

OPINION 6
RELIGION
VS CULTURE

WORLD 8
FB, TWITTER PULL TRUMP POSTS
OVER VIRUS MISINFORMATION

SPORT 12
SANCHEZ JOINS
INTER FOR FREE

 Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

 *Late City Vol. 16 Issue 210
*Air Surcharge Extra If Applicable

BHUBANESWAR, FRIDAY AUGUST 7, 2020; PAGES 12-13

www.dailypioneer.com

Chinese intrusion info taken off Govt portal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry has pulled out a document from its website giving details about the Chinese "transgressions" in Eastern Ladakh beginning early May. It was the first time that the Government officially admitted that the Chinese Army had intruded into India leading to the ongoing stand-off at the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The document was uploaded as part of the monthly report on news section of the Defence Ministry website and was there since Tuesday. However, it was missing on Thursday. There was no official word from the Ministry on this deletion.

Acknowledging for the first time that the Chinese had intruded into India, the report said the present situation arising from "unilateral aggression" by China continues to be sensitive requiring close monitoring and prompt action based on evolving situation and the present stand-off is likely to be prolonged.

Chinese aggression has been increasing along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and more particularly in Galwan valley since May 5. The Chinese side transgressed in the areas of Kurang Nala, Gogra, and north bank of Pangong Tso on May 17-18, the Ministry said in its What's New section on the website.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an all-party meeting in June regarding the volatile border situation in Ladakh had



- The document was uploaded as part of the monthly report on news section of the Defence Ministry website and was there since Tuesday
- It was missing on Thursday
- There was no official word from the Ministry on this deletion
- Chinese aggression has been increasing along the LAC and more particularly in Galwan valley since May 5. The Chinese side transgressed in the areas of Kurang Nala, Gogra, and north bank of Pangong Tso on May 17-18, the Ministry said in its What's New section on the website

said, "Neither has anyone intruded into our territory nor taken over any post. Our forces are doing what they have to do to protect the country, whether it is deployment, action or counter-action. Our patrolling capacity has increased due to newly built infrastructure, especially along LAC."

Meanwhile, the deleted document said ground-level interactions were held between the Armed forces of both sides to defuse the situation. A Corps commanders' flag meeting was held on June 6. "However, a violent face-off incident took place between the two sides on June 15, resulting in casualties on both sides."

Subsequently, said the document, a second Corps commander level meeting took place on June 22 to discuss the modalities of de-escalation. "While engagement and dialogue at military and diplomatic level is continuing to arrive at mutually acceptable consensus, the present stand-off is likely to be prolonged," the

Ministry said.

"The situation in Eastern Ladakh arising from unilateral aggression by China continues to be sensitive and requiring close monitoring and prompt action based on the evolving situation," the document noted.

Incidentally, in an interview to some television channel in early June, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had acknowledged that China has moved troops in "significant numbers". Moreover, during his visit to Leh in July, Rajnath had said he cannot guarantee to what extent the issue with China would be resolved even as the talks are on at military and diplomatic levels.

In an effort to break the logjam, the two countries have held five rounds of Corps Commander level talks since June but there is no noticeable improvement in the situation. China continues to dilly-dally in withdrawing troops from the contentious Pangong Tso (lake) leading to tension. This despite

the fact that the two Corps Commanders on July 14 parleys agreed for mutual and complete disengagement of troops from the friction points.

Why PM lying? Rahul renews attack on Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After the Defence Ministry's admission that the Chinese troops have transgressed into the Indian territory in Eastern Ladakh, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday asked why the Prime Minister was lying over the issue.

Why is the PM lying? Gandhi tweeted, renewing his attack on Modi on the issue of the stand-off with China.

Rahul has frequently attacked Modi on this issue, inviting sharp reactions from government minister and BJP leaders.

Covid count soars to 2 million

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when the Government claimed the coronavirus spread has been contained, the number of cases on Thursday crossed over 20 lakh mark in the country. With 20.21 lakh cases, India is behind Brazil which is second spot with more than 28.62 lakh cases and the United States which continues to be the worst affected nation with close to 50 lakh cases.

India has added 10 lakh cases in just 20 days. Globally, over 18.82 million people have been reported to be infected by the novel coronavirus globally and 70,677 have died so far. On May 17-18, the Ministry said in its What's New section on the website

India, the third-most-affected country by total cases and fifth by death toll, has added 30,394 cases in the past six days alone. This is the ninth consecutive day that coronavirus cases have increased by more than 50,000.

On July 28, India had recorded 15 lakh cases. The new five million came in nine days, with an average of 50,000 fresh cases logged each day. The country has reported over 57,000 cases and over 800 deaths in the last 24 hours. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization urged the member nations of its Southeast Asia region to maintain essential health services and accelerate resumption of healthcare facilities hit by the pandemic as an integral part of the Covid-19 response.

As per the Government data, five most affected States by total tally of cases are Maharashtra (4,79,779), Tamil Nadu (2,79,144), Andhra Pradesh (1,96,789), Karnataka (1,58,254) and Delhi (1,41,531).

India has added 10 lakh cases in just 20 days and is third-most-hit country and fifth by death toll

Maharashtra reported highest single-day spike of 11,514 cases, followed by Andhra Pradesh 10,328 fresh cases, Karnataka 6805 and Tamil Nadu 5,684 cases. As the virus claimed another 316 lives in Maharashtra, the State's death toll climbed to 16,792. Mumbai reported 910 fresh cases of Covid-19 and 57 deaths in the last 24 hours.

After Maharashtra, racing closer to the two lakh mark, the coronavirus tally in Andhra Pradesh reached 1.96 lakh on Thursday as another 10,328 cases were added for the second consecutive day. Worsening further, East Godavari reported another 1,351 cases in the last 24 hours.



Health workers take blood samples for a random serological test to check for antibodies against the coronavirus in New Delhi on Thursday

AP

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL

CASES: 20,24,502

DEATHS: 41,631

RECOVERED: 13,75,287

ACTIVE: 6,07,130

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	4,79,779	16,792	3,16,375
Tamil Nadu	2,79,144	4,571	2,21,087
Andhra Pradesh	1,96,789	1,753	1,12,870
Karnataka	1,58,254	2,897	80,281
Delhi	1,41,531	4,059	1,27,124
Uttar Pradesh	1,08,974	1,918	63,402
West Bengal	86,754	1,902	61,023
Telangana	73,050	589	52,103
Bihar	68,148	388	43,820
Gujarat	67,811	2,579	50,524
Assam	52,818	126	35,893
Rajasthan	48,996	757	35,131
Odisha	40,717	280	26,888
Haryana	39,303	458	32,640
Madhya Pradesh	36,564	946	26,902
Kerala	30,449	98	18,333

8 virus patients die in Guj hospital fire

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

Eight coronavirus patients died in a fire inside the ICU ward of a private hospital in Ahmedabad city in the early hours of Thursday, officials said.

A para-medical staff member of the hospital was injured in the tragedy. A cumulative compensation of Rs 6 lakh each for the families of the deceased was announced by the Centre and Gujarat Government.

Plasma therapy findings not promising so far, says AIIMS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

AIIMS Director Dr Randeep A. Guleria told PTI on Thursday no clear mortality benefit of convalescent plasma therapy was seen in a trial conducted among 30 Covid-19 patients.

The much-touted convalescent plasma therapy was hardly effective in reducing mortality risk among Covid-19 patients, according to an interim analysis of a randomised controlled trial done at AIIMS here to assess the efficacy of this mode of treatment.

118 more test +ve in BBSR; total cases 3,472

- 71 quarantine cases, 47 local contacts
- 90 patients recover; total recoveries 2,151
- 64 infected in Cuttack city; total 1,389

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR/CUTTACK

Another 118 new Covid-19 positive cases were detected in capital city Bhubaneswar on Thursday, taking its total to 3,472.

Of the new cases 71 cases recovered from quarantine centres and 47 were local contacts, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said.

The quarantined cases included 10, all employees of the Health and Family Welfare Department linked with an earlier positive case; seven of Reserve Police Colony near the Kalinga Stadium linked with an earlier case; six of Nayapally Nua Sahi linked with an earlier case; five of Badagada linked with an earlier case; four of Surya Nagar linked with an earlier case; three of Unit-1 linked with an earlier case; three male police

staffs linked with an earlier case; two of Pokhariput linked with an earlier case; two of Gajapati Nagar linked with an earlier case; two of Rasulgurh linked with an earlier case; one case of Sundarpada Gokhibaba; and a woman employee of a private hospital.

The local contacts included three of Bomikhal, three of Bharatpur, two of Kalinga Nagar, two of Old Town, two of Nayapally Brit Colony, two of Chaitika, two of Unit-3 Railway Colony, two of Nagewar Tangi, two of Barumunda, two of Jayadev Vihar near IDBI Bank and two of Nayapally near CRPF Square.

However, 90 more patients recovered from the disease on the day, taking the total recoveries to 2,151 in the city.

On Thursday, 64 more positive cases were detected in Cuttack, taking the city's total cases to 1,389 with 708 active ones.

Out of the new cases, 24 were from the Malgondw containment zone. All were contacts of earlier-reported cases in the area. Besides, 11 were from institutional quarantine, 19 from home quarantine and 10 local contact cases, the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) said.

Guj cadre DIG heads CBI SIT on Sushant

Re-registers FIR of criminal conspiracy, abetment to suicide against Rhea

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday registered a case in connection with the death of film star Sushant Singh Rajput and entrusted the probe to a Special Investigation Team (SIT). Rajput's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty among others is an accused in the case.

Deputy Inspector General and IPS officer of Gujarat cadre Ganadeep Gambhir will supervise the probe into the sensational case that had led to a turf war between the Bihar Police and Mumbai Police over jurisdiction. Gambhir will report to Joint Director Manoj Sasidhar, officials said.

The move comes after the Bihar Government recommended a probe into the matter by the Central agency. "CBI has today registered a case related to the death of Rajput on the request of Bihar Government and further notification from the Centre and taken over the investigation of the case, earlier registered at police station Rajiv Nagar, Patna vide FIR no.241/2020 dated 25-7-2020," the CBI said in a statement. The CBI further said the case was registered against six accused and others and investigation is underway. "We are also in touch with Bihar Police," a CBI spokesman said.

Bihar Police chief warns of legal action if IPS officer 'quarantine' not released in Mumbai

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar police chief Guptheshwar Pandey on Thursday warned of legal action if an IPS officer who had gone to Mumbai to probe actor Sushant Singh Rajput death case, was not released from "forcible quarantine" by the end of the day.

Pandey expressed bewilderment over no positive response from the municipal authorities in Mumbai, whom he accused of quarantining IPS officer Vinay Tiwari in virtual house arrest, despite being informed about the adverse remarks made by Supreme Court against their action.



Bihar Police team officials arrive back from Mumbai after meeting with Inspector General and submitting reports in Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death investigation in Patna on Thursday

PTI

to the death of Rajput on the request of Bihar Government and further notification from the Centre and taken over the investigation of the case, earlier registered at police station Rajiv Nagar, Patna vide FIR no.241/2020 dated 25-7-2020," the CBI said in a statement. The CBI further said the case was registered against six accused and others and investigation is underway. "We are also in touch with Bihar Police," a CBI spokesman said.

The Bihar Police FIR in this connection, the Enforcement Directorate has already launched

a probe to investigate the money laundering angle in the case. Besides Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty, her relatives Indrajit Chakraborty, Sandhya Chakraborty and Shovik Chakraborty also her associate Samuel Miranda and Shruti Modi and others have been named as accused in the case.

The case has been registered under Indian Penal Code sections relating to criminal conspiracy, abetment of suicide, wrongful restraint, wrongful confinement, theft, criminal breach of trust, cheating and criminal intimidation.

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Covid-19 claimed 10 more lives in the State on Thursday, taking the toll to 235. Ganjam district reported three deaths followed by two in Sundargarh and one each in Nayagarh, Bhadrak, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur and Keonjhar.

The Ganjam deceased were a 52-year-old man, a 40-year-old man and a 55-year-old man. The deceased in Sundargarh were a 28-year-old woman and a 54-year-old man. The other casualties were a 39-year-old man of Nayagarh, a

40-year-old man of Nabarangpur, a 53-year-old woman of Bhadrak, a 61-year-old man of Kandhamal and a 52-year-old man of Keonjhar, the Health and Family Welfare Department said.

Meanwhile, the uptick in coronavirus cases continued on Thursday with detection of the highest-ever, 1,699 new cases. With this, the total tally in the State reached 40,717.

Of the new cases, 1,073 were from quarantine centres and 626 local contact cases. The day's highest 268 cases were detected in Ganjam district followed by Khordha 220, Sundargarh 178, Cuttack 105, Sambalpur 101, Baragarh 81, Bhadrak 66, Kandhamal 74, Malkangiri 72, Gajapati 59, Keonjhar 56, Jajpur 41, Kalahandi 30, Mayurbhanj 24, Kendrapada and Dhenkanal 27 each, Balangir 21, Baleswar 17, Jharsuguda 10 and Boudh eight.

However, another 1,150 patients recovered on the day, increasing the total recoveries to 26,887.

The highest 290 recovered in Ganjam district, followed by 197 in Khordha, 121 in Rayagada, 76 in Sundargarh,

Online booking for Puri temple visit soon!

PNS ■ PURI

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) is considering reopening of the Shreemandir, which is closed for devotees for over four months since March 20 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with certain guidelines.

On Thursday, a meeting of Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee was held to discuss a proposal for reopening of the shrine for devotees.

"The discussion is underway on a proposal for online registration of devotees for darshan of the deities inside the temple," said a committee member, Ramachandra Dasmohapatra.

As per the proposal, the devotees need to register online on a proposed website for darshan of deities in the temple. The submission of identity



proof and Covid-19 test report on the website shall be mandatory as per the Covid-19 guidelines. Later, the devotees would be allotted the time for darshan. However, preference would be given to the devotees from

Puri district. The devotees need to prove themselves as coronavirus-negative. Only limited number of devotees would be given chance for darshan every day, Dasmohapatra said.

CAPSULE

LANKA POLLS: RAJAPAKSA HEADING FOR GRAND WIN
Colombo: Sri Lanka's strong winner Mahinda Rajapaksa was poised to stage a political comeback on Thursday as his party took an early lead and was set for a big victory in the twice-postponed general elections, according to results announced so far.

FIVE KILLED AS RAIN BATTERS KERALA
Thiruvananthapuram: 5 people were killed as intermittent heavy rains and strong winds battered parts of Kerala on Thursday.

BJP Sarpanch killed by ultras

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Sending out a chilling reminder to the security forces "unidentified" terrorists on Thursday carried out yet another bloodiest attack on grass root Panchayat workers in which one BJP sarpanch was killed in Vessu village of Qazikund block in South Kashmir's Kulgam district.

Police identified the slain BJP sarpanch as Sajad Ahmad Khanday who was camping in a secured migrant camp. Detailed report on P5

- Highest-ever surge of 1,699 new cases; total 40,717
- Day highest 268 in Ganjam once again
- 1,150 recover; total recoveries 26,887

47 in Jajpur, 45 in Koraput 44 in Cuttack, 40 in Puri, 35 in Nayagarh, 33 in Keonjhar, 25 in Baleswar, 23 in Balangir, 15 in Sambalpur, 22 in Balangir, 15 in Bhadrak, 14 in Kandhamal, 11 in Jagatsinghpur, 11 in Nabarangpur.

Kendrapada, 10 in Malkangiri, eight in Nuapada, seven in Baragarh, six in Dhenkanal, five each in Angul and Subarnapur, four each in Gajapati and Jharsuguda, two each in Boudh and one in Nabarangpur.

Take proper care of all patients: Samantara

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Iok Shakti Abhiyan president Prafulla Samantara has slammed the State Government for reported Covid mismanagement and urged it to take all measures to provide best treatment to both Covid and non-Covid patients in hospitals.

In a letter to Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy on Wednesday, Samantara appreciated the Government's quick response to the migrant workers issue and management of quarantine centers in villages at an earlier stage of lockdown period.

However, citing media reports, he expressed unhappiness over reported flaws, negligence and mismanagement in dealing with Covid

patients and the Covid Care Centers in Ganjam and other places.

"There are different kinds of problems patients are facing now. Though there is no prescribed medicine for Covid 19, but essential treatment is necessary to prevent the disease from getting aggravated. There are Covid centers which are lacking basic sanitary needs. Deaths of doctors has added to woes of patients. Many patients are left in beds only to wait and watch what to happen," rued Samantara.

He also alleged that non-Covid patients are not getting proper care in Government hospitals now. He urged the Chief Secretary to take necessary steps to provide proper treatment and care to both Covid and non-Covid patients.

Khordha SP tests +ve

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Superintendent of Police of Khordha district Ajay Pratap Swain has tested positive for Covid-19, confirmed Health & Family Welfare Department on Thursday.



Swain, younger brother of Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain, is the first SP in the State to have contracted coronavirus infection. The confirmation was made after his antibody test report came out positive.

Doctors have suggested the SP to remain under home isolation to prevent spread of infection.

DGP hails cops cured of Covid

PNS ■ CUTTACK

DGP Abhay interacted with police personnel, recovered from Covid-19 through video conference on Wednesday.

Covid warriors from 14 districts attended the video conference. The DGP thanked them and appreciated their commitment and dedication to public service.

Many of them narrated their experience and reiterated their commitment to public service.

Covid warriors of the Bhubaneswar and Cuttack Urban Police Districts (UPDs) and the districts of Angul, Brahmapur, Mayurbhanj, Malkangiri, Nayagarh, Puri, Cuttack, Balangir, Gajapati, Ganjam, Koraput and the Rourkela police, interacted with the DGP.

Two eminent doctors join KIMS

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR



Two Eminent doctors Bidhu Kalyan Mohanti and Hemanta Kumar Kar have joined the Kalina Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS).

Dr. Mohanti has been listed as a noteworthy dermatologist by Marquis Who's Who. Dr. Mohanti was Professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology at AIIMS, New Delhi and Director & HoD of Department - Radiation Oncology, Fortis Hospital, Gurgaon.

Dr Kar has been a member

OUWJ seeks aid to scribes in Covid time

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

BHUBANESWAR: The State Government has announced financial assistance to the tune of Rs 15 lakh for the journalists who die while on duty during the Covid pandemic, which is a welcome move, said the Odisha Union of Working Journalists (OUWJ) while thanking Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for such a gesture of goodwill to the mediapersons. However, the association sought financial help from the Government for the journalists who are living in chili penury during these Covid times as the post death assistance is of little use for them.

The OUWJ held a meeting in this connection on August 4 here, presided over by union president senior journalist Sugyan Choudhury. Prominent among others present were vice presidents Asutosh Rath, Deepak Prusty, general secretary Hrushikesh Mohanty, joint secretary Pabitra Patra and treasurer Shyam Sundar Rout. PNS

Mo Bus passes validity extended

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) on Thursday announced that validity of the online Bhubaneswar Pass and Magic Pass has been extended automatically.

In a statement, the CRUT said physical pass holders, who bought the pass at Master Canteen terminal, would have to get the validity extended at the terminal on all official working days between 10 am and 6 pm.

Similarly, pass holders who bought the pass at the CRUT office can get the validity extended there on all official working days between 10 am and 6 pm.

The last day for extension of physical pass is August 14.

10 Health Dept staffs test positive

BHUBANESWAR: As many as 10 employees of the Health & Family Welfare (H&FW) Department, which plays a major role in the battle against Covid-19, have been infected with coronavirus at the Lok Seva Bhawan here.

In view of this, the authorities have decided to conduct Covid-19 test on other employees.

Reports said that 20 employees had undergone Covid-19 test after detection of a positive case in the department on August 1.

As per a reliable source, a finance officer had recently tested positive for the virus last week. During the period, he had attended many meetings and several people had come in contact with him.

Following contact tracing, 20 employees of the department were asked to undergo Covid-19 test. The Health & Family Welfare officials in the posts of SO, ASO and Desk Officer were tested positive. PNS

Puri Wildlife ACF arrested in DA case

CUTTACK: Vigilance officers on Thursday arrested and court-forwarded Puri Wildlife ACF Prasant Kumar Swain on the charge of accumulating assets worth Rs 76,01,604 disproportionate to his known sources of income.

On Wednesday, Vigilance officers had conducted raids on his office room and houses at different places in the State and detected assets worth Rs 1,16,27,938 possessed by him and his family members.

Officers had searched his triple-storied building at Bhubaneswar, rented house at Puri, parental house at Sisilo under Odisha police station in Khordha, a relative's house at Dhenkanal and his office room at Puri.

After search, inventory and further enquiry, the income, expenditure and assets of Swain were calculated. He could not account for assets worth 76,01,604 satisfactorily, an official release said. PNS

Woman held for mobile theft in BBSR

Increasing street crimes panic denizens

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

With the easing of lockdown restrictions there is a spurt in street crimes like snatching, robbery and theft in the capital city Bhubaneswar.

Former top police officials opined such incidents would rise in view of rising unemployment due to the coronavirus pandemic, as many people, even without criminal history, would resort to criminal activities to make ends meet.

In an example, police on Thursday arrested a woman on charges of stealing a mobile phone from a house in IRC Village under the Nayapalli police station.

The accused identified as Priyanka Naik entered the house and tried to steal a mobile phone. In the meantime some house residents of the house managed to lock up the woman in a room.

After receiving information, police reached the spot and arrested the woman looter.

But the ending is not the same in every case. A few days, couple of armed miscreants had attacked a woman and looted her gold ornaments in the same street in broad daylight. The woman was critically injured and hospitalised.

In another case, a woman Vigilance DSP was looted at gunpoint in Unit-3 in front of her house. Police are yet to get any leads in both the cases and nab the miscreants. This is giving nightmares to the denizens of the city.

Rare thousand-petal lotus blooms



PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Subrat Kumar Nath has stolen limelight as a rare thousand-petal lotus has bloomed in his garden in this western Odisha city. This is indeed a significant phenomenon considering the local climate.

Nath, a resident of SRT Colony, said this is the first thousand-petal lotus to have bloomed in Odisha's western

region and the second in the State. Notably, this rare variety of lotus is bigger in size and more attractive than other flowers of the lotus family.

In local parlance, it is termed as 'Sahasradal Kamal'. As the flower matures, it forms a big ball emanating a strong sweet fragrance. It lasts for over two weeks.

This flower is revered and offered to Goddess Lakshmi for wealth and prosperity.

'Breastfeeding essential even during Covid'

AIIMS, Unicef hold workshop

BHUBANESWAR: The Department of Community Medicine and Family Medicine, AIIMS, Bhubaneswar in collaboration with the Unicef organised a media workshop on "Breastfeeding during Covid-19 - Challenges and Solutions" on Thursday.

Stating that breastfeeding as the most crucial part of nutrition for a child, AIIMS Director Prof Ganitjani Batmanabhe set the context by raising issues on challenges, misconceptions and myths related to breastfeeding during Covid-19.

Dr. Sonu H Subba threw light on how Covid could affect breastfeeding of infants and young children across the

social classes due to many reasons.

Unicef Odisha Nutrition Specialist Sourav Bhattacharjee stressed on the need of breast-feeding within one hour of delivery irrespective of Covid status. However, the mother should put on facemask that practice hand hygiene before each feeding, said he.

Bhattacharjee said, "Breastfeeding prevents 20% of newborn deaths, prevents 13% of under 5 deaths, 11 times lesser chance of diarrhoeal mortality, 15 times lesser chance of pneumonia related mortality benefits on raising IQ, prevention of non-communicable disease, lesser hospital stay of newborn and maternal benefits (less prevention)".

Notably, the World Breastfeeding Week is observed from August 1 to 7. PNS

BJD to hold webinars on new Nat'l Edu Policy

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In order to safeguard the interests of the people of the State, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has decided to organise four webinar workshops on the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020. The purpose of the workshops is to discuss the NEP and seek suggestions from different stakeholders of the society.

The webinar workshops will be held on August 8 and 16. While one workshop will be held from 11 am to 1 pm, another one will be organised

from 3 pm to 5 pm on these two days.

Educators, employees of different institutions, students and parents would be invited to participate in the webinars, the BJD said in a statement.

BJD vice-president Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, senior general secretary Arun Kumar Sahasrabudhi, general secretary Rabin Pujari, former MLA Priyadarshi Mishra, Janmejay Lenka, Satyabrata Patra and Sarada Prasad Jena would moderate the webinar workshops.

3 looters, including 2 juveniles, held

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Jagatsinghpur police on Thursday solved a loot case that took place on August 3 by arresting three persons, including two juveniles, on Thursday.

The cops also seized cash of Rs 24,020, a tablet and three mobile phones from the possession of the accused. Further investigation is on to ascertain their involvement in other crimes, said Cuttack DCP Prateek Singh.

Police said that on the fateful day when Madhusmita Biswal, an employee of Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited, was returning to office around 11.30 pm, three miscreants intercepted her and looted Rs 30,000 cash, a tablet and mobile phone from her.

JSpur bags SKOCH Award for Covid mgmt

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

The Jagatsinghpur district administration got the prestigious national level SKOCH Award in Silver category in Covid management by setting up a proactive and empathetic governance model.

The award was given to the Jagatsinghpur administration under a special category award for Covid management. The award instituted in 2003 is the highest civilian honour in the country and is conferred by an independent organisation.

It recognizes people, projects and institutions that go the extra mile to make India a better nation. The SKOCH Award is India's leading Think Tank dealing with socio-economic issues, with a focus on inclusive growth, since 1997.



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik congratulated the Jagatsinghpur district administration for bagging the prestigious SKOCH Award for efficiency in Covid-19 management. With two deaths and 573 recoveries so far, Jagatsinghpur district has 117 active cases at present. The award has brought in another feather in the cap for the district government and district Collector Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, whose tireless perseverance brought Jagatsinghpur to be the only district in the entire country to have implemented e-file as a practice of good governance throughout the district to end the era of paper file. Several welfare measures and industrialisation process in Paradip including that of JSW Ithal has proved his proactive endeavour.

Covid hosps' fire safety to be reviewed

BHUBANESWAR: Following the fire mishap at a Covid Hospital in Ahmedabad of Gujarat that claimed the lives of eight patients on Thursday, the Odisha Fire Services decided to review the fire safety measures at Covid Hospitals and Covid Care Centres in the State.

Fire Services DG Satyjit Mohanty directed the Assistant Fire Officers and Deputy Fire Officers to inspect the health-care facilities under their respective jurisdictions and take stock of the safety measures and deficiencies.

The officials would also advise the hospital authorities on taking proper fire safety measures. PNS

DL services to be available online

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR



The State Transport Authority on Thursday said it would provide several driving licence (DL) related services through online mode in view of the Covid-19 situation.

The decision was taken to reduce public gathering at RTO offices.

The DL services will be available online on Sarathi web portal, www.parivahan.gov.in. Services such as renewal of DL, change of DL address, issuance of duplicate DL, change of name in DL, change of biometric in DL, Replacement of DL, issuance of extract of DL, surrender of

Class of Vehicle (COV), issuance of NOC and surrender of NOC would be available online.

The applicants would book an appointment to visit the concerned RTO office in connection with these services wherever required.

However, the LL online computerised test and DL skill test would not be conducted, the order said.

State Govt has betrayed migrants: BJP

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP on Thursday alleged that the State Government has failed in giving jobs to migrant workers who have returned from other States due to the Covid pandemic.

"While some State Governments have done efficiency mapping of migrant workers to provide them jobs as per the Supreme Court order, the Odisha Government has not prepared a list of migrant workers yet. People who have returned from other States due to Covid pandemic are facing lots of difficulties," alleged BJP state general secretary Golak Mohapatra.

UCCI holds webinar on PwDs' safety

Sanyas explains Govt Covid norms

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A webinar on "Safety care and social security of PwDs during Covid-19 pandemic and Government of Odisha guideline" was conducted by the ladies forum of the Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UCCI) here on Wednesday.

Visually-challenged OAS officer Sanyas Behera and

Sadhana director Ranjit Mohapatra guided the occasion as guests. Dr Geeta Rani Padhi delivered the welcome address. The guests highlighted Covid impacts on PwDs' education, health and transportation.

Behera explained the State Government guidelines in detail during interaction session. NGO personalities and members of the forum took part in the discussion. The discussion came to an end with a vote of thanks proposed by former secretary Dr Bharati Behera.

Minor mineral: 6 trucks seized in Khordha



PNS ■ KHORDHA

On the direction of Khordha district Collector Sanat Kumar Mohanty, the local Tehsildars along with police personnel conducted raids at different places to check illegal transportation of minor minerals like sand, laterite stones and basalt morum on

Thursday. The teams seized as many as six trucks, a tractor and six power-tillers engaged in illegal transportation of sand and laterite stones.

While the move has panicked minor mineral mafia in the district, such raids would continue in the district in coming days, said an official.

Covid-hit face stigma, treated as untouchables

Lack of awareness causing social unease in Subarnapur

PNS ■ SUBARNAPUR

While the number of Corona positive cases in Subarnapur district is on the rise, social lives of those infected are now in a jeopardy here due to the attitude of the people towards the infected ones.

In the district, 113 Corona cases have been identified and

out of them 81 have recovered. No death took place in the district due to Corona so far.

The rise in the number of Corona positive cases is only due to the lack of awareness among the public. This is especially true in rural areas.

Those who returned to their own villages with great difficulty are treated like untouchables by their own people. The families who brought small children underwent great sufferings.

It is a misconception that a person who is infected will be the carrier of the virus forever and if anybody talks with them or touches them, he runs the risk of getting infected.

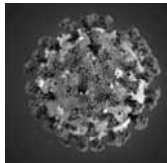
Covid spreads even as N'rangpur bags SKOCH

PNS ■ NABARANGPUR

A few days back, the district administration of Nabarangpur had won SKOCH Award (silver) for an exhibition on district response to the Covid-19.

District Collector Dr Ajit Kumar Mishra dedicated the award to all the Covid warriors. However, soon the administration came under fire for suppressing the exact figure of infected Covid patients and mortality rate in the district.

The figure stated by the district administration in day-to-day bulletin about the infected persons was inconsistent with the State figure. Further, it is alleged that large scale irregularities were made in



supply of materials to the quarantine centers.

Meanwhile, the positive cases in the district have surged to 340. There are allegations that the district administration was making delay in demarcating the area as containment and buffer zones where positive cases of Coronavirus were found.

In Nabarangpur

Newly-wed pregnant woman found hanging

Parents allege murder

PNS ■ NABARANGPUR

A body of a newlywed pregnant woman was found hanging from the ceiling of a house at Bhima Sahi in the Papadahandi area of Nabarangpur district on Wednesday night.

The deceased was identified as Tanushree Nayak, who was eight-month pregnant. Her

parents' family members have lodged a complaint with police alleging that her husband Albert Shakespeare and in-laws murdered her over dowry demand.

Tanushree had married Albert on October 5 last year. Both were staying in a rented house at Bhima Sahi since then. Albert telephoned her family members at night and informed that she had committed suicide.

The accused persons absconded after the incident. Police recovered the body and started an investigation into the matter.

INBRIEF

3 KIDS DROWN IN TEL RIVER IN NABARANGPUR

Nabarangpur: Three children, including two girls, drowned in the Tel river near Tohar in Nabarangpur district on Thursday. The kids, aged between three and six years, were taking bath. As they did not return home, their family members searched for them but in vain. They then informed Fire Service personnel. After a brief search, the Fire Service personnel fished out the three bodies. A pall of gloom descended on the village following the incident.

RAM TEMPLE FOUNDATION LAID IN KEONJHAR



Keonjhar: On the day of Bhoomi Pujan at Ayodhya on Wednesday, the Namo Sena laid foundation-stone of a Shri Ram temple at a beautiful natural environment near Judialghat on the outskirts of Keonjhar town. One Rama Krishna Patnaik has donated his land for construction of the temple. Social worker Buta Singh and Namo Sena district president Pratap Rout were present. Sachidananda Patnaik, Radharaman Patnaik, Arundhati Patnaik, Anil Ram, Madan Mohan Das, Akash Nath, Debadarshan Dad and Satyajit Mishra coordinated the programme.

BALANGA MATRIC TOPPERS FELICITATED



Balanga: The Alumni Association of Balanga Govt High School felicitated Matric AI students of the Balanga area recently. Association president Dilip Pattnaik, secretary Santosh Kumar Patti, Sukanta Baral, Prakash Pradhan, Saroj Kumar Das and others felicitated the students giving them educational kits and certificates at their homes. Those felicitated were Lopita Jena of Balanga Nodal High School, Aditya Sahoo of Lokanathdev Bidyapitha Garchandapur, Pratyusha Patra of Kanakakanta High School and Ananya Mohapatra of Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir.

PYTHON SPOTTED NEAR M'GIRI COVID HOSPITAL



Malikangiri: An eight-foot-long python was rescued in front of the Malikangiri Covid Hospital on Wednesday evening. Local spotted the snake, an Indian rock python, crawling on the main road near the hospital after rainfall in the area. Being informed, a member of the Snake Helpline reached the spot and rescued the reptile. It was later handed over to the Forest Department and eventually released into the nearby forest.

KING COBRA RESCUED FROM GANJAM TEMPLE

Brahmapur: A nine-foot-long king cobra was rescued from a temple at Chaitanpur Sasan under Patrapur block of Ganjam district on Wednesday evening. A priest of the temple spotted the snake under the Hundi and informed villagers. Being contacted by locals, a member of the Snake Helpline and Forest officials reached the place and rescued the reptile. The animal was later released into the nearby reserve forest.



Memorial held for JDTOA chief



PNS ■ PARADIP

A memorial meeting was held on Wednesday for late Jagatsinghpur District Truck Owners' Association (JDTOA) chairman Anam Charan Swain at the JDTOA office.

The meeting, chaired by association president Santosh Kumar Patnaik, paid rich homage to Swain's Patnaik's the union would never forget Swain's valuable views and vision for the formation and

management of the union.

JDTOA vice-presidents Gopakrishna Paria and Ramkrishna Paria, secretary Ranjit Behera, treasurer Sanjay Rout and working committee members and other members were present and paid tributes late Swain. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all members attended the memorial meeting by wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. The meeting place was sanitised after the programme.

Transgenders' plight: NHRC seeks ATR from States

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought for an Action Taken Report (ATR) from the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories over the plight of transgenders.

Acting on a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the NHRC passed the order. Tripathy has raised the issue concerning plight of transgenders during Corona pandemic wherein they are being deprived of basic necessities

of life and highlighted failure on part of States to implement the NALSA judgment of the Supreme Court for safeguarding the rights of the transgender persons.

With the outbreak of Corona pandemic, the transgenders in India have been suffering immensely but silently. Performance of dances or doing some other stray jobs or running small businesses has become impossible for them. Their source of livelihood has been stopped completely and the States have done nothing for their survival, Tripathy mentioned.

All the States and Union Territories in India have failed to implement the decision of the Supreme Court Judgement in NALSA case related to the transgenders, Tripathy contended.

He further pointed out that the benefits of social welfare schemes remain a mirage for these unfortunate victims.

The horrific incidents of human rights violation have been continuing for these victims due to inaction and failure of the State administration in ensuring the bare necessities of life, Tripathy alleged.

He requested the NHRC to seek detailed report from the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union territories with regard to steps taken to ensure bare necessities of life of the transgenders.

Seeking ATR from the authorities the apex human rights watchdog warned, "In case the report is not received within the stipulated time, the Commission shall be constrained to invoke coercive process u/s 13 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 for personal appearance of the concerned authority".

Farmer finds antique gold coin in Jajpur

PNS ■ JAJPUR

A farmer of Radhanagar in Jajpur district found a gold coin while working in his farmland on Wednesday.

Benudhar Nayak, a progressive farmer, suddenly stumbled on the gold coin while ploughing his field. The coin weighs about 6.5 gram

and is punched with images on both its sides.

The coin reportedly dates back to the second century with the image of King Huviska during the Kushan era.

The gold coin which was recovered from Radhanagar has image of King Huviska on one side and another image on the other side. Huviska was a

Kushan emperor during second century. As the coin has the image of King Huviska, certainly it belonged to the Kushan era," said historian Nrusingha Charan Sahoo.

He said that earlier many coins of gold and silver and lots of potteries were also discovered from Radhanagar during an excavation by the

Odisha Institute of Maritime and South East Asian Studies (OIMSEAS).

Sahoo said the unearthing of several inscriptions and other corroborative evidences clearly prove that Radhanagar was the capital city of Tosali, an ancient city. As the capital, it had a maritime link to South East Asia and other countries, he said.

38 docs +ve: VIMSAR OPD to remain shut

SAMBALPUR: The VIMSAR authorities on Thursday decided to close the out-patient department (OPD) services of Medicine department from Friday.

VIMSAR Director Lalit Kumar Meher said OPD services of the Medicine Department will remain closed from tomorrow till August 12. The decision was taken after 38 doctors of Medicine Department of the institute were sent on quarantine. So far, a total of 70 Doctors of the institute are on isolation.

As the OPD services of the Medicine Department will remain closed, telemedicine services of the department would be launched from tomorrow, Meher added. The VIMSAR issued two numbers - 7655051598 and 7655051601 to provide telemedicine facilities to critical patients of Medicine Department. PNS

All-religion celebration for Ram Temple held



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Bharat Raksha Manch (BRM) along with other organisations celebrated the Bhoomi Pujan ceremony of Ram Janmabhoomi Temple at Ayodhya at the holy Bindu Sagar in the Old Town here. Devotees organised a Yajna. A special cover with Ramayana Stamps was also released.

Bhikshus from the Buddha Temple, representatives from the Jain, Sikh, Muslim and Christian communities joined

the celebration. BRM president Dr Ashok Acharya said Lord Ram is a symbol of communal harmony. BRM, national secretary Anil Dhir said the temple would be a symbol to unite the country. Prafulla Swain, who organised the celebration, said that like Ayodhya, other holy places like Bhubaneswar too should be developed.

Umesh Khandelwal from the Marwari Yuva Manch said the grand temple at Ayodhya would be a global landmark.

B'pur BJP holds Bal Hanuman Chalisha

Ahead of Ram Temple Bhoomi Puja

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The BJP organised a "Bal Hanuman Chalisha" in the Radhakrushna Temple at Jena Street, Bada Bazaar here on Wednesday morning ahead of Ram Temple Bhoomi Pujan conducted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Ayodhya.

The programme organised on the advice of former BJP district president KC Pati was attended by several party workers and small children amidst social distancing norms. The children recited Hanuman Chalisha eleven times.



In another event, party workers, under the supervision of Gosaniyagaon Mandal president Namitarani Panda, organised "Ghruta Yajna" to mark the event. Enthusiastic Hindutva lovers and BJP workers offered deepa and prayed to Lord Rama at TVs in their

respective homes.

"I convey greetings to Prime Minister Modi for his all out efforts and success in resolving the 500-year-long dispute peacefully in just 5 years," Pati said referring to proposed construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya.

Bamboo to address jumbo-man conflict



SASMITA LENKA

There is nothing spectacular in germination of seeds into saplings in dense forests, but 'germination' of bamboo has brought cheers to the forest-side residents of the Athgarh Forest Division in Cuttack district, one of the epicentres of man-elephant confrontation in the State.

As bamboo shoots are the most favoured food of jumbos, the germination has raised hopes of curbing elephants from raiding human habitations in search of food.

Officials of the Forest Department and people bearing the brunt of elephant depredation hope that growing bamboo will be a game-changer in confining elephants to forest limits.

Man-elephant conflict continues to pose trouble in the Athgarh Forest Division area from time to time. We are hopeful that bamboo cover in the forest will check the conflict to a great extent.

Bamboo shoots are relished by elephants. We are highly optimistic that it will meet the food requirement of wild elephants in their habitats and they will not stray out of

the forest in search of food. "Dendro calamus" bamboo or the Salia bamboo seed balls were prepared with community involvement and were dropped to restock salia bamboo to enrich elephant habitats in the 38 Reserve Forests of Athgarh Forest Division.

The experiment to increase bamboo cover is undertaken in July-August. These seeds germinate and the saplings grow up in four months. We expect the plants to fully grow in six to seven months' time and provide shoots to elephants.

Prior to the implementation of bamboo experiment to arrest man-elephant confrontation, a massive awareness campaign had been set in motion in all the villages hit by ele-



phant depredation for restoration of natural habitats of elephants.

One quintal of bamboo seeds which were brought from the Silviculture Division at Baripada, Baripada will be thrown in the open patches inside the dense forests. Elephants love chewing bamboo shoots. Once the shoots come out of the plants, the animals' interference into villages will definitely come down.

The Athgarh Forest Division is one of the worst-hit areas due to straying of elephants into villages. The elephants coming from the Chandaka Dampada Sanctuary raid villages at the Athgarh and

Khuntuni Ranges to eat standing crops, causing damage to fruit-bearing trees and vegetable plants besides damaging human settlements. Humans also get killed as there are several instances of marauding elephants crushing them to death in past.

Last year, we threw around 950 kg of bamboo seeds in several locations of our division and inside our own departmental nurseries. We got positive results out of this. The survival percentage of this was around 50 per cent to 60 per cent. This year, we have decided to adopt it in a massive scale. We hope the bamboo seed ball plantation would be a solution to elephant-man conflict in a long term.

(The writer is Divisional Forest Officer, Athgarh)

Ventilators for Covid-19 patients now with GPS



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Life-saving ventilators for Covid-19 patients are now being embedded with Global Positioning System (GPS) chips to ensure they are not misused or diverted and their movement is tracked on a real-time basis.

The Union Health Ministry has created a dashboard for tracking the real-time status of the indigenously-manufactured ventilators being dispatched, delivered and installed for monitoring and feedback, said Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan.

"We can track the location of each of these devices as we get to know in real-time if a ventilator is changing location," he said.

On the issue of giving nod for export of ventilators, the official said that just about 0.27 per cent of total active Covid-19 cases are on a ventilator across the country. "At any given time, not more than 1 per cent of patients are sick enough to need ventilator support," said Bhushan.

The Government has set up a high-powered committee to address issues and encourage the domestic industry to manufacture ventilators and ramp up their production.

Based on expert projections in March, the Health Ministry decided to procure about 60,000 ventilators for Covid-19 patients. About 18,000 ventilators have been so far supplied to states, central government hospitals, and Defence Research Development Organisation facilities, said the senior official.

They have been installed in at least 700 hospitals across the country. Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) rolled out the first locally-made ventilator on May 30.

Bhushan said about 96 per cent of the 60,000 ventilators being procured are indigenous and most of them have been sponsored by the PM CARES Fund established to fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The Make in India (indigenous) ventilators have a share of more than 96 per cent by volume and more than 90 per cent by value," The ministry's technical

Spread of Covid-19 contained in country, says Min Vardhan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Thursday asserted that the spread of Covid-19 has been contained in the country, pointing out how half the total cases are from three states only and another 30 per cent from seven others.

His comments come even as India is all set to breach the 20-lakh mark of Covid-19 cases with over 40,000 deaths and record number of cases at over 50,000 infections being reported daily in the past few days.

Dr Harsh Vardhan was speaking at a virtual meeting of WHO's Regional Director, South East Asia, Poonam Khetrpal Singh with Health Ministers from the region on maintaining essential health services and public health programmes in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The strategy of containment has been successful in that 50 per cent of the cases are from three states and 32 per

cent of the rest are from seven states. The spread of the virus thus has been contained," he said.

The Minister said that the lockdown was effective in slowing down the rate of growth of cases and gave the government time to augment the health infrastructure and testing facilities.

"From one lab in January, India has 1,370 labs today. Indians anywhere can access a lab within three hours travel time. 33 of the 36 states and UTs (Union Territories) exceed WHO's recommendation of testing 140 people per million per day."

Harsh Vardhan also said that the country was "preparing for the pandemic as soon as China informed the World Health Organisation on January 7", over three weeks before the first case emerged.

India had reported its first coronavirus case on January 30 when a student from Kerala, who was studying in China, Wuhan University, came back to India and tested positive for the deadly virus.

Harsh Vardhan also stressed that earlier viral outbreaks like the Avian Influenza, H1N1, Zika and Nipah had provided institutional memory in designing containment and management strategies.

India's proactive and graded multi-level institutional response to Covid-19 made it possible to have very low cases per million and deaths per million in spite of having a high population density, and low fractional GDP spending, per capita doctor, and hospital bed availability as compared to other developed countries," he contended.

Despite India's population and low fractional GDP, the proactive and graded multi-level institutional response to Covid-19 by government has made it possible for the country to maintain "very low cases and deaths per million" population, the Union Health Minister said.

"India was preparing to fight the pandemic as soon as China informed WHO about it on January 7. Dr Harsh Vardhan said.

Centre releases ₹890.32 cr as second instalment of 'COVID-19 Emergency fund' to 22 States, UTs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has released ₹890.32 crore as the second instalment of the COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness package to 22 States and Union Territories, the Union Health Ministry said on Thursday.

The amount of financial assistance to each state and Union Territories is based on their COVID-19 caseload.

Those who received financial assistance in the second instalment include Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim, the ministry said in a statement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the Rs 15,000 crore package as part of the 'Whole of Government'

approach wherein the Centre is leading the COVID-19 response and management, and supporting the states and UTs through technical and financial resources.

The second instalment of the aid will be used to strengthen public health infrastructure for testing, including procurement and installation of RT-PCR machines, RNA extraction kits, TrueNat and CB-NAAT machines, bolster infrastructure for treatment and development of ICU beds, installation of oxygen generators and procurement of bedside oxygen concentrators among others.

It would also be used for engagement, training and capacity building of necessary health resources and incentives to healthcare workforce and volunteers, including ASHA workers on COVID-19 duties, the Ministry said, adding that wherever necessary, volunteers registered on

the COVID Warriors portal may also be engaged in coronavirus duties.

The first instalment of Rs 3,000 crore was released in April to all States and UTs to aid and enable them ramp up testing facilities, augment hospital infrastructure, conduct surveillance activities along with procurement of essential equipment, drugs and other supplies, the Ministry said.

As part of this package, states and Union territories have been strengthened with 5,80,342 isolation beds, 1,36,068 oxygen-supported beds and 31,255 ICU beds.

Also, 86,88,357 testing kits and 79,88,366 Vital Transport Media (VTM) have been procured by them. As many as 96,557 human resources for COVID-19 incentive has been given to 6,65,799 human resources.

The package has aided provision of mobility support to 11,821 staff, the Ministry said.

PCI holds three-day health screening camp

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Press Club of India (PCI) organised a three-day health screening camp for its 4,500 members and their

families from August 4-6, 2020. The screening campaign is part of the special initiative of Tech Mahindra, a leading provider of digital transformation, consulting and busi-

ness re-engineering services and solutions, to screen members for risk factors of COVID-19 through temperature and antibody test, blood pressure and blood glucose test.

Students move SC, seeks postponement of JEE (Main), NEET-UG exams



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Referring to the coronavirus pandemic and floods' havoc in several parts of the country, a group of students on Thursday filed a petition in the Supreme Court on Thursday seeking postponement of JEE (Main) April 2020 and NEET-Undergraduate examinations, which are scheduled to be conducted in September.

The plea sought quashing of July 3 notices issued by the National Testing Agency (NTA), by which it was decided to conduct Joint Entrance Examination (Main) April 2020 and National Eligibility-Cum-Entrance Test (NEET)-Undergraduate exams in September.

The plea, filed by 11 stu-

dents belonging to 11 States, said that the authorities be directed to conduct these exams only after the normalcy is restored. As per the public notices issued by the NTA, JEE (Main) April 2020 is scheduled from September 1-6, while NEET UG 2020 exam is scheduled for September 13.

The plea, filed through advocate Alakh Alok Srivastava, has also sought direction to the authorities to increase the number of examination centres for these exams. "Conducting the central examination across India at such perilous time, is nothing else but putting lives of lakhs of young students (including petitioners herein) at utmost risk and danger of disease and death.

The best recourse at this

stage can be to wait for some more time, let COVID-19 crisis subside and let the authorities conduct these exams, in order to save the lives of the students and their parents," the plea said.

It claimed that NTA, which conducts entrance exams for admission in higher educational institutions in India, has decided to conduct JEE (Main) April-2020 through online mode and NEET UG-2020 exams through offline mode at 161 centres across India.

It alleged that NTA has indefinitely postponed the National Council of Hotel Management Joint Entrance Examination-2020, which was scheduled to be conducted on June 22, in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide: ED grills Rhea's associate Samuel Miranda



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday questioned actress Rhea Chakraborty's associate Samuel Miranda about the finances of Rajput, sources said.

ED had lodged a money laundering case relating to film star Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

The ED questioned Miranda about the finances of Rajput, sources said.

ED had lodged a money laundering case against Rhea Chakraborty and her family



members after Rajput's father filed a complaint with the Patna police and accused the deceased actor's girlfriend of swindling his funds to the tune of Rs 15 crore.

Earlier, the ED had registered a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act after taking cognisance of the Bihar police FIR.

Miranda's questioning

comes a day ahead of Chakraborty's grilling as she has been summoned by the agency to appear before it on Friday in Mumbai.

Earlier, the agency had grilled Rajput's Chartered Accountant Sandeep Sridhar who had in his statement before the Mumbai police claimed that no major transactions were made to Rhea

Chakraborty from the late actor's account.

Miranda's statement was recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. Miranda has been named as an accused in the case.

Miranda was reportedly named by Rajput's brother-in-law and IPS officer OP Singh in his WhatsApp message to Mumbai Police DCP Paramjeet Dahiya. OP Singh wanted the Mumbai police to informally interrogate Samuel Miranda, according to Dahiya.

According to OP Singh, if Miranda was kept in custody informally for a day, then he would have spilled the beans about Chakraborty who was allegedly controlling Rajput's life, reports said.

Miranda, according to all accounts, was recruited by Chakraborty as Sushant's house manager and was looking after the employees and house expenses.

Bhushan seeks to present addl evidence to SC



New Delhi: A day after the Supreme Court reserved its verdict, activist lawyer Prashant Bhushan Thursday moved a plea seeking to present additional evidence if the court is not satisfied with his submissions that the contempt was not made out against him for his two tweets allegedly against judiciary.

A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra, which on July 22, had issued show cause notice to Bhushan after initiating the criminal contempt against him for his two alleged derogatory tweets against the judiciary, had reserved the verdict on Wednesday.

Senior advocate Dushyant Dave defended Bhushan before the bench, which also comprised Justices R Gavai and Krishan Murari, and had said on Wednesday that the tweets were against the judges regarding their conduct in their personal capacity and did not obstruct administration of justice.

Referring to the tweets, Bhushan said he had earlier submitted a preliminary reply to explain his tweets and the law laid down on the issue to highlight that the contempt notice was not sustainable.

Several high-level exchanges between India, Russia scheduled

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A number of high-level exchanges between India and Russia is set to take place, including the annual bilateral summit in October when President Vladimir Putin is expected to visit, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday.

MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said that in the recent exchanges between the two sides, regional and international issues have also been discussed.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Putin had spoken on July 2 when the PM had congratulated him on the suc-

cessful national vote on constitutional amendments in Russia.

Then in the last week of June, Raksha Mantri (Rajnath Singh) had visited Moscow. The Indian military contingent had participated in the 75th anniversary of the victory in the 2nd world war. "Yesterday when foreign

secretary (Harsh Vardhan Shringla) and the (Russian) deputy foreign minister spoke, they took stock of all these recent exchanges and the idea is to keep the momentum of these regular exchanges going on because due to the COVID situation, we have not been able to have visits," he said.

Goa: Part of tunnel wall collapses, Konkarn Rly trains diverted

PTI ■ PANAJI

A portion of a tunnel wall at Pernem in Goa collapsed in the early hours of Thursday due to heavy rains, following which number of trains on the Konkarn Railway route had to be diverted via Londa in neighbouring Karnataka, an official said.

There was no report of any casualty and work to restore the track was underway, Konkarn Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) spokesman Baban Ghatge said.

A five-metre portion of a wall inside a tunnel at Pernem in North Goa district collapsed around 2.50 am. The traffic in this section has been suspended till further advice, KRCL said in a press note.

Hence, trains running on the section have been diverted via Londa, Ghatge said, adding that no train has been cancelled.

Goa has been witnessing incessant rains since the last few days

The trains which have been diverted include Ernakulam-H.Nizamuddin Superfast Special Express train, Thiruvananthapuram-Central Lokmanya Tilak Special Express, Thiruvananthapuram-Ghatge said.

H.Nizamuddin-Ernakulam Superfast Special Express and Lokmanya Tilak Thiruvananthapuram Central.

Goa has been witnessing incessant rains since the last few days and some low lying areas have been facing a flood-like situation.

Raj HC provides relief to Union Minister Shekhawat in scam case

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Providing relief to Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a cooperative society scam case, the Rajasthan high court on Wednesday stayed the ADJ court order that directed the magistrate court to send a criminal complaint for further investigation to the Special Operations Group (SOG).

The complaint had named Shekhawat and others as the alleged accused in the scam and sought further investigation by the SOG into their role.

A single judge bench of Justice Satish Chandra Sharma while passing the interim directions also admitted the criminal miscellaneous petition filed by one Kewal Chandra Dakia, who is co-accused along with Shekhawat.

Dakia's counsel Mahesh Jethmalani argued

that there were specific allegations against the accused and they were required to be heard when the lower court passed the order.

The bench admitted the petition and granted an interim order.

A city additional district judge (ADJ) court last month had directed that a private complaint be investigated by the SOG with relation to the money trail that ended at Navprabha Buildtech Pvt Ltd.

Later, a magistrate's court also rejected an application to include him in the chargesheet.

The applicants then approached the ADJ court, which issued directions that their complaint should also be probed. The SOG has already sent a notice to the minister in connection with a probe into a separate case pertaining to audio clips which purportedly indicate efforts to lure MLAs away from the Congress.

India being briefed on all relevant matters: MEA on Afghan peace process

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As the Afghan peace process gains momentum, India on Thursday said it is keeping abreast of all relevant matters and that the Indian envoy in Afghanistan is in touch with the leadership of that country.

On Friday, Afghanistan's capital Kabul is set to hold a grand gathering called 'Loya Jirga' to decide the fate of hundreds of prisoners, mostly members of the Taliban, as it was a key demand of the terror outfit to join peace talks.

Loya Jirga is a highly respected traditional consultative body of Afghanistan and their meet is an issue internal to Afghanistan," external affairs ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said at an online media briefing.

He was asked about India's views on the scheduled gathering of the traditional

India has been a key stakeholder in the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan

body comprising Afghan elders, community leaders and politicians.

"Our policy is very consistent in supporting the government of Afghanistan," Srivastava said, adding the Indian envoy in Kabul has been in touch with the leadership of the country.

"He is being briefed on all relevant matters. We have also been briefed by other interlocutors who are part of the process," he said.

India has been a key stakeholder in the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan. It has been supporting a national peace and reconciliation process which

is Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled.

India has been keenly following the evolving political situation after the US signed a peace deal with the Taliban in February. The deal provided for the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, effectively drawing curtains to Washington's 18-year war in the country.

The US has lost over 2,400 soldiers in Afghanistan since late 2001.

India has also been maintaining that care should be taken to ensure that any such process does not lead to any 'unsecured spaces' where terrorists and their proxies can relocate.

India has been calling upon all sections of the political spectrum in Afghanistan to work together to meet the aspirations of all people in that country including those from the minority community for a prosperous and safe future.

BJP sarpanch killed by terrorists in S Kashmir

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Sending out a chilling reminder to the security forces 'unidentified' terrorists Thursday carried out yet another bloodiest attack on grass root Panchayat workers in which one BJP sarpanch was killed in Vessu village of Qazikund block in South Kashmir's Kulgam district.

Police identified the slain BJP sarpanch as Sajad Ahmad Khanday.

According to ground reports, 'Sajad Ahmad was camping in a secured migrant camp in the area for the past several days. Early Thursday he stepped out of the camp and 20 meters short of his home

when 'unidentified' terrorists fired upon him". "Bleeding profusely he was rushed to the nearby hospital where doctors declared him brought dead", official sources said.

This is the second attack on a BJP worker in the last 48 hours in the region.

Earlier, BJP Panch Arif Ahmad was critically wounded after terrorists fired at him in Akhran Qazigund on the evening of August 4. Since June 2020 this is the fourth major terror attack on Panchayat workers in Kashmir valley.

Last month, former BJP district president Waseem Bari, his father and brother were killed inside their shop after terrorists fired on them from

close range in Bandipora. Bari had a 10-member police security and all of them were suspended and arrested because they were not with him when he was attacked.

On June 8, Congress sarpanch Ajay Kumar Pandita was killed outside his house at Lokbhawan in Anantnag.

Meanwhile, fearing for their lives three more BJP Workers of Kokernag constituency of Narnpora Water Village Thursday resigned from basic membership of BJP party. These workers were identified as Shabir Ahmad Khan S/o Gh Rasool Khan, Reyaz Ahmad Rather S/o Ab Aziz Rather, Ab Khaliq Shach S/o Mohd Subhan Sheikh.



BSF dismisses constable from service for facilitating Pakistani smugglers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Border Security Force (BSF) has dismissed a constable from service for allegedly facilitating Pakistani smugglers to sneak in contraband like weapons and drugs.

BSF constable Rajendra Prasad was arrested along with two others by the Punjab Police on July 28 from his native place at Sriganaganagar in Rajasthan.

As per the Punjab Police investigation report, Constable Rajendra Prasad of 71 Bn BSF was found guilty on the charge of collusion with smugglers. Subsequently, on August 4, under the zero-tolerance policy, Constable Rajendra Prasad (was) dismissed from the service under the provision of the BSF Act and Rule with effect from August 4, reads the statement of BSF (Punjab Frontier).

Prasad, posted at a border outpost (BOP) in Chhina village in Taran Tarn district of Punjab, was found to be the part of cross-border drugs and weapons smuggling syndicate busted by the Punjab Police.

Punjab police had recovered a 30 bore pistol along with five live cartridges and Rs 24.50 lakh in cash from Prasad and two of his accomplices — Surmal Singh and Gurjant Singh.

Punjab Police probe had revealed that Prasad had allegedly helped the syndicate in getting 17 kg of heroin and two foreign-made pistols in May. During questioning by the Punjab police, Prasad's associates Surmal and Gurjant Singh revealed that they were working with a cross-border smuggler, Satnam Singh alias Satta, a resident of Taran Tarn district. Satta was closely linked with Pakistan-based smugglers for getting heroin and weapons supplies from Pakistan. Prasad had also disclosed that Prasad was also involved in the smuggling racket.

Maha witnesses spike, records a new of 11,514 infected cases

- Breaches 300 fatality mark 3rd time in a week, records 316 deaths
- Total infections mount to 4,79,779, deaths go up to 16,792

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major spike in the number of Covid-19 infections in Maharashtra, an all-time daily high of 11,514 people tested positive for coronavirus on Thursday, while 316 people succumbed to the pandemic in various parts of the State.

Surpassing the earlier record daily tally of 11,147 infections reported on July 30, the State witnessed a new high of 11,514 infections, taking the total number infected cases to a staggering 4,79,779.



Breaching the 300 fatality mark on the fourth consecutive day in week, Maharashtra recorded 316 deaths on Thursday. Earlier, there were 322 deaths on August 1, the state recorded 300 deaths on August 4 and 334 on August 5.

With the 316 fresh deaths, the total number of deaths in the state mounted to 16,792.

Of the total reported on Thursday, Pune accounted for the highest 62 deaths, followed by 57 deaths in Mumbai and 56 deaths in Thane.

Apart from 62 deaths in Pune, 57 in Mumbai and 56 in Thane, there were 18 deaths in Nagpur, 15 in Solapur, 13 each in Nashik, Jalgaon and Kolhapur, 10 in Palghar, 7 each in Aurangabad, Parbhani and Amravati, 6 in Latur, 5 each in Raigad, Ahmednagar and Nanded, 3 in Buldhana, 2 each in Dhule, Satara and Yavatmal and one death each in Nandurbar, Ratnagiri and Akola.

With 57 deaths, the Covid-19 toll in the city rose from 6591 to 6648, while the number of infected cases went up by 910 to touch 1,20,150.

On a day when 10854 patients were discharged from hospitals in the state after full recovery, taking the total number of patients discharged from various hospitals after full

recovery since the second week of March this year to 3,16,375. The recovery rate rose to 65.94 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 3.50 per cent. The State health authorities pegged the number of 'active cases' in the state at 1,46,305.

Pune, which has emerged as the second worst-affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 1,04,353 infections and 2496 deaths till now.

With 1,00,875 infected cases and 2,823 deaths, Thane continued to be the second worst hit district in Maharashtra.

Out of 24,87,990 samples sent to laboratories, 4,79,779 have tested positive (19.23 per cent) for COVID-19 until Thursday.

Currently, 9,76,332 people are in home quarantine while 37,768 people are in institutional quarantine.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari e-inaugurated a new Covid-19 testing lab at Bhaktivedanta Hospital in Mira Road, one of the Corona hotspots, in the presence of the hospital Chairman Hrishikesh Mafatila, Biman Bhayad and Municipal Corporation Mayor Jayant Hasnane and MLA Gita Jain.

NHAI signs MoU with IIT-D for use of AI

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

New Delhi: The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on Thursday signed a MoU with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi to develop advanced analytics for use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in data driven decision making and advance data management system for Highways.

Under the partnership, IIT Delhi will work with NHAI on developing advanced analytics based on AI and ML, prepare simulation models, enhance data storage and retrieval capacities to further strengthen NHAI's capabilities in data-driven decision making. The collaboration, according to a statement from the MoRTH, will be undertaken on the identified thrust areas like Project Management and Data Management, Highway Network Traffic Demand and Incident Management, Highway safety, Highway Work-zone Management, Highway Pavement Management System. PNS

MUMBAI PARALYSED AGAIN

City remains under wet spell for 3rd day; landslide in downtown Mumbai, 15 wall, 360 tree falls, 47 short circuits mark day

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after the Island city of Mumbai registered a record rainfall in 46 years, the city's commercial capital and neighbouring area reeled under the intense wet spell for the third consecutive day on Thursday, resulting in dislocation in bus and suburban train services and inundation of the low-lying areas.

A landslide along upmarket Peddar Road, 15 wall collapses, 360-odd tree falls and 47 incidents of electric short-circuits were the highlights of Thursday's monsoon report card for the metropolis put out by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BM).

In one of the major monsoon-related incident that disrupted the traffic towards south Mumbai, a portion of the land slid along with trees planted near the wall protecting the hillcock along the Peddar Road. The landslide took place in the early hours of Thursday, at the edge of the Malabar Hill located just off the Kemp's Corner flyover.

The suburban train service on the Main and Harbour lines of the Central and Central Railway were affected by the continued rains and consequent inundation of tracks at several places. This was the second landslide within Mumbai in three days — the other being the one reported earlier at Kandivli in north Mumbai along the Western Express Highway.

For most part of the day, team of civic workers were involved in clearing the piled up loose soil from the landslide and branches of the trees. As a consequence, the main arterial road remained out of bounds for the traffic movement for several hours.

Talking to mediapersons after visiting the spot, Maharashtra's former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said: "I visited the Peddar Road in south Mumbai where the entire road got blocked due to landslide. Not only traffic got affected but water supply too".

Meanwhile, the Island city of Mumbai recorded 331.8 mm of rains during 24 hours between

8.30 am on August 5 and 8.30 am August 6, which incidentally was the highest rainfall in 46 years. The city suburbs recorded a rain of 162.3mm during the same period.

Of the 15 wall collapses reported on Thursday six were reported from the Island city, six incidents took place in the eastern suburbs, while the remaining three incidents were reported from western suburbs of the city.

Similarly, there were 361 tree falls — 274 in the city, 40 in eastern suburbs and 47 in the western suburbs — were reported from across the metropolis, while 57 incidents of electric short circuits were reported from the different parts of the metropolis.

Following the call by the weather bureau, the fishermen from the Coastal Konkan region chose not to venture into the sea.

Meanwhile, 16 fishermen who were stranded off Aramboli in Kolhapur, Raigad, Ratnagiri and shift local residents to safer places in view of flooding of rivers.

but no damage to any vessel was reported, while winds caused extensive damage to the DY Patil Stadium in Nerul in Navi Mumbai.

In a related development, Kolhapur district in Western Maharashtra has been put on high alert with the Panchganga river flowing over the flood line in some places. The Panchganga river is flowing at 41.2 feet level whereas the alert level is 39 feet and danger mark is 43 feet.

The movement on nine State highways and two dozen roads in the Kolhapur district were affected because of rainfall since the last three days.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray reviewed the situation in Kolhapur, along with the neighbouring district of Sangli which had in July-August witnessed deluge and floods. Uddhav advised Konkan and Pune divisional commissioners to focus on overflowing of rivers in Kolhapur, Raigad, Ratnagiri and shift local residents to safer places in view of flooding of rivers.

Special Court to pronounce verdict on Swapna's bail plea

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Both the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the petitioner (Swapna Suresh, the kinglypin in the gold smuggling racket through diplomatic channel at Thiruvananthapuram) completed their arguments before the Special Court in Kochi on the bail application moved by the latter. The judge has reserved the orders for August 10.

While the lawyer representing Swapna told the court that though the gold was smuggled into the country, the team probing the case has failed to prove that it had any links with terrorism-related activities.

But the NIA told in its reply that the case was well aware of the implications of her action and she had confessed to the agency that she was not bothered about the possibility of the profitability from smuggling being diverted to anti-national activities and terrorism.

The revelations by the NIA to the court that the accused Swapna Suresh has close links with higher officials in the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) was a serious issue.

"She had approached her contacts in the CMO to get the gold released from the Customs. She was getting sufficient help from the police department of the State," said the assistant solicitor general Vijayakumar who represented the NIA.

The lawyer for Swapna is opposing the slapping of the UAPA in this case which would make it impossible for the accused to come out on bail for the next one year.

666 villages hit by floods in 17 dists

Lucknow: Amidst Met office forecast of rain or thunderstorms at many places over eastern UP and at a few places over the western part of the state over the next 2-3 days, the UP government has been affected by floods across 17 districts of Uttar Pradesh. According to the data released by the UP relief commissioner, major rivers are flowing above the danger mark at some places in the state. The Sharda river at Palika Kalan in Lakhimpur Kheri, the Sarayu at Elgin Bridge in Barabanki and Ayodhya, the Rapti in Ballia and the Rapti at Birdham in Gorakhpur are flowing above the dredge mark.

The following cover notes issued by The Oriental Insurance Co Ltd to Sh. Raju Sharma re-charge BG RK Purnam New Delhi, Motor vehicle insurance -375516, 522035, 522052, 669791, 522036, 522054, 716482, 522037, 522073, 669593, 522050, 522051, 522047, 522074, 504191, 522048, 522075, 504194, 522056, 522058, 522182, 522065, 624211, 704225, 522192, 522310, 522197, 522034, Fire department -11, 73451, 73452, 73453, 73454, 73455, 73456, 73457, 73458, 73459, 73460, 73461, 73462, 73463, 73464, 73465, 73466, 73467, 73468, 73469, 73470, 73471, 73472, 73473, 73474, 73475, 73476, 73477, 73478, 73479, 73480, 73481, 73482, 73483, 73484, 73485, 73486, 73487, 73488, 73489, 73490, 73491, 73492, 73493, 73494, 73495, 73496, 73497, 73498, 73499, 73500, 73501, 73502, 73503, 73504, 73505, 73506, 73507, 73508, 73509, 73510, 73511, 73512, 73513, 73514, 73515, 73516, 73517, 73518, 73519, 73520, 73521, 73522, 73523, 73524, 73525, 73526, 73527, 73528, 73529, 73530, 73531, 73532, 73533, 73534, 73535, 73536, 73537, 73538, 73539, 73540, 73541, 73542, 73543, 73544, 73545, 73546, 73547, 73548, 73549, 73550, 73551, 73552, 73553, 73554, 73555, 73556, 73557, 73558, 73559, 73560, 73561, 73562, 73563, 73564, 73565, 73566, 73567, 73568, 73569, 73570, 73571, 73572, 73573, 73574, 73575, 73576, 73577, 73578, 73579, 73580, 73581, 73582, 73583, 73584, 73585, 73586, 73587, 73588, 73589, 73590, 73591, 73592, 73593, 73594, 73595, 73596, 73597, 73598, 73599, 73600, 73601, 73602, 73603, 73604, 73605, 73606, 73607, 73608, 73609, 73610, 73611, 73612, 73613, 73614, 73615, 73616, 73617, 73618, 73619, 73620, 73621, 73622, 73623, 73624, 73625, 73626, 73627, 73628, 73629, 73630, 73631, 73632, 73633, 73634, 73635, 73636, 73637, 73638, 73639, 73640, 73641, 73642, 73643, 73644, 73645, 73646, 73647, 73648, 73649, 73650, 73651, 73652, 73653, 73654, 73655, 73656, 73657, 73658, 73659, 73660, 73661, 73662, 73663, 73664, 73665, 73666, 73667, 73668, 73669, 73670, 73671, 73672, 73673, 73674, 73675, 73676, 73677, 73678, 73679, 73680, 73681, 73682, 73683, 73684, 73685, 73686, 73687, 73688, 73689, 73690, 73691, 73692, 73693, 73694, 73695, 73696, 73697, 73698, 73699, 73700, 73701, 73702, 73703, 73704, 73705, 73706, 73707, 73708, 73709, 73710, 73711, 73712, 73713, 73714, 73715, 73716, 73717, 73718, 73719, 73720, 73721, 73722, 73723, 73724, 73725, 73726, 73727, 73728, 73729, 73730, 73731, 73732, 73733, 73734, 73735, 73736, 73737, 73738, 73739, 73740, 73741, 73742, 73743, 73744, 73745, 73746, 73747, 73748, 73749, 73750, 73751, 73752, 73753, 73754, 73755, 73756, 73757, 73758, 73759, 73760, 73761, 73762, 73763, 73764, 73765, 73766, 73767, 73768, 73769, 73770, 73771, 73772, 73773, 73774, 73775, 73776, 73777, 73778, 73779, 73780, 73781, 73782, 73783, 73784, 73785, 73786, 73787, 73788, 73789, 73790, 73791, 73792, 73793, 73794, 73795, 73796, 73797, 73798, 73799, 73800, 73801, 73802, 73803, 73804, 73805, 73806, 73807, 73808, 73809, 73810, 73811, 73812, 73813, 73814, 73815, 73816, 73817, 73818, 73819, 73820, 73821, 73822, 73823, 73824, 73825, 73826, 73827, 73828, 73829, 73830, 73831, 73832, 73833, 73834, 73835, 73836, 73837, 73838, 73839, 73840, 73841, 73842, 73843, 73844, 73845, 73846, 73847, 73848, 73849, 73850, 73851, 73852, 73853, 73854, 73855, 73856, 73857, 73858, 73859, 73860, 73861, 73862, 73863, 73864, 73865, 73866, 73867, 73868, 73869, 73870, 73871, 73872, 73873, 73874, 73875, 73876, 73877, 73878, 73879, 73880, 73881, 73882, 73883, 73884, 73885, 73886, 73887, 73888, 73889, 73890, 73891, 73892, 73893, 73894, 73895, 73896, 73897, 73898, 73899, 73900, 73901, 73902, 73903, 73904, 73905, 73906, 73907, 73908, 73909, 73910, 73911, 73912, 73913, 73914, 73915, 73916, 73917, 73918, 73919, 73920, 73921, 73922, 73923, 73924, 73925, 73926, 73927, 73928, 73929, 73930, 73931, 73932, 73933, 73934, 73935, 73936, 73937, 73938, 73939, 73940, 73941, 73942, 73943, 73944, 73945, 73946, 73947, 73948, 73949, 73950, 73951, 73952, 73953, 73954, 73955, 73956, 73957, 73958, 73959, 73960, 73961, 73962, 73963, 73964, 73965, 73966, 73967, 73968, 73969, 73970, 73971, 73972, 73973, 73974, 73975, 73976, 73977, 73978, 73979, 73980, 73981, 73982, 73983, 73984, 73985, 73986, 73987, 73988, 73989, 73990, 73991, 73992, 73993, 73994, 73995, 73996, 73997, 73998, 73999, 74000, 74001, 74002, 74003, 74004, 74005, 74006, 74007, 74008, 74009, 74010, 74011, 74012, 74013, 74014, 74015, 74016, 74017, 74018, 74019, 74020, 74021, 74022, 74023, 74024, 74025, 74026, 74027, 74028, 74029, 74030, 74031, 74032, 74033, 74034, 74035, 74036, 74037, 74038, 74039, 74040, 74041, 74042, 74043, 74044, 74045, 74046, 74047, 74048, 74049, 74050, 74051, 74052, 74053, 74054, 74055, 74056, 74057, 74058, 74059, 74060, 74061, 74062, 74063, 74064, 74065, 74066, 74067, 74068, 74069, 74070, 74071, 74072, 74073, 74074, 74075, 74076, 74077, 74078, 74079, 74080, 74081, 74082, 74083, 74084, 74085, 74086, 74087, 74088, 74089, 74090, 74091, 74092, 74093, 74094, 74095, 74096, 74097, 74098, 74099, 74100, 74101, 74102, 74103, 74104, 74105, 74106, 74107, 74108, 74109, 74110, 74111, 74112, 74113, 74114, 74115, 74116, 74117, 74118, 74119, 74120, 74121, 74122, 74123, 74124, 74125, 74126, 74127, 74128, 74129, 74130, 74131, 74132, 74133, 74134, 74135, 74136, 74137, 74138, 74139, 74140, 74141, 74142, 74143, 74144, 74145, 74146, 74147, 74148, 74149, 74150, 74151, 74152, 74153, 74154, 74155, 74156, 74157, 74158, 74159, 74160, 74161, 74162, 74163, 74164, 74165, 74166, 74167, 74168, 74169, 74170, 74171, 74172, 74173, 74174, 74175, 74176, 74177, 74178, 74179, 74180, 74181, 74182, 74183, 74184, 74185, 74186, 74187, 74188, 74189, 74190, 74191, 74192, 74193, 74194, 74195, 74196, 74197, 74198, 74199, 74200, 74201, 74202, 74203, 74204, 74205, 74206, 74207, 74208, 74209, 74210, 74211, 74212, 74213, 74214, 74215, 74216, 74217, 74218, 74219, 74220, 74221, 74222, 74223, 74224, 74225, 74226, 74227, 74228, 74229, 74230, 74231, 74232, 74233, 74234, 74235, 74236, 74237, 74238, 74239, 74240, 74241, 74242, 74243, 74244, 74245, 74246, 74247, 74248, 74249, 74250, 74251, 74252, 74253, 74254, 74255, 74256, 74257, 74258, 74259, 74260, 74261, 74262, 74263, 74264, 74265, 74266, 74267, 74268, 74269, 74270, 74271, 74272, 74273, 74274, 74275, 74276, 74277, 74278, 74279, 74280, 74281, 74282, 74283, 74284, 74285, 74286, 74287, 74288, 74289, 74290, 74291, 74292, 74293, 74294, 74295, 74296, 74297, 74298, 74299, 74300, 74301, 74302, 74303, 74304, 74305, 74306, 74307, 74308, 74309, 74310, 74311, 74312, 74313, 74314, 74315, 74316, 74317, 74318, 74319, 74320, 74321, 74322, 74323, 74324, 74325, 74326, 74327, 74328, 74329, 74330, 74331, 74332, 74333, 74334, 74335, 74336, 74337, 74338, 74339, 74340, 74341, 74342, 74343, 74344, 74345, 74346, 74347, 74348, 74349, 74350, 74351, 74352, 74353, 74354, 74355, 74356, 74357, 74358, 74359, 74360, 74361, 74362, 74363, 74364, 74365, 74366, 74367, 74368, 74369, 74370, 74371, 74372, 74373, 74374, 74375, 74376, 74377, 74378, 7

New L-G for Kashmir

Will Manoj Sinha be able to fill the political vacuum and get things moving or will he just be another conformist appointee?



That Kashmir is drifting away with a current of people's angst — what with the widening chasm of trust deficit and clampdowns even one year after the abrogation of Article 370 — is evident from persistent militant activity and targeted killings. With no signs on the ground of the promised development, economic revival or civil engagement, its integration with the mainstream is increasingly looking like an exercise in political egoism, a tool that is disempowering than engaging, a punishment for history than an incentive for moving on. The spate of hitback killings of BJP leaders and sarpanches is worrisome as the office-bearers are seen as extensions of Central authority. BJP sarpanch Sajad Ahmad Khan was shot dead in south Kashmir's Kulgam district yesterday. It comes close on the heels of similar attacks over the past couple of months. A BJP-affiliated panchayat member, Arif Ahmad Khan, was also shot in Kulgam early this week, while last month, former BJP district president, Waseem Bari, his father and brother were killed as militants fired on them from close range. In June, Congress sarpanch Ajay Kumar Pandita was killed in Anantnag district. Only 7,528 of the 19,582 panch and sarpanch seats in Kashmir went to polls in 2018. Yet most of those elected are hiding out in hotels in Srinagar for fear of being attacked for participating in an electoral process initiated by the Centre. The BJP had hoped to build an alternative political pyramid with friendly leaders at the local level and devolving power to them. But that was not to be. Over 12,000 posts are still empty, affecting local administration and despite the former State's changed status, nobody is ready to engage till all known elected representatives are freed from detention. With credible leaders redefined as public enemies, as bad as militants, and basic rights and connectivity denied to locals, there is confusion, disenchantment and fatigue everywhere, one that can congeal to become a violent force if left to fester. Perhaps, that's the reason why the Government is sending a seasoned politician like Manoj Sinha to be the new Lt Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. A low-key, subtle performer, he is probably being sent to test the waters and work out ways of connecting with people without disturbing the BJP's overall schematics in the Valley. That's a delicate exercise requiring fine negotiation skills. Most importantly, he could use his administrative depth and experience to fill up the political vacuum in the Valley. Although his predecessor GC Murmu was an establishment man, he was essentially a bureaucrat with a focus on policy, not politics. And he could not build a rapport with local bureaucrats. Besides, he did shoot his mouth off on two sensitive issues that the Government should rightly consider but would not talk about much at this stage. First was his comment on the restoration of 4G internet in the Valley, saying he was not afraid of how people of Kashmir would use it. This went against the Government's rationale that the services were shut because they could be misused by militants. He also advocated early elections in the Valley, running ahead of both the Government and the Election Commission, which would have liked to take a call on this in a measured manner and at a time of their choosing. This speaking out of turn almost amounted to embarrassing the Government and showed it as a reluctant decision-maker.

Sinha undoubtedly has a political acumen that could be banked upon for handling the sensitivities in Kashmir. Especially if implementation of the uniform civil code is on the agenda. And he happens to be in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's good books. His appointment is crucial at a time when political activity is picking up with the release of local leaders, some of whom are voicing strong opinions. National Conference leader Omar Abdullah has already claimed the moral high ground and with Saifuddin Soz scaling the walls of his home to call out the Government's "no detention" claim, the Government needs a politician to articulate its position. Known to be an amicable person, who is equally skillful in interacting with the media, which has been muzzled ruthlessly, Sinha fits the bill. At least he can be accommodative without appearing to be too conformist. But the Government has to realise that it cannot make any claim of transformative intent till it gets some kind of mediatory presence of local parties. The failed panchayat polls are proof enough. Demonsing leaders has been costly as some of them have been lionised among locals. The BJP did raise the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP), drawing rejects from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and NC, but it looks more sorry than credible. Sinha might be the interlocutor who could connect to people's representatives and get them to meet the Government half way constructively provided they didn't play a dual strategy with Pakistan. He could still use Omar to work a middle ground. But first, the Centre should restore normalcy and mainstream internet connectivity. The youth are already feeling punished for being left out of the digital education revolution and we cannot let them be radicalised. The economy is in shambles with disruptive clampdowns affecting the supply chain and the services sector. Even the traditional performing sectors like the apple trade, tourism and handicrafts have wilted and there is nothing that seems worthy of big ticket investment. There must be an enabling climate or Kashmir could go into a perennial freeze.

Monumental apathy

Unpardonable callousness in storing ammonium nitrate causes Beirut's worst blast and the scars may take a long time to heal



It may not have been a terrorist attack, most expected in a conflict zone as flagrant as Lebanon, but is a man-made disaster no doubt. One that could have been avoided. Even as the people of Beirut pick up the pieces of their lives that have been shattered by the massive blast on August 4, anger is rising against official negligence, apathy and callousness. This simmering anger comes on the back of an official admission of carelessness by Lebanese authorities that led to the Hiroshima-type explosion in the port, flattened more than half of Beirut, killed at least 135 people, injured thousands and left many more homeless. Nearly 3,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate were stored without safety measures in a warehouse since 2014. Just six months ago, inspectors had warned the authorities against piling up the consignment and predicted a massive explosion. Yet, the port officials sat on the stockpile till it blew up and devastated whatever was left of an already comatose city that has been through the rigours and ravages of civil war, repeated bombings, a corrupt Government and the pandemic.

Now, as a firefighting measure, the Government of Prime Minister Hassan Diab has put a few Beirut port officials under house arrest. There is also a probe going on to find out how such highly explosive materials were stored less than 100 metres from residential areas. But this is not enough to assuage the anger of the people who are writhing under a bankrupt economy. They need answers, someone to be held accountable for this unnecessary suffering. They need the Diab Government to step up rescue and relief work, provide more hospital beds, restore regular power supply, mend the infrastructure to import and store essential goods at the earliest before a scarcity of food and other goods hits them. The world needs to come to Lebanon's aid as it has suffered enough. Its institutions of governance may be democratic but the Parliament does not represent the interests of the Lebanese people. Power has been divided between militarised factions, a fetid legacy of the 1975-90 civil war and the result is a barely functional statehood. The Diab Government has failed to halt the nation's slide towards bankruptcy and Lebanon is on the brink of failure. The International Monetary Fund and other lenders don't want to sink money into a corrupt machinery where a small group of power brokers put their personal and financial interests above the nation's stability. The blast has not just exacerbated Lebanon's plight, it has ripped its soul.

opinion

Religion vs culture

Never mind the differences between the deductive and inductive approaches. For domestic peace to prevail, we need to co-exist, respect each other's limits than be confrontationalist



PRAFULL GORADIA

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan hit the nail on its head last week when he said that some people make the mistake of equating culture with religion. The former is about a consciousness and identity that set us apart as a people and wholly unrelated to the individual faiths we might practise. Yet some commentators look at things from a Western or Semitic frame of reference. The subject of logic has two broad sections, namely deductive and inductive. The former section begins reasoning with a clear-cut premise without any explanation. For example, Judaism asserts the Jehovah is god; Moses the Prophet and Torah the scripture. What follow are logical corollaries of this premise, all of which the believer must expectantly accept during his/her journey to heaven, which ends on Doomsday.

Allah, the merciful, is the god of Muslims. Muhammad is the last Prophet and the *Quran* the final message for all those who consider Abraham as the first Prophet of all. The *Quran* is supplemented by the *Hadith* or traditions and the *Sunnah*, which records the lessons of the Prophet's life. Between these scriptures, the *momin* or the faithful Muslim would get a complete prescription for how to live life individually as well as collectively. There is, as it were, no need to look left or right. The Islamic scriptures lay out all possible dos and don'ts, the *halals* and *harams* about which the believer does not need to ponder or hesitate. The logic of the religion flows like a river.

Christianity preceded Islam, and among the Abrahamic religions, has more followers than either Islam or Judaism on paper. Islam acknowledges Jesus but as a Prophet and not as a son of God. Moreover, governance is covered by religion; whereas the Bible assigns politics to Caesar, as the emperor was called in those days. As a result, separating the Church from the State was possible when the "Reformation" came in the 16th century. However, the religion of Christ has grown into many denominations, each having a somewhat different theological view. By contrast, Islam stopped *Jihad* or reinterpretation of theology, which was reflected in the *Sunni* (about 90 per cent Muslims) attitude to the temple issue.



“

THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DEDUCTIVE AND INDUCTIVE APPROACHES IS CLEAR AND SHARP. THE FORMER INSISTS ON ITS VIEWPOINT AND DOES NOT CONCEDE THE OPPOSITE CONTENTION; HENCE FIGHTS AND WARS HAVE BEEN FREQUENT. FOR THE DEDUCTIVE TO BE AT PEACE WITH THE INDUCTIVE IS MORE DIFFICULT. THIS IS THE HINDU-MUSLIM SYNDROME

”

So what lies at the core of the Hindu-Muslim equation in India? There are differing views on the subject. MA Jinnah had said that Pakistan was born the day the first Hindu was converted to Islam. In contrast, MK Gandhi had told the then British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald in London in 1931 that Hindu-Muslim riots are coeval with British rule. The rule ended 73 years ago but riots still continue; remember the Partition was meant to be a solution to the problem. In that context, Jinnah's separatism did take the Islamic pressure off the other communities. He, however, had in mind a complete exchange of population, as designed by the League of Nations and implemented in 1923 between Greece and Turkey. BR Ambedkar endorsed this proposal but Congress leaders paid no attention to the idea.

Coming back to logic, the deductive section is clearly up-down, given the premise followed by the corollaries and reasoning. Abrahamic faiths follow this approach. Inductive logic is the reverse; there is no given premise. The facts, data and sentiments are gathered from the ground, the people and the reasoning move upwards until a conclusion is arrived at. This is free reasoning; nothing is given.

Hinduism, Indic faith or what is often referred to as the *Sanatan Dharma*, or eternal faith or virtue, follows the inductive path. Which would

explain the multiplicity of Hindu denominations. One of the few common factors that runs through all of them is *karma*, leading to *bhagya* or fate; deed causes destiny. This equation is as near as faith can get close to science or physics; for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

To illustrate the liberality of the inductive approach, let us take a hypothetical example. Let us assume four Hindus from four directions of India discussing the subject of "roses." The person from the east could claim that "roses" are always white. One from the west could contend that "roses" are always red and no other colour. The northerner would insist that he and his friends have only seen pink "roses." The south Indian would probably laugh and contradict all the three, saying "roses" are yellow and he has seen none other. The argument could go on for a while but would not lead to a quarrel. There would not be any agreement on the colour of the roses but the four would most likely agree to disagree.

If a person worshipping an Abrahamic religion were present at the debate, he could insist that roses are red; the other colours are probably weeds or perhaps flowers other than roses.

This fundamental difference between the deductive and inductive approaches is clear and sharp. The former insists on its viewpoint and does not concede the opposite contention; hence fights and wars have been frequent. For the deductive to be at peace with the inductive is more difficult. This is the Hindu-Muslim syndrome.

Remember that the dethroning work was performed by the British East India Company; Robert Clive in the east vanquished Nawab Sirajuddaula in 1757. Lord Wellesley saw the conclusive end of Tipu Sultan in 1799 while Lord Dalhousie pushed out Nawab Wajid Ali Shah for the company to take over Awadh in 1856. These were the three corners of India. The western or fourth corner, comprising Rajasthan and Gujarat, remained mostly with the local principalities. Gwalior, Indore, Kolhapur and others survived as princely States until independence in 1947.

Uncannily, there have not been Hindu-Christian riots although there have been incidents of Muslims killing Christians, especially in Pakistan. What the circumstance is that in that country we do not know. We do know though that we need domestic peace and there is no alternative but to co-exist respecting each other's limits than being confrontationalist. And to do so is not too difficult. As we are bound by Indic culture.

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

If this lad was Virat Kohli, everyone would be talking about him but because he is Babar Azam, no one is talking about him.

Former England captain — Nasser Hussain

I've skipped many steps that many people have had to fight for. I've gotten chances that many people wouldn't have gotten easily. I've fast-tracked into this system already.

Actor — Janhvi Kapoor

The world has seen China become more aggressive during the pandemic. It has deployed troops along the LAC with India and is acting out in a way that is inconsistent with international norms.

US Defense Secretary — Mark Esper

If the Congress had a clear stand on secularism, the country would not have faced the present fate. I don't find anything new in the approach of Rahul or Priyanka.

Kerala Chief Minister — Pinarayi Vijayan

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Justice should prevail

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Closure for Sushant" (August 6). The Centre's decision to order a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into Sushant Singh Rajput's death has emboldened hopes for justice. Despite having a good professional reputation and high integrity, the Mumbai police so far has not been up to the mark in probing this case. It was surprising that the Mumbai police and the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) forcibly quarantined Vinay Tiwari, the officer from Bihar who came to Mumbai for a detailed investigation of the case. People lost trust because of these feeble approaches, necessitating a CBI probe. One hopes that justice shall prevail.

Tushar Anand
Patna

Reality beyond temple

Sir — It is true that as far as Ayodhya is concerned, "history" is being made and crores of Indians cannot believe that this

Trolls and their impact on social media

Of late, it has become an unpleasant tad for some social media users to target celebrities and post unsavoury comments about them. Most often such utterances are found to be irritable and repugnant. This is why sometimes celebrities lose their cool and are forced to stoop to the level of these people whose only aim is to get publicity and pose as a "hero" in the social media domain. In recent times, we have seen Indian superstar and Bollywood icon Amitabh Bachchan being targeted by some who have been commenting on his actions unsparingly and that, too, using immodest and indelicate words. A rude twitter troll even asked Abhishek Bachchan how he would fend for himself when his father was hospitalised after he tested positive for Coronavirus. Abhishek took his usual, graceful but impactful stance and said that he hoped for their good health. What these "commentators" forget is that by using derogatory remarks just for momentary fame, they themselves are degrading themselves on a public forum.

Freedom of expression is permitted but then many do not understand that using abusive and provocative comments does not come under this right. A response to such cheap commentary often leads to further conflicts that at times even lead to legal procedures and court battles. Let us learn from Big B, who often responds even to provocative comments in a decent and wise manner.

M Pradyu
Kanpur

Pakistan at it again

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Now Pak in map war" (August 6). That Pakistan has released a territorially misleading map, which includes much of Kashmir and Jangladesh into its territory, shows its desperation. Brazen actions like these smack

of Chinese connivance in the backdrop of the standoff along the LoC. This move drew a sharp reaction from New Delhi as it dubbed it an "exercise in political absurdity." But this time, we need to firmly refute its claims and reassert our territorial sovereignty.

Devendra Khurana
Bhopal

Corona spiral

Sir — It seems only a matter of time for India to attain the dubious distinction of topping the global charts of daily COVID deaths. Delhi, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, which reported the highest number of cases until now, have managed to bend the virus curve. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are the new hotspots. Sadly, many of these States are less equipped to tackle the virus load. Central coordination and support will be needed to fight the virus in the hinterland.

Shambhavi
Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Race to space is hotting up

Investments in long-term space programmes require change in strategic, far-reaching thinking, which unfortunately is clouded by politics



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Why go to the stars? Because we are the descendants of those primates who chose to look over the next hill, because we won't survive here indefinitely," wrote science fiction authors James and Gregory Benford.

Take a moment off from the ongoing COVID-19 crisis to look up and wonder what lies beyond that beautiful cloud-filled August sky. And that is where the Indian space programme or "space diplomacy" should come in. While we were busy looking at the pandemic's impact, not many noticed the three intra-planetary objects launched across the globe. The first was the Hope orbiter from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), followed by Tianwen 1 by China and finally the Perseverance by the US. All three are expected to reach destination Mars by February 2021, thereby opening up a whole new chapter of Star Wars. No matter who reaches there first, or what their stated objectives are, the world is again welcoming a "highly-contested and thereby, surveillance-hungry and of course trillions of dollars worth of yet-to-be-explored space" right above our heads. The battle for global dominance has just gone into space.

Leading the race for interstellar supremacy is China, which has openly stated its objective of joining the elite space club with self-reliant rockets, satellites and telescopes by 2049. The Mars Mission is part of a larger plan which aims to set up a space station orbiting Earth in the next two years. China has already shot most rockets into space with "shrouded ambitions" in 2018 and its BeiDou-2 navigation system has an impressive array of satellites, mapping every corner of the globe, providing an alternative to the European and US navigation systems. Meanwhile, China has taken the Moon seriously and wants to establish a lunar research centre within the next decade.

So why does an edge in the cosmic sphere suddenly become so important, specially if it is led by terrestrial players, hungry perhaps, for new territories? First, it is about a strategy to occupy as much of the outer space as one can for global dominance. Remember the Cold War-era Moon rush between the then superpowers? Today a host of citizen services beginning with the internet, electricity, common city navigation via the GPS, high-tech military surveillance and missile and torpedo navigation can all be beamed from a satellite, with needle-edge precision, onto any tech-enabled receiver.

We are all aware of China's lust for territorial colonialism — barely hidden under a veil of loans and infrastructure development projects — targeted towards those willing to barter away their sovereignty. In fact, the BeiDou-2 navigation system is an excellent example of how China aims to keep an eye on its strategically-chosen warfare partner countries and the globe. China knows that future space wars will not be fought on terra firma. The second reason for China's space rush is to lay claim to trillions of dollars worth of unmined minerals, precious metals and rare earths that can be found just a few kilometres above the Earth, floating around in space and in our galactic neighbourhood, the Moon. A mineral-rich asteroid or comet if somehow pushed back to Earth can cover and provide for billions of dollars worth of space missions.

Clearly it is a heady combination of new horizons with dominance in existing spheres and India has just begun to look at opening its space programme to private players. The desire is to have indigenous companies like Blue Origin, Virgin Galactic and Space X — all of which are funded by billionaires who made their fortunes elsewhere — be a part of the race to space.

Investments in long-term space programmes require change in strategic, deep, far-reaching thinking, which unfortunately is mostly clouded by politics on the ground. In the land of great physicists and mathematicians like Bhaskaracharya, Aryabhata and CV Raman, there is a black hole of lost opportunities and scientific temper. Independent India was left plundered and poor by the colonisers. It has taken more than 50 years for India to be able to truly start telescoping between ancient knowledge with modern-day quantum theories to start rebuilding its starships.

It is here that the true human and monetary resources of the country need to be pooled together for an "Indian Century." A deep focus on marketing and glamourising space studies with ample doses of creative imagination, mixed with scientific knowledge, would be a good start for young minds at school. After all, the Indian interstellar traveller of the future is perhaps still at school. Similarly, billions of worth of long-term bets without any visible returns in the near future can only be achieved by a clever mix of private enterprise and the taxpayer's money. Remember NASA can easily be dubbed as the most criticised and perhaps expensive space organisation in the world, yet it made communicating with anyone around the globe at the touch of a button possible. Mark Twain said, "There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesome returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact."

(The writer is a policy analyst)

BHOOMI PUJAN CEREMONY FOR THE RAM TEMPLE IN AYODHYA SHOULD BE SEEN AS A CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL UNITY, FRATERNITY AND CULTURAL AFFINITY.
—CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA

POINT COUNTERPOINT



WE DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY PRIYANKA GANDHI ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAM TEMPLE. HER STATEMENT IS OUT OF PLACE.
—IJML MP PK KUNHALIKUTTY

A rural Indian spring

The harbinger of this change is a unique policy experiment in village-level governance, the Panchayati Raj Act, which has brought transformative results for village women



MOIN QAZI

In the last two decades, the gender landscape in rural India has been green and women are now on the cusp of a powerful social and political revolution. The harbinger of this change is a unique policy experiment in village-level governance, the Panchayati Raj Act, which has brought transformative results for the weakest of the weak, the village women. In a country that has a bad record in matters of gender equality, India has set a stellar example by becoming a crucible for one of social democracy's most innovative experiments in gender justice. Women now steer local governance in thousands of villages.

This revolution led to the discovery of several hidden gems and one of them is Shalini Shelke, an intrepid and passionate woman with a unique brand of earnestness and determination. She has galvanised the poor, unlettered women in Sangamner, a remote corner of India's deep hinterland. Sangamner is the site of the confluence of three rivers: Pravara, Mhalingi and Adhala in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra.

Now a 49-year-old firebrand, Shalini was one of those emerging backyard leaders, who realised early on that powerful things could happen if marginalised communities were themselves involved in finding solutions to issues plaguing them. She is now a crusader for a number of social causes. By giving marginalised women a stake in the outcome of their communities, Shalini and her band of workers are trying to unlock human potential, both for themselves and for thousands of women in villages around Sangamner.

Shalini was 20, barely out of college, when she became a social activist and entrepreneur. Although she had mentors and friends to support her, the journey was hard. She taught herself advocacy and business skills in a male-dominated culture. "Being a woman in this space is challenging," says Shalini. She recalls how "scary" it was when her initial efforts landed her in trouble but relatives and friends rallied around and chipped in.

She had seen women of her mother's generation bearing multiple burdens. The drudge work that goes into cultivation is mostly done by women. They till the land, sow the seeds, de-hull the grains, attend to livestock and also act as primary caregivers to their families, that include children and elders. We all are aware of this but do little to change some of the harsh realities of our country. But Shalini was made of sterner stuff and instead of being resigned to *status quo*, she decided to upend it.

Shalini's voice is one among many pushing for women's rights. In recent years, women have felt more empowered to call out men's wrongdoings, leading to conversations about the power dynamics that women are subjected to in the home and beyond. In many ways, it is still a man's world, yet women are working to change that in their communities. Change is seldom easy. The patriarchal status quo is deeply entrenched, especially in traditional societies where challenging the system comes at a hefty cost.

Shalini's journey began with the founding of Nirmiti Mahila Udyojik Sahakari Sanstha (called Nirmiti for short) in 2001 in Sangamner. It supports local communities to transition from a supply-led to a demand-driven approach and harnesses resources from the departments of agri-

“IN RECENT YEARS, WOMEN HAVE FELT MORE EMPOWERED TO CALL OUT MEN'S WRONGDOINGS, LEADING TO CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE POWER DYNAMICS THAT WOMEN ARE SUBJECTED TO IN THE HOME AND BEYOND. IN MANY WAYS, IT IS STILL A MAN'S WORLD. YET WOMEN ARE WORKING TO CHANGE THAT IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. CHANGE IS SELDOM EASY. THE PATRIARCHAL STATUS QUO IS DEEPLY ENTRENCHED, ESPECIALLY IN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES WHERE CHALLENGING THE SYSTEM COMES AT A HEFTY COST”



culture, tribal welfare and other Government agencies. Through their multiple roles and responsibilities, women are learning, adapting and reinventing themselves along the way. The society now has about 900 members with a yearly turnover of about ₹90 lakh.

A chance encounter in 2003 helped Shalini make her mark as a business leader and also put me on a wonderful journey. I was posted in Mumbai to head my bank's State operations in micro-finance. Shalini was heading a federation of self-help groups (SHGs) of women in Sangamner. She was also a prominent face on various platforms in Mumbai and Pune for rural women. I was amazed at her understanding of global economics, particularly her ability to analyse local issues in the international context. I continue to marvel at the logical precision with which she presents the economic and social case of marginalised women.

It was around this time that Shalini and her colleagues decided to set up their own production facilities to enhance employability for locals. The loan processing was fast-tracked and the money released in time, thanks to Shalini's perseverance. However, due to her lack of experience and the technical inadequacy of the team to whom the job of assembling the plant was outsourced, the unit couldn't take off.

It was a major setback but Shalini fought back. She and her partners didn't let the bank down either. They paid off the entire loan from their own savings. Shalini has grown wiser in the process and has preferred to spread her risks evenly by opting for joint ventures.

While pursuing her entrepreneurship journey, Shalini didn't lose sight of her primary mission: Advocacy for broader social issues of poor and discriminated women. In 2006, she started a magazine to channel the voices of these women. It is named *Bahina*, after a local poetess Bahinabai Chaudhari, who was herself unlettered but composed inspiring verses. The coverage of rural issues in the mainstream media is very spotty and *Bahina* filled an important space. It has a distinct activist flavour and serves as a hyper-local platform. The region's arid expanse overflows with social and economic strife. This has been channelled into the magazine's writings where issues are reported and analysed from a woman's perspective.

In 2011, the magazine brought about immense change in the lives of the readers. It has been able to capture the groundswell of discontent and package the subtle nuances of the discourse in a highly palatable form. It has been able to help the perspectives of women so that they are equipped in their effort to upend the feudal system that kept their women ancestors trapped in servitude.

Shalini has also tapped business opportunities for women to have a reliable and consistent source of income. In 2011, the co-operative set up a canteen at the girls' hostel in the local university campus. The canteen caters to 500 girls, providing nutritious, hygienic meals made from locally-grown crops and vegetables. Three years later, the Nirmiti started canteen services for the staff of the Lok Panchayat Rural Technology College in Sangamner. In 2016, Nirmiti set up its own Co-operative Credit Society. It has 1,237 members with a share capital of ₹20 lakh and fixed deposits of ₹1.25 crore.

Shalini's entrepreneurial dreams found sturdy wings when she collabor-

ated with an acclaimed food company to set up a bakery. Reema Sathe, a well-known entrepreneur, has mentored this project which provides employment to farmers, workers at the baking unit and retailers. Nirmiti has also been able to use the time-honoured native knowledge of seeds to build a cadre of "seed mothers" who are now the stewards of biodiversity, protecting the genetic wealth of the country through "seed vaults." They are conserving the indigenous seed heritage and preserving heirloom races of crops.

Now, more than ever, these women, many of whom escaped poverty through the SHG route and know what it is like to be destitute and poor, are living up to their motto of self-help and solidarity. For these women and communities, crisis is not new. They have lived through failed crops, unpaid debts and recurring droughts which they have faced almost every single year. Nirmiti's approach of self-reliance and self-empowerment has helped strengthen the innate resilience of these women that is steering them through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shalini has come a long way since she started out. She shepherds a federation of almost 350 SHGs, all of which are actively engaged in a variety of socio-economic activities. Her success story underscores the importance of giving poor people access to loans, savings accounts and other financial services that can help them create businesses and reach their full potential. It is worth understanding that sheer grit and a helping hand can sometimes blaze trails where none seems possible. "It feels so good," beams Shalini. "I really feel like a seasoned business leader." Women leaders like Shalini present us with shiny, silver glimmers as they steer their communities through these tenuous times.

(The writer is a well-known development professional)

India is choking its rivers with sewage

The country must establish new STPs to increase the current 37 per cent treatment capability to at least 80 per cent of the waste generated



KOTA SRIRAJ

While crossing the Kalindi Kunj bridge over the Yamuna in Delhi, have you ever wondered about the reason for the white, frothy foam floating on the river's surface? This toxic foam, that is usually seen in abundance in July, prompted the National Green Tribunal (NGT)-appointed special committee to instruct the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to submit a report to it on the issue. The report concluded that sewage flowing into the Yamuna contained an abnormally high amount of detergent. This, coupled with the churning of the waters at the barrage, led to the formation of the toxic foam on the river's surface. The problem was compounded by the

presence of traditional laundries along the banks of the river and 23 drains from Delhi directly discharging sewage, effluents from industries, riverside laundries and tanneries, ashes of the dead and even bodies of those who are not cremated. The Yamuna is no exception and has endured pollution of all kinds, for centuries. The most visible form of a river catching fire intermittently, thus adding to air pollution. This level of pollution in our water bodies raises pertinent questions about the role and efficiency of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs)



that are primarily installed to treat the water and ensure that the pollution remains in a controllable range in our water bodies and rivers. In 2014, the Ministry of Environment and Forests stated that 70 per cent of India's STPs were dysfunctional and the main reason for this was the high cost of maintenance and the ever-growing gap between the sewage to be treated and the capacity of the STP to handle it. Six years down the line, the situation is not any different. The facts present a grim picture and a break for India's long-suffering rivers seems far off as nearly 70 per cent of the sewage treated in India does not meet the acceptable standards and there is a 78.7 per cent gap between sewage generation and the STP's installed capacity to treat it. Even if the additional 1,742.6 million litres a day (MLD) of sewage treatment capacity is factored in, that is either in the planning stages or under construction, there will still be a gap of 72.7 per cent in the sewage treatment capacity in the country.

The situation is expected to get worse, as according to a report by the CPCB, sewage generation in India is 61,000 MLD or enough to fill 24,800 Olympic-sized swimming pools. Against this, we have a paltry sewage treatment capacity of 23,277 MLD. Adding to the problem is the absence of a centralised sewerage system that allows for correct channelling of sewage output. The 12th Five-Year Plan Report on Urban Development highlighted that a shocking 4,861 cities and towns in India do not have a basic central sewerage system. Large cities such as Bengaluru find themselves in this list as nearly 50 per cent of the city's households do not have a proper sewerage system that is connected to a central system. This naturally means that these households channel their sewage to the nearest water body.

The impact of all this pollution on water bodies is devastating to say the least. Aquatic life and biodiversity suffer irreparable damage and so do humans who are dependent on the water bodies for their livelihoods. There is an urgent need for the Government to set up special action

committees that can look at the underlying causes for the inoperable STPs and those that require repairs to be functional again.

To save our rivers, there is a need to attach top priority to the establishment of new STPs that can increase the current 37 per cent treatment capability to at least 80 per cent of the sewage generated. This can be done by opening the STP sector to entrepreneurship platforms and providing the necessary technical expertise, funding and subsidies on encouraging terms. This will serve the twin purpose of creating employment-generating enterprises, besides also narrowing the gap between sewage generated and sewage treated. India also needs an action-oriented initiative to turn around the urban rivers and water bodies that are plagued by pollution such as the toxic white foam seen on the Yamuna's surface. Till such action is taken the white foam on our rivers will be a reminder that we have failed our rivers.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)

FOREIGN EYE



MAPPING OPTIONS

Repression, custodial killings, internet blackout, whichever way one looks at it, India has truly lost the people of Kashmir. Does Pakistan have policy options to address this situation? Marches and highway re-namings are all fine but insufficient to be dressed up as strategic policy. The challenge for the foreign policy establishment is clear — and it is not situated inside the comfort zone. (Dawn editorial)

FOR 2020 PRESIDENTIAL POLL

Republican, Trump campaign raise \$1 bn

Washington: The Republican Party and the Trump campaign have collectively raised over \$165 million in July, surpassing the billion-dollar threshold with a total haul of \$1.1 billion.

The joint re-election effort continues their cash in hand advantage, with an over \$300 million war chest, the Republican National Committee (RNC) announced on Wednesday.

"With 90 days until victory, our teams and supporters are in overdrive working to re-elect President (Donald) Trump and Republicans up and down the ballot," said RNC chairwoman Ronna McDaniel.

According to the RNC, July's massive haul is not only a record for the month, but also eclipses the total raised in any single month of 2016.

July was also the largest online fundraising month ever for the re-election effort, it said.

The enthusiasm behind President Trump's re-election continues to grow as July's



massive fundraising totals prove," said Bill Stepien, Trump 2020 campaign manager.

"Voters express their support for President Trump in many different ways and donating to his campaign is one of the most personal, because they feel invested in his success and the future success of the country. The President's support for continues to increase while Joe Biden just posted a down fundraising month from his basement," he said.

The RNC recently announced the hiring of an additional 300 field staffers, bringing the total Trump

Victory operation to over 1,500 — double that of Biden's field operation.

With a grassroots army of 1.8 million Americans, the Trump Victory field effort is on pace to surpass the 2.2 million volunteers that helped re-elect President Barack Obama in 2012, the media release said.

Seeking re-election for his second consecutive term, Trump, 74, is pitted against Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden, 77, in the November 3 presidential elections.

Most of the opinion polls show that Biden is several points ahead of Trump. PTI

'See you in court': ACLU files nearly 400 cases versus Trump

New York: The day after Donald Trump's election in November 2016, the American Civil Liberties Union posted a message to him on its website: "See you in court."

As president, Trump hasn't personally squared off against the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) from the witness stand, but the broader warning has been borne out.

As of this week, the ACLU has filed nearly 400 lawsuits and other legal actions against the Trump administration, some meeting with setbacks but many resulting in important victories.

Among other successes for the ACLU, it prevailed in the Supreme Court case blocking the administration from placing a citizenship question on the 2020 census. It also spearheaded legal efforts that curtailed the policy of separating many migrant children from their parents.

"The assault on civil liberties and civil rights is greater under this administration than any other in modern history," said the ACLU's president, Anthony Romero.

"It's meant we've been living with a three-alarm fire in every part of our house." Since the day Trump took office, the ACLU — according to a breakdown it provided to The Associated Press — has filed 237 lawsuits against the administration and about 160 other legal actions, including Freedom of Information Act requests, ethics complaints and administrative complaints.

Of the lawsuits, 174 have dealt with immigrant rights, targeting the family separation policy, detention and deportation practices and the administration's repeated attempts to make it harder to seek asylum at the US-Mexico border.

The other lawsuits address an array of issues such as the ACLU's agenda: voting rights, LGBT rights, racial justice and others. In one long-running case, the ACLU succeeded in forcing the administration to end its policy of barring young immigrant women in government custody from getting abortions.

"Donald Trump has provided a full employment program for ACLU lawyers on all of our issues," Romero said. AP

FB, Twitter pull Trump posts over virus misinformation

Washington: Facebook Inc has taken down a post by US President Donald Trump, which the company said violated its rules against sharing misinformation about the novel coronavirus.

The post contained a video clip from an interview with Fox & Friends earlier on Wednesday, in which Trump claimed that children are "almost immune" to COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

This video includes false claims that a group of people is immune from COVID-19, which is a violation of our policies around harmful COVID misinformation," a Facebook spokesman said.

A tweet containing the video that was posted by the Trump campaign's @TeamTrump account and shared by the president was also removed by Twitter Inc for breaking its COVID-19 misinformation rules.

A Twitter spokesman said the @TeamTrump account owner would be required to remove the tweet before it could be taken down. AGENCIES

Joe Biden launches new national ad aimed at Black Americans

Detroit (US): Joe Biden's Democratic presidential campaign has launched a new national ad focused on Black Americans, urging them to stand up to President Donald Trump the way their ancestors stood up to "violent racists of a generation ago."

The one-minute ad, which was shared exclusively with The Associated Press before its digital and television release on Thursday, is meant to drum up support among Black Americans, a key constituency for Biden, ahead of November's general election.

The ad, titled "Better America," also features the swipe at Trump, without mentioning the Republican president by name.

"We must choose to fight for that better America," the narrator states. "And just like our ancestors who stood up to violent racists of a generation ago, we will stand up to this president and say, 'No more,' because America is better than him. So we choose to be bigger. We choose to be bolder. We choose to bring back justice, respect and dignity to this country. We choose Joe Biden to lead us all towards that American promise together." African Americans have largely supported Biden's presidential bid and have been credited with single-handedly transforming the Democratic presidential race and cementing his status as front-runner after his decisive primary win in South Carolina. But Black Americans, who form one of the party's most loyal voting blocs, have been hit doubly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic — they have died from the virus at disproportionate rates across the country and they've borne the brunt of its economic fallout.

In recent months, historic protests against police brutality and systemic racism have changed the national discourse around race, thrusting it to the top of the presidential campaign. The ad is part of the Biden campaign's planned \$280 million digital and television ad buy that was announced Wednesday and will run through the fall. AP

Sri Lanka election: Early results show Rajapaksa clan heading for landslide win

Colombo: Sri Lanka's powerful Rajapaksa family-run Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) appeared to be heading for a landslide win in the country's twice-postponed parliamentary election, according to early results announced on Thursday.

The SLPP has polled more votes than its rivals, scoring over 60 per cent of the total votes in the 16 seats declared so far from the South, dominated by the Sinhala majority community. The party won 13 seats out of 16.

In Galle district, the SLPP won seven out of nine seats offered while in the neighbouring Matara district they did even better by winning six out of seven seats on offer.

The nearest rival is the new party formed by former presidential candidate Sajith Premadasa who has released his mother party, the United National Party (UNP), of former premier Ranil Wickremesinghe to the fourth place even below the Marxist

Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP).

The SJB has won only three seats from both districts. In the polling division results from other districts where counting is in progress, the SLPP has taken unassailable leads, sources said.

In the Tamil minority dominated north, the main Tamil party - Tamil National Alliance (TNA) - despite bagging a few polling divisions had also suffered unexpected reversals at the hands of SLPP's Tamil allies - the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP).

The counting began in the morning after the polls were closed on Wednesday.

As the counting of votes began, SLPP founder and its National Organisation Basil Rajapaksa - who is the youngest brother of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa with the eldest being Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa - said that the party is all set to form a new government. PTI

Survivors mark 75th anniversary of world's 1st atomic attack

Hiroshima: The dwindling witnesses to the world's first atomic bombing marked its 75th anniversary Thursday, with Hiroshima's mayor and others noting as hypocritical the Japanese government's refusal to sign a nuclear weapons ban treaty.

Mayor Kazumi Matsui urged world leaders to more seriously commit to nuclear disarmament, pointing out Japan's failures.

"I ask the Japanese gov-

ernment to heed the appeal of the (bombing survivors) to sign, ratify and become a party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," Matsui said in his personal declaration.

"As the only nation to suffer a nuclear attack, Japan must persuade the global public to unite with the spirit of Hiroshima." His speech highlights what survivors feel is the hypocrisy of Japan's government, which hosts 50,000

American troops and is protected by the US nuclear umbrella.

Tokyo has not signed the nuclear weapons ban treaty adopted in 2017, despite its nuclear pledge, a failure to act that atomic bombing survivors and pacifist groups call insincere.

The US dropped its first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, destroying the city and killing 140,000 people. AP

No hoopla: Virus upends Trump, Biden convention plans

Washington: At the last minute, President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival, Joe Biden, are searching for places to impressively yet safely accept their parties' presidential nominations as the spread of the coronavirus adds fresh uncertainty to the campaign for the White House.

Trump said Wednesday he's considering giving his Aug. 27 acceptance speech on August 20 in Milwaukee, where the party has spent more than a year planning a massive convention.

Biden, meanwhile, scrapped plans to accept the Democratic nomination on August 20 in Milwaukee, where the party has spent more than a year planning a massive convention.

Presidential conventions are a staple of American politics and have played out against national traumas as significant as the Civil War and World War II. AP

Obama's Medicaid expansion keeps gaining ground under Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump is still trying to overturn "Obamacare," but his predecessor's health care law keeps gaining ground in places where it was once unwelcome.

Missouri voters this week approved Medicaid expansion by a 53 per cent to 47 per cent margin, making the conservative the seventh to do so under Trump.

The president readily carried Missouri in 2016, but the Medicaid vote comes as more people have been losing workplace health insurance in the coronavirus era.

That leaves only a dozen states opposed to using the federal-state health program for low-income people as a vehicle for covering more adults, mainly in jobs that don't provide health care. AP

Indian-American doc wins Democratic Congressional primary in Arizona

Washington: Dr Hiral Tipirneni, an Indian-American emergency room physician, has won the Democratic party primary for the US House of Representatives in the US state of Arizona. New polling showed that Tipirneni is just three points down to the Republican incumbent David Schweikert. The seat is said to be a Republican stronghold.

"I am honoured to be the nominee in Arizona's 6th Congressional District. For nearly a decade, our district has been represented by a DC politician who puts the profits of his special interest corporate donors over positive change that will make life better for working families here in Arizona," Tipirneni said. Tipirneni was three years old when her family immigrated from India to this country to pursue the American dream. PTI

PUBLIC NOTICE / TENDER NOTICE						
Sr. No.	NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT / OFFICE	NAME OF WORK / NOTICE / TENDER	OPENING DATE / CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / BID (Approx.) in Rupees	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NO. OF TENDER
1	Chief Technical Officer	Appointment of an agency for Meter Reading, Spotting and Bill Distribution for Consumer under UHBVH jurisdiction.	Closing date: 16-08-2020 Reading: 13:00 hrs Opening date: 20-08-2020 (at 10:00 hrs)	10,00,000/-	atenders.hy.in	334/MP/CO/Proc/2020

Premium Merchants Limited
Regd. Office:- Omase square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre
Jasola, New Delhi-110025
CIN:- L51909DL1985PLC021077, Tel:- +91 11 61119658
Email Id:- premiummerchants123@gmail.com, website:- www.pmltd.in

Extract of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter ended on 30th June, 2020					
(Rs. in lakhs)					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended on		Year Ended on	
		30.06.2020 (Audited)	31.03.2020 (Audited)	30.06.2019 (Unaudited)	31.03.2020 (Audited)
1	Total Income from operations	15.06	(3.95)	2.40	50.71
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extra-ordinary items)	13.43	(25.03)	(2.81)	23.95
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	13.43	(25.03)	(2.81)	23.95
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	10.04	(17.99)	(0.36)	27.30
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	14.12	(818.64)	6.77	(773.35)
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value Rs. 10 each)	99.80	99.80	99.80	99.80
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the audited Balance Sheet of accounting years 2019-20 and 2018-19	-	-	-	5,828.99
8	Earning Per Share (EPS) (Face Value Rs. 10)	1.01	(1.80)	(0.04)	2.74
2	Diluted	1.01	(1.80)	(0.04)	2.74

Notes:-
1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of unaudited results filed with the stock exchange under regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation, 2015. The full format of the Unaudited results are available on company's website www.pmltd.in (under the process of renewal) and on the website of the Stock Exchange www.mse.in.
2) The detailed audited results and this extract were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of directors in their meeting held on 06.08.2020

By order of the Board
For Premium Merchants Limited
ad/-
Babir Singh
Director
DIN:- 00027438
Date:- 06.08.2020
Place:- New Delhi

SUPRA INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES LTD.
Regd. Off: 1212, Namik Chamber 85, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019
CIN: L29990DL1985PLC019587
Website: www.supraindustrialresources.in
Email: supra1985@gmail.com / supraresources@gmail.com

M/S Bharat Bhushan Finance & Commodity Brokers Ltd.
CIN: L27200DL1985PLC014938
Regd. Office: 403, Rohit House-3, Tolstoy Marg, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110 001, inter-alia to consider, approve and take on record, the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter ended 30th June, 2020.
Further, pursuant to Regulation 47(2) of listing regulations, this information is also available on the website of BSE Limited at www.bseindia.com where the Company's securities are listed and shall also be available on the website of the Company at <http://www.bbvinvestments.in>.
For Bharat Bhushan Finance & Commodity Brokers Limited
(Nisha Ahuja)
Date: 07-08-2020
DIN: 0001875

Afghan council to decide whether Kabul releases 400 Taliban
Kabul: Afghanistan officials say a traditional consultative council will convene on Friday to decide whether the last 400 Taliban prisoners will be released as part of a peace agreement, even as its Health Ministry says half of Kabul's residents are infected with the coronavirus.

The Taliban have rejected any changes to the deal they signed in February with the US. That deal calls for 5,000 Taliban prisoners to be freed by Kabul and the Taliban to free 1,000 government personnel, including security officials, ahead of negotiations to map out a framework for a future Afghanistan. The release of the 400 prisoners is the final hurdle to the start of negotiations.

The Taliban have freed the 1,000 prisoners they were holding in a tailing flat, her eyes glared over, dead under a beam.

But if Sunday was alive, I decided, then maybe my close friend, a fellow journalist, was

No idea how I'm not dead: Journalist recounts horror of Beirut twin blasts

Beirut: All I could think about was finding the cat.

It was an irrational sentiment but I kept thinking: If I could find Sunday, then everything would surely be OK. I don't even normally like pets, and have no idea how during lockdown, I fell in love with this ginger cat who's constantly swishing her bushy tail.

I kept imagining that dramatic tail lying flat, her eyes glazed over, dead under a beam.

But if Sunday was alive, I decided, then maybe my close friend, a fellow journalist, was

too. Normally I would have been with him, speeding to the scene on his motorcycle like we often do when news breaks in Beirut. So when I saw him on fire, I grabbed my helmet and changed into a pair of jeans.

My boyfriend asked why I was going. He said the fire didn't seem like big news. "Why are you wasting your time?" he asked as I walked into the living room. Then everything blew up.

Every door inside my

apartment, hinges and all, was ripped out of the walls. So was my air conditioner. My big fan split right in half. My massive living room windows shattered. The glass didn't just shatter; the windows themselves flew clean off. I genuinely, even now, have no idea how I am not dead. I stood in a whirlwind of nails and glass and splintered wood, saw Sunday for a split second. Then we heard loud humming that sounded like planes and within moments, the second blast hit. AGENCY

GULSHAN POLYOLS LIMITED CIN:L24231UP2000PLC034918					
Regd. Off: 9th K.M., Jansath Road, Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh Ph:-0131-3201231, Fax: 0131- 2661378, website: www.gulshanindia.com Extract of Un-Audited Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30th June, 2020					
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS Q1 FY 2020-21					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended		Year ended	
		30.06.2020 (Unaudited)	31.03.2020 (Audited)	30.06.2019 (Unaudited)	31.03.2020 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	12103.56	13,553.90	16906.33	62174.49
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (Before Tax, Exceptional and / or Extraordinary Items)	718.78	336.15	978.16	2742.22
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period Before Tax (After Exceptional and / or Extraordinary Items)	718.78	336.15	978.16	2742.22
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period After Tax (After Exceptional and / or Extraordinary Items)	518.17	278.20	728.94	2058.40
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (After Tax) and other Comprehensive Income (After Tax))	518.17	259.19	728.94	2039.39
6	Paid-up equity share capital (Face Value of Rs. 1/- each)	469.17	469.17	469.17	469.17
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	-	-	-	30059.90
8	Earnings Per Share for Continuing and Discontinued Operations (Basic & After Extraordinary Items) (Face Value of Rs. 1/-each)	1.10	0.59	1.55	4.39
9	Diluted	1.10	0.59	1.55	4.39

NOTES :-
1 The Auditor has conducted Limited Review of these Financial Results. The results were reviewed by the Audit Committee. The Board of Directors has taken on record the financial results at its meeting held on August 06, 2020.
2 The statement has been prepared in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 (IND - AS) prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 and other recognised accounting practices and policies to the extent applicable.
3 The Company's operations and financial results for the quarter ended June 30, 2020 have been adversely impacted by the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown announced by the Government of India due to which the operations were suspended for part of the quarter and gradually resumed with requisite precautions. The results for the quarter are, therefore, not comparable with those for the previous quarters.
4 Figures for the previous period have been regrouped/ rearranged wherever necessary to make them comparable with current figure.
For and on behalf of the Board
Sd/-
Dr. C. K. Jain
Chairman and Managing Director
Date : 06th August, 2020
Place : New Delhi

RBI extends debt restructuring for MSME to March

PTI ■ MUMBAI

In view of the continued need to support the viable MSME entities on account of the fall-out of Covid-19, the Reserve Bank on Thursday extended the one-time debt restructuring for small businesses by another three months to March 2021.

Besides, the central bank has also relaxed some of the existing provisions for availing this scheme by the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

With Covid-19 continuing to disrupt normal functioning and cash flows, the stress in the MSME sector has got accentuated, warranting further support, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the central bank's bi-monthly monetary policy outcome.

"Accordingly, it has been decided that stressed MSME borrowers will be moratorium restructuring their debt under

the existing framework, provided their accounts with the concerned lender were classified as standard as on March 1, 2020.

This restructuring will have to be implemented by March 31, 2021," he said. As per the existing scheme, the borrower account had to be standard as on January 1, 2020.

Asset classification of borrowers classified as standard may be retained as such, whereas accounts which may have slipped into NPA category between March 2, 2020 and date of implementation may be upgraded as 'standard asset', as on the date of implementation of the restructuring plan.

However, the RBI asked banks to maintain additional provision of 5 per cent over and above the provision already held by them for accounts restructured under these guidelines.

The RBI has also retained

the aggregate exposure limit of the existing guidelines. As a result, the exposure limit also including non-funded based facilities of banks and NBFCs to the borrower should not exceed Rs 25 crore as on March 1, 2020.

Commenting on the MSME sector plays an important role in the growth of the Indian economy as it contributes over 28 per cent of the GDP, more than 40 per cent of exports, while creating employment for about 11 crore people.

Commenting on the scheme, PwC Partner Kuntal Sur said it is a good move by the RBI and would help MSMEs impacted by COVID-19 to get time and space to service debt when cash flows are under pressure due to uncertainty. Noting that a restructuring framework is already in place for MSMEs, he said it was subject to restructuring being implemented up to December 31. The scheme would help Mahindra & Mahindra dipped 0.75 per cent,

Rate-sensitive bank, realty, auto stocks close mixed on RBI policy day

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Interest rate-sensitive bank, realty and auto stocks closed on a mixed note on Thursday after the RBI left interest rates unchanged but maintained an accommodative stance to shore up growth.

Shares of Bandhan Bank declined 3.57 per cent, RBI Bank 0.49 per cent, Axis Bank dipped 0.43 per cent and SBI 0.29 per cent on the BSE.

In contrast, City Union Bank rose by 2.50 per cent, ICICI Bank gained 1.97 per cent, HDFC Bank 1.24 per cent, Kotak Mahindra Bank 0.44 per cent, IndusInd Bank 0.39 per cent, and Federal Bank 0.19 per cent. The BSE Bank index closed 0.71 per cent higher.

From the auto pack, TVS Motor Company rose by 2.22 per cent, Tata Motors 1.13 per cent, Maruti Suzuki India 0.49 per cent, Hero MotoCorp 0.26 per cent, and Ashok Leyland 0.10 per cent.

However, Mahindra & Mahindra dipped 0.75 per cent,

Bajaj Auto 0.67 per cent and MRF 0.42 per cent.

The BSE auto index closed registering a marginal rise of 0.07 per cent.

Among realty companies, Prestige Estates Projects jumped 8.49 per cent, Suntek Realty 5.48 per cent, Oberoi Realty 2.94 per cent, Sobha 0.57 per cent and DLF 0.21 per cent.

Godrej Properties fell 1.48 per cent, Indiabulls Real Estate 1.35 per cent and Mahindra Lifespace Developers 0.31 per cent.

The realty index closed with a gain of 1.15 per cent.

"The status quo was largely on the expected line. The apex bank is closely monitoring the impact of various measures announced in the past week, and waiting to see how the COVID situation pans out for further action."

Having said that, their accommodative stance and expectation of easing in inflation keep the possibility of a rate cut open.

"Besides, the additional

measures announced to support the stressed sectors were also received well by the market," said Gurpreet Sidana, chief operating officer, Religare Broking Ltd.

The Sensex surged 362 points to close at 38,025.45.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, left the benchmark repo rate (repo) rate unchanged at 4 per cent.

"Given the uncertainty surrounding the inflation outlook and the weak state of the economy in the midst of an unprecedented shock from the ongoing pandemic, the MPC decided to keep the policy rate on hold," Das said.

He said the central bank would continue to watch for a durable reduction in inflation to use the available space to support the revival of the economy. The committee unanimously decided to continue to keep its accommodative policy stance "as long as necessary to revive growth."

Lockheed Martin shares new partnership opportunities with Indian suppliers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

US aerospace giant Lockheed Martin shared information about new partnership opportunities with the Indian companies during the five-day virtual annual suppliers conference that ended on July 31, said an official statement on Thursday.

These opportunities with the Indian industry are in areas like space, aeronautics, rotary and mission systems (RMS) and missiles and fire control (MFC), the company said.

"A highlight from the company's RMS group is future work with MH-60R (naval helicopter) for India."

There is also an offer requirement for the programme, and so as part of that, Lockheed Martin will put more indirect work over in India, it stated.

During the February visit of US President Donald Trump, India announced a purchase of 24 MH-60R helicopters, worth

around USD 2.6 billion.

Lockheed Martin on Thursday said its RMS team will work with capable Indian companies over the next 7-8 years and provide opportunities to the industry to integrate into the global supply chain.

"RMS Supply Chain team already works with several Indian industrial partners in India and plans to expand that list, strengthening its commitment to the country," it added.

In April last year, the Indian Air Force issued an RFI (request for information) or an initial tender to acquire 114 multirole fighter aircraft at a cost of around USD 18 billion, which is billed as one of the world's biggest military procurement in recent years.

The top contenders for the deal include Lockheed's F-21, Boeing's F/A-18, Dassault Aviation's Rafale, the Eurofighter Typhoon, Russian Su-30 MKI and Saab's Gripen.

No layoffs so far but surging Covid-19 cases in some States cause for concern: Bata chairman

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Bata India Chairman Ashwani Windlass on Thursday said it has not laid off any employee so far, but admitted that there is not much clarity on "where the footwear market is heading" amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

As of March 31, Bata India had 9,762 employees across functions and locations, of which 4000-4500 are on third-party contract, he said.

"There is no layoff till date, Bata has friendly HR policies," Windlass told shareholders at the 87th annual general meeting of the company. "I don't think we have complete clarity about where we are heading, intermittent lockdowns and the surging pandemic in some states is of concern. But at the end of the current quarter, we will be better placed to analyse and calibrate our strategies," he said.

The management has taken a number of measures to safeguard and reopen stores, while according top priority to employee and customer safety, company officials said.

"Actual demand recovery shall be concurrent with the overall recovery of the economy, which is inching up now."

Complete reinstatement of pre-Covid state of affairs is still sometime away," the chairman said in his address at the virtual AGM.

Bata India has achieved 35-40 per cent of the pre-Covid business levels, he said.

"Moreover, the RBI moratorium will help bolster the huge supply chain for Bata," Windlass told PTI. Of the footwear major's 1,500 stores across the country, around 85 per cent are now open, he said, adding, the manufacturing units are also operating smoothly, while adhering to health and safety protocols.

FICCI, OYO develops online certification course for hospitality industry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body FICCI and Hospitality firm OYO on Thursday said that they have joined hands to develop and design an online training and certification course specifically for the hospitality industry.

"The course will focus on redesigning the sanitisation protocols and minimising person-to-person contact for a hotel in line with the standard operating procedures announced by the tourism ministry," according to a joint statement.

The course will help budget, mid-segment and boutique hotels and homestays in India as well as hospitality professionals to maintain and improve their safety and hygiene standards in line with government and industry benchmarks, it added.

OYO Hotels and Homes founder and Group CEO Ritesh Agarwal said, "The certification course will enable hospitality professionals and hotels across the country to determine new ways of working, understand government guidelines and align with best practices and re-imagine operations in a manner that helps both customers and employees feel safe, secure and comfortable."

FICCI will enable and support the implementation of information technology (IT) infrastructure and the online delivery platform for the online certification course, the statement said. OYO has developed and designed the course materials for the programme, it added.

"This course has been designed to help develop a uniform set of self-regulating guidelines," FICCI Secretary General Dilip Chenoay said.

India Inc, experts welcome RBI announcements

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Announcements made by the Reserve Bank, particularly the one on resolution of loans, have been welcomed by the industry as well as market players and experts.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday announced a loan restructuring window for corporates following the demand from bankers and the industry.

"Restructuring will be allowed as per the prudential framework issued in June 2019, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

Last week, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that the government is working with the RBI on the need for restructuring of loans to help the industry tide over the impact of COVID-19.

GDA board meeting pass many important resolutions

PTI ■ GHAZIABAD

A total of 12 proposals were presented in the 15th board meeting of the GDA on Thursday, of the Ghaziabad Development Authority, most of which were passed. The special thing is that in the board meeting, the sector rate was frozen by 31 March 2021 to dispose of the undocumented properties.

The mitigation policy 2020 was also approved. The meeting was chaired by Mandla Lakshmi and GDA Chairman Anita Seen Mshram. In addition, the Board approved the mitigation policy 2020.

GDA Vice President Kanchan Verma said that the GDA chairman has given instructions to make an inquiry on the proposal to terminate the interest due to non-intimation of the outstanding amount to the

allottee in the Authority's scheme and recover it from the employee concerned. Declining the proposal to amend the cyber use of the proposed educational land use in the map of the Kaushambi Residential Scheme, dismantling the cyber hub in view of the land use of the land blocks to be kept educational only and the desired area for the cyber hub is not complete.

The proposal has been approved. On the proposal made in connection with the progress of high-tech and integrated township schemes being implemented in Ghaziabad.

Wipro partners Intel to enable remote IT support

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Services major Wipro on Thursday said it has partnered Intel to enable its LIVE Workspace solution with the latter's vPro platform that will help customers do business continuity by enabling remote IT support and solutions.

Wipro integrated the Intel vPro platform into LIVE Workspace, a suite of digital workplace services to provide remote manageability of devices, a statement said.

This extends to users at home or in the office and provides enhanced protection and security against firmware-level attacks, it added.

The combined solution provides practical business continuity services to enable enterprises to rapidly design, deploy, and manage a true remote work experience.

Business optimism for Jul-Sep quarter slips to record low: Report

New Delhi: Business optimism for the July-September quarter slumped to a record low due to

sharp rise in COVID-19 cases, the extension of lockdown in containment zones and staggered easing of restrictions, according to a report.

Dun & Bradstreet Composite Business Optimism Index for the July-September quarter fell to a record low of 29.4.

The index registered a decline of 40.6 per cent over the last quarter.

The BOI covered about 350 senior executives in June this year.

"The spike in the number of positive Covid-19 cases, the extension of lockdown in containment zones and the staggered easing of restrictions affected the business optimism levels," said Arun Singh, Global Chief Economist, Dun & Bradstreet. All six optimism indicators -- volume of sales, net profits, selling prices, new orders, inventories and employees -- have registered a decline as compared to the previous quarter, the report said.

Exchange's subsidiary can administer, supervise registered investment advisers: Sebi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A growing number of registered investment advisers, markets regulator Sebi on Thursday said a wholly-owned subsidiary of the stock exchange (stock exchange subsidiary) to administer and supervise IAs registered with Sebi, the regulator said in a circular.

Under IA Regulations, Sebi can recognise any body or

responsibilities.

"Considering the growing number of registered Investment Advisers (IAs), it is decided to recognise a wholly-owned subsidiary of the stock exchange (stock exchange subsidiary) to administer and supervise IAs registered with Sebi," the regulator said in a circular.

Under IA Regulations, Sebi can recognise any body or

body corporate for the purpose of regulating IAs. It further provides that Sebi may, at the time of recognition of such body, delegate administration and supervision of IAs to such body or body corporate on certain terms and conditions.

Sebi said the recognition of stock exchange's subsidiary will be based on eligibility of parent entity.

The parent entity should be in existence for a minimum of 15 years, should have a minimum net worth of Rs 200 crore, should have nation-wide terminals as well as investor grievance redressal mechanism, including arbitration, the circular said.

Besides, the stock exchange needs to have investor service centres (ISCs) in at least 20 cities.

Sebi said the exchange will either form a subsidiary or des-

ignate an existing subsidiary for the purpose of regulating IAs. The subsidiary will put in place systems for grievance redressal, administrative action against IAs, maintain data, share information with Sebi.

The subsidiary needs to have the necessary infrastructure like adequate office space, equipment and manpower to effectively discharge its responsibilities.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I hereby inform to the Public at large that my Clients (1) Shri Kamlesh Kumar Jain (2) Shri Om Prakash Jain (3) Shri Shashi Jain (4) Shri Kamlesh Kumar Jain (5) Shri R. P. Singh, Patna, Bihar, have severed off / disconnected all their relations / connections with Shri Anu Jain and his wife Dipika Jain, and have deleted / downed them from their all movable & immovable properties if anybody deals with them, he / she shall be fully responsible for all future consequences.

Niranjan Singh Tomar (Advocate)
En. No. D-1542/2008

PUBLIC NOTICE

We inform you that Mr. Devender who was working in KBS TRAVELS handling Passports and other Services. He was working since last 5 years in KBS TRAVELS. Now Mr. Devender Kumar is left on his own of 29.07.2020 from our organization. If any types of dealing with KBS TRAVELS is not responsible for any types of dealing.

Sd/-
Director
KBS TRAVELS
(A Unit Group of KBS Associates Travels Pvt. Ltd.)

PUBLIC NOTICE

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to inform the General Public that following share certificate of KEC INTERNATIONAL LTD. having its Registered Office at RPD House, 463, Dr. Annie Besant Road, Worli - Mumbai - 400030, 400030 registered in the name of the following Shareholder(s) have been lost by them. Registered in the name of the following Shareholder(s) have been lost by them:

Name of the Shareholder: RANJIT SAWHNEY
Folio No. R027678
Certificate No. 10272
Distinctive No. 10125061 - 10125500
No. of Shares: 500

The Public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificates. Any person who has any claim in respect of the said share certificates should lodge such claim with the Company or its Registrar and Transfer Agents Link Intime Private Limited, 247 Park, C-101, L.S. Marg, Vikhroli (West) Mumbai-400083 within 15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entertained and the Company shall proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificates.

Place: New Delhi Date: 07-08-2020 DEEPAK SAWHNEY

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering)

Name of work with its location: Provision of GRFL Inland Container Depot Railway Siding at Garhi Harsaru in c/w Re-Location of the proposed handling line No. 1 & 2 of Phase-II inside the GRFL Premises at Garhi Harsaru Station on Delhi-New Delhi section.

App. Cost of the work (₹) ₹ 20,96,335/- only
Earnest Money deposit (₹) ₹ 41,906/- only

Address of the office: Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-I, Northern Railway, 2nd Floor, Annex-1, DDM office, New Delhi-110055.

Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender: Tender uploading / closing date & time: 02.09.2020 up to 15.00 hrs.

Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.: See the Northern Railway website www.irpsa.gov.in & notice board at S&T Branch, 3rd Floor, DDM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.

No. 558-Sig-16-M-Tender-1346 Dated: 05.08.2020 170820

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON

General public is hereby informed that this person namely Sanjeev Kumar S/o Parmanand R/o H.N. H.No. 103, Bargad Mohalla, Salapur Majra Dabas, Delhi Age: 45 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Sallow, Face: Oval, Build: Thin, Identification: Mentally Sound, wearing purple colour shirt, blue colour jeans and brown colour shoes in feet, has been missing since 04.07.2020 from his house. In this regard DO No. 65-A Dated 22.07.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi.

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

E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
SHO: P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi
Ph: 011-25951486, 8750870324
Tel: 24368639/24386641

Govt. of Bihar Police Headquarters, Bihar, Patna

Notice Inviting Tender No.-03/2020-21

1. Name of the Department: Office of Director General of Police, Bihar, Patna.
2. Last date & time for the acceptance of the tender: 01/09/2020, Till 02:00 PM
3. Date & time fixed for the opening of the tender: 01/09/2020, At 04:00 PM
4. Place fixed for receiving & opening the tender: Office of Director General of Police, Bihar, Patna.

5. Details of Job:

S.N.	Item name	Quantity
1	F.T.I.R. Spectrophotometer	02
2	Deep Freezer	05
3	Ion Chromatograph	02
4	Flash Point Apparatus	02
5	Aniline Point Detector	02
6	Automatic Distillation Analyzer	01
7	Ballistics Botoscop	02
8	UV Visible Spectrophotometer	01
9	Water Purification System	03

Specifications and other terms & conditions of the tender may be obtained in person from this office or may be downloaded from the website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar or biharpolice.bih.nic.in.

PR-04596 (POLICE) 2020-21

बिहार सरकार के द्वारा बिहार पुलिस के लिए उपरोक्त वस्तुओं का खरीद किया जा रहा है।
आप सभी को सूचित किया जा रहा है कि उपरोक्त वस्तुओं का खरीद बिहार सरकार द्वारा किया जा रहा है।
आप सभी को सूचित किया जा रहा है कि उपरोक्त वस्तुओं का खरीद बिहार सरकार द्वारा किया जा रहा है।

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

E-TENDER NOTICE

NAME OF THE WORK: Operation and maintenance of COVID Laundry activities like collection, washing, drying and ironing of linens. Both the works for the period of 06 (Six) months. (a) TENDER NOTICE. No. Med/G/ Preventive of COVID-19(1). (b) TENDER NO. Med/G/ Preventive of COVID-19(1). (c) Cost of Tender Form (Document) : ₹1,000.00 (Rupees one thousand) only. (d) Approx. Value of the work (Tender Value) : ₹ 3,44,479/- (Rupees three lakhs forty four thousand four hundred seventy nine) only. Sl. No.: 1; Item No.: 1; Description of Item: Operation and maintenance of COVID Laundry activities like collection, washing, drying and ironing of linens. Both the works for the period of 06 (Six) months; Unit: Lump sum; Qty: 01; Rate: ₹ 3,44,479/-; Amount: ₹ 3,44,479/-; Total : ₹ 3,44,479/-; (e) Earnest money to be deposited : ₹ 6,900/- (Rupees Six thousand nine hundred) only. (f) Completion period of the work : 180 days. (g) Tender Submission Closing Date : 28.08.2020 at 13.30 hrs. (h) Tender Bid open date : 28.08.2020 at 13.30 hrs. (i) Tender submission start date : 14.08.2020 from 10.30 hrs. (j) Type of Tender: Work. Complete details of tender can be seen in the Railways website : www.irpsa.gov.in & www.clw.indianrailways.gov.in

AD76 - 060 KGH/CLW/Chittaranjan
Like us on : www.facebook.com/clwrailways

Trend Slazer

I'm not here for fame: Radhika

Actor **RADHIKA APTE** says she does not want to get stuck in something convenient or be satisfied, and she is not chasing fame.

"I'm not here for fame. I do like the perks sometimes, but I don't take success and failure seriously because these are temporary and all very relative," Radhika said.

"You can't take either seriously, but you can't just ignore them. They are very important aspects in your journey — you need appreciation, you need to pat your back many a time, you have to love the appreciation as well and you have to also learn from your failure and not get defeated. So I have a balanced approach," she added.



'Music has been my sanity. It is an integral part of my life and I feel blessed to be able to share it. Edge is an attempt at portraying and owning your inner chaos and loving parts of yourself that are imperfect. When you stop looking at perfection in others, the journey of understanding and accepting yourself begins.'

—Shruti Haasan

Looking ahead in time, actor **URVASHI RAUTELA** feels history books in the future will need to dedicate an entire chapter to the year 2020.



From forest fires to the COVID-19 pandemic and now a blast in Beirut, the year has seen one disaster after the other.

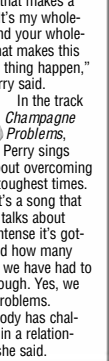
"My prayers are with Beirut, Lebanon. I am heartbroken by the loss of life in this tragic event. Solidarity to all those affected and those working tirelessly to help. I can't even imagine the predicament of the people witnessing this out there," she said.

Katy on her split with Orlando

KATY PERRY and actor **Orlando Bloom** are now a happy couple, but they have gotten through a lot of hell, says the singer.

"It's really about an individual journey that makes the whole thing better. We both had to decide to go on that journey separately because it's not my half and your half that makes a whole. It's my wholeness and your wholeness that makes this whole thing happen," Perry said.

In the track *Champagne Problems*, Perry sings about overcoming their toughest times. "It's a song that really talks about how intense it's gotten and how many things we have had to go through. Yes, we have problems. Everybody has challenges in a relationship," she said.



The unlock diaries

A survey, conducted by a dating app, finds out the reasons behind infidelity during the lockdown

A lot of love stories have blossomed in last few months of the lockdown and the new couples are eagerly waiting to meet their loved ones. From the outset, it's hard to judge when this global health crisis is going to leave the country but one thing is for sure, love is unhindered from the outside surrounding and blooming like never before.

A dating app, Gleeden, conducted a survey after the beginning of 'Unlock 1.0' and found out that about 75 per cent of its users are willing to meet their love interests if provided an opportunity. The survey was rolled out among 1,000 of its newly joined users and was conducted across metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune. The findings from the survey are pretty exciting and it also addresses the unspoken side of the reasons behind infidelity. Here is a glimpse of the same.

The heart is always dicey Can you cheat on your spouse and still love them at



the same time? Well, the answer to this question is as tricky as the question itself and the users are no exception. About 45.6 per cent of them think that their shared intimacy won't affect their current relationship, while 47 per cent of them believe that they cannot share the same level of emotions with two different people. A minute 7.4 per cent are indecisive about their stand on shared intimacy with their spouses.

Why partners cheat Infidelity is considered as a taboo worldwide and there are a lot of factors leading up to the same. Lack of intimacy and compatibility in a relationship are just the kick-starters to the ultimate fate. Interestingly, it has been found out that 37 per cent of people cheat their partners because they want to try out something new or spice up their existing relationship. About 36 per cent of people commit infidelity because they are in

love with someone else other than their spouses, while for the remaining 27 per cent, the decision of committing infidelity was taken when they realised that their current partner is not the right match for them both emotionally as well as physically.

Blame it on the night

It has been found that people usually try to make new connections while attending a social gathering or at a club party; it can range

Keep it casual It seems that casual relationships are the need of the hour for 38 per cent of the app users, who would like to get into a new relationship without making serious future commitments. About 23 per cent of the users still believe in the old school romance and are looking for future life partners. Interestingly, about 39 per cent of users are only interested in one-time affairs and are not looking for anything serious.

From the scratch

Actor **TAHIR RAJ BHASIN** says that every project has taught him to focus on being true to the process

Actor Tahir Raj Bhasin is an outsider with no connections in the industry. He debuted with *Mardaani* to show his acting prowess as a villain and since then, Tahir is delighted about how his career has been shaping up. After making a mark in *Mardaani*, which earned him the Best Supporting Actor and Best Villain awards, Tahir decided not to look back. His powerful performances in the subsequent films like *Manto*, *Chhichhore* and many more made him grab projects like *83* and *Loop Lapeta*. He is thrilled about the fact that he has shaped his own destiny in the Bollywood.

"I'm very proud of the journey I've had in Bollywood. When you start from the scratch, you value the recognition that your work gets and the opportunities you've earned because they are built solely on the basis of your talent. I consider the parts I've done so far to be a personal collage of experiences," he says.

The actor credits the directors he has collaborated with for having faith in him. "I've been fortunate enough to work with some amazing filmmakers. This has led to my growth as an actor and as a person. Every project has taught me to focus on being true to the process. What matters is making a part fun to watch and authentic. The next exciting turn of my career is going to be equally challenging. *Loop Lapeta* is a thriller comedy and pairing up with a talent like Taapsee (Pannu) is something I really look forward to."

Tahir discloses his journey in cinema makes him proud. "The part in YRF's *Mardaani* challenged me to stretch my abilities as I was a starting opposite an icon like Rani Mukerji. The uniqueness of the part made it a great one for me. From doing that to shifting gears in a light hearted college drama *Chhichhore* and now to a romantic lead in *Loop Lapeta* is incredibly fulfilling and gives me a sense of pride in the journey so far," he says.

Tahir also reveals who his biggest inspirations are. "People who I count as mentors in cinema aren't always the ones with me on a day to day but are magnetic people who I've briefly crossed paths with. It's something they've said or did that left a deep impression on me."

Aamir Khan, who I had a chance to meet soon after *Mardaani*, said — never be in a rush and never be afraid to take chances. It seemed cryptic back then but as time passes, it makes more and more sense. My other cinema mentor is Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who I worked with in *Manto*. His work teaches me to never underestimate the power of the audience," says Tahir.



A DANGEROUS MASTER

Partially automated driving systems don't always work, so the auto club recommends that car companies should limit their use

Two tests by AAA during the past two years show that partially automated driving systems don't always function properly, so the auto club is recommending that car companies limit their use. Researchers with AAA recently tested systems from five manufacturers over a distance of 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometres), and said they encountered problems every eight miles (13 kilometres).

Most of the issues involved systems designed to keep vehicles in their lane, but the tests discovered that many had trouble spotting simulated broken-down vehicles in their path. About two-thirds of the time the test vehicles hit the broken-down car, at an average speed of 25 mph (40 kph), according to the study.

It was AAA's second round of tests on the systems. Researchers said little had changed from a test of four other vehicles in 2018, prompting the recommendation that automakers stop including the technology on more models. "AAA has repeatedly found that active driving assistance systems do not perform consistently, especially in real-world scenarios," said Greg Brannon, AAA's director of automotive engineering.



ing. "Automakers need to work toward more dependable technology including improving lane keeping assistance."

Also the systems, which combine control of acceleration, braking and steering, often quit working with little notice to drivers, AAA found. That could cause a dangerous situation if the driver isn't fully engaged and has to make an emergency decision.

AAA tested five vehicles at several research centres with drivers and instruments monitoring their performance. Included this year were a 2019 BMW X7 SUV, a 2019 Cadillac CT6 sedan, a 2019 Ford Edge SUV, a 2020 Kia Telluride SUV and a 2020 Subaru Outback SUV. Their systems have names like Kia's "Highway Driving Assist," Subaru's "EyeSight," Ford's "Co-Pilot 360," Cadillac's "Super Cruise," and BMW's "Active Driving Assistant Professional."



The results were similar to those found in 2018 testing by AAA of four other vehicles including a 2017 Tesla Model S with the company's "Autopilot" system.

BMW, General Motors and Subaru issued statements saying their systems aid drivers and are not meant to be fully autonomous. Messages were left seeking comment from Ford and

Kia. Subaru said its system "is designed to assist the driver, not replace the driver, when confronting hazards," while GM said it designed the Super Cruise system so it makes sure the driver stays engaged.

"Super Cruise undergoes rigorous testing and validation, and we continue to remain confident in the system," GM's statement said.

BMW said it appears the X7's system performed as designed in AAA's testing. "BMW requires that the driver remain fully at attention in order to intervene in the case of an emergency situation (such as a car stopped in the lane as simulated in the AAA study)," BMW said.

AAA said most owners manuals explain that the systems have trouble spotting stationary objects. The most recent tests show that the systems aren't improving much, even as

automakers move them into more mainstream models. Brannon said that can be a problem.

People who bought systems when they first came out generally were early adopters who know more about technology, Brannon said. But as the systems make their way into more mainstream models, people who are less tech-savvy will be driving them, he said.

"People are really less familiar and less likely to really engage in understanding how the systems work," he said. "That just assume they do work. That could be a really dangerous assumption."

Also, research has shown that people become overly reliant on the technology, which could be dangerous when the systems don't work, he said. Also, there's no standard way for the vehicles to notify drivers that the systems are disengaging. Some just have a green light on the dash, while the Cadillac's steering wheel vibrates and a green light goes to flashing red, he said.

In real-road tests, all of the systems had trouble keeping the vehicles in their lanes, and they came too close to other vehicles and guardrails, AAA said. Test track examinations of three vehicles, the Kia Telluride, BMW X7 and Subaru Outback, found that all had trouble spotting a simulated broken-down vehicle in their lane most of the time, Brannon said.

The Cadillac system couldn't be tested on the track because General Motors limits use to divided highways, while the Ford system also wouldn't work on the track. But both systems had problems on real roads, Brannon said.

He said that problems with the system could slow the adoption of fully autonomous vehicles because owners who experience the driver-assist technology may not trust it.

RAISE THE BAR AT HOME

Here are some must-follow tips to set up your personal bar and enjoy your favourite cocktails at home. By ASMANI SUBRAMANIAN

A well-set bar is one thing every grown-up home should have. It is not just about honing skills to hosting some family and friends over for drinks, but also about taking some time out for yourself and enjoying a drink at home. Well, this applies the most to the times we are living in now. By setting up a bar at home, you wouldn't be missing your favourite cocktail at your most-visited outlet. The bar can also add an unexpected element of design to your home. But it will definitely be a space that will inspire you to try new things and upgrade your mixology skills.

WHERE TO BEGIN FROM

Creating a home bar isn't as intimidating as it may seem. An important step is deciding what you want to stock your bar with. However, there are a few more things to consider before making the jump from a few bottles of spirits and a chilled beer in your refrigerator, to several variety of liquor, mixers and tools on display in your home bar.

If space is a constraint to create a full built-in wet bar, you could always have a portable bar designed that will help you to move the essentials to the area of your gathering. A well-made cocktail trolley is the best fix. Be it a make-shift bar or a cocktail trolley, both are readily available in leading e-commerce portals to add to your cart. If nothing else, transform your already available wooden console table into a bar top table by just adding a simple yet aesthetic serving tray.

Once you have narrowed down on some space for your bar, the next step is to set a budget aside to arrange for all the must-haves including your choice of spirits, bar tools, mixers, glassware, mixers and garnishes — that is where the visual appeal kicks in!

WHICH SPIRITS TO GO FOR

The budget that you decide on will help you set a base for the spirits that will bring your home bar to

life. I suggest adding different types of spirits to enjoy on various occasions and settings. It'll also help you master your skills at cocktail making as you will have a multitude of liquor categories to experiment with. Expert tip: Stock up on distinct flavours that will meet the wider spectrum of your audience.

THE ABSOLUTE MUST-HAVES

Scotch Whisky — A variety of scotches, which have a distinct maturation element to them such as the Black Dog Triple Gold Reserve, a classic single malt such as the Singleton of Glendullan and a limited-edition collectable collection such as the Johnnie Walker Black and Origin Series, are the liquors that add an extraordinary essence to the bar.

Trust me, there is no single way to enjoy whisky. It can be consumed in the manner you want and recent trends suggest that scotch cocktails are a great way for the new generation to venture into knowing whisky. Try to explore whisky cocktails and experimenting with flavour notes available. If it's a social occasion like a brunch with a close group of friends or an cozy movie night indoors, a Highball will accompany the mood perfectly. Expert tip: One such highball is also Johnnie Ginger — Simple, understated and easy to create at home.

Take a tall glass (highball) and fill it with ice. Add 45 ml of Johnnie Walker Red Label, top with ginger ale and drop in a slice of fresh ginger, orange or cherry to garnish.

Vodka — Another spirit perfect for cocktails. I would recommend having your choice of vodkas in your freezer. Frozen Smirnoff is great to try with any mixer but if you are looking for more complex flavours and wish to try your hand at a *Bloody Mary* cocktail, Ketel One Vodka will make it a well-rounded drink.

Gin — It is a great accompaniment when it comes to brunching. No one can go wrong with a classic gin cocktail. Tanqueray London



Dry Gin will be a best choice to fix up a refreshingly gin and tonic. Take 30 ml Tanqueray, 60 ml tonic, lots of ice in a wine glass with your choice of citrus fruit sliced up to garnish.

Other additional spirits which you can stock up your bar with are Rum and Tequila to serve at your indoor gatherings.

Vermouth — An element added to your bar for you to make a great martini with your choice of vodka.

Bitters — For enjoying your very own Negroni.

Important tip: Once you have set up your home bar, do try your hand at experimenting with mixology but remember to drink responsibly.

ESSENTIAL BAR TOOLS

Few things that you would need to enhance your mixology skills and serve some great cocktails for your friends and family are essential bar tools, glassware, shrubs and syrups.

Cocktail shaker: A cocktail shaker is essential to make sure you blend in all the ingredients of your cocktail. I would recommend that you invest in a three-piece shaker, which has an in-built strainer and helps in serving a drink, especially when you're short of time. If you are just starting out and don't have one, a 500 ml recycled bottle with a wide mouth works just as well and can result in preparing three serves at a time.

Jigger or peg measure: As a responsible host, it is always wise to measure every drink. This is especially useful in portioning out your cocktail when you are trying out a



new recipe.

Pourers: Use a pourer while pouring your drinks into a glass to avoid spillage.

Cocktail strainers: A Hawthorne or Julep Strainer, that is simple in design, is handy to use for stirred cocktails. For those that are shaken, use a fine strainer (tea strainer) to filter the ice that breaks into ice chips while shaking or to separate fresh fruit and herb seedlings that may float in your drink.

Muddler: While using local/seasonal fresh fruits and herbs in your drink, use a muddler to bring out the utmost freshness and juice of the ingredients.

Citrus press / Mexican elbow juicer: For all those who love their sour cocktails, use the right tools

Chopping board and knife: A wooden chopping board and sharp knife is useful while slicing fruit. A small knife and peeler helps to peel citrus fruits for garnishing. A *Cosmopolitan* is never the same without a fresh orange twist.

Bar spoon: A bar spoon is good to stir your martinis or to muddle the sugar cube in an *Old Fashioned*. Chopsticks also come in handy for stirring.

Mixing glass or pint glass: Who doesn't love a well-made, stirred, dry martini or a negroni in a fancy mixing glass? A pint glass or a recycled bottle works just as well.

Glassware: The right glassware gives the best first impression of a great drink. Research reveals that beautiful glassware not only enhances the perception but also has a lasting impact. Here are some recommendations:

□ A highball glass is great for tall drinks like whisky highballs, mojitos and vodka with OJ.

□ For cocktails like *Old Fashioned* and straight drinks, a rocks or whisky glass is preferable.

□ Some wine glasses for red/white wine or a gin and tonic.

□ A martini or a cocktail glass, which brings in the bond moment is a must-have.

□ A beer glass serves as an excellent utility glass through the evening.

Mixers: Stock up on mixers that you enjoy to create simple and easy

while making a sweet lime soda. A means of gin makes it a Tom Collins or Gin Fizz.

Juice containers or punch bowl: This helps when you are hosting an intimate gathering for friends and family where you can pre-mix the cocktails and store them in the fridge.

Spill mat and kitchen towels: Very useful in keeping the surface clean as bar tops tend to get wet with spill liquids pretty often. A mat keeps the moisture in check.

Ice cube tray: Ice is the most important element in a cocktail and big ice cubes help the drink stay chilled for a longer duration. Small paper cups or 100 ml steel tumblers make good alternatives. Expert tip: Don't add your ice until you're ready to shake or stir, melted ice makes the drink too weak and unenjoyable.

Glassware: The right glassware gives the best first impression of a great drink. Research reveals that beautiful glassware not only enhances the perception but also has a lasting impact. Here are some recommendations:

□ A highball glass is great for tall drinks like whisky highballs, mojitos and vodka with OJ.

□ For cocktails like *Old Fashioned* and straight drinks, a rocks or whisky glass is preferable.

□ Some wine glasses for red/white wine or a gin and tonic.

□ A martini or a cocktail glass, which brings in the bond moment is a must-have.

□ A beer glass serves as an excellent utility glass through the evening.

Mixers: Stock up on mixers that you enjoy to create simple and easy

cocktails. This also works well for your guests who may look for something other than an alcoholic drink. Here are some mixers that one must have.

□ Aerated drinks like soda water, tonic, ginger ale, lemonade

□ Fresh and chilled fruit juices like orange, cranberry, pineapple, tomato

□ Sweet and sour mix like margaritas, whiskey sours

□ Equal parts of fresh lime or apple cider vinegar and sugar syrup work well too

□ Having a selection of honey, preserves, shrubs and flavoured syrups in your pantry brings in complexity to your drink and never fails to wow your guests

□ Spices and herbs help you add some of the unique flavours to your drink

□ Through local seasonal fruits, you can make a whisky sour right at home, throw in a bit of ginger to add plenty of complexity to the drink

□ Using citrus fruits for garnishing are brings a sense of freshness to your drink. It's always great to have a bundle of kaffir lime leaves or mint leaves as a brilliant garnish, uplifting the entire cocktail experience.

Essential bitters: What salt does to food, bitters do to your cocktails. Try stocking up on an Angostura bitter in your bar. If you can't find one, use your favourite spices, steeped tea or spent coffee in vodka gives your drink its own homemade tincture.

Well, one last tip: Drink and enjoy responsibly!
(The writer is the Brand Ambassador, Diego India.)

R E C I P E S

ALMOND PUMPKIN KEBAB

WHAT YOU NEED

- Pumpkin: 500 gm
- Green chillies (chopped): 1 1/2 tsp
- Garlic and ginger (chopped): 2 tsp
- Cumin seeds: 1 tsp
- Cracked coriander: 1 tsp
- Red chilli powder: 1 tsp
- Nutmeg powder: 1/8 tsp
- Chat masala: 1 tsp
- Dry mango powder: 1 tsp



- *Desi ghee*: 40 gm
- Almonds (slivered): 20 gm
- Almonds (chopped): 40 gm

METHOD

- Peel, de-seed and grate the pumpkin.
- Heat *desi ghee* in a thick bottom casserole pan and sauté ginger and garlic, green chillies, cumin seeds and all the spices.
- Add the pumpkin. Cook for 15-20 minutes till the water has

dried out.

- Add the chopped almonds and cook for another five minutes. Let the mixture cool down. Cut them into rough, thin patties of 30 gm each. Coat them with slivered almonds.

- Heat *desi ghee* in a pan and place the patties in medium hot oil. Cook till the bottom is caramelised and then carefully turn the patties. Cook them till they are crisp from outside.

Courtesy: Chef Manish Mehrotra.

TRICOLOUR LADDOO

WHAT YOU NEED

- Desiccated coconut: 1.5 cup (additional 1/4 cup for garnishing)
- Sweetened condensed milk: 1/2 cup
- Clarified butter: 1 tsp
- Cardamom powder: 1 tsp
- Milk: 1 tsp
- Saffron (for orange colour): 2 tsp
- Pistachio powder (for green colour): 2 tsp

METHOD

- In a non-stick pan, heat *ghee* and add coconut. Stir it on medium heat until it turns golden brown.
- Take it out and add condensed milk in same pan, mix it well for a minute.
- Now add coconut in it and mix well until it observes the moisture. Keep stirring



constantly, then add cardamom powder and mix well until the mixture becomes thick.

- Further take three equal portions of the mixture in different bowls.
- Add saffron milk in one, pistachio powder

in second and keep the rest natural white. Cool down the mixture completely and make *laddoos* from it.

- Coat it with desiccated coconut and serve.

Courtesy: Head Chef Ritesh Shabani, Madchef.

SMOKED SALMON FISH CAKES

WHAT YOU NEED

- Smoked salmon: 400 gm
- Mashed potatoes: 300 gm
- Melted butter: 2 tsp
- Wholegrain mustard: 2 tsp
- Fresh dill (chopped): 1 tsp
- Fresh parsley (chopped): 1 tsp
- Fresh chives (chopped): 1 tsp
- Lemon juice
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Flour (seasoned): 1/2 cup
- Eggs, beaten: 2
- Breadcrumbs: 1 1/2 cups
- Oil: 100ml

METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 190 degree Celsius.
- Place the salmon in a roasting dish, cover with foil and place in the oven for 15 minutes to heat through.
- Flake the salmon with a fork and place in a large bowl together with the mashed potatoes, butter, and mustard. Mix well.



- Add the dill, parsley, chives, lemon juice and zest. Season well with salt and pepper and mix thoroughly.
- Divide the mixture into 12

portions and form into balls. Flatten each ball to about 1cm thick.

- Dip each fishcake in the seasoned flour, then the beaten egg and finally the breadcrumbs

to coat each one.

- Fry the fishcakes in 2 tsp oil over medium-high heat for five to eight minutes on each side until golden brown and crispy.

Courtesy: Le Creuset.

STRAWBERRY, WALNUT & DATE SMOOTHIE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Strawberries (halved): 200 gm
- California Walnuts: 50 gm
- Pitted dates (roughly chopped): 3
- Natural yogurt: 100 gm
- Milk: 100 ml

METHOD

- Place all the ingredients in a smoothie maker or blender and blitz until smooth.
- Pour into two glasses.
- Serve sprinkled with extra chopped walnuts.

Courtesy: Chef Sabyasachi Gorai.

SINGLES

HERODES RETAIN BOTAS FOR NEXT SEASON

LONDON: Valtteri Bottas has signed a new deal with Mercedes, keeping him at the Formula One team until the end of the 2021 season. Bottas, who was runner-up to Hamilton last year, joined Mercedes in 2017 and has so far notched eight wins and 12 pole positions with the team.

TAIKO BAY TEMPORARILY REMOVE OLY RINGS

TOKYO: The Olympic rings monument installed in Tokyo Bay for the 2020 Summer Games was temporarily removed for maintenance on Thursday and will return in December when Japan heads into the final stretch of preparations for the rescheduled event. The monument, which was installed seven months ago and stands 15.3m tall and 32.6m wide, will be cleaned and undergo a safety inspection before being re-installed.

HAN CITY SIGN AKE FROM BOURNEMOUTH

MANCHESTER: Manchester City have signed Dutch defender Nathan Ake from Bournemouth. Ake has just turned 26 and has been a regular starter for the club since the summer of 2015. The 25-year-old said he is delighted to have joined City, a club he feels offers him everything he needs to win trophies and have a successful career.

FRIEDKIN GROUP COMPLETE ROMA TAKEOVER

ROME: US-based Friedkin group has reached an agreement with the current owners of Serie A club Roma to buy the former league champions for \$501 million euros. Roma said in a statement that owner and club president James Pallotta has signed the necessary preliminary contracts to Dan Friedkin, the current chairman and CEO of The Friedkin Group, on Wednesday night.

GARCIA JOINS ATK MOHUN BAGAN FC

KOLKATA: Spanish mid-fielder Edu Garcia has signed a two-year deal with newly merged ATK Mohun Bagan FC, the franchise of the ISL announced on Thursday. Having represented Bengaluru FC in 2017-18, Garcia returned to the ISL for the second half of the 2018-19 with ATK and scored the winning goal against Chennaiyin FC to guide them to a record third title last season.

MCA WRITES TO CM SEEKING NOD FOR PRACTICE

MUMBAI: The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has written to Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray, seeking his approval for its players' practice at the indoor facility of the Bandra Kurla Complex. The Maharashtra Government has so far not allowed any team sport to resume in the state and they have also not given a go-ahead for the resumption of training of individual cricketers.

LEDLEY KING HIRED AS MOURINHO'S ASSISTANT

LONDON: Tottenham has appointed former captain Ledley King to become an assistant manager under Jose Mourinho. The 39-year-old King spent his entire 19-year playing career at Tottenham and has been a club ambassador since retiring in 2012. The former center back made 323 appearances and lifted the League Cup as captain in 2008 which is the club's last major trophy. King has joined Mourinho's backroom team in place of tactical analyst Ricardo Formosinho, who has left the club.

KYRGIOS LIKELY TO PULL OUT OF FRENCH OPEN

MELBOURNE: Nick Kyrgios dropped a huge hint on Thursday that he will skip the French Open, saying the chances of him travelling to France this year were "slim to none". "It's a very slim chance I'll play in Europe. Almost slim to none to be honest," he said. The Australian last week pulled out of the US Open in New York due to the coronavirus pandemic.

'Babar belongs in league of Kohli, Smith, and Williamson'

MANCHESTER: Former England captain Nasser Hussain feels it's time the cricket world catches the moniker 'Fab Four' to 'Fab Five' by including Pakistan's Babar Azam in the same league as Virat Kohli and Kane Williamson.

Australian run-machine Steve Smith and England captain Joe Root complete the quartet of modern day greats.

"They keep going on about the 'Fab Four' (Kohli, Steve Smith, Kane Williamson and Joe Root) — it's the 'Fab Five' and Babar Azam is in that," Hussain said on Sky Sports.

Babar, who has been Pakistan's best batsman in the past few years, started the first Test against England at Old Trafford on a bright night, scoring an unbeaten 69 off 100 balls by the time bad weather stopped play on Wednesday.

"I think it is a real shame and it is in part a consequence of Pakistan playing away from home, playing in the UAE all the time in front of no one. Pakistan hiding in the shadow of Indian cricket, not going over and playing IPL cricket, not playing India."

Babar's cover drives have some similarities with Kohli's and some consider him even better in his execution.

"If this lad was in Kohli, everyone would be talking about it but because it is Babar Azam, no one is talking about it," Hussain said during commentary. "He is young and he is elegant. He has got all the swagger," he added.



BCCI, Vivo suspend IPL partnership for 2020

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI on Thursday suspended the IPL title sponsorship deal with Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for the event's upcoming edition amid the Sino-India border face-off.

The BCCI sent out a one-line statement, without giving any details, to say that Vivo will not be associated with the IPL this year.

"The Board of Control for

Cricket in India (BCCI) and vivo Mobile India Pvt Ltd have decided to suspend their partnership for Indian Premier League in 2020," the press release stated.

The company, on its part, stated that the association is being paused.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and vivo Mobile India Pvt Ltd have mutually decided to pause their partnership for the 2020 season of Indian Premier League," it stated.

Vivo won the IPL title sponsorship rights for five years from

2018 to 2022 for a reported sum of ₹2190 crore, approximately ₹440 crore per annum.

It is learnt that the two parties are now working out a plan in which Vivo might come back for a fresh three-year period starting 2021 on revised terms. However, a top BCCI official offered a divergent view.

"Here we are talking about diplomatic tensions and you

expect that after November, when IPL ends and before the next IPL starts in April 2021, there would be no anti-China sentiment? Are we serious?" the veteran official said.

The anti-China sentiment in the country peaked after the violent face-off between the Indian and Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh, India lost 20 soldiers in the clash, while China also acknowledged unspecified casualties.



Inter, Man Utd reach Europa quarters

AFP ■ GELSENKIRCHEN

Manchester United edged MLSK 2-1 and Inter Milan beat Getafe 2-0 on Wednesday in rescheduled ties due to the coronavirus pandemic to clinch places in the quarter-finals of the Europa League.

United had a 5-0 lead from their first leg played in March and will face Copenhagen who enjoyed a 3-0 victory on the night over Istanbul Basaksehir.

Antonio Conte's Inter Milan will face either Steven Gerrard's Rangers or Bayer Leverkusen with the Germans holding a 3-1 lead going into Thursday's match.

Despite United's comfortable lead from March 12's first leg, the visitors caused problems early on.

Andrej Kramaric hit the crossbar with a powerful header after 10 minutes at an almost empty Old Trafford before Peter Michorl fired wide just after the quarter of an hour mark.

The Linz-based outfit had to wait until the second half to break the deadlock as defender Philipp Wiesinger rifled into the top corner from outside the box after 55 minutes.



Man Utd's Jesse Lingard reacts during Europa League match against LASK. AP

Their celebrations were short-lived as Jesse Lingard equalised on the counter-attack for United three minutes later.

Anthony Martial claimed the match-winner with two minutes to go despite LASK goalkeeper Alexander Schlager guarding a foot to the France striker's shot.

Inter's meeting with the La Liga side was played over just

one leg in Gelsenkirchen to save time ahead of next week's last eight to be held in Germany.

They advanced to the next round as Rome's Lukaku became the club's first player to score in five straight European appearances since Brazilian striker Adriano in 2004.

Lukaku slotted home after Alessandro Bastoni's long ball

Sanchez joins Nerazzurri for free

AFP ■ MILAN

Manchester United's Chilean forward Alexis Sanchez has signed a three-year contract with Inter Milan, on Thursday.

No transfer fee was involved in the deal as United seemed to be in a hurry to offload the forward who could not reach the heights of his previous years at Old Trafford. He was also reportedly earning in excess of 500,000 pounds per

week at Manchester United. "Alexis Sanchez has joined the Nerazzurri on a free transfer," the Serie A side said in a statement.

The 31-year-old, who had been loaned at Inter this season, signed a contract until June 30, 2023, the club added.

Sanchez scored four goals for Antonio Conte's Serie A runners-up behind Juventus. "Everyone at Manchester United wishes Alexis Sanchez all the best in his future career as he joins Inter Milan on a permanent transfer," the Premier League club said.

of a clearance inside his own area.

Elsewhere, 2009 champions Shakhtar Donetsk booked a last-eight spot against Basel of Eintracht Frankfurt after three goals but veteran center-forward Jorge Molina missed the resulting penalty.

Christian Eriksen made sure of Inter's spot after 84 minutes with his first touch after Dakonam Djene made a mess

after 33 minutes.

The Spaniards gave a chance to take the game to penalties with 25 minutes remaining as VAR said Diego Godin had handballed in his own box but veteran center-forward Jorge Molina missed the resulting penalty.

On Thursday Rangers head to Leverkusen, Wolves host Olympiakos, and Sevilla face Roma in Duisburg.

Football Association Board allowing the temporary use of five substitutions next season, the league won't be adopting it. The rule had been seen to favor bigger clubs with more depth in their squads.

A maximum of seven substitutions will be allowed on the bench but only three can be brought on when the new season begins around Sept 12.

Man City has unfinished business in CL: Laporte

Manchester: The

Champions League is the missing link in Manchester City's growing silverware collection, defender Aymeric Laporte said ahead of his side's last-16 second leg against Real Madrid on Friday.

City have dominated English football in recent years under Pep Guardiola, although they finished second to Liverpool in the Premier League this season. But they have yet to add Europe's most coveted prize to their trophy cabinet.

"City have unfinished business in the Champions League, we have been talking about it for a long time, it's the thing we are missing," Laporte told Spanish newspaper AS on Thursday.

"Last year we won four trophies in the same season but couldn't win the Champions League, so if it's our turn this year, perfect."

They were knocked out in the quarter-finals last year on away goals by Tottenham after having a last-gasp effort ruled out by a VAR review. They were beaten on away goals by AS Monaco in the last 16 in 2017.

"I don't know what we've been doing wrong as the team has been the same in the last few years. Away goals have been key. Last year Tottenham scored the same number of goals as we but eliminated us," added Laporte.

"We have all the ingredients to do great things. The team is really upping it, we don't have to change much, we just need a little more luck. We have lacked that final spark which I'm sure we'll find soon."

City hold a 2-1 lead over Real going into Friday's second leg at an empty Etihad Stadium and will be without all-time top scorer Sergio Aguero through injury.

Real will be missing captain Sergio Ramos, who was sent off in the first leg.

"Everyone knows Aguero, he's an important player to be missing just like theirs. All the goals that he has scored and the career he's had since he was young speak for themselves," added Laporte.

"He's one of the best strikers I've ever seen but we believe in our other players. Sergio Ramos is also a very important player but we want to show that we can play better than them."

Agencies

PL revert to 3 substitutions

LONDON: The Premier League will revert to a maximum of three substitutions in matches next season with England's top division clubs deciding to no longer allow two additional changes.

Clubs previously backed the use of five substitutions to deal with the congested schedule after the league's pandemic-enforced 100-day shutdown ended in June.

Despite the International

Football Association Board allowing the temporary use of five substitutions next season, the league won't be adopting it. The rule had been seen to favor bigger clubs with more depth in their squads.

A maximum of seven substitutions will be allowed on the bench but only three can be brought on when the new season begins around Sept 12.

Mithali defends BCCI's stand, says foreign stars misjudged situation

NEW DELHI:

India ODI captain Mithali Raj totally understands the frustration of foreign international players over the overlapping of T20 Challenge and WBBL dates but firmly believes that BCCI "did its best" to fit in the four-match tournament in these unusual COVID-19 times.

While the foreign players, led by Australian star Alyssa Healy, questioned the timing of the exhibition games as it is clashing with the WBBL, the BCCI was also criticised for not going ahead with the women's tour of England in September.

Asked about her thoughts on the two subjects, Mithali spoke her mind.

"People tend to judge quickly. The BCCI president (Sourav Ganguly), secretary (Jay Shah) and

IPL GC chief (Brijesh Patel) have been very encouraging towards women's cricket."

"I personally thought we may not even get to play the Challenger trophy (domestic event) because even the men's IPL was in doubt but these games are most welcome," Mithali said.

On comments of top international players like Healy, Suzie Bates, Rachel Haynes expressing their displeasure, the Indian legend tried putting things into perspective.

"I know a lot of people (foreign players) have questioned the timing of it but these are not normal circumstances. Normally, the IPL happens in April-May and doesn't collide with WBBL (in Australia)."

"But these are unusual cir-

cumstances, the window (tentatively November 1-10) was a short one and the BCCI did the best it could."

The WBBL is scheduled from

October 17 to November 29.

"It (their frustration) is understandable. They (foreign players) also want to be part of the event."

"I too want the best players in the league. 'But the situation is not normal. Right now, there is hardly any sporting activity in India and to have the matches before the men's IPL, it would require players to be in match mode. We are yet to start training."

"My own state has just allowed the opening of gyms. So for me to get match ready will take time. The BCCI has given us that window and we will have to work around it this year," she said.

PTI

Shan's 156 drives Pak to 326

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Century-maker Shan Masood and Shahab Khan snatched the initiative for Pakistan from England with a 105-run partnership on day two of the first Test at Old Trafford on Thursday.

Pakistan lost three cheap wickets and scored only 48 runs in the morning session, but Masood and Khan were transformed after the lunch break.

They scored 27 runs in the first five overs after lunch, then England took the second new ball. But the Pakistan pair, especially Khan, was too confident to be confined again.

They were positive and rotated the strike, and the runs flowed as Pakistan added 125 runs in the middle session and reached 312 at tea.

Masood was career-best unbeaten 151 and Khan was out for 45, one of three wickets to fall in the session.

England pacer Jofra Archer had a hat-trick ball but Shaheen Afridi had a 2-8 at tea.

Masood, 27, at lunch, was comparatively zippy as he scored 23 runs in 26 balls to achieve his third century in three innings.

The first century by a Pakistan opener in England came against a 251-ball test, with 13 fours.

It followed his previous career-best 135 against Sri Lanka in December in Karachi and 100 against Bangladesh in February in



Pakistan's Shan Masood raises his bat to celebrate scoring a century during the second day of the first Test. PCB/Twitter

Rawalpindi.

The partnership with Khan was aggressive and frustrating England until Khan came down the pitch at spinner Dom Bess, mis-hit and Joe Root took the catch at mid-on.

Archer trapped Yasir Shah on 5 and Mohammad Abbas on the next ball for a duck. Knowing he was running out of partners, Masood attacked and moved to his best Test score when his first six of the innings, winning Bess over the wicket, then smashing him back over his head for another six.

1st Test, Day 3
Live from 3:30pm IST
SONY SIX NETWORK

Afridi was with him at tea on 1 not out.

NO PROBLEM IN TOURING PAK

England head coach Chris Silverwood has "no problem" in touring Pakistan for a short T20 series if it can be managed ahead of the side's scheduled visit to the sub-continental nation in 2022.

England have avoided touring Pakistan since 2005-06 citing security concerns but of late the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has expressed hope of visiting the country in two years' time.

"For me it's great that it's a topic of conversation again. We are looking to get back there," Silverwood told Sky Sports on the opening day of the first Test.

"Personally, I'd have no problem going," he said.

Silverwood hinted that things are on course for a potential T20 series, saying England batsmen are raring to have a go at the placed wickets in Pakistan.

"I've never been so it would be nice to go and have a look. And I know our batsmen are looking forward to batting on the new pitches. We are getting there (in terms of planning)," he said.

Silverwood's statement came after Pakistan Cricket Board CEO Wasim Khan requested the ECB to consider sending a T20 team to the troubled nation ahead of their next scheduled visit in 2022.

Tai has no problem with Oly postponement



KUALA LUMPUR: World No 2 shuttler Tai Tzu-ying has said she didn't have any problems with Tokyo Olympics getting postponed as according to her, she has now more time to prepare and end her drought at the showpiece event.

Tai Tzu-ying was initially set to be hosted in July this year but due to coronavirus pandemic, it will now take place

from July 23 till August 8 in 2021.

Despite her constant successes on the BWF circuit, Tai Tzu is yet to win a medal at senior international level which includes Olympics and World Cups. At London 2012 and Rio 2016, she crashed out in the last-16 round itself.

"I didn't have a problem with (postponement). I can use this time as a period of rest because it's been a long and tight schedule of high-level competition," Tai Tzu said on the BWF's *Badminton Ultimate Feature*. "It's a good time to rest and have even more time to prepare (for the Olympics)."

Tai Tzu had earlier hinted that she might call time on her career after the end of 2020 season. But with the badminton calendar destroyed due to coronavirus pandemic, all such retirement talks have been put to rest for the time being.

"I will play until the end of next season before I revisit the decision. As of now I want to finish next season's schedule," the former World No 1 said. IANS

BCCI, CA to discuss on swapping of T20 WC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The heads of BCCI and Cricket Australia will be connecting virtually to discuss the hosting of two T20 World Cups in the next two years when the ICC's all-powerful board meets on Friday.

The decision will also be impacted by the stand of the two boards on the next ICC chairman, the nomination process of which is yet to be announced formally.

It is expected that BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah along with CA's Earl Eddings and Nick Hockley will reach a

consensus on the hosting of 2021 and 2022 editions.

"The main agenda of the meeting is scheduling of ICC tournaments including the women's ODI World Cup in New Zealand early next year. It is expected that some decisions will be taken," an ICC Board member said.

The ICC World T20 which was scheduled to be held in Australia from October 18 this year was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making way for the cash rich Indian Premier League, to be held from September 19 in the United Arab

Emirates.

It is expected that Cricket Australia will like to host the T20 World Cup in October 2021 as it had already started preparations and wouldn't like to wait for two years but BCCI also doesn't want to forego its right to host the tournament in 2021.

"The BCCI was originally scheduled to host the T20 World Cup in 2021 and they would like to go ahead. Another reason being, hosting a T20 World Cup in 2022 and then a 50 over global event within a gap of just one year. It would be an overall," another ICC board member said.