice in the legislature and an opportunity to make laws for the benefit of all," said Siddi.

#### **GOVT MAKES E-INVOICING OF GST COMPULSORY FROM OCTOBER 1**

 $T^{\text{he government proposes to roll out compulsory e-invoicing of GST from October 1, but has decided to raise the threshold to exempt smaller}$ entities from this compliance, an official said on Thursday. Accordingly, einvoicing will be mandatory only for businesses with turnover of Rs 500 crore or more. Those, on the other side of the threshold, will be exempted from the compliance burden, for the time being. The threshold for mandatory e-invoicing -- a step to improve tax

compliance — was earlier planned to be kept at Rs 100 crore. But, the changes are now being made on the recommendations of an empowered panel of the GST Council.



Need of hour to jointly bear Covid burden: HP CM



**UK welcomes efforts** by India, China to de-escalate tension in Ladakh



Monetisation by RBI has a cost: Rajan

#### **Month & Paksham:**

Shravana & Shukla Paksha Panchangam

Tithi: Chaturthi: 02:33 pm Nakshatram: Purva Phalguni:

04:02 pm Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start

any important work)

**Rahukalam:** 10:46 am – 12:22 pm **Yamaqandam:** 03:35 pm - 05:11 pm 10:43 pm - 12:12 am 07:33 am - 09:09 am **Good Time:** (to start any important work) **Amritakalam:** 10:05 am - 11:35 am

**Abhijit Muhurtham:** 11:56 am − 12:48 pm

#### **VIJAYAWADA**

WEATHER Forecast: Cloudy Temp: 28/25 Humidity: 92% **Sunrise:** 05.53 am **Sunset:** 06.52 pm **Current Weather Conditions** Updated July 23, 2020 5:00 PM

incorrigible lie". The 77-year-old actor, who along with actor-son Abhishek, was admitted to the isolation ward of Nanavati Hospital here on July 11, was quick to rubbish stories that started swirling on social media. "This news is incorrect, irresponsible, fake and an incorrigible lie!" wrote Amitabh on Twitter, tagging a video clip from a TV news channel. The reports emerged as the Bollywood veteran and Abhishek, 44, neared the completion of their 14day quarantine period at the city hospital.

# State records 7,998 cases, 61 casualties in 24 hours

With over 10,000 infections, E Godavari now Covid hotbed in AP

PNS VIJAYAWADA

A staggering 7,998 fresh Covid-19 cases and 61 casualties were added in a day in Andhra Pradesh on Thursday, taking the death toll to 884, according to the latest bulletin. Andhra Pradesh also

recorded the second highest number of Covid-19 cases in India, next only to Maharashtra. East Godavari is now the

Covid hotspot of the state as the contagion has been spreading at a rapid pace over the past week in particular. The district has recorded the highest number of cases and crossed the 10,000 mark (10,038), out of the total 72,711 positive cases reported till July 23 in the state.

East Godavari also saw 14 Covid-19 deaths, the single largest number in a district in a day so far.

In the last 24 hours, 5,428 Covid-19 patients were discharged from hospitals after they got cured, the bulletin said.

According to East Godavari district Collector Muralidhar Reddy the surge in the district was expected around August 25, but the cases surged earlier than surmised. He advised people not to panic, but instead be aware and follow Covid-19 guidelines.

Officials said that increased testing has led to detection of more cases. The district is now conducting about 5,000 to 6,000 Covid-19 tests against the earlier 1,500 to 2,000 samples a day. The private hospitals have also started offering Covid-19 treatment.

While it's said that marriages are

made in heaven, nowadays, it

appears that the time they are

solemnised is dependent on

Playing havoc with his mar-

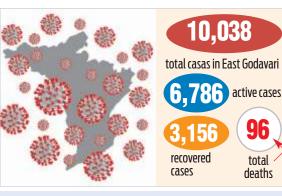
riage plans, a 28- year-old

youth tested positive for Covid-

19 hours before his wedding at

his hometown Kothapeta vil-

lage in East Godavari district of



#### Man tests positive, wife denied entry into her home

PNS EAST GODAVARI

In yet another incident of Covid spread, residents of Alcot Gardens in Rajahmundry locked the house of a w o m a n health workand Auxiliary Nursing Midwifery (ANM) and prevented her from

her husband tested positive Gardens. But the locals there for Covid-19. According to reports, Kalyani, working as ANM at near Kadiyapulanka (Sri Gurulanka) area in East Godavari district and she has

been staying in a rented house in Rajahmundry. Kalyani's husband tested positive for the Covid-19 and he was referred to home quarantine. However, he

Bommuru quarantine centre in East Godavari district. Meanwhile, Y Rajeev, social boycott fearing the owner of the house, did not allow Kalyani into the home claiming that she would spread

Though she tested negative for the virus, the house owner didn't allow her to stay in the rented house.

With this she went entering her own home after to her own house at Alcot locked her house from outside forcing the health worker and her relative to spend the night outside of her

house while it was raining. Though she dialled 100 (police) and others, no one came forward to rescue her.

A video of Kalyani urging the people to show humanity went viral on social media platforms.

down forced them to wait for

Finally, when they decided to

brave the virus and get married

this weekend, the pandemic

made its presence felt, once

again. On Tuesday evening, the

groom complained of fever

and headache and he under-

went the Covid-19 test the

next day. When the family

members of the groom were

making all the arrangements for

at least three months.

#### Human ingenuity will find solution to Covid: Guv

Amid rising Coronavirus Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan on Thursday said human ingenuity and capability of innovation and adaptation would soon create a solution to the Covid-19 pandemic mankind was now facing.
In a televised address to the

people of the state on completion of one year in office of Governor, Harichandan noted that the country was witnessing a spurt in Ćovid-19 cases in spite of the best efforts by the administra-

It was a worldwide phenomenon that even countries with advanced medical and public health facilities were finding it difficult to cope with.

The Governor said both the state and the Central governments were doing their best to contain the spread of the virus and providing treatment facilities to those infected by the virus.

"The only mantra through which the battle against Covid-19 can be won appears to be following the principle of 4Ts - Tracing, Tracking, Testing and Treating," he remarked. He advised people to remain at home as far as possible and follow the guidelines issued by the health experts as prevention was the best way to defeat the

Thursday stepped into the

groom's home and confirmed

his worst fears, that he has test-

ed positive. Brushing aside his

protes, they the groom to a

The medical and health offi-

cials are suspecting that the youth, along with his family

quarantine

Bommuluru.

members

virus there.

# Rethink 3-capital decision, Pawan Kalyan advises Jagan

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Playing the roles of both the good cop and the bad cop, Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan on Thursday praised and criticised Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy in the same breath.

The Jana Sena chief not only advised Jagan to rethink on his decision to have three capitals for the state, but also come to the rescue of the farmers of Amaravati, even while praising the Chief Minister for his handling of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Commenting on the alleged atrocities against Dalits in AP, Pawan said that series of events against a community were disheartening. "It's quite distressing that these incidents are taking at a time a leader from

Home Minister. The Jagan Modi on the capital where the government has failed to protect the weaker sections," the actor-politician said. "The PM asked to build a capital like Gandhinagar in 2,000 to 3,000 acres," he said. farmers of Amaravati have my "While I welcome the num-

complete support," he said. ber of tests being carried out by the AP goverment, the pan-Pawan Kalyan also found fault with former demic should have been handled better. Unfortunately, the chief minister N facilities and infrastructure for Chandrababu Covid patients in AP is not Naidu for good," the Jana Sena chief acquiring 33,000 acres of Pawan Kalyan said that he

was on Chaturmasa deeksha where he eats only one meal a day and sleeps on the floor. He said that this deeksha will continue through Karthika Masam and he was doing it for the wellbeing of humanity.

**SpiceJet lifts** 

1,500 Indian

**Kyrgyzstan** 

PNS NEW DELHI

students from

SpiceJet on Thursday said

it will operate nine charter

flights in association with

bollywood actor Sonu

Sood to repatriate over

1,500 Indian students from

# HC notice to Centre, AP on 3-capital plea

land.

The Andhra Pradesh High Court, which has been hearing a batch of petitions opposing the trifurcation of the state capital, on Thursday admitted yet another petition which argued that the location of the capital city of the state comes under the purview of the

Admitting the petition, the High Court sent notices to the Central and State governments, directing them to file a counter affidavit in this regard and adjourned the case to August 6 for further hearing.

It observed that when a situation is developing, there can't



be piecemeal hearing and that all the matters have to be taken up together.

The pagination of the court bundle is not complete and that they will be adjourning the matter by one week for the registry to paginate and the matters to be heard on August 6 for the completion, the bench hearing the petition said.

Kyrgyzstan during the next two months. "SpiceJet operated the first charter flight from

Bishkek (capital of Kyrgyzstan) to bring back 135 students to their hometown of Varanasi today," the airline said in a press release.

#### opted to convalesce at the Order issued for permanent Groom tests positive hours before marriage commission of women officers PNS EAST GODAVARI medical and health officials on Coronavirus-induced lock-

centre

went Rajahmundry for shopping and he might have contracted the

The Ministry of Defence has issued an order for grant of Permanent Commission to women officers in the Army

In a landmark judgement, the apex court in February had directed that all serving women officers recruited under the Short Service Commission (SSC) scheme will have to be considered for Permanent Commission.



#### The youth was supposed to the marriage, officials from the Godavari district, but the Ayodhya temple to get bigger, taller, more magnificent

The construction will begin

PNS AYODHYA

Coronavirus.

Andhra Pradesh.

Ayodhya will now be bigger and taller in size. According to Nikhil Sompura, an architect and son of C. Sompura, chief architect of the temple, "The earlier design was prepared in 1988. Over 30 years have passed... the footfall is likely to increase. People are also very enthusiastic about visiting the temple. So, we thought its size should be increased. As per the revised design, the height of the temple has been increased from 141-feet to 161-feet."

The proposed Ram temple in

Sompura said that two mandaps have also been added to the design and all pillars and the stones that were carved based



on the earlier design will still be used. Only two new 'mandaps' have been added.

tie knot with his girlfriend

from Villakaru village of East

after a grand ground-breaking ceremony on August 5 and for The original design that was this, invitations have also been repared in 1988, mentioned its sent to the Prime Minister's height as 141 feet which has Office and other VIPs. been raised to 161 foot tall.

**'Bhoomi Pujan Mahurat'** The Jyotishpeethadhee ated in the "Uttam Kaal" section of the Hindu calendar. Shardapithadheeshwar, Jagadguru

**Shankaracharya objects to** 

Shankaracharya Swaroopanand Saraswati has questioned the 'muhurat" August 5 for laying the foundation stone of the Ram temple. The Shankaracharya said

generally good work is initi-

'The August 5 date falls in the Dakshinayan Bhadrapada month of the Hindu calendar. August 5 is the second date of Krishna Paksha. In the scriptures, the beginning of the construction of the home/temple in the Bhadrapada month is prohibited," he said.

and Stamps portfolio.

The Roads and Buildings department, which was earlier handled by Krishna Das was

# Krishna Das gains in reshuffle of portfolios

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet underwent a minor reshuffle on Thursday, after portfolios were allocated to newly sworn-in ministers Chelluboina Srinivasa Venugopala Krishna and Dr Sidiri Appalaraju.

Dharmana Krishna Das, who earlier was Roads and Buildings minister, was promoted as Deputy Chief Minister and allocated the Revenue, Registrations

Sidiri Appalaraju was allocated Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries department. The BC Welfare Department, which was earlier handled by Shankar Narayana, was allocated to Chelluboyina Srinivasa Venugopala Krishna. Pilli Subhash Chandra Bose,

who was the Minister of Revenue, and Mopidevi Venkataramana, who was the Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Marketing, had recently resigned from their posts after being elected to the

REGULAR PATIENT FLOW DIPS

# Private hospitals to cash in on Covid-19 treatment

Most of the private hospitals, which were reluctant to spare beds for Covid treatment, are now changing their plans with a sharp decline in the flow of patients due to the pandemic.

Some hospitals, which a couple of months ago, had less than 10 beds for treating Covid-19 patients, are dedicating an entire building, or several wings of their facilities to such cases. Officials of the hospitals said the change in stand was prompted by a realisation that they would now get only a few patients with other ailments.

Earlier, the government has asked private hospitals to increase the number of beds. The hospitals were also asked to set up more satellite units for asymptomatic Covid patients, or those with mild symptoms. Officials of a number of private several hospitals said they were earlier reluctant to add beds for Covid treatment because they were apprehensive that other patients would be scared away.

"Before Covid-19 struck, 60 per cent of the indoor patients would have planned admissions, coming through the outpatient department. The rest were emergency admissions. Now, there are barely any planned admissions," Subramanyam, PRO of Care

Hospital in Ram Nagar, said. "The hospital is trying to increase 50 more beds dedicat-



ed to Covid treatment following the government's request."

Earlier in the week, District Collector V Vinay Chand visited Visakha Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS) and reviewed the situation with the health officials. Keeping the rising number of Coronavirus cases, he instructed officials concerned to make necessary arrangements to improve the bed strength from 548 to 750 and facilitate oxygen beds. At the CSR block, Vinay Chand instructed officials to keep

ready 300 beds for occupation. The special officer for Covid-19 of north Coastal Andhra Dr PV Sudhakar, said: "As cases are increasing, we will keep more private hospitals on standby. They should get ready to handle Covid-19 cases safely." Apart from free-of-cost treatment at designated Covid hospitals, health officials are

also planning to demarcate

hospitals for various strata of

'There are some patients, who do not mind spending money but insist on having a single-occupancy cabin with television and privacy. For them, corporate hospitals can be roped in," Dr Sudhakar

The district administration is negotiating with a number of private hospitals and, if required, will either take over the hospitals, or a few wings to accommodate more patients. If the government takes over the hospitals, the treatment is going to be free, as it comes under the Arogyasri scheme. As of now only one, or two private hospitals have been approved by the government

for treatment in the district. "Earlier, hospitals were apprehensive about losing non-Covid patients. But over the past few months, mostly Covid

couple of months ago, had less than 10 beds for treating Covid-19 patients, are dedicating an entire building. or several wings of their Officials of the hospitals said prompted by a realisation that they would now get only a few

• "Before Covid-19 struck, 60 per cent of the indoor patients would have planned admissions, coming through the outpatient department. The rest were emergency admissions. Now, there are barely any planned admissions," Subramanyam, PRO of Care Hospital in Ram Nagar, said.

patients are coming to get admitted. So, hospitals are increasing the number of beds for Covid treatment to remain viable, said Front Office manager of Pradhama Hospital.

"A large number of patients diagnosed with Covid are actually patients, who came for other ailments. Such patients come back for their procedures after recovering from Covid after two weeks or so. Moreover, a few non-Covid patients are not turning up for fear of contracting the virus," said Venkatesh, manager-Critical Care Unit of Seven

#### **Amazon to** set up 10 new fulfillment centres

PNS HYDERABAD

Amazon India on Thursday announced the expansion of its fulfillment network in India, with 10 new Fulfillment Centres (FC) and expansion of seven existing buildings. These new FCs will be set up in Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Patna, Lucknow, Kolkata, Chennai, Ludhiana and Ahmedabad.

With this expansion, Amazon.in will have more than 60 FCs in 15 States, with a total storage capacity of over 32 million cubic feet. The new FCs include the specialised network of FCs for large appliances and furniture category and Receive Centres.
All new fulfillment centres
will be operational before the festive season, enabling customers to stay safe at home and have what they need delivered at their doorstep

As per the press statement, Akhil Saxena, VP, Customer Fulfilment Operations, APAC, MENA & LATAM, Amazon India. Said, "The increase in storage capacity is in line with our long-term commitment to invest in India and we are delighted to help Indian customers get everything they need, while keeping our customers and our workforce safe. With the expanded network of more than 60 fulfilment centres, we look forward to creating thousands of job opportunities with competitive pay."

## AP tops with 8K fresh Covid cases in S India

Andhra Pradesh with nearly 8,000 COVID-19 cases topped southern states in daily numbers for the second day on Thursday as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala also reported record single day tallies with the aggregate of the four breaching the 20,000 mark.
Tamil Nadu breached the

6,000 mark, Karnataka shot past 5,000 cases and Kerala saw 1,000 plus infections for the second day as the pan-demic situation in the southern

The tiny Union Territory Puducherry recorded 123 fresh cases, taking its tally to

region contin-

ued to remain

The four states and the

UT registered a total of

Tamil Nadu breached the 6,000 mark, Karnataka shot past 5,000 cases and Kerala saw 1,000 plus infections for the second day as the pandemic situation in the southern region continued

The high case-loads in Kerala and Tamil Nadu came months after the former announced on May 8 it had flattened the curve while the latter earlier seemed to be on

р to remain grim

course for achieving a similar feat before two clusters played spoilsport and started pushing TN's cases north in quick pace.



#### **TV** actor from **Guntur ends** life in Hyd

PNS HYDERABAD

Maddela Sabeera alias Rekha, a television actress, committed suicide at her residence in Vidyanagar in Hyderabad on Thursday.

According to police Sabeera, a native of Guntur district, moved to Hyderabad pursuing her dream to act in movies. 'She had acted in a couple

of television serials but after that there were no offers. Then she returned to Guntur and got married. However, differences arose between the couple after the birth of a girl child, due to which they got separated. A couple of years later, she got married to one Chaitanya and shifted to Hyderabad and has been living at Vidyanagar," said

the police.
Chaitanya was into real estate business and she resumed her career in the television industry. She worked as an anchor in television. Gradually, offers began declining and her husband's real estate business, too, ran into losses due to which she reportedly plunged into depression.

On Wednesday, she went to take a bath but did not come out from the bathroom even after a long time. Her husband went looking for her. Finding the bathroom door closed, he called her but there was no response. Immediately, he alerted the police who rushed to the spot and found

#### **Kidnapped** son of beggar rescued

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Ganesh, the two-year-old son of a beggar, who was allegedly kidnapped on July 21, was traced from Phool Bagh Colony of Vizianagaram Thursday. The police arrested the three persons in this connection. The accused have been identified as Patan Salman Khan, Sk Subhani and Bandaru Roshan Raja. All three are friends and residents of Phool Bagh Colony. According to police, the aunt of Roshan Raja, who is childless wanted to adopt a child. On July 21, all the three had come to Visakhapatnam in an autorickshaw and they noticed Ganesh living with his parents, who are beggars, on the roadside.

They waited till all the three slept, and seizing the opportunity late in the night, they kidnapped Ganesh and took him to Vizianagaram. Based on a complaint filed by Srinu, father of Ganesh, police launched a search operation. Based on CCTV footage, the police identified the registration number of the auto-rickshaw and traced the accused.

#### VIJAYAWADA **BULLION RATES**







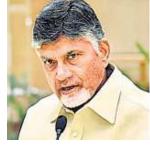
# TDP to adopt rape survivor, Dalit minor girl

Party will adopt and give education for the victim: Naidu

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) has announced Rs 2 lakh financial assistance for the Dalit minor girl, who fell victim to kidnap and gang-rape in Rajahmundry. TDP National President and

former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has promised to adopt the 16year-old girl and give her good education on behalf of the party. The TDP fact-finding committee consisting of former ministers and MLAs has returned after a visit to the town and submitted its report



to the party chief. The committee called on the girl's family

and expressed its solidarity. Naidu was moved when the leaders narrated to him about the deteriorated condition of

the innocent girl. He immediately announced the Rs 2 lakh cash assistance. As the girl has studied up to Class X, the TDP chief announced that their party would take care of her future education. There was a strong need to instill confidence in the girl

Naidu asked the party leaders to agitate against such atrocities and assure the victims that the TDP would stand like a rock of support to them in their hour of need. Society has a responsibility to mould the hapless girl into a dutiful citizen, who would carry on her fight against such injustice.

#### PNS HYDERABAD

Health Minister Eatala Rajender has directed the authorities to focus on equipping isolation centres in all districts.

During a video conference with superintendents of hospitals and staff of the Telangana Vaidya Vidhana Parishad, Eatala asked officials to recruit or engage requisite personnel, including sanitation staff, patient care providers, lab technicians, and nursing staff for the isolation centers.

Referring to the standards of care, the Minister said, "We are in talks with researchers around the world to provide advanced treatment information from time to time. Experts say that even if the vaccine comes, it would not be of much use; 99% of people do not need medica-



TS to focus on isolation centres in districts

tions like Remdisivir or be put on ventilator. Timely use of antiinflammatory drugs can save

The Minister said that Diet Contractors would be paid arrears shortly. Necessary sanitation staff, patient care providers, lab technicians and nursing staff would be hired shortly. Oxygen cylinders would be sent to all hospitals from Hyderabad, he said.

Reasoning that many people were dying more "due to fear of corona" than from the complications caused by the virus, the Minister called for redoubled efforts to quickly detect coronavirus and prevent deaths. Most people don't even know that they were infected by the virus. "I will be available to you 24 hours a day, let's all work with the same spirit,â€⊠ he observed. Eatala asked the authorities of

every government hospital to ensure that generator facility is available, along with stocks of diesel to run the machines. He gave these instructions in the wake of sudden shutdown of power supply in Gandhi Hospital at about 5:35 pm, which was restored at 5:56 pm. According to superintendent Dr Raja Rao, "Our generators started functioning by 5:42 pm(within 7 minutes of power shutdown). There's no issue & no problem occurred in the Emergency & ICU areas and other patient care areas.

# Admission criteria for NITs & CFTIs relaxed

PNS HYDERABAD

After IIT, Central Seat Allocation Board (CSAB) also relaxed norms for admissions into National Institute of Technology (NITs) and Centrally Funded Technical Institutions (CFTIs) on Thursday.

NITs will admit undergraduate students based on their performance in Joint Entrance Exam-Mains (JEE-Mains) and will discount the Class XII Board examination marks in selection process, the Human Resource Development Ministry has announced.

"Due to prevailing circumstances, the Central Seat



Allocation Board (CSAB) has decided to relax the eligibility criterion for admissions to NITs and other centrally funded tech-

nical institutions," Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank tweeted.

"JEE Main 2020 qualified

candidates will now only need to obtain a passing certificate in Class XII examination irrespective of the marks obtained," he further stated. As per the norms, a candidate had to secure a minimum of 75% marks in Class XII Board exams, or rank among the top 20 percentile in their qualifying examinations, to get the admission, along with the performance in JEE-Mains.

Earlier, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) also announced that they will admit the students based on their performance in JEE-Advanced. The marks in Class XII Board examinations will not be necessary for admission into IITs this year.

# Covid-19 suspect jumps off hospital building in Hyderabad

PNS HYDERABAD

A 75-year-old man, suspected to be infected with Coronavirus, committed suicide by jumping off hospital building at Srinagar Colony here on Thursday. The deceased was identified as R Nagender, a retired employee of Air India. He was residing in Ameerpet, along with his wife and two sons.

According to police, Nagender had shown symptoms of the virus and had gone to Nikhil Hospital at Srinagar



Colony on Thursday. After a while, he went to the terrace of the building and jumped from

it. He suffered critical injuries after he landed on the trees below. The hospital staff immediately took him inside and put him under emergency treatment. Nagendra later succumbed to the injuries. The Banjara Hills police registered a

case and took up investigation. Preliminary investigation revealed that Nagender was also suffering from lung ailment and he was scared of contracting the virus. Afraid that he was affected, he took the extreme step, said the police.

# ISRAELI DOCTORS DEVELOP 'ANTI-DIABETES I

IANS NEW YORK

A new drug being developed in Israel could be the answer to treating the main cause of Type 2 Diabetes, insulin resistance.

According to Concenter BioPharma co-founder and CSO Prof. Mottie (Mordechai) Chevion, "the unique property" of the drug, called Zygosid-50 "is that it cancels out insulin resistance.

"It's an anti-diabetes drug," he told The Jerusalem Post during an interview on Thursday afternoon."With Zygosid-50, we are proposing the use of the new drug and are developing it into an oral pill, as a monotherapy drug, to treat diabetics and pre-



vent in pre-diabetic patients," Chevion said. Asked about how

it "almost completely reduces insulin resistance and normal-Zygosid-50 works, he said that izes all diabetes-associated

"It's an anti-diabetes drug," he told The Jerusalem Post during an interview on Thursday afternoon."With Zygosid-50, we are proposing the use of the new drug and are developing it into an oral pill, as a monotherapy drug, to treat diabetics and prevent in pre-diabetic patients," Chevion said

parameters to the normal range. "If you take care of the insulin resistance, you take care of the symptoms," he said. He stressed that they have

not found any adverse side effects during their testing. 'What we found about Zygosid-50 allows us to go into clinical trials," he said, explain-

Administration has approved clinical trials, after supplementary TOX studies, based on evidence from earlier testing in animal models for Type 2 Diabetes.

"It was proven as 'safe," Chevion told the Post. "We found that it restores the normal insulin sensitivity, it ing that the US Food and Drug restores blood glucose levels, it

also normalizes the glucose tolerance test," which measures the body's response to sugar, "and suppressed systemic inflammation, which is a component of diabetes.

Chevion added that on a molecular level, "Zygosid-50...forces an intra-cellular exchange to take place," where it removes what's called "free iron" in cells and replaces it with

"It captures the 'free' iron in the cell and it releases the same amount of zinc into the cell - it feeds them with zinc," he said, adding that zinc deficiency has often been found in those suffering from diabetes.

He made it clear that zinc is

needed for certain pathways in diabetes-related processes in the body. Chevion found that Zygosid-50 is effective in fighting topical inflammation on the skin and that even under continuous use there were no neg-

Asked about BioPharma, Chevion said that it was set up in 2019 as a subsidiary to Silkim Pharma, which is a holding company for the intellectual properties of the inventors patents.

ative side effects.

In December, Chevion won first place at the 17th Annual World Congress on Insulin Resistance, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Diseases for his work on Zygosid-50.

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# Cold storage units to be set up in each mandal

In a bid to strengthening agriculture infrastructure, Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Thursday directed the officials to establish cold storage units in each mandal and also to build advanced warehouses in each Rythu Bharosa Kendra (RBK).

He also wanted proposals to strengthen the agricultural marketing sector with an infusion of Rs 4,000 crore. During a review meeting with Minister for o Agriculture K Kannababu and marketing officials, he directed them to set up cold storage units at the mandallevel for the convenience of farmers to sell their produce.

He said all the RBKs as warehouses would be equipped with grading and sorting machinery with a budget of Rs 350 crore. Other necessary instruments like weighing balances, calipers and lab wears



are to be procured with Rs 92.2

He wanted a software be developed that will connect the cultivation details to RBKs, which will be directed to the central server. Soon after receiving the information, marketing officials shall intervene and take up the crop purchase ensuring minimum support price was paid to their crops, he said.

Discussing the sale of crops, he asked officials to ensure that 30% of the sales take place through local markets and Janatha Bazaars and also asked the marketing department to intervene with the remaining 70%.

Lauding the efforts of

motherland, he said

country was defeated

However people are

the neighbouring

twice in the past.

not aware as our

publicise it in order

avoid provoking the

communist regime

Indian troops in

defending their

# 4,000 crore for agri infra,

All RBKs as warehouses would be equipped with grading and sorting machinery with a budget of Rs 350 crore. Other necessary instruments like weighing balances, calipers and lab wears are to be procured with Rs 92.2 crore.

The CM wanted a software be developed that will connect the cultivation details to RBKs, which will be directed to the central server. Soon after receiving the information, officials shall intervene and take up the crop purchase ensuring minimum support price

## SpiceJet lifts 1,500 Indian students from **Kyrgyzstan**

Continued from Page 1 Scheduled international pas-

senger flights continue to remain suspended in India since March 23 due to the coronavirus pandemic. "SpiceJet...will operate nine charter flights to evacuate over 1,500 Indian students stranded in Kyrgyzstan for over two months. This special repatriation mission...has been undertaken by SpiceJet in association with film actor Sonu Sood," the press release noted. The lowcost carrier has operated over 400 charter flights to repatriate around 65,000 Indians from countries like Oman, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Till now, more than 1.24 million people have been infected and around 29,600 people have died due to coronavirus in India. Scheduled domestic passenger flights resumed in India on May 25 after a gap of two months due to the coronavirus-triggered

## TDP complains to NHRC on Dalit 'tonsure' TDP leader Varla Ramaiah on Thursday complained to the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) against the YSRCP leaders and police for beating up and tonsuring a Dalit youth in East Godavari

district. He wanted the NHRC

to take cognizance of

unchecked atrocities being

committed against Dalits in

In a letter to the NHRC Chairman, Ramaiah urged for

stringent action against the

perpetrators of atrocities on

Dalits. He accused the

Jaganmohan Reddy government of running an anti-Dalit 'Jungle Raj' in the State ever since it came to power in

June, 2019. There is overall deterioration in the law and

order situation and there has

been a spate of attacks also

against Backward Classes (BCs), women and other vul-

nerable sections of society, he

Recalling the latest attack on Dalit youth, Ramaiah told the

NHRC Chairman that the ruling YSRCP leaders were

involved in illegal quarrying

and transportation of sand in

an indiscriminate fashion. In

this backdrop, on July 18, this

year, a truck illegally trans-porting sand hit one Vijay under Sitanagaram police sta-

tion limits in East Godavari

district. Then, Indugumilli

Vara Prasad stopped the truck while helping Vijay to get up.

At this juncture, local YSRCP

MLA's follower Kavala

Krishnamurthy came to the location and got furious at

pointed out.

Vara Prasad. Krishnamurthy rashly opened his car door that injured Vara Prasad. Krishnamurthy had also scolded Vara Prasad in the name of his caste.

RIGHTS COMMISSION

Ramaiah said that the YSRCP leader gathered around 40 of his henchmen and attacked Vara Prasad and his friends, Sandeep, Anil and Akhil. Then, Krishnamurthy lodged a complaint with Sitanagaram police station against Vara Prasad, Sandeep, Anil and Akhil on July 19. Accordingly, police registered Accordingly, police registered an FIR under Cr. No. 256/2020 under IPC 324, 354, 341, 427, 506 r/w Section 34. Krishnamurthy even exerted pressure on police to open a rowdy sheet against all the four. Ramaiah deplored that on

July 20, the Sitanagaram police arrested Vara Prasad, Sandeep, Anil and Akhil. At the police station, all the four were brutally beaten up with lathi sticks, belts and boots. More humiliatingly, Dalit youth Vara Prasad's head was tonsured as a part of ill-treating them. Tonsuring the head of a Dalit forcefully is a punishable crime under SC/ST (PoA) Chairman, Ramaiah urged for stringent action against the perpetrators of atrocities on Dalits. He accused the Jaganmohan Reddy government of running an anti-Dalit 'Jungle Raj' in the State ever since it came to power in June, 2019

There is overall deterioration in the law and order situation and there has been a spate of attacks also against Backward Classes (BCs), women and other vulnerable sections of society, Ramaiah pointed

Act. Even when Vara Prasad's mother visited the police station, she was scolded and ill treated and sent away. On July 21, all the four were released and were undergoing treatment at their respective homes, while the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) advised Vara Prasad not to go to hospital as there are a lot of COVID cases.

Ramaiah said seeing the visible injuries on Vara Prasad's body, former MLA Pendurthy Venkatesh and former MP Harsha Kumar admitted him to a hospital. In this regard, the NHRC should intervene and initiate stern action against the culprits as a section of police are in connivance with the YSRCP leaders, he alleged.

# India's growth rate may dip to 6% to 9%: Subramanian Swamy

PNS HYDERABAD

Country's growth rate may plunge to six to nine per cent during the current financial year due to COVID-19 pan-demic and may bounce back next fiscal if correct policies were worked out, BJP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy said on Thursday.

"Economy has collapsed in the last four to five years. What has happened is that the COVID-19 pandemic has sharpened the decline. Now you will find between six to nine per cent negative growth by the end of this financial year," Swamy said.

He took part in a virtual meeting organised by Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, Telangana State and Andhra Pradesh branches. How will it turn around? The capacity for production is there. The very question is you should be able to make it profitable to produce and we should ensure that the workmen were required in the factories, in the fields. They are all empowered to

go back to their work. Once that happens I would say that in 2021-22 (next fiscal) we will rise to seven per cent growth rate if you follow the right policy. Not the same policies of the last five years," he said.

Swamy said he wrote letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on several occasions in Noting that country has a huge labour potential, he said it should be used properly like the Japanese did to grow. Asked whether India can win a war, if it comes, against China, Swamy said if India can fight for one month, then it can defeat the neighbouring country. "If India has the stamina to fight for one month you defeat

the past pointing out the incip-

have written a letter to the PM

about four days ago explaining

what the situation will look like

by the end of this year. I wrote

a letter in 2015 that the growth

rate will start declining... Every

year we have been declining," he

only Rs 1.5 lakh crore of the Rs

20 lakh crore stimulus package

announced by the Centre for the

revival of the declining econo-

my due to prolonged lock-

down, does not directly create

demand which is necessary at

it should be used properly

like the Japanese did to grow.

Asked whether India can win

a war, if it comes, against

China, Swamy said if India can

fight for one month, then it can

Noting that country has a huge labour potential, he said

The BJP leader opined that

ient economic slowdown.

defeat the neighbouring country. "If India has the stamina to fight for one month you defeat China," he said.

Lauding the efforts of Indian troops in defending their motherland, he said the neighbouring country was defeated twice in the past. However people are not aware as our country did not publicise it in order avoid provoking the

Communist regime.
"Our people performed extremely well although 20 unfortunate soldiers lost their lives," he maintained. He claimed that encouraging companies such as Walmart into the country may affect millions of domestic retailers.

He suggested that India, as part of bilateral trade, should exert pressure on the US to agree to import Indian agricultural produce into that

# Chalk out plan on KG edu at Anganwadis: CM's fiat to officials

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Setting up of a proper kindergarten education system and providing good nutrition to the children at Anganwadi centres were discussed in a review meeting chaired by Chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy at his residence cum camp office at Tadepalli on Thursday.

Chief Minister The reviewed the progress of activities under 'Nadu-Nedu' (Then and Now) scheme in Anganwadi centres and 'YSR Sampoorna Poshana' (YSR Complete Nutrition) programme. He directed the authorities to provide postdelivery financial assistance of Rs 5,000 to women under 'Aarogya Aasara' (Health

Support).

"Think about how to implement the pre-primary education and plan within 7-10 days. The education of children at this age should be linked to Class I," the CM said, adding that the textbooks have already been changed as part of the curriculum reforms, hence, education authorities should hold a meeting and decide on the curriculum.

To impart learning skills to children in Anganwadi centres, all necessary tools, televi-

reviewed the progress of activities under 'Nadu-Nedu' (Then and Now) scheme in Anganwadi centres and YSR Sampoorna Poshana' (YSR Complete Nutrition) programme. He directed the authorities to provide post-delivery financial assistance of Rs 5,000 to women under 'Aarogya Aasara' (Health Support)

sions and special books should be made available to them, he said. The Chief Minister also stressed on the need to ensure same quality of food across all Anganwadi centres.

Some Anganwadi centres are being run from rented premises. The government is working on the construction of new buildings and the creation of infrastructure in existing buildings. The Chief Minister has clarified that the food served under YSR's holistic nutrition should be of good quality. The quality of food in Anganwadi should be the same everywhere, for which standard operation procedure should be followed

## State records 7,998 cases, 61 casualties in 24 hours

Continued from Page 1

Till date, 37,555 patients had recovered and been discharged from hospitals while the state now had 34,272 active cases, it added. Guntur district recorded 1,184 and Anantapur 1,016 new cases in the last 24 hours, according to the bulletin.

Guntur and Kurnool districts reported seven Covid-19 deaths each, Krishna and Srikakulam six each, Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram five each during this period.

The state claimed to have

conducted a record 58,052 sample tests in 24 hours, including 25,618 rapid antigen tests, result-

ing in 7,998 positives.

Overall, 14,93,879 tests were completed in the state so far at the rate of 27,975 per million population even as the infection positivity rate climbed further up to

#### **Groom tests** positive...

Continued from Page 1

The unfortunate turn of events meant that the wedding was postponed, again, and several of the family members of the groom have been asked to observe home quarantine. The officials said over 30 to 40 people have attended the marriage preparations in the groom's house and they would undergo Covid-19 tests.

4.87 per cent.

The recovery rate, however, showed an improvement to 51.65 per cent after 11,922 patients were discharged from hospitals in the last two days.

### **HC** notices to govt ...

Continued from Page 1

One of the counsel argued that there is a writ petition filed for construction of permanent High Court in Amaravati and that may be taken up. The bench refused, observing that if the state succeeds in the litigation, then the location of the High Court could be shifted and therefore there can't be any adjudication of the said writ petition at this juncture. The Advocate General,

appearing for the state, intervened at this juncture and informed the court that the counter-affidavit filed in the matter discloses that people holding positions of power to locate the capital at Amaravati, hinted at a minimal expendi-ture of Rs 1.5 lakh-crore. The bench remarked that they are not adjudicating the matter and that there will be no apprehension regarding the same. The A-G further argued that in the meantime the Governor may grant assent to the Bills which would become law to which the court observed that those situations could also be taken care of, during the course of hearing of the writ petitions.

#### No auction for **Balapur Ganesh** laddu this year PNS HYDERABAD

The Coronavirus has cast its shadow on the Balapur Ganesh festival celebrations, the second biggest in Hyderabad after the Khairatabad Ganesh festival celebrations. For the first time in over 25

years, the Balapur Ganesh Utsav Committee in Hyderabad will not auction the 21-kg laddu prasad this The committee at its meet-

ing held here on Thursday, decided to make the celebrations this time a low-key affair this year because of the pandemic.

Further, the committee decided to limit the height of the Ganesh idol this year to mere six feet as against 21feet last year.

# Order issued for permanent...

Continued from Page 1

Army Spokesperson Col Aman Ánand said the government order paved the way for empowering of women officers to shoulder "larger roles" in the "The order specifies grant of

permanent commission to Short Service Commissioned (SSC) women officers in all 10 streams of the Indian Army," he said. Col Anand said the 10

streams where permanent commission of women officers are being made available include army air defence, signals, engineers, army aviation, electronics and mechanical engineers, army service corps and intelligence corps

At present, the Army offers permanent commission to women officers in two branches — judge advocate general (JAG) and education

"Their selection board will be scheduled as soon as all affected SSC women officers exercise their option and com-

plete requisite documentation," the Army spokesperson Under SSC, women officers are initially taken for a period of five years, which is

extendable up to 14 years. Permanent commissioning will allow them to serve till the age of retirement The Army recruits women officers under SSC for streams like air defence, engineering, signals and services and they

can serve up to a maximum of 14 years Last year, the defence ministry had taken an in-principle decision to allow permanent commissioning of women in streams like signals, engineering, army aviation, army air

It was decided that the SSC women officers will be considered for grant of permanent commission based on the availability of vacancies and subject to willingness, suitability, performance, medical fitness and competitive merit of the aspirants

The three services have allowed permanent recruitment of women in select streams including medical, education, legal, signals, logistics and engineering

The women officers recruited through the SSC in the IAF have the option of seeking permanent commission in all streams except the flying branch

The Navy has allowed permanent commission of women in a host of departments such as logistics, naval designing, air traffic control, engineering

# Ayodhya temple to get bigger, taller, more magnificent

Continued from Page 1 stone.

The construction of temple will take around 3.5 years, Sompura said. 'As soon as the ground

breaking ceremony or the 'bhumi pujan' is done, the construction work will begin. The team of Larsen & Toubro, along with machinery and materials, have reached the spot and the work on foundation will start right away. It will take 3 to 3.5 years for the completion of the work,"

Sompura said. Three-day long Vedic rituals will be held ahead of the grand ground -breaking ceremony, which will revolve around the installation of a 40 kg silver brick as the foundation

August 3 with a Gauri Ganesh' Puja , and will be followed by 'Ramracha' on August 4 in which the 'Ram Naam' will be recited without a break.

The entire ceremony will be telecast live so that all devotees can watch it from their homes.

Sources said that only about 50 persons will be allowed at the event. The restriction on the number of persons has been imposed due to the pan-demic. Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra sources said that massive CCTV screens will be put up across Ayodhya so the devotees can watch the programme.

#### one. The rituals will begin on Shankaracharya objects to...

Continued from Page 1

He said that according to Vishnu Dharma Shastra, the launch in the Bhadrapada month is the cause of destruction. The 'Daivagna Ballabh Granth' states that the home, made in Bhadrapada, brings poverty. Vastu Pradeep also says the same. Shankracharya said that according to Vastu Rajaballabh, the beginning of Bhadrapada gives zero fruit. He said that it is also not right to consider it as auspicious due to "Abhijit Muhurta". "Abhijit is prohibited on Wednesday in the marriage of Muhurta Chintamani. Till the Cancer is in the Sun, the foundation stone can be done only in the month of Shravan and not in Bhadrapada," said Shankracharya.

# **Krishna Das** gains in

reshuffle of

portfolios

Continued from Page 1

During the transition, the portfolios were managed by Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy. Ramachandrapuram MLA Venugopala Krishna and Palasa MLA Appalaraju were sworn in as ministers on Wednesday. Bose and Mopidevi Venkataramana also took oath as Rajya Sabha Members the same day

# Smokers quit in highest numbers during Covid

defence and electronics and

NAVEEN KUMAR HYDERABAD

Those facing withdrawal symptoms post lockdown announcement have now completely quit smoking. Though many were planning to quit, they were unable to due to easy access. However, staying at home has compelled them to control the urge and quit smoking altogether.

In many families, people would not smoke at home out of a sense of respect for their elders or because of the absence of social cues of parties and post-lunch tea breaks with colleagues.

"I have been trying to quit smoking for quite some time now. It was always one of those stop and start affairs. What the lockdown did to me is to bring things into perspective, a moment of quiet reflection in the middle of a pandemic, on how much I prioritise my health. I had never spent so much time at home. It gave me enough time to think: if not now, then when?" says Rajesh Sahoo, a techie from Cognizant. Moreover, data from the Zoe Covid Symptom Tracker app suggested smokers were 14 per cent more



likely than non-smokers to develop the three 'classic' symptoms of Coronavirus infection - fever, persistent cough and shortness of breath. An official release from WHO said, "The available evidence suggests that smoking is associated with increased severity of disease and death in hospitalised Covid-19 patients."

It is not the normal 9-to-5 job in the creative industry; you always have to be ideating. After crazy meetings and brainstorming, you could leave all of it aside for a little while, to have a smoke," said Nithin Raj, a copywriter from an advertisement agency. Psychiatrist Dr Venkatesh

Babu, who consults for Fortis

Hospital, has been speaking with

people online who have been

For the first week, the questions were mostly around dealing with withdrawal symptoms and sourcing nicotine patches. Eight weeks down the line, a couple of them tell him they have not relapsed.

looking to quit during lockdown.

"The reason you quit is very important. If it is just because cigarettes are not available at this point of time, or there is a compulsion to be at home, it is never going to last. But if they were meaning to quit before this, and see the lockdown as an opportunity, then giving up will be easier," he says.

## Top Maoist leader RK escapes after exchange of fire in Agency conduct meetings with the er three to four days," the ASP

**PNS** ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Top leaders of the banned CPI (Maoists) escaped during an exchange of fire that took place in Visakhapatnam

Agency on Wednesday. Additional SP (operations) based at Narsipatnam Satish said Central Committee leader RK, Aruna and Chalapathi, along with 30 members Dalam, were present in the forests of Peda Bayulu to

Adivasis of the area in connection with the Martyr's Week that will be observed by the extremists group from July

"There was blood at the encounter site and at least three to four members might have sustained injuries. As they were in good numbers, Maoists might have taken them, along with them. We will know the casualties in anoth-

Meanwhile, tension pre-

vailed in Munchingput and Peda Bayulu area following the encounter. Youths were seen in grip of fear arrests and questioning by the Special Armed Forces. Barricades have been put up at important points and the armed police are making a random check. Heavy rains, on the other hand, disrupted police combing operation.

# Sri Lankan port workers protest against proposed deal with India

Wearing black arm bands, the workers of the strategic Colombo Port have restarted their protest against a proposed deal with India to develop a deep-sea container terminal of the country's largest and busiest port.

The workers ended their protest on July 3 following a meeting with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, a day after they had threatened to go on an indefinite strike if the government allowed a foreign country to develop the Eastern Container Terminal (ECT).

The previous Sirisena government signed a "memorandum of cooperation" (MOC) with India and Japan for a tripartite effort to develop the ECT which is located just next to the USD 500 million Colombo Chinese-run International Container Terminal (CICT)

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur

on Thursday hit out at the

opposition Congress for criticis-

ing the Himachal Pradesh gov-

ernment over the recent hike in

bus fares and for allowing

tourists to the hill state during

the COVID-19 pandemic.
Thakur said it is the need of

the hour to jointly bear the bur-

den of handling COVID-19

and several other states, includ-

ing Punjab, have also hiked the

bus fare. The chief minister was

addressing BJP workers of the

Doon assembly segment in the

Shimla parliamentary constituency online from his official

He is in self-quarantine since

Wednesday afternoon after a

deputy secretary in his office

tested positive for coronavirus.

Sadhana Thakur and their two

daughters tested negative around

Though Thakur, his wife Dr



Although the MOC was completed last year, a formal agreement for the terminal's development is yet to be signed and the trade unions are pressing the government to abandon the MOC and develop the terminal as a 100 per cent Sri Lankan venture.

The workers, who launched the 'Black Week' protest on Wednesday, alleged that government had reneged on the

remain quarantined for a week

and tested again, Additional CS

The opposition Congress,

Centre of Indian Trade Unions

(CITU) and the RSS-affiliated

Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) had on

Tuesday demanded an immedi-

ate rollback of the 25 per cent hike in bus fares in HP. The state

government decided to increase

the bus fare by 25 per cent. It also

decided to hike minimum bus

fare for the first three kilometres

from Rs 5 to Rs 7 in view of the

fund crunch due to the Covid-

(Health) R D Dhiman said.

Need of hour to jointly bear

Covid burden: HP CM

pledge to make the ECT oper-

ational as a Sri Lankan venture. "The government must say who is pressuring them on this. If it is India, then we will say that port's future will be in danger," Shamal Sumanaratne, a trade union leader told

Leaders cutting across party

lines, including Maharashtra

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and his deputy Ajit

Pawar, paid tributes to freedom

fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak on

his birth anniversary on

Tilak was born on July 23,

1856 at Chikhali village in

Ratnagiri district. He died in

"Tributes to Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak who had

bugled 'swarajya (self-rule) is

my birth right and I shall have

it'," the Chief Minister's Office

taking on the British regime

with his intelligence and

intense journalism, and noted

that the freedom fighter was

"We can see the dream of a

jailed for it many a times.

Thackeray praised Tilak for

(CMO) tweeted.

August 1920 in Mumbai.

Thursday.

The port workers have roped in influential Buddhist monk Elle Gunawansa to join them. The monk blessed the protes-

The workers, who launched the 'Black Week' protest on Wednesday, alleged that government had reneged on the pledge to make the **ECT** operational as

tors and issued a warning to the government. "We will give this government more time, if they don't want to do the right thing, we will take to the streets," Gunawansa said.

venture

Prasanna Kalutharage, another trade union leader, said the port workers would ensure 50 million rupees to the Treasury every month through ECT's operation as a 100 per cent Sri Lankan venture.

Maha: Leaders pay tributes to

Tilak on his birth anniversary

# Industry backs Karnataka govt's 'jobs-for-locals' push

Industry has backed Karnataka government's "jobs-for-locals" push saying the state has talent with required skills and the business has a responsibility to be a good citizen in every place they go to.

According to the new industrial policy approved on Thursday by the government, "all new industrial projects shall create maximum possible direct employment opportunities with a minimum employment of 70 per cent to Kannadigas on an overall basis and 100 per cent in case of Group D employees."

Welcoming the government decision to give preference to local youth, Chairman of FICCI, Karnataka State Council, K Ullas Kamath said the State has abundant talent with required skill sets.

Karnataka has the best of education institutions and also skill development ITIs. Local youth needs encouragement in

State PWD Minister and

Congress leader Ashok Chavan

hailed Tilak for firmly raising

the demand for self-rule

through his speeches and writ-

ngs.
Water Resources Minister

and state NCP chief Jayant Patil

also tweeted saying, "Humble

tributes to Lokmanya Bal

Gangadhar Tilak who was

described as the 'Father of Indian

Unrest', was a great freedom

fighter, litterateur, journalist."

**FICCI** 

their own State. This can be achieved over a period of time," Kamath said.

The government, he said,

"Here, public-private part-

Terming it as a general cy," information technology Terming it as a "good poliindustry veteran T V Mohandas Pai said in every State industries should create maximum employment for

**SHORT READS** 

Cong to launch agitation against 'dismal' law and order in UP: Lallu

BALLIA (UP): The Congress will launch an agitation across Uttar Pradesh over the "dismal" law and order situation and issues facing the common people, the party's state unit president Ajay Kumar Lallu said Thursday. The Congress is chalking out a strategy for the agitation, he said, alleging that Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government has proved to be a failure on the law and order front. Talking to reporters here Lallu alleged that loot, murder, dacoity and rape have become the new identity of Uttar Pradesh. Targeting the chief minister, the Congress leader said his claims regarding strengthening embankments and flood relief measures have turned out to be lies. Lallu said he visited Turtipaar and Mujhena villages of Ballia on Thursday and found that no flood relief works have been

#### Protests in UP hospital over power outage, unhyegenic conditions

undertaken there.

MUZAFFARNAGAR: Patients at a COVID hospital in Jhinjhana town of Shamli district staged a protest when a senior official was inspecting the facility over complaints of power outage and unhyegenic living conditions. A video had surfaced on social media in which patients at the facility were seen raising the complaints, following which Subdivisional Magistrate Mani Arora was conducting an inspection on Wednesday. As soon as the official reached the centre, the patients started protesting which caused a ruckus. District Magistrate Jasjit Kaur said an explanation had been sought from the Health department over the issues raised and warned of strict action against those

has to focus on imparting skill post education so that they can get into industry after completng the training.

nership with industry will be desirable."

"This practice of getting

## Pvt schools stop online classes after govt's 'no fee' order

PNS AHMEDABAD

Private schools in Gujarat have suspended online classes for an indefinite period from Thursday, after a state government order said they should not collect fees from students until the schools reopen.

In a notification issued last week, the Gujarat government directed self-financed schools in the state not to collect tuition fees from students as long as they remain shut in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It also asked these schools not to hike fees for the academic year 2020-21.

Unhappy with the move, a union of representing nearly 15,000 self-financed schools in Gujarat decided to put on hold online classes, an alternative arrangement started earlier this month for students.

Majority of these schools informed the parents through SMS on Wednesday night that



"Karnataka has

institutions and

development ITIs.

needs encourage-

ment in their own

be achieved over

a period of time,"

cheaper contract labour from

outside for Group D jobs

should stop," Pai, a former

Chief Financial Officer of IT

"However, for highly skilled

jobs, there should be no such

restriction as it will impede

efficiency with the caveat that

jobs are given on a fair and

equal opportunity basis for

major Infosys Ltd, said.

Kamath said

State. This can

the best of

education

also skill

Local youth

there will not be any online classes for their wards from Thursday. Self-financed School Management Association's spokesperson Dipak Rajyaguru on Thursday said almost all the self-financed schools in the state refrained from imparting online education.

"If the government believes online education is not real education, then there is no meaning of imparting such unreal education to our students. Online education will remain suspended until the government withdraws that notification," Rajyaguru said in a state-

#### 9 pm on Wednesday, they will prosperous and strong nation Ditch in Uttarakhand village due to torrential rains; over 50 families evacuated

Fifty-three families of Dhapa village, around 30 km north of Munsiyari town in this district of Uttarakhand, were evacuated to safety after a huge ditch started to develop in the middle of the village, following torrential rains over the past few days. "The families have been shift-

ed as a precautionary measure to nearby safe locations like anganwadi centres, primary schools and government buildings, where they are being taken care of by the district supply officer revenue officials," Pithoragarh District Magistrate V K Jogdande said.

With heavy fatalities caused by a cloudburst recently in Gaila



Pattharkot and Tanga villages of the district, the administration is leaving nothing to chance.

Scared villagers began to leave the village even before the district administration swung into action, fearing imminent landslides and gradual widening of

Meanwhile, a zila panchayat representative from the area

landing and roving in a single

mission, taking an ambitious

step towards planetary exploration of the solar system.

A Long March-5 rocket, China's largest and most

powerful launch vehicle, car-

rying the spacecraft with a

mass of about five tonnes,

soared into the sky from the

Wenchang Spacecraft Launch

Site on the coast of southern

China's island province of

Hainan, the official Xinhua

launch, the spacecraft, includ-

ing an orbiter and a rover, was

sent into the Earth-Mars trans-

fer orbit, embarking on an

almost seven-month journey

to the red planet, according to

the China National Space

The Chinese Mars probe

named Tianwen 1 or Quest for

Heavenly Truth 1, will fulfil

three scientific objectives:

orbiting the red planet for

comprehensive observation, landing on Martian soil and

Administration (CNSA).

About 36 minutes after the

news agency reported.

said all families of Dhapa village

should be shifted out permanently and relocated. "The village is witnessing continuous landslides from the hills since July 16. We have requested the state government to shift the village to a safer place permanently," Member of Pithoragarh Zila Panchayat Jagat Singh

#### **Dr Dangs will be** central lab for **Covaxin dtrials**

because of his sacrifice and

dedication. Tributes to his

thoughts and memories," the

Taking to Twitter, state

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said, "Tributes to

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar

Tilak who had roared swara-

jya is my birth right and I shall

have it'. Let's resolve to convert

the 'swarajya' he talked about

into 'surajya' (good rule), as we

chief minister wrote.

pay respects to him.

A Delhi-based private laboratory has claimed that it has been selected as the central lab for human clinical trials of Covaxin, India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine candidate. "We are extremely privileged to announce that Dr. Dangs Lab, New Delhi has been provided the opportunity to serve the nation by being selected as the central lab for the Human Clinical trials of Covaxin; India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine being developed and manufactured by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) - National Institute of Virology (NIV)," it

# Chhattisgarh urges Centre to hike fund allocation for police scheme

The Chhattisgarh government has urged Union Home Minister Amit Shah to increase the Centre's share under the police modernisation scheme for the state for effective anti-Naxal operations and for enhancing resources of A the department, an official said on Thursday.

Chhattisgarh Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu made this demand in a letter to Shah writ-

ten on Wednesday. In the letter, Sahu expressed concern over the gradual reduction in the funds allocated to the state under the modernisation of state police forces (MPF) scheme by the Centre despite



the fact that Chhattisgarh has been fighting against the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) for the last several years, the public relations department official said.

"In 2013-14, the allocation approved for the state under the scheme was approximately Rs 56 crore, which came down over the years and in 2019-20, it was not even Rs 20 crore," the minister said in the letter.

The main objective of the scheme is to identify and fulfil the necessary shortcomings in the police administration and its operation, he said.

Out of the 28 districts in the state, 14 are Naxal- affected, of which eight are the worst-hit. The state government has taken several measures for tackling the menace and increased the strength of the force as well as police stations, he said.

Presently, around 45 Battalions of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) are deployed in the state. When the state came into existence, there were only 22,520 police personnel, whose number has now increased to 75,678, Sahur

#### Over 10K litres of illicit liquor seized in UP in 3 days

LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh

found responsible

Excise department has lodged 401 cases and seized 10,169 litres of illicit liquor in the last three days during a special drive conducted in the state, a seni official said on Thursday. Twenty-three people were arrested and sent to jail for their alleged involvement in illegal liquor sale while 10 vehicles seized in this connection. Excise Commissioner P Guruprasad said in a statement issued here "A special enforcement drive is being conducted against the manufacture, smuggling and sale of illegal liquor by the Excise department. During the last three days, a total of 401 cases have been registered across all over the state in which 10,169 litres illegal liquor has been recovered," he said

#### **Trump points at** race protests. bar-goers for surge in cases

■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump is casting wide blame for a nationwide surge in coronavirus cases, pointing to racial justice protests, travelers from Mexico and young bar-goers.

Holding his second briefing on the virus in as many days after a three-month hiatus, Trump sought on Wednesday to explain the rise in confirmed cases across the nation's South, Southwest and West.

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

Further, he says, "Young people closely congregating at bars and probably other places, maybe beaches," likely also led to new cases.





sending a rover to roam the landing site. It will conduct scientific investigations into the planet's soil, geological structure, environment, atmosphere

and water, media reports said. It should arrive in orbit around the red planet in

The Long March 5 rocket will transport the robotic probe to the Earth-Mars transfer trajectory before the spacecraft begins its self-propelled flight toward Mars' gravity field.

According to China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, a State-owned space conglomerate,

the probe will travel for about seven months before it reaches Mars, which at the farthest point of its orbit is about 400 million kilometres from Earth and 55 million kilometres at the nearest point.

It said the probe consists of three parts - the orbiter, the lander and the rover -and they will separate in Mars orbit. The orbiter will remain in the orbit for scientific operations and to relay signals while the lander-rover combination makes an

autonomous descent and landing. The rover has six wheels and four solar panels and carries six scientific instruments. It **The Long March 5** rocket will transport the robotic probe to the Earth-Mars transfer trajectory before the spacecraft begins its self-propelled flight toward Mars' gravity field

weighs over 200 kilogrammes and will work for about three months on the planet, the designers said.

China aims to catch up with India, the US, Russia and the European Union to reach the red planet.

The triple-task expedition of Tianwen-1 marks another milestone in China's aerospace science and technology development, as well as a fresh daring adventure in the country's long march of outer space exploration following its lunar program and the endeavour to build a space station," the state-run media commented.

# SJTA plans to preserve Lord Jagannath's chariots

Contrary to the usual practice of dismantling the three gigantic chariots after the annual Rath Yatra, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) is contemplating to preserve them this year.

The chariots were used by Lord Balabdara, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath for the annual 9-day sojourn to Shree Gundicha Temple from the Sri Mandir, the 12th-century main shrine.

A discussion in this regard was held with servitors and carpenters who constructed the three wooden chariots within a record time during the pandemic, said the Chief Administrator of SJTA Krishan Kumar.

Sources said that the SJTA is contemplating to preseve the chariots as this year's Rath Yatra took place amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and in the absence of devotees. "We have set up a technical committee to guide the administration on how to preserve the chariots and keep



the wooden structures safe from insects," he said.

Every year the chariots are dismantled after the Rath Yatra festival and the wood is used in the temple kitchen. But this year, the SJTA is planning to conserve the three chariots at the museum being constructed at Jagannath Ballav, the Lords garden. The SJTA chief administrator said a directive has already been issued to shift the chariots to the premises of Jagannath

Lord Jagannaths chariot called 'Nandighosh', is the tallest one of 45-feet high with 16 wheels, while Lord Balabhadra's 'Taladhwaja' is 44-feet high with 14 wheels. Their sister Devi Subhadra's 'Darpadalana' is 43-feet high and has 12 wheels. The SJTA had earlier decid-

ed to document this years Rath Yatra in view of its massive arrangements made amidst the pandemic and COVID-19 scare. For the first time in living memory, the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath and the return journey was held in the pilgrim town under curfew and in the absence of devotees as per the Supreme Court guidelines.



#### MP: Journalist dies after being shot over old rivalry

NIWARI: A 35-year-old journalist working for a Gwalior-based daily died after a group of persons allegedly shot him and attacked him with sticks over an old rivalry in Madhya Pradesh's Niwari district, police said on Thursday. The incident took place near Putri Khera village in Sendri nolice station limits on Wednesday evening. The victim, Sunil Tiwari, and his brother were heading towards the village on a motorcycle when seven persons, including three identified as Awdhesh Tiwari, Narendra Tiwari and Anil Tiwari, intercepted the duo, sub-divisional officer of police Balram Singh Parihar said. The accused allegedly attacked the victim with sticks and shot him he said. The journalist's brother somehow managed to escape from the spot to reach the village to get help, while the attackers fled leaving the victim grievously injured, he said.

#### **Upset about actor's** death, minor girl kills self in C'garh

**DURG**: Upset about the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, a 13-year-old girl allegedly committed suicide in Chhattisgarh's Durg district, police said on Thursday. The Class 7 student was found hanging from the ceiling of her home in sector-7 of Bhilai town on Wednesday evening, said Trinath Tirpathi, station house officer of Bhilai Nagar police station. "A suicide note was recovered from the scene, in which the girl has stated that she was taking the extreme step as she was upset about the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput," he said. According to the girl's father, his daughter was a fan of the actor and kept watching his videos and films, the official said. The victim always looked for news related was found hanging in his Mumbai home on June 14, the SHO said quoting the girl's father. Incidentally, the girl was watching the movie Chhichhore on Wednesday evening, when her father stepped out to fetch the rest of the family from her grandparents' place at Railway Colony in Durg, he said. On its return, the family found that the girl hanging from the ceiling,



The northeast has the potential to become India's growth engine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday, noting that peace is now being established in the

entire region. He made these remarks at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Manipur water supply project via video

While blockades have become a part of history in Manipur, the era of decades of violence in Assam has ceased.

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

The prime minister noted that the government is making constant efforts to improve connectivity in the northeast region, be its highways, laying of rail tracks or upgradation of

The foundation stone laying programme, the prime minister said, is an example of the fact that even during the crisis triggered by the novel coronavirus, the country has not

stopped working.

Till the time a vaccine is developed, we have to vigorously fight against coronavirus and the development works should also be carried forward with full force, he said.

Referring to the "aatma nirbhar Bharat abhiyan" (selfreliant India campaign), the prime minister said now clus-



The prime minister noted that the government is making constant efforts to improve connectivity in the northeast region, be its highways, laying of rail tracks or upgradation of airports

ters are being developed for value addition and marketing in local products. In these clusters, all the facilities will be given to agro startups and other industries.

He said the northeast has the potential to replace India's pamboo import with local pro-

There is a huge demand for incense sticks in the country, but for this, India imports bamboo worth crores of rupees, he lamented.

A lot of work, Modi pointed out, is being done to change this situation.

He said a huge investment is being made under the National Bamboo Mission. This will benefit the youth of the northeast, and the startups here.

Many institutes are now being set up for health, education, skill development and

With the formation of sports university and world class stadia, Manipur is becoming a major hub for the country's sports talent, he observed.

Speaking on the water supoly project, the prime minister said it is a big day for lakhs of people of Manipur, including Imphal, as it will reduce the water problems faced by them.

He said women will especially benefit as they won't have to travel for kilometers to fetch clean water. The project has been designed keeping in mind needs of the next 20-22 years and lakhs of people will get access to clean drinking water, while thousands will get employment, he said.

# NE's prosperity always priority of Modi govt: Shah

congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the Manipur water supply project and said the development and prosperity of the Northeast has always been the priority of his government.

Shah said the project, whose foundation stone was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, will provide safe drinking water to more than 2.8 lakh households and also generate huge employment opportunities in Manipur.

"Development and prosperity of North Eastern region has always been the top priority of Modi govt. In his continued efforts, PM @narendramodi ji today laid the foundation stone of Manipur Water Supply project worth ?3,054 crores. I congratulate PM for this unprecedented project," Shah tweeted.

He said the project is yet another manifestation of the prime minister's resolve towards Har Ghar Jal' (water in every home) and a prosperous

An externally funded project, the Manipur water supply project was designed to provide freshwater household tap connections (FHTCs) to remaining households in Greater Imphal planning area, and for

1,731 rural habitations covering 2,80,756 households in all 16 districts of Manipur.

Northeast. The foundation

stone of the project was laid by Modi via video link.

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rural habitations covering

2,80,756 households in all 16

3054.58 crore, with a loan com-

conent funded by the New

The project outlay is Rs

districts of Manipur.

Development Bank

An externally funded project,

The project outlay is Rs 3054.58 crore, with a loan component funded by the New Development Bank.

# Green card waitlist for an Indian more than 195 yrs: US Senator PNS WASHINGTON nationals received 9,00

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

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

"Someone from India entering the backlog today would have to wait 195 years to receive an EB-3 green card. Even if we give their children this limbo status, none of them will have a prayer of becoming a US citizen," Mr Lee said on the Senator floor.

In fiscal year 2019, Indian

nationals received 9,008 category 1 (EB1), 2,908 category 2 (EB2), and 5,083 category 3 (EB3) Green Cards. EB1-3 are different categories of employment-based Green Cards.

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

'Green cards are critical in the lives of so many who are here on temporary work visas. The backlog puts families at risk of losing their immigration status as they wait year after weary year to finally make it through this green card back-log," Mr Durbin said.
"Our bipartisan agreement would add critical protections

that were not in the original bill for immigrant workers and their immediate family members who are stuck in the back log. They would be able to switch jobs and travel without losing immigration status. And children of immigrant workers would be protected from aging out so they will not face deportation," he said.



# DRDO establishes Covid-19 testing facility in Leh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The DRDO has established a COVID-19 testing facility at the Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR) in Leh to augment the existing capacity for identification of coronavirus cases in the union territory of Ladakh, according to an official statement. The testing facility, which

was inaugurated by Ladakh Lieutenant Governor R K Mathur on Wednesday, is capable of screening 50 samples per day, said the statement by the Defence Ministry.

"The facility can also be utilised for training manpower for COVID-19 testing and will be of great help to address

Voice of dissent in democra-

We are trying to find out

whether this process (disquali-

fication) was permissible or

not," it said, while questioning Joshi on the reasons for initiat-

ing disqualification proceed-ings against the 19 dissident

appearing for Joshi, listed the

reasons for starting the dis-

qualification proceedings, saying

that these MLAs did not attend

party meetings and conspired to

destabilise their own govern-

simple matter and these MLAs

are elected representatives."

The bench said: This is not a

Responding to a query of the

bench, Sibal said, These MLAs

had gone to Haryana, stayed at

a hotel and gave TV bites that

they want floor test." He said the

issue as to whether the disqual-

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal,

cy cannot be shut down, the

bench observed.

Congress MLAs.



future bio-threats and carrying out R&D (research and development) activities pertinent to agro-animals diseases," the

ministry noted. In Ladakh, the virus has

infected 1,206 people and killed two people, as per data on the Union health ministry's website. There are 186 active COVID-19 cases in Ladakh as of now, it stated.

#### **Pak Army** shells foward areas along **LoC** in Poonch

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Pakistan Army on Thursday opened fire and shelled forward areas along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said.

The Indian Army effectively retaliated. "At about 1100 hours, Pak Army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms & shelling with mortars along the LoC in Qasba sector of Poonch district", a defence spokesman said. This is the third day that Pakistani forces have violated the cease-

# UK welcomes efforts by India, China to de-escalate tension in Ladakh

PNS NEW DELHI

The UK on Thursday welcomed efforts by India and China to deescalate tension along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. British High Commissioner

Sir Philip Barton also expressed concern over Chinese action in Hong Kong as well as cases of human rights abuses against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.

The UK, he said, is aware of the challenges presented by "some Chinese actions" and has been working with its close allies like the US to deal with them. "I would like to say that the progress we have seen in managing the tensions and the commitment the two special repre-



sentatives made on boundary question on July 5 to disengage and de-escalate is welcome," the newly-appointed envoy said during an online media briefing.

He said the Chinese actions in

LAC are "concerning".

The British envoy also talked about the "tragic loss of lives" of Indian soldiers along the LAC and hoped that both sides would be able to achieve de-escalation Hong Kong as well as along the of tensions through talks.

# SC allows Raj HC to pass orders on plea of Pilot, 18 MLAs

#### **DIRECTIONS SUBJECT TO ITS VERDICT**

PNS NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday allowed the Rajasthan High Court to pronounce order on plea of 19 dissident Congress MLAs, including sacked deputy CM Sachin Pilot, against the Assembly Speaker's notice for initiating disqualification proceedings against them, but said that it would be subject to the outcome of the petition before the top court.

Rajasthan Assembly Speaker CP Joshi however failed to get any interim relief on his plea alleging that the high court cannot interdict the disqualification proceedings undertaken by him under 10th schedule of the Constitution.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra, B R Gavai and Krsihna Murari said Joshi's plea raises important questions and

requires prolonged hearing.
We are not restraining the High Court from passing the order but it will be subject to the outcome of the petition (of Speaker) before the Supreme Court, the bench said, while fixing the plea for hearing on July

#### **Sense of despair** among Congress workers, says Kuldeep Bishnoi PNS NEW DELHI

Haryana Congress leader Kuldeep Bishnoi on Thursday said there is a sense of despair among party workers over the treatment meted out to leaders like . Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sachin Pilot, and also urged the leadership to promote mass leaders in every state in the war against the BJP.

Taking on the old guard, he asked the Congress leadership to give other responsibilities to those who have been occupying high positions for 35 years and have never contested elections.

Bishnoi, who is son of former Haryana chief minister Bhajan Lal, triggered speculation when he posted a picture of himself with Scindia and Pilot on Twitter.

"Many congratulations @JM\_Scindia. A well deserved one," he said along with the picture, on a day when Scindia took oath as Rajya Sabha member of the BJP. He also congratulated former Congress leader Priyanka Chaturvedi, who also took oath as a Shiv Sena member of Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. "Sincere congratulations @priyankac19 on your hardearned success. Best wishes for a bright future.



# Siddaramaiah demands probe into irregularities in Covid management

PNS BENGALURU

Alleging large-scale corruption in COVID management in Karnataka to the tune of at least Rs 2,000 crore, former chief minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday demanded a judicial inquiry by a sitting High Court judge.
The government, however,

dismissed the charges saying no irregularities have taken place.

The total money spent on COVID management is Rs 4,167 crore whereas state Health



Minister B Sriramulu says only Rs 324 crore has been spent. Equipment and materials were purchased double or triple the existing cost. At least Rs 2,000 crore has been pocketed by the ministers and officials," Siddaramaiah. who is the leader of opposition in the state assembly, told reporters. He demanded a judicial inquiry by a sitting judge of the high court.

Releasing some documents to the media to substantiate his allegations, the former chief minister claimed that the health department spent Rs 700 crore "some of the amount has been spent and some is in the

## 84 TN Raj Bhavan staff test positive for Covid-19

PNS CHENNAI

Eighty-four security and fire services personnel deployed in Raj Bhavan have testpositive for COVID-19 but none of them came into contact with Governor Banwarilal Purohit or senior officials, the gov ernment said here on Thursday.

As few men posted at Raj Bhavan showed symptoms, testing was done for 147 personnel and 84 of them, comprising security and fire service staffers. were found positive for coron-

avirus, a Raj Bhavan release said. 'All these persons were further investigated and now have been quarantined by the health department. All these persons were working on the outer side of Raj Bhavan

like the main gate and not in the main building," the release said, adding none of them came into contact with governor Purohit or senior officials.

# COVID-19 Conducting exams in varsities in MCQs format not feasible alternative, say academicians

PNS NEW DELHI

Conducting exams in universities in Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) format in view of COVID-19 pandemic is not a feasible alternative as it cannot test students' analytical skills and students pursuing subjects like literature will be at a disadvantage, academicians have pointed out.

The concerns by academicians come against the backdrop of the Delhi High Court asking University Commission (UGĆ) to clarify if final year examinations of the universities be conducted based on MCQs, open choices, assignments and presentations, instead of long form exams.

The UGC officials, however, maintained that over 6,000 universities in the country have already conducted exams for final year students or are plan-



ning to conduct them.

Earlier this month, the UGC in its revised guidelines directed the higher education institutions that final year examinations be conducted in September 2020, instead of July 2020, as per its guidelines announced in April.

Punjab, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Delhi have announced reserva-

tions against the plan, citing the COVID-19 situation.

Rajesh Jha, a political science professor and executive council member of DU, said, "Our students are not prepared for a new format of exams. They have been taught to analyse things and will be caught unprepared for any new format. All of a sudden you cannot impose a system. You need to test it before

The UGC officials, however, maintained that over 6,000 universities in the country have already conducted exams for final year students or are planning to conduct

implementing it. Coronavirus time cannot be used for experimentation.

Pankaj Garg, a professor at Rajdhani College, said, "The format of exams decide how students are taught. For MCQs and even for open book exams, the students have to be taught in a certain way but in Delhi University, students have not been taught in a way that they can take exams in such a for-"Plus problems are multiply-

ing-- coronavirus cases are on the rise and students in Assam and Bihar are also facing issues due to floods. Internet connectivity is already an issue and the flood situation has complicated the connectivity situation, so even if the MCQ format exams happen they will happen in an online format which will not be feasible for students," he said. Saikat Ghosh, an English

rofessor at the Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College and Academic Council member, said, "The way the subjects and the syllabus have been designed, we teach those subjects even at the undergraduate level in a fair amount of detail and we encourage students to show analytical skills. Analytical skills cannot be tested through the MCQ format, which favours information"

#### PAPER WITH PASSION

This round to Pilot SC says disqualification can't be based on dissent, asks why

Speaker approached court when he should be neutral



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 **G**overnment, 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 Gujjars of three States — Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh — has 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 caping 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.

# opanion

# 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

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 anď 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

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

While cargo variants of the 747 are still flying in great numbers, both those built at the Boeing factory outside Seattle, Washington, and those planes converted from passenger operations to freight, have halted operations. After all, the 747 was initially conceived as a cargo plane and the iconic "hump" on the 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 its doors, a mere 251 entered commercial service. Boeing is expected to close its 747 lines in 2022, with 16 aircraft (all cargo variants) remaining to be delivered. Around 1,558 planes have already been delivered since 1970. And while the current options such as the 747-8 have lit-

tle 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 surrise, a couple of British Airways flights across the "pond" stuck in a middle seat less enjoyable. But I did experience that ultimate joy of an aviation fan. I have flown on the upper deck of a 747, which is one of the single most fun things one can do. The last time I did that was

on a British Airways evening service from Chicago O'Hare to London Heathrow. As far as my memory goes, I think I just slept throughout that flight. I never knew it was going to be the last time. Even as global air travel boomed during the past decade, a lot of that was due to the rise of low-cost airlines, hopping and skipping around the world with their gigantic fleets of Airbus A320 and Boeing 737 aircraft. While it will be interesting to see what happens to these airlines, even Indian ones, in the aftermath of the Chinese contagion, international air travel, too, has changed. In no small part, thanks to the emergence of more point-to-point flying and ultra-long-haul flights.

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

Before the pandemic started, both Air India and United Airlines had non-stop services between the two cities, 15 hours from take-off to touchdown. Sure, that might seem like a lot of time without any "fresh air" but there was no need to walk 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.

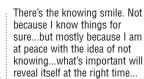
It is the development of the high bypass turbofan, which literally sips fuel compared to older engines, that led to the creation of all modern planes such as the Boeing 777, which has the largest engine in commercial service. The 747 was the "Queen" and the world of aviation comprised its subjects. Even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

(The writer is Managing Editor, The Pioneer)

#### NDBITE

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

Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi



-Sushmita Sen



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

US Ambassador to India -Ken Juster



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

Former Sri Lanka captain -Kumar Sangakkara



#### LETTERS

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

#### 22). With 15 million cases and six lakh deaths globally, biomedical companies are under tremendous pressure to deliver a safe and effective vaccine for Coronavirus. While the outbreak is peaking by the day, a silver lining on the horizon is also flashing. A new vaccine development technology — RNA vaccine, also known as mRNA — is emerging as the front-runner to

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

alleviate mankind's COVID-19-inflicted miseries. The three leading vaccines by Oxford — AstraZeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna — are mRNA based and are also in the final phase of trials. The technology, capable of faster rollout at affordable prices, is versatile and promising. It is known to produce safe and long-lasting immune response in addition to better management of a class of white blood cells called T-cells. White cells, as we all know, help the body get rid of infected cells. That two dozen of the 150 vaccinations are mRNA driven is not surprising. All the three front-running vaccines score high on "dual immune response" comprising antibodies and T-cells.

Though some euphoria is justified, yet we must understand that vaccine development is a lengthy and painful process. Even the vast amount of data from clin-

Kannur

goes well, the vaccine will be

ready by December. Let us hope

this vaccine and others, that are

of the people.

the Government's plan to

Sir — This refers to the article, also being tested, put an end to the mental and physical misery "Leave Lutyens alone" (July 21) by Yashovardhan Azad. The M Pradvu writer is right to raise alarm over

**Futile exercise** 



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 given, expediency cannot override quality. Being optimist is good but being one with caution is better

SK Prabhakar Guruaram

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

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

#### Adapt to changes

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

Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

# analysis

#### FIRSTCOLUMN

# India can exit fiscal tight spot

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



#### KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

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

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

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

#### POINTCOUNTERPOINT

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

**ASHOK GEHLOT** 





IT IS CLEAR FROM THE LETTER OF THE CM TO THE PM THAT HE HAS LOST THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS MLAS AND HIS GOVERNMENT IS IN MINORITY.

—RAJASTHAN BJP CHIEF **SATISH POONIA** 

# FDI through front door

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



UTTAM GUPTA

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

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

Even as foreign investors see value in every seg-

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

between the two conglomerates.

The duo intend to offer technology-enabled wherewithal to enable consumers access neighbourhood stores and have products delivered at their doorstores. About 30 million of these stores will be 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 combinaion of online and offline retail. Apart from Reliance Retail Limited (RRL), which has thousands of retail stores spread all over India and gets hooked on to the Jio platform, it will be serving tens of millions of neighbourhood stores in a variety of ways viz. handling, procurement, storage, payment, delivery and so on. Since all of this will be powered by a digital eco-system, the model is a hybrid of online and

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

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

In the physical format, as per a policy approved by the then UPA dispensation in 2012, as much as 51 per cent FDI is allowed but with a plethora of riders such as 30 per cent local sourcing, minimum investment of \$100 million and prior approval of the State where the retail shop is to be set up. In 2016-



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 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 more than 25 per cent of total sales on its platform from one vendor or its group companies. Further, it can't directly or indirectly influence the sale price." Sans any specification as to "who the vendor is", a firm linked to the marketplace (either its subsidiary or a Joint Venture with an Indian company) is eligible.

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

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

Unlike the marketplaces of foreign 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

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

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

comes to grant of approvals. It will help small traders by leading to all-round development of infrastructure and offering a wide range of choice for sourcing products. They can and will coexist with big players — both foreign and Indian. It will be pro-consumer in the ong-run with many players catering to their needs at competitive/affordable rice. 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

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 sewerage and storm water system.

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

The efforts to prevent urban flooding will be incomplete unless the ground water absorption rate of rainrater 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)





WITHOUT HISTORY

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

(*Dawn* editorial)

**flipkart** 

Walmart >



#### **Kia Motors** expects Sonet to pump new energy

**NEW DELHI:** Kia Motors India on Thursday said its upcoming model Sonet, to be launched during the festive season this year, will inject new dynamism in the compact SUV segment in the country. The company, which is going to unveil the sub-four meter SUV globally on August 7, has released the first officia rendering of the new production-ready Sonet. The model, which is slated for launch during the upcoming festive season, aims to set new design benchmarks and inject a new dynamism in the compact SUV segment, Kia Motors India said in a statement "With the new Kia Sonet, we had the ambition to give this compact SUV a strong and muscular character



found only in much larger

vehicles," he said.

#### Airbus workers on strike against Spain layoffs

MADRID: Airbus workers in the European aircraft manufacturer's eight plants in Spain are striking Thursday against the consortium's decision to cut 1.600 jobs over the next few months. Battered by the coronavirus pandemic. Airbus announced last month that it must eliminate 15,000 jobs, or more than 10% of its global workforce, to safeguard its future and warned of more thin years ahead. The cuts are mostly in Europe and affect 900 employees in Spain. They're in addition to 700 layoffs out of 2,600 global job cuts in the consortium's defense division. Workers chanted "Zero layoffs!" as they marched from the Airbus plant in Getafe, to the local townhall demanding more political involvement to revive the industry and investments that



will guarantee long-term

employment.

#### India's LPU student bags Rs 1.3 cr PhD scholarship

**NEW DELHI:** Punjab-based Lovely Professional University (LPU) said its post graduate agriculture student Sumant Bindal has bagged a fully-paid scholarship of Rs 1.3 crore to pursue PhD in plant sciences at Australian National University. "This is perhaps the biggest scholarship ever bagged by an agriculture student from India. The PhD programme would commence in September 2020 at ANU," Jalandhar-based LPU said in a statement. Bindal, a post graduate in agri-genetics and plant breeding would be doing research on "Identification of signalling pathways activated by resistant genes against Fusarium wilt in tomato," the private university said. His research would focus on how to make tomatoes completely resistant to Fusarium wilt, a plant fungus that infects tomatoes worldwide, and has reportedly caused up to 45 per cent yield loss to tomato crop in India in the past, it added.

PNB Housing Finance on

Thursday reported 10 per cent

demic. The housing financier,

promoted by Punjab National

Bank, had reported net profit

of Rs 284.5 crore in June quar-

ter of 2019-20.

# 'Identified 20 sectors where India can become global supplier'

The government has so far identified 20 sectors where India can meet domestic demand as well as become a global supplier, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush

Goyal said on Thursday. He said industry body Ficci and other associations are working with the government in this regard. "We have identified first 12

sectors and now 8 more, so we have 20 sectors in which Ficci and other associations are very much part of our engagement, where we have identified sectors where India can not only meet own domestic needs but also become globally competitive and become global leader supplying to the world," he said in a Ficci webinar.

These sectors include food processing, organic farming, agro chemicals, electronics, industrial machinery, furni-

**Pandemic to** 

cost Aus USD

131 bn this yr

Australia's response to the

coronavirus pandemic tipped the government's

budget 85.8 billion

Australian dollars (USD 61

billion) into the red in the

last fiscal year and will cre-

ate 184 billion dollars (USD

131 billion) more debt in the

current year which would be

the nation's biggest deficit

since World War II, treasury

figures showed on Thursday.

Australia's crumbling eco-

nomic outlook based on

increased government

spending to stimulate to economy and declining tax

The conservative govern-

ment had forecast in

December a 5 billion dollars

(USD 3.6 billion) surplus in

the fiscal year that ended

June 30, 2020: the first sur-

Josh

revealed

Treasurer

Frydenberg

revenue.

PNS CANBERRA



Sensex surges 269 pts

the minister said yoga holds

huge potential for industry

and young entrepreneurs as the

opportunity that the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi)

opened up for India. Did we set

up 100,000 yoga centres all over the world, did any entre-

preneur amongst you or star-

tups thought in terms of the

possibilities that yoga offers by

planning to train maybe

and L&T finished in the red.

According to Narendra Solanki, Head- Equity Research

(Fundamental), Anand Rathi

Shares, Indian markets started

off on a positive note but with

underlying caution as its Asian

peers traded mixed as investors

remained concerned over US-China tensions. "During the

noon session markets strength-

ened as domestic sentiments

were boosted after news of

India working on offering pro-

duction-linked incentives for

up to five sectors to boost

domestic manufacturing," he

said. Some support also came

with the Chief Economic

Adviser's statement that the

government may announce

more fiscal measures to boost

demand, Solanki added.

"But did India really grab the

world is excited about it.

tiles, among others.

He also highlighted that despite having skilled carpenters and artisans, India continues to import furniture.

"Can we not prepare India to become the factory of the world for furniture, can we not build to scale at competitive prices so that the world looks at India, to source from India, he added.

Further talking about yoga,

Equity benchmark Sensex

jumped 269 points on Thursday, led by gains in index

Industries, ICICI Bank and

Kotak Bank amid hopes of

fresh government stimulus to

support the economy.
The 30-share BSE Sensex

ended 268.95 points, or 0.71

per cent, higher at 38,140.47. Similarly, the NSE Nifty advanced 82.85 points, or 0.74

per cent, to close at 11,215.45.

climbed around 3 per cent to

hit a record closing high of Rs

SBI, ICICI Bank, Tech

Mahindra, ITC and Kotak

Bank were among the other

winners. On the other hand,

Shares of Reliance Industries

Reliance

heavyweight

00,000 or 500,000 yoga teachers who would find an opportunity across the globe," Goyal noted.

He said one has to take a person in yoga room for four sessions only and for the fifth session, the person will come "running and then for the rest of his life, he would want to be a yoga participant, that is the power of yoga".

Cure is not only about medicine or about visiting hospital or a doctor for treatment, the huge possibilities of yoga as a preventive medication are known to many but have not been captured as an opportu-

'I do not know whether all of us have failed the nation and the people of India, where despite the Prime Minister with his vision of opening up door, opening up opportuni-ties, for all of us, (we) have not seized the moment," the minister asked.

#### California in new deal with mask maker

PNS ■ SACRAMENTO (US)

California will spend an additional USD 315 million on protective masks through a contract with a Chinese manufacturer.

Governor Gavin Newsom announced the deal with BYD on Wednesday as he touted California's efforts to procure masks for health care and other essential work-

Newsom signed a USD 1 billion contract with BYD in April and the first masks began arriving last month after delays.

Newsom said California will soon launch a competitive bidding process to try to get more masks at lower

But he also acknowledged the masks aren't always getting to workers that need them and pledged a more

Amazon Pay, which is the payments unit of Amazon

In this quick paperless insurance plan, customers can get hassle-free claims with zero paperwork, onehour pick-up, and three-day assured claim servicing and one-year repair warranty in

Policyholers will also have

### amazon

buy auto insurance from Amazon Pay page, **Amazon app or** mobile website and they can get a quote for their car or bike insurance

tlements for low value claims, making it beneficial for cus-

Additionally, customers can select from a list of add-ons like zero-depreciation and engine protection and they will be able to pay for the insurance using Amazon Pay balance, UPI, or cards, the

# the grocery and fashion cate-

partnered with Flipkart Wholesale to ensure the availability of an exhaustive range of products and merchandise for kiranas and MSMEs, the statement said.

Flipkart Group to launch of Wholesale,

acquires Walmart India biz

The Flipkart Group on

Thursday announced the

launch of Flipkart Wholesale,

a new digital marketplace, and

the acquisition of 100 per cent

interest in Wal-Mart India

Private Limited, which oper-

ates the Best Price cash-and-

central to India's retail ecosys-

tem and Flipkart Wholesale

will focus on meeting their

needs by providing small busi-

nesses a wide selection at sig-

nificant value, the company

al merchandise or fashion,

these businesses will have one-

stop access to an extensive

selection of products with

attractive schemes and incen-

tives, supplemented with data-

driven recommendations for

stock selection, delivered

through a fast and reliable

network to drive greater effi-

ciencies and better margins," it

Best Price currently supports more than 1.5 million

members, including kiranas

Top Indian brands, local

and other MSMEs.

"Whether in grocery, gener-

said in a statement.

Kiranas and MSMEs are

carry business.

Kalyan Krishnamurthy, Chief Executive Officer, Flipkart Group, said, "The acquisition of Walmart India adds a strong talent pool with deep expertise in the wholesale business that will strengthen our position to address the needs of kiranas and MSMEs uniquely.'

Flipkart Wholesale will launch its operations in August 2020 and will pilot services for

It will be headed by Adarsh Menon, a veteran at Flipkart.

Sameer Aggarwal, Chief Executive Officer at Walmart India, will remain with the company to ensure a smooth transition, after which time he will move to another role within Walmart. With the acquisition of the Walmart India business, its employees will join the Flipkart Group and the home office teams will integrate over the next year. The Best Price brand will continue to serve its members via its omnichannel network of 28 stores and e-

## Amazon joins hands with Acko to offer auto insurance in India

PNS NEW DELHI

Amazon Pay on Thursday said it has tied up with Acko General Insurance Ltd to offer two- and four-wheeler insurance policies in India.

Índia, will help customers purchase insurance effortlessly, and Amazon Prime members will get extra benefits including additional discounts, a statement said.

Customers can buy auto insurance from Amazon Pay page, Amazon app or mobile website and they can get a quote for their car or bike's insurance by providing basic details, it said.

select cities.

**Customers can** 

an option for instant cash set-

statement said.

#### **Bharti AXA** gets Rs 800 cr crop insurance

PNS ■ MUMBAI

commerce operations.

Private non-life insurer Bharti AXA General Insurance on Thursday said it has received Rs 800 crore worth crop insurance mandate from Maharashtra and Karnataka governments to insure farmers in both the states under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

The company has secured authorisation for three years from both the state governments to implement the PMFBY in six districts of Maharashtra and three districts of Karnataka, a release

"Apart from implementing crop insurance for farmers in both the states, we will also capitalise on innovative technologies and digital capabilities for sharing relevant information about the PMFBY and ensure speedy and hassle-free claim assessments in the respective districts," the company's CEO and MD Sanjeev Srinivasan

# Monetisation by RBI has a cost: Rajan

PNS MUMBAI

plus in 12 years.

Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan on Thursday said the central bank has been expanding its balance sheet and buying government debt on the back of excess liquidity amid the economic slowdown but cautioned that this comes at a cost and cannot be a lasting solution. He said central banks in

many emerging markets are resorting to such strategies and disagreed with votaries of



the "modern monetary theory' who support this, making it clear that there are no free

"The RBI has been expand- gish. ing its balance sheet and it has been buying government debt.

Banks are parking the money with the RBI in the But effectively, in that process, reverse repo window, earning what it is doing is borrowing from the banks at the reverse repo rate and lending on to the government," Rajan said speaking at a conference organised by Singaporean lender DBS Bank.

It can be noted that at present there is excess liquidity in the system as people get more risk averse and save more and the demand for credit is slug-

**Radico Khaitan Q1 net falls** 

19.52 pc to Rs 44.07 crore

very less.

It can be noted that monetisation of the fiscal deficit is one of the suggestions put forth by a slew of economists and analysts as a prescription to tackle the current environ-

Rajan said there are limits to monetisation and the process can go long only for a limited period of time.

operations declined 33.70 per

cent to Rs 1,774.65 crore dur-

the quarter ended June 30,

2020, was impacted partially,

as there were no sales during

the period April 1, 2020, till May 04, 2020.

### Power demand to decline 8 pc in FY21, discoms' revenue to fall 13.1 pc to Rs 0.95 per unit from Rs

Power demand is expected to decline by around 8 per cent in current fiscal due to the steep fall in demand from commercial and industrial segments on the back of COVID-19 pandemic-induced nationwide lockdown, Emkay Global Financial Services said in a report.

According to the agency, the fall in demand is likely to result in a 13.1 per cent yearon-year (YoY) decline in revenue of discoms (distribution companies) to Rs 6.8 lakh crore in FY2021.

The nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of the deadly coronavirus during the first three months of the fiscal has significantly



leading to 17 per cent fall in Q1FY21 power demand, it

"Our analysis reveals that power demand will decline 8 per cent year on year in FY21 on a steep fall in commerical and industrial (C&I) demand," the agency said.

Further, the gap between average cost of supply and average revenue realised in FY21 is expected to increase

translating to an underrecovery of Rs 1.12 lakh crore. According to Emkay, discoms' overdue has reached Rs 1.17 lakh crore, which is close to the peak level witnessed pre-UDAY. "Discoms' financial stress

0.50 per unit in FY2020,

has been aggravated in this period due to the fall in power demand from the commercial and industrial segments and waiver of fixed charges by many discoms to the industrial segment.

"The overdue level is likely to remain high in FY21 due to the expected rise in underrecovery and slow progress in the Aatmanirbhar scheme toward loan disbursement," it

#### ing the quarter under review PNS MUMBAI Liquor firm Radico Khaitan Ltd on Thursday reported a as against Rs 2,677.07 crore in The rupee pared its initial 19.52 per cent decrease in the corresponding quarter last standalone net profit at Rs 44.07 crore for the first quargains and settled on a flat note year, Radico Khaitan said in a at 74.75 against the US dollar BSE filing. ter ended June 30, 2020, due on Thursday as escalating ten-The company said "because sions between the US and to disruptions caused by of lockdown, the volume for

COVID-19.

The company had posted a

net profit of Rs 54.76 crore in

the April-June quarter a year

ago. Its total revenue from

PNS NEW DELHI

China weighed on investor

74.75 against US dollar

Rupee settles flat at

Forex traders said the uptick in the rupee during the day was supported by weak greenback, foreign fund inflows and positive domestic equities, but rising tensions between the US and China weighed on investor sentiment and low of 74.87 against the US restricted the gains.





There has been an per cent in active report

in the direct-to-consumer (D2C) segment, it added.

During the lockdown, there were supply disruptions, and delivery services faced huge challenges and were unable to meet the demand or orders, it

shipment trends in post-lock-

increase of 65 shippers in the D2C segment, according to a

down India in the D2C sector for a period between May 18

the country.

ers were not sure how the new normal will look like for them, it added. "The lockdown created a

Less than 2 per cent of sell-

major disruption in the supply chain, and the demand-tosupply ratio was not balanced with the demand increasing exponentially. Our report was based on the patterns and trends observed," Shiprocket co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Saahil Goel

He added that Unlock 1.0 has paved the way for a new phase of logistics operations in

restrictions on several aspects of logistics and e-commerce and Shiprocket looks forward

to continuing its services in the Unlock 1.0 without hindrances in the supply chain and shipping, he noted.

"It's interesting to see an increased demand for hyperlocal services amid this pandemic. We hope the situation improves and the world returns to normalcy soon," he added.

Further, Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru clocked the highest number of pick-ups and deliveries which underlines pent-up demand in these cities during the lockdown, report added.

were able to overcome challenges more quickly in becoming operational, it added.
While Delhi leads the pick-

up activities, Mumbai was the top city in terms of delivery.

#### PNB Housing Fin Q1 net profit falls 10 pc to Rs 257 cr on lower disbursement The company's net interest in more than 24 quarters. income also slipped 22 per cent

to Rs 487.8 crore during April-

June, as against Rs 625.5 crore

At the interbank forex mar-

ket, the domestic unit opened

on a strong note at 74.65, but

erased the gains and finally closed at 74.75, unchanged

from its previous closing.

During the session, the

domestic unit witnessed an

intra-day high of 74.52 and a

decline in consolidated net in year-ago period, it said in a regulatory filing.

Total income during the quarter also fell to Rs 1,872.33 profit to Rs 257.2 crore in the first quarter ended June 30, mainly due to lower disbursement amid COVID-19 pan-

sentiment.

crore from Rs 2,232.58 crore. "During the quarter, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the disbursements resulting in the lowest quarterly disbursements However, with all our branches now operational, we are witnessing an increasing trend in disbursement on a month on month basis.

The company has rolled out its business plan for the FY 20-21 and will continue to focus on the lower risk weighted retail assets, resulting in higher percentage of retail book in the total AUM," Neeraj Vyas,

modities surged after Unlock 1.0 as their shipment volume was nearly three times higher after the relaxations as compared to the lockdown period, according to a report by e-commerce logistics aggregator Shiprocket. The shipment volume of

essential products was nearly three times higher after the relaxation in lockdown from Unlock 1.0 and over 40 per cent of the overall shipment volume came from essential categories as compared to the lockdown period, said the

There has been an increase of 65 per cent in active shippers

The report is an analysis of

demand channel.

and June 30, with a sample size of over 26,000 sellers across The report further said 60

per cent of sellers felt that the blend of both offline and online will continue to be preferred

The government has eased

Also, sellers in these cities

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> Friday July 24, 2020

'NO NEPOTISM IN TOLLYWOOD, IT'S DEMAND & SUPPLY

A friend, brother, villain, comedian — actor Brahmaji has played it all in his 25-year-long career in Telugu cinema and has become one of the most soughtafter character artistes now. The 55-year-old actor speaks to K RAMYA SREE about nepotism, the reason for not succeeding as a

hero, and more...

lthough we have hundreds of character artistes in the Telugu cinema, there are only a few who gained the same love and support that the audience would give to protagonists. One such artiste is Brahmaji. With hundreds of films to his credit, the actor is one of the most loved character artistes in the TFI.

Speaking about his entry to films, Brahmaji, who made his debut in the industry in 1995 said, "I came to Hyderabad after I joined a film institute here. Until then I was studying in Eluru. My father who happens to be a tahsildar had many transfers, so my entire childhood had us traveling from one place to

Brahmaji played several characters, including neg-ative shades, but isn't considered a typical hero. Krishna Vamsi, a dear friend of Brahmaji, launched him as a hero in his film Sindhooram but the film tanked at the box office. When asked why he couldn't succeed as a hero he said, "Only a few are lucky. I didn't even

think of becoming a hero. Krishna Vamsi wanted to make me a hero but it didn't work out. I didn't take my failure as a hero seriously. I'm happy as a character artist and I'm leading a comfortable life. If you ask me, with present competition among heroes, the life of a character artist is way better than that of a hero because every Friday is a war. If a hero does one film in six months, we as character artistes can do about five to six films. We have more interaction with the audience."

Brahmaji who brings with him over 25 years of experience in the film industry feels nepotism doesn't exist in the field of art. "Many outsiders are doing well in the industry, see for instance Naveen Polishetty, Nani, Vijay Deverakonda and many more. These people are extremely talented, hence they are surviving the tough competition here. Entry for heroes coming with a background might be easy but sustaining here is difficult. For example, only one son among three sons coming with a background in the industry is doing well, the other two failed as actors. There is no nepotism here. Its sheer talent. You will grow in the industry only if you have talent. It is only demand and supply in the industry and not nepotism. I will not agree if you say nepotism exists in the industry," the actor

a comfortable space for yourself in the industry.
"It is a lot easier for people to come to limelight now, there are many means to showcase your people are making it big

TikTok, etc.," he tells us. The actor's son too made his debut with O Pitta Kada. His son worked for the Indian Navy before his debut in Telugu cinema. The Who's who of Tollywood attended the pre-release event of O Pitta Kada because of the friendly relationship the actor maintains. "My son felt he wasn't able to spend enough time with

opines. Things are a lot better

today, believes Brahmaji, when it comes to making talent. Back then, we had to run from pillar to post for opportunities. Today, by posting short films on youtube, videos on

the family as he was in the marine for four months. He then decided to get into films. He underwent training in acting. As trail and error, we first shot a small portion of the film and showed it to others which later developed into a full-fledged film after watching my son's acting skills. I told my son to go back to his job if he doesn't sustain here," the actor





# Are you interested

The new Netflix show *Indian Matchmaking* has everyone hooked to it, making it one of the top 3 shows being watched by Indians on Netflix. All about an Indian matchmaker catering to the colourist, sexist and casteist demands of potential brides and grooms, and their parents, the show has fueled debates online and off it, on the ugly side of arranged marriages in India. The Pioneer's SHIKHA DUGGAL talks to women from the city across all ages and walks of life, to gauge what they think of the show and what one can learn and unlearn from it

o watch a show like Indian Matchmaking in 2020 can drive you nuts! The new web series released on Netflix last week and is receiving mixed reviews. Indian matchmaking showcases our country's obsession with criteria like height, caste, colour, etc. infused with Sima Aunty's (the famous real-life matchmaker from Mumbai) matchmaking tactics.

While some on the internet say that the 'show is simply holding a mirror to the ugly society we are a part of', many others argue that the show, instead, just whitewashes the preconceived notions of an arranged marriage with modernised ideas.

The families of the characters in the show and Sima Taparia believe in the most atrocious ideas of marriages, being problematic at parts. The desire to have a wife who performs all duties, works, and manages household seems one-sided. She needs to be accommodating, fun, and outgoing, all at the same time! Yet in one of the characters, Aparna's case, her determined nature, and confidence isn't admired but considered to be negative. Hypocrisy much?

Astrology in matchmaking is another hype in the show. The world perhaps can't depend on kundlis or the important decisions by the elite on marriage cannot be based on a nakshatra anymore but the web show takes you back to the olden times where Sima Taparia consults a famous face reader

for her failed compatibility issues. 'Hi, I am Sima Taparia from Mumbai. The girl should be flexible, know how to compromise and adjust' — this phrase caught the attention of a post-graduate student of Mass Communication from St. Josephs Degree College, who made her curious to know why Sima Taparia is trending. "I happened to watch the trailer of Indian Matchmaking and found it uncanny-cum-fun and decided to binge-watch it. In the very first episode, the show managed to establish a patriarchal and stereotypical nature, wherein a matchmaker is in pursuit of rich, successful, and good-looking matches from abroad. Even to this day, in India, arranged marriages ask for adjustments, especially from us women. Mrs Sima is following the same age-old tradition in the show. The grooms are being emotionally manipulated by their mothers. Pressure is being built up after a certain age, with an urgent need to get married. Problems of sexism, ageism, casteism, and colourism continue to persist. All in all, the show is full of sarcasm with a little bit of cringe and I suggest our Indian parents grow out of such norms as Ankita Bansal's father from the show rightly does. He believes in

her daughter's fierce theories

about equality and that's admirable," shares Prishita Motay.

The web series also acknowledges loneliness and that makes the audiences not stop watching it. This show is a hot mess, a fantasy that's catering to the white audiences with its exotic appeal of desi weddings. Some watchers were mortified, embarrassed, sardonic, confused, and some could relate to it. "Half an hour into Indian Matchmaking and I fastforwarded it. It's a cesspool of matching kundlis. It's all rooted in caste. I can just see it as a branding stunt for Sima Taparia! Personally, our families didn't take such a path to get us hitched. It doesn't seem like it's about finding love but more about keeping supremacy pure. The criteria every parent put forward leads you to body shaming — it's just uncool! This road to getting married needs to be fixed instead of being prosecuted as a Netflix special," argues Pradeepthi Vissamsetti, a Teluguite and city editor for the famous blog on parenting called Momspresso.

Pradeepthi also frowns at the marriage timelines discussed on the show, but says it makes sense to some extent. She feels the pressure becomes stronger in our twenties to thirties and we keep hearing that it's time to settle down! "I second this ideology because I understand our loved ones have certain expectations



Half an hour into Indian Matchmaking and I fastorwarded it. It's a cesspool of matching kundlis. It's all rooted in caste. Personally, our families didn't take such a path to get us hitched. The criteria every parent put forward leads you to

body shaming — it's just uncool! This road to getting married needs to be fixed instead of being prosecuted as a Netflix special.



As a life coach now, I have helped many young girls find a suitable groom, built their projector image or stalked

their social media accounts and suggested them to remove certain pictures that don't go well by their personalities, because, let's face it, this new age has no end to comparisons. I personally liked the matchmaker as she's quite passionate about her work.

PRIYA RAJIV A TRAINED LIFE COACE

from us, but if it doesn't work out, it leads to stress or disappointment as seen with Nadia's charac- she wonders if the opposite of loneliness is marriage, lacks self-confidence and is anticipates too much. Healthwise too, it's beneficial for a woman to get married before her thirties in terms of her future pregnancies but she must be able to pursue her dreams even after getting married," she opines.

There are many issues about what women have to be like, for them to be considered as wife material. Marriage is great but it may not fix one's insecurities, love is hard work, and must flow from both ways, believe several young women in the city. Everyone deserves to have the best for themselves when considering marriage, regardless of gender. With similar expectations comes Pradhyuman who has been rejecting women by just looking at their photos, to which Sima Aunty suggests he meet a life coach. A life coach from our own city says, "Arranged marriages are a very intrinsic part of our culture and also the iota of the web series. I found my match through a matrimonial advertisement too, in why my biodata read: attractive and vivacious. As a life coach now, I have helped many young girls find a suitable groom, built their projector image or stalked their social media accounts and suggested

that don't go well by their personalities, because, let's face it, this new age has no end to comparisons. Fun fact — no matter how progressive we become, a good looking man/woman will always be our first ordeal. We need a cordial shift to this approach. I personally liked the matchmaker as she's quite passionate about her work. The problem arises when people don't have an open mind. Episode four takes the character Pradyuman to a life coach who asks him to introspect himself which helped him become a lot less fickle-minded and fussy. But why a life coach, you ask? It's because the kids of this generation seem to be too picky and confused, they have multiple desires. It's like they are on a shopping spree! This takes us to another area- when an individual rejects his/her potential partner, it tends to demean their morale and confidence, which we need to be careful about," explains Priya Rajiv, a trained life coach. This graduate from the University of Oxford also loved the way Nadia Jagessar was open to change, passionately looks

woman of laughter. So if you've binge-watched Smriti Mundhra's *Indian* Matchmaking, are you ready to evolve for the better, break stereotypes and dismiss plans for the ideal bride/groom?

for love the love of her, and is a



# what's brewing?

# **BREAKING THE** STIGMA AROUND PERIODS

iar with TVCs and commercials for sanitary napkins which depict menstrual flow with 'blue liquid' as a way of discreetly depicting blood.
Decades later there's finally a brand which shows blood in TV communica-

tions as it should be — red. The aim is to bring forth an important and often neglected topic of "Heavy Flow" during periods; a problem which affects almost 25 per cent women in India and requires them to change their pads every 2 hours. RIÔ Heavy Flow Pads by Nobel Hygiene changes the face of Indian Advertising by launching their TVC with a

pan-India campaign. The first phase of the launch in February was paused after several complaints were filed with ASCI on the usage of blood shown in the commercial. However, after deliberations with ASCI and an independent review, RIO Pads have been allowed to air the advertisement with

minor modifications in the second phase of the launch. Actress Radhika Apte, brand ambassador for RIO

pads features in the TVC. She reiterates, "I have said this earlier and I will say it again. I do not see the issue in showing actual blood. Blood in a fight sequence in a film is fine but not for periods? Why can't we just show what heavy flow is really like? Why can't we show blood? I am glad that RIO has taken up this challenge and they are standing by it with conviction. Getting a go-ahead on this advertisement is very reassuring. If this ad can start even a single conversation, then that is a win for all the unheard voices. If we can remove even an iota of stigma around periods via this ad and encourage people to accept it as a normal and natural phenomenon then it will be

a big win for us all. Period." Commenting on the launch, Kartik Johari, Vice-President, Nobel Hygiene, said, "We are extremely proud to take this first step on behalf of all the women in India. There can be no talk of education, awareness or equality when the biological truth of half the population is censored. Our resolve to continue this conversation has been renewed, start-

ing with the depiction of blood. To show the unaddressed problem of Heavy Flow, without showing blood itself, is so absurd a concept, but it didn't even occur to us. All our communications are deeply inspired from our research, showing the first true and honest representation of periods for consumers. Awareness is needed, and conversations can only begin after acknowledging reality."

He further added, "We

took special care to ensure our communication remained as authentic as possible. The entire creative was scripted by a woman, based on real narratives from women, directed and shot by a woman, and is being marketed by women. Additionally, 1000s of women have already applauded our product and messaging; we are proud to have brought this innovation for Indian ladies who receive no respite from Heavy Flow. We are sure that other players in the market are excited by this new paradigm, and we call upon everyone to take advantage of this exciting shift to educate and recon-

nect with their consumers!"

# Orlando Bloom gets tattoo in honour of dead pet dog

ctor Orlando Bloom has had an ace of spades inside a heart inked under the name of his late dog Mighty, on his chest.

A week after his dog went missing, Bloom shared on Instagram on Wednesday that his dog is dead, reports etonline.com.

Paying a tribute to the pet he had welcomed into the family in 2017, he wrote, "Mighty's on the other side now. After seven days of searching from sunrise to sunset and into the wee hours, today, the 7th day — the number of completion — we found his collar."

"I have wept more this week than I thought possible, which has been very cathartic and heal-

ing."

Bloom wrote that he "left no
" in the search for stone unturned" in the search for Mighty, which included him crawling "thru all the man holes, under the roads, (searching) every back yard and creek bed".

"I feel so grateful to have learned from my little Mighty man that love is eternal and the true meaning of devotion," Bloom "I feel sure he was looking

down on me whistling in every back yard and knowing that I was doing all I possibly could to respect our bond. He was more than a companion. It was a soul connection for sure."

"I'm sorry. I love you," he continued. "Thank you. RIP my MIGHTY HEART'

Bloom concluded his post by thanking his community for its support, which allowed him to "see the best of people even in the





**TODAY'S SINGERS SHOULD COMPOSE THEIR OWN SONGS** 

> them," he said. He feels the understanding of the nuances of a composer's ver-

"My songs have never been in

sion is very rare. "For example, Arijit (Singh) has the right kind of pick up sense, but not everyone has that. I feel today's singers should try and compose their own songs because only then they will know the soul of their own composition and that'll shine through and connect with listeners," he said.

The style of working was different a few year ago, he pointed out. "Earlier, singers and composers

used to get 8 to 10 hours to jam and rehearse with the musicians. They used to interact before starting any project, but nowadays singers don't get that much time. It is a sad reality that composers today often just send a tune to the singers over WhatsApp and ask the singer to dub the song themselves. So, the process doesn't see the kind of coming together of talent, synergies and improvisations that used to be a part of the previous process," he explained.

Himesh recalled, "Back in the day, Alka Yagnik ji and I dubbed Tere naam for eight hours and that made the song such a hit. Amidst the new normal, I feel digital is the most direct medium between the singer and their audience and that's where they should reach out to them. Compose 100 songs, 500 songs you might fail 99 times but you will get that one hit song once you've hit the right

"I love Michael Jackson, he is a legend but he never sang for Tom Cruise, he has his own identity. This is what I want for all singers, this is the time where we all need to hold hands and succeed together," he shared while shooting for an episode of Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Li'l

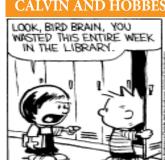








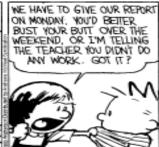




REALITY CHECK

HMMM- YOU SEEM A LITTLE

JUNG CAN I SEE SOME ID?



**SPEED BUMP** 

WE'RE DRIFT WOOD, BOB.

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO FEEL WASHED UP.





#### **GARFIELD**

**NANCY** 



GET YOUR PEACE AND

LOVE HERE! STEP RIGHT







#### **SUDOKU**



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4	9	6	5	8	1	2	3	7	
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- . The sum of all numbers in anv row or column must

# **CROSSWORD**

#### ACROSS

1 Made or became larger

- 7 A month
- 8 An item of furniture
- 9 One of the continents 10 A graceful water bird
- 12 Give assistance
- 14 Purchased

- 17 Sample by mouth
- 18 Tiny 19 Bewildered
- DOWN Mistake

A building for a king or

4 Where your arm bends

queen

3 Short letter



5 A skydiver wears this

6 Jack climbed this in a

11 Buildings for people 13 A rope thrown by a

15 Keep watch over

16 A green thing growing

SOLUTION

cowboy

on a tree

# GINGER MEGGS









#### Doc dies, Covid +ve, turned away by three hospitals

Agovernment doctor in Karnataka who was turned away by three private hospitals because he could not produce a coronavirus test result died today in Bengaluru. Dr Manjunath, who was a frontline COVID-19 doctor, was allegedly turned away by hospitals when he was extremely ill and struggling to breathe Dr Manjunath worked in the state Health and Family Welfare department and was based in Ramanagara district, around 50 km from Bengaluru. D Randeep, a Special Officer with the Bengaluru

municipal body BBMP, told NDTV that the hospitals that had refused to admit Dr Manjunath would be reported to the department. In



June-end, Dr Manjunath went to Rajashekhar Hospital in JP Nagar, BGS Global Hospital in Kengeri and Sagar hospital in Kumaraswamy Layout. All three demanded to see his COVID-19 test result but those were still not in at the time, according to his family. His brother-in-law Nagendra is also a doctor with BBMP and in charge of allotting hospital beds, yet he was completely helpless when it came to his own relative

#### BB season 14 tagline likely to be 'Lockdown'

 $T^{\text{he upcoming season of the reality show Bigg Boss will}} \\ \text{Treportedly have a lockdown theme, stated a report in}$ Pinkvilla. According to the publication, the makers of the reality show have also decided to use the tagline - Bigg Boss 14 Hoga Rocking - for the fourteenth season. Last year, the makers of the show finalized Bigg Boss 13 Tedha as the tagline. A source close to the development told Pinkvilla: "Like last year, it was Bigg Boss 13 Tedha, the 14th season will be

Rocking. The considered is, Bigg Boss 14 Hoga Rocking'." The exclusive Pinkvilla report is the latest addition to several media reports



about Bigg Boss 14 that have been doing the rounds on the Internet. While some reports have stated that Salman Khan will shoot the reality show from his Panvel farmhouse, where he has been living since before the nationwide lockdown was imposed, others have shared lists of probable contestants of

#### first-ever British-Indian census to be held in UK

The India League, a UK-based diaspora group which dates back to 1916, on Thursday announced the launch of a first-ever British Indian Census to collate data around Britain's estimated 1.5 million Indian-origin population. The census will be conducted online in collaboration with the University of Oxford and will culminate in a British Indian Report later this year, reflective of the true make-up of Britain's Indian diaspora and their concerns in 2020. "The British Indian community has

changed greatly over the years and this survey will provide our community with much needed data that will help us to understand the kev issues of concern and importantly on how best to



address them," said CB Patel, a veteran media personality and Chairman of India League. "The India League has been working for decades to champion Indians in the UK." he said The survey, available online from the Indian League website, intends to explore the diversity of heritage, identity, beliefs and behaviour of the Indian community based in the UK, whilst identifying key issues of concern to British Indians

#### **Trump touts 5-Word Memory Test**

Donald Trump has divulged details of a cognitive test he "aced" - including a five-word memory challenge he said proved he had the "mental stamina" to lead the US. "Person. Woman. Man Camera. TV," the US president recited as he revealed details of the much-discussed test to Fox TV on Wednesday. "The last questions are much more difficult," he said in an interview or

Tucker Carlson Tonight", in which he repeatedly questioned the . mental capacity of his Democratic rival Joe Biden. "Like a memory question. It's like, you'll go: Person. Woman. Man. Camera. TV," the president said. "So they say, 'Could you repeat that?' So said, 'Yeah. It's:



Person. Woman Man. Camera. TV.' "Then, ten minutes, 15, 20 minutes later they say, 'Remember that first question... Give us that again." "And you go: 'Person. Woman. Man. Camera. TV." "And they say 'that's amazing. How did you do that?" "I do it because I have, like, a good memory," Trump continued. "Because I'm cognitively there."

# 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

Premier League win over Chelsea in their final home game of the season to lift the Premier League trophy for the first time.

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

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

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



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

constant crackling of fireworks lit by lifted. 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

"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. 'IÑ 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 seathey are reportedly closing in on a deal for the 90-million euro (\$103 million, £81 million) rated Kai Havertz of Bayer Leverkusen.

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

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

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

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

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 son with the signings of Timo saw Liverpool surge forward and

# We should not stop because others will not sleep: Klopp

**AFP** ■ LIVERPOOL

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

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

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

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

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

We are champions of England, Europe and the world. We won four trophies, really big ones, so I couldn't be more proud,"



he added. "I'm usually not a person who needs pictures but I will have a picture with all four trophies because it doesn't happen often, so we should?

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

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

# not to get 'too arrogant'

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

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

"For me it wasn't a foul

from Kovacic," Lampard told Sky Sports. "There were a lot of things that were ongoing and on the bench ... I've got no problem with Jurgen Klopp, he's managed this team and it's 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 CL

**AFP** ■ MANCHESTER

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

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

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

They are ahead of fourth-



placed Chelsea on goal difference after the Blues lost 5-3 later at champions Liverpool.

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

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

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

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

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

#### West Brom promoted as **Brentford blow chance**

Manchester: West Bromwich Albion won promotion back to the Premier League after a 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.



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

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

## B'DESH TO RESCHEDULE SL TEST TOUR

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

#### CARLSEN BEAT ANAND IN LEGENDS OF CHESS CHENNAI: India's Viswanathan Anand suffered his second consecutive loss, going down to world No 1 Magnus

Carlsen in the second round of the \$150,000 chess24 Legends of Chess online tournament. The former world champion had kept the Norwegian ace in check in three games of the best-of-four contest before slipping 1.5-2.5 by in the final game late on Wednesday. EMERY TO COACH VILLARREAL FOR 3 SEASONS

VILLARREAL: Spanish club Villarreal on Thursday announced Unai Emery as manager for the next three seasons. Emery was sacked as Arsenal's coach in November 2019 after 18 months at helm. Emery, who has coached Almeria, Valencia and Sevilla in the Spanish 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.

## Amir cleared to join side in Eng

Pakistan left-arm pacer Mohammad Amir on Thursday was cleared to join the national side in England after his second test also returned negative for coronavirus.

"The PCB will now be making arrangements to send Amir and masseur, Mohammad Imran to England as soon as possible so that they can join the training camp in Derbyshire," the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said in a release.

Amir, 28, left many people disappointed including the national team's head coach and chief selector, Misbah-ul-Haq when he announced his sudden retirement from Test cricket last year. Former players are of the opinion that if Amir is available and fit, then he should also be con-

sidered for the Test series against England. Amir in a recent interview had said that he had made a mistake playing all three formats after his comeback after a five-year ban for spot-fixing. "I should have first played one or two formats and checked to see how my body is doing and whether I could take the strain.

I erred in playing immediately in all three formats and it led to injury and fitness problems. "At least now I am confident that I can now carry on playing for another four to six years if I take care of myself," he had said.

# NZC leave decision to join IPL on players

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) will issue No Objection Certificates (NÓCs) to all its six internationals set to compete in the IPL but said the "due diligence" on health safety protocols will have to be done by the players themselves.

The six New Zealand players who are set to play in the IPL are Jimmy Neesham (Kings XI Punjab), Lockie Ferguson (Kolkata Knight Mitchell

Boult (Mumbai Indians), Kane Williamson (Sunrisers Hyderabad) and Mitchell Santner (Chennai Super Kings).

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

While the NZC will be updating its players about the health safety protocols and latest Covid-19 related developments, the

viduals to do due diligence. "Well, yes, the issuing of NOCs is considered on a case-by-case basis and

it's rare that they are ever refused. However, the due diligence is something for the respective players to shoulder although we are happy to pass on as much info as we can to assist in these mat-

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 than

Boock also confirmed that New Zealand A team's tour of India has been cancelled. "My information is that the A tour of India will not be happening. It was decision taken by mutual agreement between both the boards," Boock said.



Japanese swimmer Ikee Rikako holding the lantern containing Olympic flame poses during a photo session at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo

#### **Akhtar blames BCCI for T20 WC postponement**

Lahore: Former Pakistan speedster Shoaib Akhtar has slammed the BCCI, alleging that the Indian cricket board played a role in the ICC postponing the T20 World Cup later this year to make room for the Indian Premier

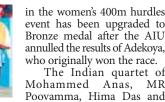
taken place.

"Asia Cup could have definitely happened, it would have been a great chance for India and Pakistan to play against each other. There are many reasons behind this. I don't want to get into that," League. Akhtar also felt that Akhtar said while speaking to the Asia Cup could have Geo Cricket on YouTube.

#### Indian mixed relay team's Asiad Silver upgraded to Gold PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian 4x400m mixed I relay team's Silver medal in the 2018 Asian Games has been upgraded to Gold following the disqualification of original winners Bahrain on account of a doping ban handed to one of its runners. Bahrain, which had topped the 4x400 mixed relay final, was disqualified after Kemi

Adekoya was handed a fouryear ban by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) for failing a dope test. Besides this, Anu Raghavan's fourth-place finish



Mohammed Anas, MR Poovamma, Hima Das and Arokia Rajiv had clocked 3:15:71 behind Bahrain (3:11:89). Raghavan had clocked 56.92 to finish fourth in the final race in Jakarta.

#### Vijayawada | Friday July 24 2020

# Regaining strength in nature's lap

The yesteryear actress who bravely fought cancer years ago shares her struggles, victories, and more, with her family

Instagram. Wednesday's post was one of those that pictures from her life with some philosophical bits to offer.

"Regaining strength", the 49-year-old actress captioned a bunch of trail through a forest. Remembering author Robert Frost's words latest adventure she quoted, "The woods are But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep."

Manisha Koirala

shared her no make-up, no-filter pictures that showed her grey strands of hair and

selfie to which her fans replied with much love. Many even asked her where she clicked the

Prassthanam, Sanju



oming soon is a suspense thriller love story based on real events that took place in Telangana called Asalem Jarigindi? Producer King Johnson is confident that the film will do well, thanks to how the recently released songs from the film has received. The songs sung by famous singers like Vijay Yesudas, Vijay Prakash, Yazin Nizar, Malvikan, Ranky, Bhargavi Pillai, and composed by Yelendra Mahaveer have received rave reviews from OTT platforms like Amazon Music, Spotify, Geosavone and Apple Music.

The film has received its clearance from the Censor board and will soon be released, but will it hit the silver screen or settle for an OTT platform is the big question. "We are discussing the matter internally. The

film has come out better than what we've expected," said Johnson. This film is based on real incidents that took place in Telangana. Shot with an 8K resolution camera, the film's famous background score by S. Chinna gave life to the film, and Sethu's special effects are what will make the audience feel the situation," Johnson tells us.

He also said that actor Sriram who plays the protagonist in the film had brought more hype to the story which had scope for good performance and is confident that the film would be well received by the audience after seeing his



# Sai Dharam Tej and 'Return of the weights'



working out. On Instagram, the actor shared a picture of his home gym, with dumbbells and other exercise equipment all around. On the image, he wrote,

"Return of the weights." The actor had earlier shared a picture of

himself running.
"Run Your Own Race. It's YOU Vs YOU. Be a BEAST," he wrote on the photo-sharing website. Sai made his acting debut with Pilla Nuvvu Leni Jeevitham. He was then seen in films like Rey, Subramanyam for Sale, Supreme, Thikka, Winner, Tej, I Love You and Prati Roju Pandage, among many

He will next be seen in Solo Brathuke So Better directed by Subbu. It also stars Nabha Natesh. The film's release got postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

# Tamannaah's 'pawfect' PUPPY LOVE

ctress Tamannaah Bhatia Ais an ardent animal lover and says there is no love like puppy love. Tamannaah took to Instagram, where she posted a motley of pictures of herself along with stray puppies. She captioned the image, which currently has 349K likes on the photosharing website: "There's no love like puppy love #DogsAreTheBest #furryfriends #doglover #pawfect."

Meanwhile, Tamannaah is excited about the Telugu remake of the Kannada superhit Love Mocktail.

wrote.

Rakshashi

Director Nagashekar has roped in the actress along with Satya Dev as protagonists of the untitled remake. The makers are hoping that the film will go on floors in mid-September and will be shot in Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad.

The original film was released in January, 2020. Directed by Krishna, *Love Mocktail* follows the story of Aadi and his quest for love.

# Samantha shares self-care secrets

Akkineni has doled out tips on self-care. With a black-andwhite picture of herself she posted on Instagram, Samantha wrote, "We wake up early. Meditate. Positive thoughts. Take that apple cider vinegar. Cleanse both body and mind. Pamper self with long skin care routine. Exercise. Hydrate. More positive thoughts and game face on yo." The image currently has 1 million likes. Samantha recently shared that she and her pet puppy Hash currently have a case of Covid-19 blues. On an Instagram picture of Hash sleeping by the staircase, she wrote,

'We are having a case of the #covidblues. How are you guys doing? I just want to remind you to remind yourself that you're awesome and you're doing just great and it will all be okay #stayhome #staysafe.' Samantha is known for her performances in films such as Ye Maaya Chesave, Neethaane En Ponvasantham,

Eega, Mersal and Rangasthalam. She impressed all with her role in Super *Deluxe* last year. She will next be seen in

Kaathuvaakula Rendu Kaadhal, starring Vijay Sethupathi. The film also stars Nayanthara. It is directed by Vignesh

