

ANALYSIS 7
IN THE NAME
OF GOD

MONEY 8
REAL ESTATE SENTIMENT ALL-TIME
LOW IN APRIL-JUNE

SPORTS 12
GENOA RETAIN
SERIE A PLACE

HYDERABAD, TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



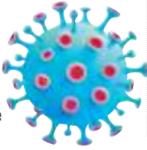
VISHNU TO PLAY
SIBLING TO
KAJAL IN
MOSAGALLU

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INDIA'S CASE TALLY CROSSES 18 LAKH, RECOVERIES SURGE TO 11.86 LAKH

India's COVID-19 tally crossed the 18-lakh mark on Monday, just a day after it went past 17 lakh, with 52,972 cases reported in a day, while the number of recoveries surged to over 11.86 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data. The number of COVID-19 tests carried out in India has also crossed the 2 crore-mark, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The total coronavirus cases surged to 18,03,695, while the death toll due to COVID-19 climbed to 38,135 with 771 people succumbing to the disease in a day, the data updated at 8 am showed.



MAN ARRESTED FOR DISTASTEFUL COMMENTS ON AMIT SHAH'S HEALTH

A person has been arrested for allegedly uploading objectionable posts on Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who is infected with COVID-19, in the social media, police said on Monday. The man, who was held on Sunday night, claims to be associated with the Karnataka Congress social media unit, the police said. The accused has made derogatory comments on Shah's health condition and been booked by the police. Shah on Sunday said he has tested positive for coronavirus and is getting admitted to a hospital following doctor's advice. Meanwhile, state Congress president D K Shivakumar appealed to the party workers to not make defamatory statements against any political leader and said it was not the party's culture.



'REGRESSIVE': AMAZON FACES CRITICISM FOR SELLING RAKHI GIFTS WITH ADOPTION JOKES

E-commerce giant Amazon has come under attack from social media users and adoptive parents for selling merchandise bearing messages like "Tu toh adopted hai" (You are adopted) and "Tujhe na mummy, papa dustbin se utha ke laye the" (Our parents picked you from a dustbin) as Raksha Bandhan gifts. They said such "tasteless" jokes reinforce the stigma around adoption. Despite repeated attempts, Amazon could not be reached for comment. "One of the most hilarious dialogues exchanged between a bro-sis duo is "Tu adopted hai".



RITUALS BEGIN IN AYODHYA, STAGE SET FOR RAM TEMPLE 'BHOOMI PUJAN'

Religious rituals got under way in Ayodhya on Monday, two days ahead of the groundbreaking ceremony for a temple at a spot where devotees believe Lord Ram was born. Barricades are already in place in the temple town and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath issued an appeal, asking only those invited for Wednesday's bhoomi puja ceremony to come to Ayodhya. Adityanath spent hours reviewing the arrangements for the ceremony at the Ram Janmabhoomi, where the temple will be constructed following the go-ahead last year by the Supreme Court.



AUGUST 5,
A RED
LETTER DAY

2

Deccan Hospital permission cancelled for Covid treatment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state government on Monday revoked the permission given to Deccan Hospital, Somajiguda, to treat Covid-19 patients.

Director of Public Health and Family Welfare Dr. G Srinivas Rao on Monday issued orders to this effect.

"No new Covid-19 patients shall be admitted by the hospital and no inconvenience should be caused to the patients already admitted. They have to be treated as per ceilings fixed by the Government. If it is found that the hospital is not following these orders, the Government then will be compelled to cancel the licence issued to the hospital," Dr Rao said in his order.

Permission was revoked as per provisions of the Telangana Allopathic Private Medical Care Establishments (Registrations and Regulation) Act-2002 and Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897.

The decision came in the wake of a detailed enquiry report from District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO),



Permission was revoked as per provisions of the Telangana Allopathic Private Medical Care Establishments (Registrations and Regulation) Act-2002 and Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897

Diseases Act, 1897.

The decision came in the wake of a detailed enquiry report from District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO),

Hyderabad, which said the hospital had flouted the ceiling on the treatment cost fixed by the State government.

2

HC directs action against pvt hospital for inflated bill

HYDERABAD: Taking a serious view of the refusal to hand over the body of an ex-serviceman and retired captain for non-payment of the bill, a single judge bench of Telangana High Court on Monday directed the Central government and the director of medical and health services to take serious action against Secunderabad-based Sunshine Hospital for exploiting innocent citizens if it was found that the bills imposed by it on the patient were in excess.



2

TS govt alert to land given to Ambani firm on city outskirts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State Government is keenly watching the developments at the Reliance Infrastructure Limited after banks started seizing properties owned by the group to recover bad loans.

Yes Bank seized Reliance Infrastructure's head office in Mumbai two days ago to recover Rs 2,892 crore loan after the company, owned by Anil Ambani, defaulted on repayment.

The previous Congress government headed by late YS Rajasekhara Reddy had allotted 76 acres on the city outskirts to Reliance Infrastructure for Rs 517 crore in 2007 to build a 100-storey tower. However, the company paid only Rs 250 crore so far.

The project did not take off



even after 13 years. Consequently, the government is now planning to resume the unutilised land from the Reliance Infra.

In this backdrop, officials are carefully examining the trail of

documents, to see if Reliance Infra had mortgaged this land with banks and raised loans and whether any banks were making moves to seize the property.

2



NK Singh: India needs to grow much faster over next decade

8

Timing to close liquor vends extended

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Liquor vends in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits can now remain open till 11 pm and till 10 pm across Telangana, after the State Government extended the timings to pre-lockdown days.

From Tuesday onwards, tipplers in the city can purchase liquor till 11 pm.

From March onwards, the State Government has been implementing the guidelines laid down by the Centre on the timings of shops to open and close in view of coronavirus-induced lockdown.

From August 1 onwards, the Centre has lifted all restrictions on liquor shops as part of the unlock process. Following this, the State Government announced that the pre-lockdown timings will be applicable now.

The State Excise Department issued orders in this regard on Monday.

BONDS OF LOVE



Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Naraiah celebrates Raksha Bandhan with his sisters in Hyderabad on Monday.

Rs 3 cr valuables looted from house in Sainikpuri

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A couple, employed as domestic help at the home of a realtor, are the prime suspects in the theft of valuables, including gold jewellery weighing around 1.73 kg, cash and electronic gadgets, all worth more than Rs 3 crore in Sainikpuri on Monday.

According to police, the thieves targeted the residence of A Narsimha Reddy when the realtor was attending his son's wedding reception at Falaknuma Palace on

Sunday evening along with his family.

The family had left behind the couple, hailing from Nepal, to guard the house.

When the family returned home late at night, the entire house was a mess, with household items lying scattered around and the gold jewellery, cash and other valuables missing. The couple was nowhere to be seen.

Alerted, the Kushaiguda police rushed to the spot and started investigation.

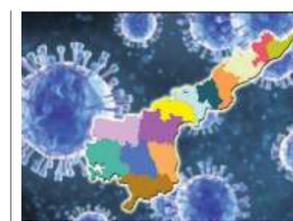
2

Except AP, all south states see dip in cases

PNS ■ CHENNAI

All of southern states on Monday saw a dip in their daily COVID-19 numbers, as Tamil Nadu cured over 2.02 lakh persons and recorded a 76 per cent recovery rate while Karnataka's infections slipped below the 5,000 single-day mark for the first time in 10 days.

Incidentally, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are behind Maharashtra in the national tally with high case-loads. On Monday, Tamil Nadu reported 109 deaths, the first ever such score of fatalities so far. It recorded 5,609 fresh



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cases, 266 lesser than Sunday, taking the overall infection count to 2,63,222, a health department bulletin said.

The death toll mounted to 4,241, it said. A total of 5,800

people were discharged, eclipsing the new cases and taking the total recoveries to 2,02,283. Active cases stood at 56,698, the bulletin said.

Karnataka's COVID-19

daily count dropped below the 5,000 mark for the first time in 10 days on Monday, while it saw 98 deaths, taking the toll to 2,594.

The state recorded 4,752 cases, taking the total number of infections to 1,39,571, while 4,776 patients were discharged after recovery, the health department said.

As of August 3, cumulatively 1,39,571 COVID-19 positive cases have been confirmed in the state, which includes 2,594 deaths and 62,500 discharges, the health department said in its bulletin.

2

OBTUSE ANGLE

THESE HUMANS HAVE A KNACK OF MAKING A RITUAL OUT OF EVERYTHING AND THEN FORGETTING TO ACT...



Vizag land, apartments costlier than Banjara Hills in city

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Lands in Visakhapatnam, the officially anointed Executive Capital of Andhra Pradesh, will cost a bomb if the annual revised market value by the government is implemented. The unit rate of land in some pockets of the city like Mudasarlova are proposed to be increased by 27 per cent and this may make them even costlier than land prices in Banjara Hills of



Hyderabad. Land prices in Vizag have

always been on the higher side and the proposed revision, if

The north of Vizag towards Vizianagaram and north east of the city, Bheemili is expected to see major development as the state government is reportedly scouting for land in these areas where big parcel of lands are available

implemented, would place parts of the city among the costliest places to live in, in the country.

Before implementing the revised unit rates of the land, the Registration and Stamps

department has sought objection and suggestion from the public.

People can give their feedback on the revised rate before August 10 on the department website.

The north of Vizag towards Vizianagaram and northeast of the city, Bheemili is expected to see major development as the state government is reportedly scouting for land in these areas where large tracts are available.

Vizag District Registrar Manmadha Rao said that sub-registrars have revised the lands rates of areas coming under their jurisdiction on the basis of rationalisation.

2

AUGUST 5, A RED LETTER DAY

August 5 will be a red letter day in the country's social and political history.

Abrogation of Article 370 granting special status to J&K was described by many as a historic event, but it's only a phenomenon with some decades of history behind it, while construction of a masjid at Ram Janma Bhoomi had taken place several centuries ago.

In this backdrop, laying the foundation stone on August 5 at the disputed site for a Sriram temple honouring sentiments of millions of people is not an ordinary matter.

There is a correlation between the desire to have a temple for Lord Sriram at his birth place and the seat of his administration between the mythological and historic past, national self-respect of Indians and spiritual quest deep-rooted in the soil of the country.

Millions of people go to many pilgrim centres, apart from Ayodhya, irrespective of caste, community, geographical and language considerations. Their belief systems, faith, pujas and pilgrimages

stand as symbols of national unity.

The mythological characters and those in the Ramayana influenced the people irrespective of time and geographical constraints.

Why do people worship a particular deity? Why do people undertake pilgrimages knowing well that God is omnipresent?

To find answers to these questions, one has to delve deep into our rich and diversified cultural heritage. During the course of history, many temples have been vandalised and idols of Goddesses have been destroyed, devotees killed. In spite of this, they rose stronger from the ruins.

This denotes not only the cultural unity, unflinching commitment to faith and sentiments, but also national spirit that flows like an undercurrent.

It is inevitable to say that the national spirit ignites social awareness with the

BJP knows the significance of Lord Sriram and the Ramayana in people's lives and their impact over several centuries on the Indian psyche and moral values and hence it is working in tune with the prevailing sentiments. Not only Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, many Indians, including Muslims, regard Lord Sri Rama as a model ruler and a person having myriad of noble qualities.

building of a temple for Lord Sriram at Ayodhya.

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Not only Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, many Indians, including Muslims, regard Lord Sri Rama as a model ruler and a person having myriad of noble qualities.

Noted Urdu and Persian poet Allama Iqbal described Lord Sriram as "Imam-e-Hind".

Mahatma Gandhi chanted the name of Lord Sriram all through his life with devotion. He did not regard Lord Sriram as a mere Hindu deity alone, but as a symbol of national unity and a divine power.

There is no exaggeration to state that building a temple for Lord Sriram, who is regarded as the collective psyche of Indians, unity and integrity, at his birthplace under BJP rule is a wonderful development that would leave a lasting impression on the collective Indian awareness.

Sardar Patel took measures to rebuild the vandalised



Y SATYA KUMAR
BJP National Secretary

Somnath temple soon after India became Independent. In the same fashion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is taking all necessary measures to build the Ram temple.

Within four days of annexing the Junagadh princely state with Indian union in 1947, Patel declared that the Government would rebuild the historic Somnath temple at its place and reinstall the Jyotirlingam.

The task initiated by Sardar Patel was accomplished by the KM Munshi, in spite of opposition from Jawaharlal Nehru. Munshi made it clear to Nehru that Government lending support to re-building the Somnath temple would gladden the collective Indian psyche.

Munshi invited Dr Babu Rajendra Prasad to declare open the rebuilt Somnath temple and to get the Jyotirlingam installed in it as per the religious rites. In spite of severe opposition from Nehru, Rajendra Prasad kept his word. He made it clear that he would not be able to be alienated from his religion. He described the Somnath temple as a symbol of national faith.

The temple which has risen from ashes makes it clear that no power on earth or a person in the world will be able to erase faith and love from people's minds and hearts.

Today, our efforts are not aimed at correcting history. Our goal is to redefine our bonding with our beliefs, faith and values inculcated by our religion since ages.

The Opposition parties are questioning Modi taking part in the foundation stone laying ceremony for the Ram temple in Ayodhya. It is better for them to recall the words of Rajendra Prasad.

Laying the foundation stone for rebuilding the temple at Ayodhya after five decades of rebuilding the Somnath temple is a historic development.

Veteran BJP leader LK Advani started his historic rath yatra from Somnath temple, treating building the temple at Ayodhya as continuation of the rebuilding goal.

When Advani embarked on rath yatra, Modi was then an ordinary party worker. Today, Modi is attending the

foundation stone laying ceremony in his capacity as PM. It is purely accidental and divine development.

Congress and other parties played havoc with the sentiments of the people of the country. They did not understand the sentiments of people and practised vote bank politics.

Had the Congress set its sights on Ram Janmabhoomi, the BJP would not have become a party to the Ayodhya movement. The people gave overwhelming support to Ayodhya Movement because of the pseudo-secularism practised by the Congress.

In 1989, the BJP adopted Ayodhya Resolution in Palampur expressing its willingness to relocate the disputed structure to another place. The verdict delivered by a Bench of the Supreme Court last year, reflected the spirit of the Palampur resolution of the BJP.

It clearly establishes how justified the BJP is in its desire. There is no doubt that the BJP would not only build the Ram temple but also establish Rama Rajya.

PANGOLIN SCALE RACKET BUSTED, 12 ARRESTED

PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM

Based on a tip off, Telangana forest officers have nabbed 12 members of an interstate gang and seized four kg of Pangolin scales from them. It is suspected that the gang might have killed at least four pangolins in Dammamet forest area to collect the scales which might have fetched them Rs 40 lakh in the international market.

According to L Ranjeet Nayak, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Kothagudem, Badavat Ravi of Kothagudem who was arrested after he tried to encourage tribals of Bhadrachalam area to catch Pangolins for a good price has confessed that he had purchased these scales from a person in Bhadrachalam in Chintur for Rs 10,000 and was proceeding to Chandrapur to search for a buyer.

During further investigation, he confessed that pangolin scales are available with Shaik Rafi of Guntur, who along with Ramchander



The demand for Pangolin meat and skin suddenly skyrocketed after China has banned the sale of Pangolin meat in its wet markets, said Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Kothagudem

Karmakar and Soma Mani Prasad are planning to sell pangolin scales in Hyderabad.

The Forest officers then started keeping a close eye in animal trading areas of Hyderabad and other places in the State and arrested Sunil, Nagaraj and nine others. The police who are on the look out of three more members of the gang say the gang also has links in West Bengal. As of now 12

persons have been arrested out of 15 accused and they were all remanded in Khammam sub jail by Forest Range Officer Srinivas, Chandrugonda and further investigation in progress.

"Many believe that the Pangolin scales have medicinal value and they fetch Rs 1 lakh per kilogram. Particularly Chinese believe in its medicinal value," DFO Kothagudem

said. The demand for Pangolin meat and skin suddenly skyrocketed after China has banned the sale of Pangolin meat in its wet markets. The pangolin trade runs through Bihar, Nepal, Manipur and Myanmar routes, he added. Kinnersani Wild Life FDO Damodar Reddy, Hyderabad Vigilance DFO Rajaramana Reddy and others monitored the operation.

Miners seek lockdown

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

Miners working in Kasipet underground mine, belonging to Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) boycotted duties demanding lock down of the mine in the wake of increase in Covid-19 positive cases on Monday.

A large number of miners gathered in front of the mine and wanted the authorities to impose the lockdown for some period and to take preventive measures to curtail the spread of the novel coronavirus. They said that they were prone to be infected if the excavation of coal was continued in the mine.

The workers of the coal major regretted that coal belt towns Mandamarri, Bellampalli, Ramakrishnapur and Naspur registered a major proportion of Covid-19 positive cases in the past two months. They lamented that their health was at risk and requested the authorities to suspend the production to break the chain of the virus for a month or two. Leaders of Telangana Boggu Ghani Karmika Sangham were present.

Covid cases drop below 1,000 mark after a month

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

For the first time in more than a month, the daily count of Covid-19 cases in Telangana came down below 1,000-mark as the state reported 983 new cases on Monday. With this the Covid-19 tally in the state rose to 67,660. Eleven fresh fatalities pushed the cumulative death toll to 551. The state had last reported below 1,000 cases on June 30 when 945 people had tested positive. Since then there has been a spike in new infections.

According to a medical bulletin issued by the Health Department on Monday, 983 people tested positive during the last 24 hours, ending 8 pm on Sunday. In fact more people recovered than the new positive cases in a day. Officials said 1,019 people recovered from Covid-19, taking the total number of recoveries to 48,609. The number of tests, however, has also come down. Only 9,443 tests were conducted as against over 20,000 per day during the last few days.



The state had last reported below 1,000 cases on June 30 when 945 people had tested positive. Since then there has been a spike in new infections

Officials claim that the number is still much higher than the target of 5,600 per day as per the World Health Organisation (WHO) benchmark. The state has so far conducted 4,87,238 tests. Test results of 1,414 samples were awaited. According to the director of public health and family welfare, 16 government and 23 private laboratories conducted RT-PCR, CBNAAT and TRUENAT types of tests while there are 320 centres doing rapid antigen tests.

It was only last month that the state started revealing the number of daily tests. From 3,000-4,000 tests per day, the authorities ramped up the testing to over 20,000 per day. The media bulletin, however, provides no break-up of the types of tests.

Rs 3 cr valuables looted from house in...

Continued from page 1

Seven special teams have been formed to look into different aspects of the case and trace the couple. Police are also probing if anybody had helped the couple commit the crime.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Bhim and his wife were employed as help in the house six months ago. On the night of the theft, the thieves broke the locker and fled with the gold and cash.

A motorcycle was also missing from the house and was found abandoned about a kilometre away.

HYDERABAD BULLION RATES	
GOLD	
₹ 56,510 (10 gm)	₹ 680
SILVER	
₹ 65,400 (1kg)	₹ 400

CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹177
Without Skin	₹201
Broiler at Farm	₹122

EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	355
VIJAYAWADA	392
VISAKHAPATNAM	400
RETAIL PRICE	₹3.50

All south states except AP...

Continued from page 1

The state had clocked 5,532 cases on Sunday. Kerala reported 962 fresh cases, down from the 1,169 on Sunday, while the total infections touched 26,867 with the latest additions.

The death toll climbed to 84 with two more fatalities.

As many as 11,484 people are presently under treatment and 15,278 have recovered, including 815 discharged today, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told reporters. In the last 24 hours, 19,343 samples

have been tested. Andhra Pradesh added 7,822 fresh cases on Monday, taking the tally to 1,66,586. Today's numbers were lesser by 733 as compared to Sunday's 8,555.

While 5,786 patients had recovered and been discharged from hospitals across the state, another 63 succumbed to the pandemic in the last 24 hours, a government bulletin said.

With a total of 88,672 recoveries so far, the number of active cases now stood at 76,377 and the total fatalities increased to 1,537, the bulletin

added. Telangana reported 983 new COVID-19 cases, taking the tally of positive cases in the state to 67,660. With 11 more deaths, the coronavirus toll in the state rose to 551, a state government bulletin said on Monday, providing data as of 8 pm on August 2. The state's Saturday tally was 1,891 positive cases. Puducherry Union Territory, after reporting its highest single-day spike of 200 cases on August 2, witnessed 178 fresh cases on Monday.

Vizag land, apartments costlier than City Banjara...

Continued from page 1

Considering the demand in areas such as Anandapuram, Yendada, Pendurthi, lands abutting Vizag-Anandapuram national highway, Madhavadhara, Murali Nagar, Kurmannapalem, Mindi, Madhavadhara, Bakkannapalem, Kommadi and Paradesipalem, the revision of rates range from 5 per cent to 10 per cent and 10 per cent to 20 per cent.

The government fixed market values of lands where new layouts are developed in the GVMC limits have been revised. Rates in villages abutting roads have been revised from 6 per cent to 12 per cent in Saripalli and Rampuram areas, the revision was 15 per cent and in Bheemili mandal 13 per cent to 15 per cent. Meanwhile, CREDAI chairman P Koteswara Rao suggest-

ed postponement of revision of land value by at least one year citing the difficulties arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic and other reasons. This would help attract prospective buyers, he said.

He also expressed concern over how the further increase in rates or land, which already costs a bomb in Vizag city, will dash the dreams of middle-class families to own a home.

He also highlighted how land or apartments in some areas in Vizag city (like CBM Compound) are costlier than Banjara Hills, one of the affluent neighbourhoods in Hyderabad.

The realty sector is the second largest provider of employment after agriculture and the present crisis in this sector would have an adverse impact on employment opportunities and hundreds of daily workers would be jobless, he said.

TS alert to land given to Ambani firm on city outskirts

Continued from page 1

Officials are taking steps to ensure that banks do not seize this prime property as Reliance Infra is yet to pay land price to the government and has also failed to execute the project as per the agreement signed with the government.

After the formation of Telangana state in 2014, the state government rejected Reliance Infra's plea to either waive or give concession of nearly Rs 250 crore for purchasing land to revive the long-pending 100-storey tower project. TS Revenue and Industry officials, meanwhile, brought to the notice of the Government that the cost of the land was now over Rs 25 crore per acre at Manchirevula and Reliance Infra had already benefited by securing property there at less than Rs 7 crore per acre

in 2007. They stated that there was no need to offer further concessions to the group. Soon after bifurcation, ADAG chairman Anil Ambani had met Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad and expressed an interest to revive the project. The company did not do anything after that to take the project forward.

After waiting for over a year, the TS government in 2015 constituted a panel headed by the chief secretary to recommend a "course of action to be taken" on this project.

The committee consists of four other senior officers — the special chief secretaries for finance and municipal administration, and the secretaries for law and industries.

The committee recommended to the government to take "appropriate action" against Reliance Infra since no

efforts were being made to revive the project. The original plan was to develop the Financial District by creating world-class infrastructure to house big national and international financial institutions along with the 100-storey tower. The government is now in favour of allowing the company to develop the Financial District first and the 100-storey tower later as was sought by the company. Official sources said revenue officials were asked to take steps in advance to ensure that Reliance Infra's expensive land does not end up in legal dispute or seizure as there is huge demand for this land parcel from other investors. The government wants to allot the land parcel to others through auction and hopes to get Rs 25 crore per acre against Rs 7 crore allotted to Reliance Infra in 2007.

Deccan Hospital permission cancelled for Covid treatment

Continued from page 1

Earlier, the State government had ordered the DM&HO to conduct a detailed inquiry into the complaints lodged by a youngster who alleged that the hospital had inflated medical bills and charged Rs 40 lakh from the family of a Covid-19 patient while extending treatment.

The youngster Radhesh, from Malleswaram, also alleged that the hospital demanded that the family should clear the medical bills first failing which they would not release the body of his father, who had succumbed to the infection.

HC directs action...

Continued from page 1

Justice T Vinod Kumar also directed the SHO of Ramgopalpet police station to take immediate steps for release of the body of ex-serviceman Ram Kumar Sharma who died of Covid-19 on Sunday and hand it over to the son of the deceased for performing the last rites. The High Court later posted the matter for further hearing on September 11, 2020.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
Procurement Notice Dt-28-07-2020
 No. of works(02) Name of the works: Periodical Renewals to M&J - Bushharam Road in Mulugu District. Renovation to the SCCL Building (Proposed for Court Building) in Bhupalapally, JS Bhupalapally District in undersigned. TOTAL ECV : 54.00 Lakhs. Tenders can download the tender schedules from 04-08-2020 @ 03:00PM onwards. The last date and time of receipt of tenders for above works before 11-08-2020 upto 03:30PM. Further details can be seen at e-Procurement market place i.e. www.eprocurement.gov.in.
 M&J No.324/DCP, Agency/ADT/10228-21, Dt:03-08-2020
Sd/- Superintending Engineer,
 (RA&S) Region, Warangal

IN BRIEF

FLO launches 'There is always somebody'

FICCI FLO Hyderabad chapter organised a panel discussion on positive mental health titled 'There is always somebody'. Speaking about the programme, chairperson of FICCI FLO Usharani Manne said, "FICCI FLO is glad to launch a yearlong campaign to spread the message of positive mental health and raise awareness about mental health issues. The need of the hour is to create awareness about accepting and treating mental health problems as any other physical illness. While debunking the stigma around mental health, the campaign will encourage those undergoing it to talk about the issue, seek professional help, prioritise self-care, practice self-compassion and focus on positive thinking. FLO is supported by Roshni NGO through its helpline. Through the yearlong campaign, FLO & Roshni NGO are hopeful of initiating a meaningful and effective dialogue on positive mental health. Conversations, activities, workshops revolving around making these life-saving skills available to more and more people will be planned month on month."



Experts discuss tech for safety of coal miners

Director Operations, Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL), S Chandrashekar, has called upon the experts in the field of coal mining to utilise latest technology that is being used to increase coal production to also use to protect the coal miners who work in precarious conditions. He gave this call at a week-long online faculty conference organised by Malla Reddy Engineering College here on Monday. The conference discussed issues related with the slopes that form when the mines are dug in open cast mines that have to be stabilised so that they would not crumble putting the coal miners' lives into trouble. "Singareni is taking care of such slopes and dumps. We are the only coal company that has acquired Lidar, a remote-sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges," he said. He further said that the SCCL is also using e-modules such as Mine X, in the management of slopes and dumps. He said that the Singareni also uses computer mapping to assist the miners in how to proceed with the mining process without risking their lives.

Young hands lend help amid Covid pandemic

Amid all the terrible things happening during the pandemic, small acts of kindness are a ray of hope for many. Extending a helping hand during these troubled times, one hundred and ninety students from the CHIREC International School in Hyderabad have crowd funded Akshaya Patra Foundation's Covid-19 Relief Efforts to the tune of Rs 1.05 crores through a fundraising campaign through Fueladream.com. These students are in the 13-17 age group across grades IX and XII. The funds collected through this campaign will be used to support the feeding program that Akshaya Patra has in Hyderabad. Commenting about the crowd funding, Sundeeep Talwar, CMO, Akshaya Patra said, "We are overwhelmed with the support we have received from the students and management of CHIREC International School. This crowd funding campaign is a testament to Millennials and Gen Z empathizing with the less privileged. This endorses our campaign that 'no individual should go hungry'. We are humbled that these students have come forward and crowd funded Akshaya Patra which exists to serve the society."

Man booked for cheating woman

The RGIA police on Sunday, arrested a man who had cheated a woman by promising to marry her. The arrested person has been identified as Raj Kumar, a photographer by profession residing at Shamshabad. The accused befriended the victim through Facebook. Later they became close friends after which Kumar proposed marriage and she agreed. Kumar then took the victim to his house and had a sexual relationship. However, recently, he married another woman. When the victim learnt about it, she confronted him after which Kumar started avoiding her. Based on a complaint from the victim, the RGIA police booked a case and subsequently arrested Raj Kumar.

'Quality education is top priority'

In a bid to provide students a better place to study and enhance their knowledge, Anurag University, established in an expansive 55 acre campus, was inaugurated on Monday. The inauguration event saw many prominent people as chief guests, including Minister for Education Sabitha Indra Reddy, Special Chief Secretary for Education Chitra Ramachandran IAS and others. The event was also attended by Chancellor Dr UB Desai, Vice-Chancellor Dr S Ramachandram in the presence of chairman and MLC Dr Palla Rajeshwar Reddy at Ghatkesar. The Chief Minister, K Chandrashekar Rao sent a congratulatory message to the staff of the University, and encouraged them to provide quality education to the stu-

Industrial estates reel due to Covid as workers keep away

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Coronavirus threat looms large on industrial estates across the state, including the ones at Charlapalli, Jeedimetla and Bala Nagar, affecting the industrial production.

Because of the Covid-19, many employees, workers and industrialists are contracting the virus. At many places, workers are apprehensive of reporting for work in industries.

In 156 industrial estates, there are 62,000 micro, small-scale and medium-scale unit employing over 12-lakh workers and employees.

Many industrial units remained closed during lockdown period, the industries were allowed rather late to resume production as part of unlocking the lockdown. The industrial production is encouraging. Moreover, the virus has spread its tentacles to the industrial estates even as the units have adopted precautions for keeping the virus at bay.

Some industrialists in Charlapalli industrial estate contracted the virus.



Subsequently, the workers at industrial estates in Jeedimetla, Gandhi Nagar and Balanagar tested positive for the virus.

Over 300 industrial workers were down with the virus across the state, it is learnt.

Several employees are contracting the virus even due to the spread in the residences of industrial workers. Some others are acquiring the virus through family members.

The migrant workers have left to their native places and did not return so far. Besides, the workers in industrial estates are reeling under the impact of the virus. Some others are

reporting for work to gauge the situation and leaving the office. As a result, the industrial production has come down.

Meanwhile, some of the industrial workers are returning to their native places. Several industrialists have closed their units.

The market personnel are also not actively campaigning sales and not procuring raw materials and orders. They are dependent mostly on telephones for conducting sales campaign.

An industrialist Swamy went on record stating that enough sales are not being generated as

More than 300 employees in the industrial estates were down with the virus across the state. Migrant workers anyhow left to their natives



Pvt hospitals ignore rules for disposing Covid-related waste

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A private hospital on the busy Banjara Hills road is accused of carelessly disposing Coronavirus-related biomedical waste along with other domestic waste increasing the risk of contracting the virus in the locality.

Meanwhile, the police department has served notices to the hospital for causing obstruction to movement of the traffic on the road since the hospital management failed to provide parking facility for visitors in the cellar.

Similarly, the HMWSSB also served a notice to the hospital for overflow of the drain near the hospital.

Citizens have been demanding the medical and health department to focus on the disposal of the Covid-19 waste along with domestic waste as it is very hazardous.

The Coronavirus-related biomedical waste includes masks, gloves, clothes, syringes, cotton, personal protection equipment, medicines covers and others. The quantity of the waste is increasing in proportion due to the increase in Coronavirus patients.

According to reports, 50 of the total 300 workers deployed in common bio-medical waste

A private hospital is accused of disposing virus-related waste along with other domestic waste

treatment centres are reported to have tested positive for the virus. Therefore, others have been demanding better health cover, medical facilities for them on the lines of the medical and health employees.

In main cities across the state, there are 12 government hospitals, 128 quarantine centres, 7 sample collection centres and 10 laboratories. The medical waste is being collected from them daily.

The waste should be sent to the common bio-medical waste treatment plants in districts and should be reduced ash there. Later, the ash should be sent to hazardous waste treatment plant at Dundigal.

The waste should be processed there and should be buried deep under the earth to prevent Coronavirus reaching back into atmosphere.

Some private hospitals have not been following the guidelines posing threat to lives of the people.

Telangana's initiative to support start-ups draws good response

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rejj.HydStartups, an initiative by the Telangana State Innovation Cell (TSIC) and T-Incubators & Enablers to support start-ups in reimagining and repositioning their business model post-Covid-19 pandemic, has received more than 300 applications and 100 start-ups have been selected to be part of the mentoring programme, it was announced on Monday.

Rejj.HydStartups is spread out in three-weeks of mentoring to help start-ups connect with investors or gain corporate market access, will see a three-pronged approach - understanding the concerns of

the start-up with a completion of leg work assigned by the mentor, understanding the change of strategy, and a revised pitch.

The programme will culminate in a massive pitch day event where the start-ups will be pitching for equity funding, collateral-free debt funding, or corporate market access.

The start-ups selected were from domains like life-sciences, fintech, manufacturing, agriculture, FMCG, emerging technology.

A webinar involving ecosystem catalysts, was organised to understand the impact of the pandemic on the start-ups and expectations from the founders to become resilient. "Hyderabad will be standing

out for its city as a whole approach through this important initiative Rejj.HydStartups to support the start-ups in coming weeks to become resilient post-pandemic. Even the applications that we received was a truly relevant mixture of industry sectors that require immediate attention," said Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Information Technology, Telangana government.

The webinar also saw a panel discussion involving Ravi Narayan, CEO of T-Hub & CIO of TSIC, Sridhar Pinnareddy, Founder Chairman of CtrlS Datacenters, currently the President of TIE Hyderabad, Sateesh Andra, Managing Director of Endiya Partners, an established VC and investor. Panel was moderated by Deepanwita Chattopadhyay, CEO of IKP Knowledge Park.

Jewellery stolen from Covid body

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The police booked a case of theft on Sunday, after the jewellery of a woman who died due to Covid-19 was allegedly stolen from the hospital.

A woman, 75, was admitted to the hospital on July 22 following symptoms of Covid-19. She died three days later. The police received a complaint from the victim's son after family found that the jewellery was not handed over to them. The hospital staff, when questioned by the police, claim that they handed over all her belongings to the family before starting the treatment.

Unable to cope with online classes, student commits suicide

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 17-year-old student committed suicide by hanging himself at his residence in Bowenpally on Sunday. Police suspect that the boy was depressed, leading him to take the extreme step.

The victim was identified as Yashwanth, an Inter II year student at the government college in Marredpally. Yashwanth was facing trouble in learning online. Unable to cope up with the studies, he slipped into depression. On Sunday, he was found hanging in his room.

A suicide note, was recovered from the room, in which he mentioned how hard the online classes were for him and his decision to end his life.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Health Minister Eatala Rajender has said that all methods of treatment available across the globe to treat Covid-19 would be introduced in government hospitals across Telangana. He advocated uniform method of treating the virus in the state.

He was addressing superintendents of Government hospitals and doctors treating Covid patients through video conference held here at Gandhi Hospital on Monday.

Eatala said the purpose of the video conference is to share the treatment methods being implemented in other countries. A clear picture emerged on Covid treatment, Eatala said and asked all doctors to follow the protocol.

The Chief Minister is ready to spend any amount of money to drive away the virus from the state, he said. The Minister asked the doctors not to turn away a single patient. They should be given treatment and their condition should be stabilised before referring to other hospitals.



Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar said that the officials and Ministers are reviewing the Coronavirus situation on the directions of the CM. There is a fixed protocol of treatment for various diseases, but it is not the case with Coronavirus. Going by the experience, the sooner the treatment is started the better is the recovery rate. Delay in providing treatment is leading to fatalities.

Many people die out of fear rather than the virus, he said exhorting the doctors to become psychologists, if necessary, in counselling the patients.

Dr Vijay Yeldandi said that suggested doctors to infuse confidence among the patients. The treatment should begin early to prevent deaths.

Latest reports indicate that the virus can cause heart ailments too. Researches indicate that many young men died due to blood clots in blood vessels. The anti-viral drugs would be of no use. The CT scan is also of no use. Precautions are necessary since it is difficult to save the life of the patient who is put on the ventilator.

Symptomatic people are undergoing CT scan as it would not be of no use to them, he said.

The ICMR has already given its guidelines, but there are many doubts on use of hydroxychloroquine. The patient should be treated according to symptoms. If the rate of respiration is more than 24 and oxygen saturation level is less than 92 the patient should be put on oxygen besides giving steroids to the patient.

Police close 31 history sheets

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As many as 31 rowdy sheeters began new chapters of their lives in different police stations in the city. The fresh beginnings were made after the police conducted a massive exercise spanning over three months, verifying whether these 31 rowdy sheeters were active in the field of crime and if not, whether their names could be removed from the history sheets.

"After three months of massive exercise, we identified persons who showed good conduct and were not indulging in criminal activities. We are giving them an opportunity to live a decent life along with their families like any other citizen," City Police



Commissioner Anjani Kumar said during a function organised here on Monday to announce the removal of the

Similar exercise will be taken up by the police in all zones of the city

31 names from the history sheets of various police stations. Stating that the City Police were confident that the persons whose sheets were closed would live up to expectations, the Commissioner said the 31 persons would have to work hard and look after their families.

"A similar exercise will be taken up by the police in all zones of city," he said, adding that at the same time, stringent action would be initiated against antisocial elements without discrimination.

Citizens celebrate Raksha Bandhan amid Covid

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Raksha Bandhan was celebrated in both the Telugu states on Monday amid the Covid-19 pandemic. People were seen taking precautions while celebrating the festival, which signifies the bond between sisters and brothers.

Highlighting the importance of coronavirus precautions, Telangana Congress MLA Danasari Anasuya gifted a mask and sanitiser to party MP A Revanth Reddy after tying rakhi on his hand. "Happy Rakshna Bandhan to my brother MP Revanth Reddy. Gifted him a mask and sanitiser with rakhi," she tweeted.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's daughter and former Telangana



Rashtra Samithi (TRS) MP K Kavitha tied a traditional rakhi on brother and Cabinet Minister KT Rama Rao's hand. The siblings were seen wearing masks during the celebration at Pragati Bhavan, the

Chief Minister's official residence. Kavitha applied 'tilak' on the foreheads of his brother and sister-in-law and after tying rakhi touched his brother's feet. He gave his blessings. "The sibling bond is the

People were seen taking precautions while celebrating the festival, which signifies the bond between sisters and brothers

most beautiful of all. Wishing you all a very happy Raksha Bandhan," Kavitha tweeted.

Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy visited his two sisters in Hyderabad on the occasion. "This festival

gives every brother and sister countless memories to cherish forever," he said.

Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan called for celebrating Raksha Bandhan in the true spirit of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' mission.

"Celebrate the festival in safe and secure environments by staying at home. Let us all take a vow on this auspicious occasion to follow the precautionary guidelines to defeat Covid-19," the Governor said.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao also greeted people on the occasion. He said the festival symbolised the thread of love and affection between brothers and sisters. "It also denotes the commitment to secure honour and respect for women," he said.

FESTIVE ATMOSPHERE



The Pragathi Bhavan wore a festive atmosphere on Monday where the Chief Minister's sisters Vinodamma, Sakalamma, Lalithamma and Laxmibai visited him and tied Rakhi. The Chief Minister's wife Shobha also participated in the celebrations. Former MP K Kavitha also visited Pragathi Bhavan and tied Rakhi to her brother and Minister KT Rama Rao as well as Santosh Kumar. On the occasion, Minister KT Rama Rao's daughter Alekhya tied Rakhi to her brother Himanshu in the presence of their mother Shailima



99% recovery rate in TS: KTR

PNS ■ SIRCILLA

Municipal Administration and IT Minister KT Rama Rao called upon the TRS workers and elected people's representatives to come forward to donate plasma. He was addressing media after inaugurating a Covid-19 ward, five special ambulances at the Government Hospital here and after laying the foundation stone for the Panchayat Raj Executive Engineer and DEE office complexes. He also inaugurated an isolation ward at the Agriculture Polytechnic College at Sardapur near here.

He said that the government would increase the number of Corona tests and asked the people not to be disheartened in case if they tested positive for the virus. The recovery rate in Telangana is 99 per cent and wished that it reach 100 per cent.

Even in Corona period, the state government is implementing welfare and development programmes. He asked the Ministers to sensitise people on Coronavirus. However, some political outfits are playing petty politics which is not desirable, he said.

During the current Corona period, special measures are being



IT Minister KT Rama Rao flagging off the Ambulances in Sircilla on Monday

initiated to rein in the number of cases. All arrangements have been made at the Government Hospital here in this regard. He promised to release Rs 2.28 crore to the hospital on Tuesday under the CSR. He offered to contribute Rs 20 lakh to the hospital. He said a 32-bed isolation ward has been set up at the agriculture college.

He said that the 2BHK houses at Mandepalli would be used as isolation centres. He asked the people not to treat those who tested positive for the virus as outcasts. He pointed out that even Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Karnataka Chief Minister BS

Yedyurappa tested positive for the virus. Nobody is above Coronavirus, he said.

Home Minister Mohmood Ali, veteran congress leader V Hanumantha Rao recovered from the virus. He said he was moded by the aged couple committing suicide because of the family members contracted the virus.

Supply of ventilators would be increased in tune with the demand. He said that the government would hire MBBS doctors with a higher pay. The government has been trying everything to rein in the virus and advised media not to resort to unnecessary

KTR comes to the rescue of woman

SIRCILLA: IT Minister KT Rama Rao on Monday directed the doctors at the Government hospital to provide better treatment to a Pochaiah, a kidney patient, who got admitted to the hospital due to fever. During KTR's visit to the hospital, Pochaiah's sister displayed a placard which reads "Save my brother". Noticing this, the Minister spoke to the woman and directed the officials concerned to provide better treatment to the patient. She claimed that all the doctors were busy in the hospital and giving no attention to her brother. Pochaiah of Vavilala of Vemulavada mandal has been admitted to the government hospital here. His sister attending on him felt bad as doctors at the hospital pay no attention to the health needs of a kidney patient.

criticism of the government.

He wanted it to highlight the positive stories. He sought the support from the Opposition parties. There is no treatment for the virus, but the prevention is the only way. Reimposing the lockdown would not solve the problems, he said.

Do not discriminate against Covid patients, says Harish

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As most private hospitals are making the most of pandemic situation, here comes a centre offering the most affordable corona care purely with the motto of service and humanitarian charging just Rs 28,000 to Rs 35,000 for 7-days package inclusive of meals, medication, basic kit, treatment and stay.

JITO Hyderabad Chapter has turned Hotel Manasarovar The Fern at Chiraan Fort Club in Begumpet into JITO Covid Care Center, offering services for isolation and treatment for asymptomatic and mild Covid-19 patients. The JITO Corona Care Centre is permitted and approved by the Telangana State Health department. The facility is being set up on the humanitarian ground in association with Mahavir Hospital & Research Center and will commence its operations from 5 August.

Finance Minister T Harish Rao formally inaugurated the JITO-CCC. He was accompanied by

MP K Prabhakar Reddy and MLA Kanthi Kumar. Addressing the gathering,



Finance Minister Harish Rao during the launch of JITO Covid Care Center

Harish Rao told doctors at JITO-Corona Care Center to handle Corona patients with patience and humanity. Such a situation is missing in many hospitals currently, he added.

Responding to the request made by Motilal Bhalgat, chairman of Mahavir Hospital & Research Center to make Mahavir Hospital a Freehold so that they could construct a new building and expand, Harish Rao gave them an assurance to organise their meeting with Chief Minister and pursue the matter.

JITO a global body which works with a motto Seva, Knowledge and Economic

Empowerment has inaugurated 15 such Corona Care Centers across the country. The 16th was inaugurated on Monday. JITO plans to set up more such centres across the country. Harish, who inaugurated the 16th Center in India described it as a need of the hour. Society needs more such centres. "Our CM tells us to talk less and work more. The more we talk, the patients are more confused. Corona is invisible. So contracting Corona or not is not in our hands. The victims must not be discriminated. Doctors and nurses should handle patients with care," he said.

CPI slams govt for lack of facilities in state-run hospitals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

CPI senior leader Dr K Narayana on Monday alleged that Corona patients fled RIMS due to lack of facilities in government hospitals. "It is heartening to note that patients are scared and are running away from Government Hospitals due to poor infrastructural and treatment facilities. The Adilabad incident is glaring example for this and shows the bankrupt attitude of Telangana Government in extending minimum required facilities. Because of government's failure, several incidents of patients or relatives of patients attacking doctors are being reported," he alleged.

This is unfortunate and utter failure on part of Telangana Government to provide required infrastructure and recruitment of doctors in Government Hospitals," he said. There is acute shortage of medical professionals at RIMS. It is directly impacting patient services. While the State government has given administrative sanction to recruit doctors, the disgruntled faculty at RIMS is 'impeding' the recruitment process, he alleged.

He said that the corporate hospitals are taking advantage of miserable situation in Government hospitals and exploiting the patients with lakhs of bills.

Raja Singh unhappy over new BJP state committee

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP MLA from Goshamahal Constituency T Raja Singh on Monday expressed his unhappiness over the new state committee announced by the party state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar. The MLA was upset as there was no leader in the committee from Goshamahal constituency.

He asked Bandi Sanjay to stop groupism and focus to strengthen the party in the state. However, the MLA exuded confidence that the party will grow under Bandi Sanjay leadership. However, according to sources, leaders who joined the party in recent years succeeded in securing a place in the committee.

There were rumours that the BJP high command has side lined Raja Singh. However, his victory in the Assembly elections proved that wrong. Raja Singh expressed his unhappiness to Bandi Sanjay through WhatsApp message. In his message, Raja Singh said, "Being



the floor leader of BJP in Assembly and lone MLA in entire Telangana state, my opinion was not even taken in forming the state team. I have been sidelined in BJP once again. Did the committee not find any capable person from my Goshamahal constituency to be in the new team? My kaaryakartas worked so hard to make me win 2 times on BJP flag. I don't have even access to select even division president in my Goshamahal constituency. I was and I am still very confident that under your leadership there would be change in guards which will benefit BJP in entire state but nothing is visible. Let's work hard and stop groupism to grow BJP in 'Telangana'.

CS launches e-office in 8 more departments

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar on Monday launched e-office in another 8 Secretariat Departments and 2 Head of Departments at BRKR Bhavan. The Chief Secretary said that as per the directions of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, the government has initiated the introduction of e-office to improve efficiency, consistency and effectiveness of government responses. He further said that e-office enables to establish transparency, accountability and reduce delays. It provides ability to work from anywhere and



Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar launching the e-office services at BRKR Bhavan in Hyderabad on Monday

improves the efficiency of administration. The Chief Secretary

and Factories, BC Welfare, SC Development Department, Minority Welfare, Tribal Welfare and Home in Secretariat and Pollution Control Board, Commissioner of Agriculture in HoDs.

Somesh Kumar informed that 15 departments in Secretariat are implementing e-office system. He directed the officials to complete e-office implementation in seven days in remaining departments, without further delay. Rani Kumudini, Spl Chief Secretary, LET&E, Jayesh Ranjan, Prl Secy, ITE&C, Ravi Gupta, Prl Secy, Home and others were present.

Stopped from entering village, Coronavirus patient ends life

PNS ■ MEDAK

In spite of sensitising people against getting cruel towards Covid-patients, there seems to be no let up in ill-treating those who tested positive for virus in villages. Peeved at the attitude of the villagers, a hospital worker took the extreme step of committing suicide at his home. His body was found hanging in Kuchanpalli village of Medak district.

The deceased was identified as a worker in government hospital at Narsapur and resident of Kuchanpalli in Havelighanpur mandal of the district. As he became

symptomatic for the virus, he got himself tested in Government Hospital in Kamareddy. The result was that he tested positive for the virus.

Doctors advised him to receive treatment under home isolation conditions.

As he returned to Kuchanpalli to remain in isolation, villagers, who got a scent of he tested positive for the virus, asked him to leave the village.

The disturbed hospital worker committed suicide by hanging himself. His relatives blamed the villagers for the youth taking the extreme step.

Gudur donates plasma at Apollo

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee Treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy on Monday came to the rescue of a Corona patient, whose condition was stated to be serious, by donating plasma. He donated plasma in Apollo Hospital. It may be recalled that Guduru, who successfully recovered from Coronavirus after undergoing treatment at Apollo Hospital, floated an association of plasma donors in the state in the name of Telangana Plasma Donors' Association (TPDA) to create awareness among people to donate their plasma to save Covid-19 patients.

Governor showers praises on Plasma donors

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan on Monday celebrated the Raksha Bandhan festival in a unique way with the plasma donors at the Raj Bhavan. Celebrating Raksha Bandhan in a rare departing from the traditional way, she felicitated the plasma donors with the rakhis, sweets and shawls and hailed them as the saviours of lives.

The celebration, organised at the iconic Darbar Hall at the Raj Bhavan, witnessed the participation of 13 plasma donors, who shared their experiences of fighting Covid-19 and how they got motivation to donate plasma to save other patients with the Governor.

Listening to each of their experiences, the Governor showered heaps of praises on them for their noble gesture in plasma donation not only once but multiple times to save lives of other patients and lauded their efforts



Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan felicitating the plasma donors in Hyderabad on Monday

in motivating and coordinating others too in donating plasma.

The Governor specially appreciated B Nitin Kumar, an IITian from Mumbai, who donated plasma as many as four times and other donors S Siva Pratap, Syed Mustaf Irfan, Umer Farooque, Ennamsetty Akhil and Dr. Roopa Darshini, who all have donated the plasma twice.

The Governor stated that all the

plasma donors have set a great example for others to emulate and added that through their visit the Raj Bhavan has become more divine. Pointing out that all of the plasma donors have got successfully treated at the Gandhi Hospital, Dr Soundararajan appreciated the services rendered by the Government Hospitals and appealed the people to have faith in the government hospitals

The Rakhi celebration, organised at the iconic Darbar Hall at the Raj Bhavan, witnessed the participation of 13 plasma donors

and doctors who are better equipped and experienced in treating the Covid-19 treatment in an exemplary manner.

"People without an iota of hesitation can approach the nearest available Government Hospital to get treated, as they have treated all the Covid-19 recovered patients and plasma donors successfully at government hospitals. I appreciate the services of the government hospitals and doctors for their exemplary and humanitarian services. I salute all the frontline warriors like doctors, nurses, medical

staff, police, sanitation workers and journalists for their commitment and selfless services during these challenging times," the Governor said.

She also appealed to the private hospitals to treat those patients, who are approaching them, at reasonable and affordable rates with humanitarian approach, and not to overcharge and burden the patients and their families.

Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan has called for the intensified efforts in setting up of plasma bank to effectively coordinate between the needy and the donors and save more lives.

"People need not get panic. If symptoms are there, get tested. If found positive for Covid-19, go to the government hospitals and get treated at the earliest with full confidence. Recover and if found having enough antibodies, donate plasma to save other lives," the Governor exhorted the people.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
DISTRICT COLLECTOR, WARGAL [RURAL]
FORM-C
NOTIFICATION
(Under Section 11 of the Act, where 10A Exemption is given) [See rule 6/12]
Wargal (Rural) District Gazetteed No. 34/WGL(R)2020
Dated: 31-07-2020
Collector, Wargal (Rural), Proc No. G/2212/2017
Dated: 30-07-2020

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana Collector, Wargal (Rural) that a total Extent of [19.06] acres, Patta land is required in the Muthojpet and Hukalappally villages of Narsampet Mandal of Wargal (Rural) District for public purpose. The Executive Engineer, I&CDDO JCR DLIS Division2, KC Colony Chintagattu Wargal has filed the requisition for Excavation of land to an Extent of [19.06] acres for Excavation of 13R-Distributary of Left Main Canal from K.M.0.000 to 3.100 [T.E] of Rangiah and Eraiah Cheruvu to create irrigation potential.

Therefore it is notified that for the above said project in Muthojpet and Hukalappally villages of Narsampet Mandal Wargal (Rural) District for public purpose namely for excavations of 13R-Distributary of Left Main Canal of Package-V From K.M. 0.000 to 3.100 [T.E], of Rangiah and EraiahCheruvu.

Therefore it is notified that for the above said project in the village of Muthojpet and Hukalappally of Narsampet Mandal Wargal (Rural) District land measuring, more or less [19.06] acres of standard measurements, whose details description is as following is proposed for acquisition.

Schedule
Village:MuthojpetandHukalappally Mandal:Narsampet District:Wargal(Rural) K.M.0.000 to 3.100 T.E

Sl. No	Sy. No.	Type of land	Type of Acquisition	Area-Sq. Feet	Name of the Pattaوار and Occupant	Details of Trees Statures etc. if any
Muthojpet village of Narsampet Mandal						
1	881	Dry	Patta	0.08	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Mattu, Sri Rajya	--
Nallabally village of Narsampet Mandal						
1	1520a	Dry	Patta	0.11	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Bala, Sri Sanyu	--
2	1520a	Dry	Patta	0.26	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Raju, W/o Sanyu	--
3	1520a	Dry	Patta	0.13	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Raju, Sri Gohu	--
4	1520a	Dry	Patta	0.04	Pattadar and Occupant Banethi Sundar Sri Manjya	--
5	1520a	Dry	Patta	0.18	Pattadar and Occupant Banethi Naresimha Sri Manjya	--
6	15111	Dry	Patta	0.06	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Kanna Sri Enjya	--
7	15111a	Dry	Patta	0.07	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Rajya Sri Enjya	--
8	15111a	Dry	Patta	0.38	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Sri Sri Sanyu	--
9	1520	Dry	Patta	0.08	Pattadar and Occupant Sri Sri Sri Sanyu	--
10	10203	Dry	Patta	0.01	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Keet, W/o Nagya	--
11	102	--	--	0.03	Road	--
12	10202	Dry	Patta	0.37	Pattadar and Occupant Gannasayappa, W/o Padi	--
13	1520a	Dry	Patta	0.04	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Rajya, Sri Enjya	--
14	1520c	Dry	Patta	0.19	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Pusamma, W/o Sanyu	Telu trees
15	152	Dry	Patta	0.06	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Mohan, Sri Sanyu	Openwell
16	152	Dry	Patta	0.04	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Reddy, Sri Devudu	--
17	10305	Dry	Patta	0.01	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Malla, Sri Tanya	--
18	10303	Dry	Patta	0.12	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Laxman, Sri Laku	--
19	103	Dry	Patta	0.09	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Ramesh, Sri Laku	--
20	10303	Dry	Patta	0.26	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Devi, W/o Kanna	--
21	10305	Dry	Patta	0.01	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Kanna, Sri Sanyu	--
22	1520	Dry	Patta	0.37	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Rajya, Sri Sanyu	--
23	1520	Dry	Patta	0.30	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Kanna, Sri Gohu	--
24	103	Dry	Patta	1.03	Pattadar and Occupant Gannasayappa, W/o Sanyu	--
25	108	Dry	Patta	1.21	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Shani, W/o Enjya	--
26	108	Dry	Patta	0.21	Pattadar and Occupant Gannasayappa, W/o Sanyu	--
27	152021	Dry	Patta	0.21	Pattadar and Occupant Gannasayappa, Sri Rajyal	--
28	158	Dry	Patta	0.17	Pattadar and Occupant Gannasayappa, Sri Sanyu	--
29	1520a11	Dry	Patta	0.22	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Kanna, W/o Ramesh	--
30	158	Dry	Patta	0.37	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Ramesh, Sri Sanyu	Borewell
31	158	Dry	Patta	0.33	Pattadar and Occupant Boda Enjya, Sri Manjya	--
32	152021	Dry	Patta	0.06	Pattadar and Occupant Bhalay Chandru, Sri Bheemayya	--
33	108	Dry	Patta	0.06	Pattadar and Occupant Bhalay Kanna, Sri Bheemayya	--
34	158110	Dry	Patta	0.17	Pattadar and Occupant Bhalay Bhalay, Sri Bheemayya	--
35	158114	Dry	Patta	0.12	Pattadar and Occupant Muralidharan, Sri Chandru	--
36	158	Dry	Patta	0.33	Pattadar and Occupant Muralidharan, Sri Chandru	--
37	1586	Dry	Patta	0.36	Pattadar and Occupant Mada Sanyu, Sri Harjya	--
38	158114	Dry	Patta	0.16	Pattadar and Occupant Bhalay Laxman, Sri Parjya	--
39	158114	Dry	Patta	0.36	Pattadar and Occupant Bhalay Bala, Sri Parjya	--
40	158112	Dry	Patta	0.13	Pattadar and Occupant Mada Sanyu, Sri Phalaya	--
41	158112	Dry	Patta	0.05	Pattadar and Occupant Muralidharan, Sri Chandru	--
42	158114	Dry	Patta	0.13	Pattadar and Occupant Muralidharan, Sri Chandru	--
43	158114	--	--		SPP Canal	--
44	158114	Dry	Patta	0.33	Pattadar and Occupant Mada Rama, Sri Sanyu	--
45	158114	Dry	Patta	0.13	Pattadar and Occupant Mada Sambath, Sri Narsanyu	--
46	158102	Dry	Patta	0.11	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Ravi, Sri Narsanyu	--
47	15811	Dry	Patta	0.17	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Shani, Sri Raju	--
48	158118	Dry	Patta	0.32	Pattadar and Occupant B. Dhanu Pruthya, Sri Bala	--
49	158103	Dry	Patta	0.39	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Bheema, Sri Sanyu	--
50	158101	Dry	Patta	0.15	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Anand, Sri Danyu	--
51	158111	Dry	Patta	0.39	Pattadar and Occupant Desoeth Ganga, Sri Chandru	--
				Total	19.38	--
				Grand Total	19.06	--

This Notification is made under the provisions of Section-11(1) of Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act No.33/2013), as amended by the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Telangana Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No. 21 of 2017) and all orders and directions issued thereunder. A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the District Collector, Wargal (Rural) and Land Acquisition Officer/Revenue Divisional Officer, Narsampet on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana / Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to authorize Revenue Divisional Officer, Narsampet and his staff / workers to enter on and survey land, the levels of any land dry or base in to the sub soil and do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in Section-12 of the said Act.

(Under Section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e. sale/purchase etc. or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector, Wargal (Rural). Objections to the acquisition, if any, and claims from all the persons interested / affected for settlement by negotiation of the compensation, may be filed by the person interested in the land with in 60 (sixty) days from the date of publication of this notification as provided under section 15 of the Act, before District Collector, Wargal (Rural) or Land Acquisition Officer & Revenue Divisional Officer, Narsampet.

Land Acquisition Officer/cum-Additional District Collector, Wargal (Rural) / Revenue Divisional Officer, Narsampet. Manager (Rural) / District Collector, Wargal (Rural) / DIPP R. O. No.448/LA/PP/And/Pub/2020-21

SHORT READS



Rajya Sabha member Amar Singh cremated in Delhi

NEW DELHI: Rajya Sabha member Amar Singh was cremated at the Chhatrapur crematorium here in the presence of family members and relatives on Monday, two days after he died in a Singapore hospital. The last rites took place around 11:30 am. His two daughters consigned his mortal remains to flames. Due to COVID-19 protocols, Singh's last rites were performed in the presence of a limited number of people, including actor-turned-politician Jaya Prada, who considered him her 'godfather'. Earlier in the day, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP Rajya Sabha member Jyotiraditya Scindia, and Jaya Prada were among the first ones to pay floral tributes to the former Samajwadi Party leader at his Chhatrapur farmhouse.

Bihar SP quarantined, Cong's Nirupam attacks BMC, Mumbai cops

MUMBAI: Congress leader Sanjay Nirupam on Monday lashed out at the BMC and Mumbai police for placing a senior Bihar police officer who had come to probe the Sushant Singh Rajput death case in quarantine and asked whether the two agencies had gone "mad". Patna City SP Vinay Tiwari was quarantined by the BMC till August 15 at the State Reserve Police Force camp in Goregaon after he arrived in the metropolis on Sunday. "Looks like the BMC and Mumbai Police have gone mad. They have quarantined till August 15 IPS officer Tiwari who arrived here to probe the Sushant Singh suicide case. How will the probe go on? The chief minister must intervene immediately," Nirupam, a former city Congress chief, said in a tweet in Hindi.

Covid: MP CM's 9th day test positive, hosp stay continues

BHOPAL: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will undergo further hospitalisation after a COVID-19 test conducted on the 9th day returned positive, health officials and a state minister said on Monday. Chouhan has been in Chirayu Medical College and Hospital in Bhopal since July 25 undergoing treatment for COVID-19. A health bulletin from Chirayu Hospital said, "CM's RT-PCR test for SARS-Cov-2 on 9th day was positive. His medical parameters are normal." MP Home Minister Narottam Mishra confirmed the development to reporters and said the CM will stay in hospital for now, adding that the state cabinet meeting scheduled for Tuesday would be a virtual one.

FOR AUG 5 CEREMONY

Special dress with 9 gems with golden thread for Ram Lalla

PNS ■ AYODHYA

For the past three and a half decades, brothers Shankarlal and Bhagwatlal 'Pahaadhi' have been stitching clothes for Ram Lalla in Ayodhya. Their dedication will be manifest in the splendid dress they have meticulously crafted for the deity to wear on August 5, during the bhoomi puja ceremony of the Ram temple.

Operating from their shop named after their late father Babulal and located in the city's Badhi Kutiya area, the brothers stitch clothes for only deities and seers.

"My father late Babulal started stitching the clothes of Ram Lalla in 1985. He used to carry our sewing machine to the Ramjanmabhoomi and stitch the clothes with me and my elder brother in tow," Shankarlal, 54, told PTI on



Monday. "The three of us used to make the clothes of Lord Ram. The dresses were made and stitched virtually in front of the deity. Since then, our work is continuing," he said. Shankarlal said that for Wednesday, the day of bhoomi puja to mark the beginning of the construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya, two sets of dresses have been made -- one is green, while the other is orange. "The clothes are made using soft material such as 'makhamal' (velvet). After all, they are for Ram Lalla who is a child. The green dress has been made keeping in mind the day-specific colour, while orange is considered auspicious," he said.

On Wednesday, the green dress will be worn first and the orange one later, Shankarlal said.

The special dress for the ceremony has nine gems stitched in golden thread. "There is grandeur in the clothes of the Lord as well," he said.

On Sunday, the dresses were handed over by the tailors, said Acharya Satyendra Das, the chief priest of the Ram temple.

"A day-specific colour scheme is followed for the dresses worn by Lord Ram. On Monday the dress is white, on Tuesday it is red, while on Wednesday it is the turn of the green dress for the Lord," Shankarlal said.

On Thursdays the idol is dressed in yellow, Fridays are for cream-coloured dresses, on Saturdays it is the turn of blue clothes while on Sundays pink clothes adorn the deity.

Digvijaya requests PM to defer temple 'bhoomi puja'

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh has requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to defer the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday, saying the occasion is inauspicious.

The 'bhoomi puja' of the Ram temple is scheduled to be held on Wednesday at Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh and is expected to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a series of tweets on Monday, Singh said, "I again request Modiji postpone the ground-breaking ceremony of the Ram temple on August 5. After a struggle of hundreds of years, the occasion for the construction of the temple has come. Don't allow your arrogance create obstruction in the way." Jagat Guru Swami Swaroopanandji Maharaj



Digvijaya Singh

(Shankaracharya of Dwarka Peeth) had said that August 5 was an inauspicious muhurat for the ground-breaking ceremony of Ram temple. For the convenience of Modiji this inauspicious muhurat was fixed," the Rajya Sabha member claimed in a tweet in Hindi.

"This means that Modiji is above the Hindu beliefs of thousands of years. Is this Hindutava?" the former chief minister of Madhya Pradesh said in another tweet.

He also claimed that some leaders tested positive for coronavirus as they ignored the tenets of the Sanatan Dharma.

Result of overlooking Sanatan Dharma's tenets- 1 All the priests of Ram temple tested coronavirus positive 2 Uttar Pradesh Minister Kamla Rani Varun died of coronavirus

3 UP BJP chief tested positive, admitted to hospital 4 Union Home Minister Amit Shah tested coronavirus positive 5 MP chief minister and state BJP president tested positive 6 Karnataka BJP chief minister tested positive, admitted in hospital, Singh tweeted.

"Modiji, how many more people you want to send to hospital by laying the foundation stone of the Ram temple. Yogiji (Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister) advice Modi. In your presence, the tenets of Sanatan Dharma are being broken? What is compelling you to allow all this to happen?" he sought to know in another tweet.

Thackeray unlikely to attend Ram temple 'bhoomi puja'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is unlikely to visit Ayodhya for the bhoomi puja for Ram temple construction there on August 5 owing to the serious COVID-19 situation in the Uttar Pradesh town, senior Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut indicated on Monday.

"It is important that the PM is going. The chief minister (Thackeray) can go there anytime, Raut told reporters here while extending good wishes for the ceremony.

The 'bhoomi puja' of the Ram temple is scheduled to be held on Wednesday at Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh and is expected to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Raut reiterated the Shiv Senas contribution in the Ram temple construction campaign, and said the party has given Rs



Raut reiterated the Shiv Senas contribution in the Ram temple construction campaign, and said the party has given Rs one crore for the purpose of building the temple.

one crore for the purpose of building the temple.

"The outbreak of COVID-19 in Ayodhya and surrounding areas is a matter of concern...Uttar Pradesh's minister Kamal Rani (Varun) lost life (due to the disease), while three other ministers are infected," Raut said.

"I think as less people as possible should go there and the ceremony there be held. It is

important that the PM is going.

The chief minister (Thackeray) can go there anytime, the Rajya Sabha member said.

Asked if Thackeray has not been invited for the ceremony, Raut said, "Nobody is waiting for the invitation."

He said the chief priest of the temple and security guards there have been quarantined.

Yogi visits Ayodhya to see preparations

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday visited Ayodhya to review preparations for Ram temple 'Bhoomi Puja' by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 5.

The Chief Minister reached Ayodhya in the afternoon and visited the Ram Janmabhoomi site where the Bhoomi Puja is to be held.

He also visited Hanuman Garhi temple and was seen giving various directions to the senior officers.

Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Ayodhya District Magistrate Anju Kumar Jha and DIG Deepak Kumar also accompanied the CM during his visit in which he also sought details of seating and other arrangements for the event, a senior official said here.

'It's Lord Ram's will that I attend bhoomi puja'

PNS ■ AYODHYA (UP)

Iqbal Ansari, who was a litigant in the Ayodhya land dispute case, has decided to gift a 'Ram namo' stole and a copy of the Ramcharitmanas to Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he attends the bhoomi puja ceremony for the Ram temple here on Wednesday.

"Yes, I have received the invitation from Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust for the bhoomi puja ceremony. I will certainly attend it. The dispute is over now after the court's verdict," Ansari, 69, told PTI.

"Our Prime Minister is coming. I will meet him and give him a 'Ramnamo' stole (with Ram's name written on it) and Ramcharitmanas as a present," Ansari said.

His father Hashim Ansari, the oldest litigant in the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi land dispute case, died at the age of 95 in 2016 after which the son started pursuing the case in the court.



Iqbal Ansari

Talking about Wednesday's ground-breaking ceremony to mark the beginning of a grand Ram temple here, Ansari said, "I belong to Ayodhya. All this (temple's construction) will change the fate of Ayodhya. We all want our child to get better opportunities".

He further said, "I respect sadhus and saints. I am happy to have received the invitation for the ceremony. I think it is Lord Ram's will that I attend it".

Modi 'fulfilled' dream of Hindus: Ayodhya MP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As the man on ground zero, BJP MP Lallu Singh from Ayodhya has been a part of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement long before it caught popular imagination in 1990s and believes that Ram temple's construction will change the national politics in the same big way the agitation for it once did. Singh (65) names many, from VHP's late patriarch Ashok Singhal to veteran BJP leader L K Advani and several saints, when asked of the movement's success while asserting that it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who finally 'fulfilled' the dream that the Hindu samaj nursed for long. Speaking to PTI, the second-term Lok Sabha member said he was confident that the temple would be finally built at the disputed site in Ayodhya, the ground zero of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, since Modi came to power for the first time in 2014.

Covid tests in India cross 2-cr mark

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The total number of tests for detection of COVID-19 has crossed the two-crore mark in India, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) data.

A cumulative total of 2,02,02,858 samples have been tested up to August 2 with 3,81,027 samples being tested on Sunday, the ICMR said.

The total number of tests for detection of COVID-19 had crossed the one-crore mark in India on July 6.

There are now 1,348 testing labs in the country comprising 914 in the public sector and



434 private labs.

Having started with one single laboratory at the National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune and then expanding to

100 laboratories around the beginning of the lockdown, the ICMR on June 23 validated the 1000th testing lab.

India's COVID-19 tally

crossed the 18-lakh mark on Monday, just a day after it went past 17 lakh, with 52,972 cases reported in a day while the number of recoveries surged to over 11.86 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total coronavirus cases surged to 18,03,695, while the death toll due to COVID-19 climbed to 38,135 with 771 people succumbing to the disease in a day, the data updated at 8 am on Monday showed.

Various steps taken by the central government have paved the way for enhanced testing for COVID-19, the health ministry had said earlier.

6 staff at Kar CM office hit by virus

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Six employees at the Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's office have tested positive for COVID-19, official sources said on Monday.

After the Chief Minister tested positive, his office and residence were sanitised. Besides, contact tracing was done during which the six of his staff members were confirmed to have contracted the virus, the sources said.

However, Governor Vajubhai Vala and Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai, whom the Chief Minister had



B S Yediyurappa's

met on July 31, have tested negative.

Officials said random tests were conducted at the Chief Minister's premises and the six were found infected. They

included a gunman, a driver, and house-keeping staff.

They have been sent to the COVID-19 care centre set up at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BEIC) as they were asymptomatic, sources said.

Yediyurappa's personal residence Dhavalagiri has been sanitised, the officials said, adding that entry would be restricted to the Chief Minister's home and office.

He was admitted to Manipal hospital here on Sunday night after testing positive.

The hospital has said the Chief Minister was doing well and clinically stable.

No infighting in Bengal BJP, TMC spreading canards

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Amid reports of infighting in the BJP unit of West Bengal, the party's state president, Dilip Ghosh, on Monday asserted that all was well in the organisation, and charged the TMC with spreading canards against the saffron camp.

The senior BJP leader also said that a section of media was trying to mislead the people of the state with "false" information about his party.

"The TMC and a section of the news media are trying to

Media reports also suggested that a few leaders in the West Bengal unit of the BJP are unhappy with the state leadership

spread canards against the state unit (of the BJP) to create confusion among the cadres and malign the image of the party. "I want to make it very clear that reports of dispute in



Dilip Ghosh

the party are untrue. We are united and will fight together to defeat the TMC in next elections," Ghosh said during a press meet here.

Speculation is rife that some BJP leaders may switch over to

the TMC, ahead of the 2021 assembly polls. Last week, former MLA Biplab Mitra quit the saffron camp to return to the state's ruling party.

Media reports also suggested that a few leaders in the West Bengal unit of the BJP are unhappy with the state leadership. The reports claimed that differences had cropped up between Ghosh and a section of state leaders, who had moved to the BJP from the TMC over the last few years, during an organisational meeting in New Delhi.

Chouhan urges people to light lamps at home for Ayodhya event

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has appealed to people to light lamps at their homes on Tuesday and Wednesday and recite 'Sunderkand' and 'Hanuman Chalisa' to mark the 'bhoomi puja' for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Chouhan made the appeal on Monday in a video from a city-based hospital where he has



been undergoing treatment for COVID-19 since the last 10 days. The ground-breaking ceremony of the Ram temple is scheduled to be held on Wednesday at Ayodhya in Uttar

Pradesh and is expected to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "I appeal that we all light lamps and light up our houses with decorative electric bulbs on the night of August 4 and August 5 to express our happiness for the construction of the temple (at Ayodhya). Celebrate by staying at home, recite 'Sunderkand' (part of the epic Ramayana) and 'Hanuman Chalisa', Chouhan said in the video.



On Sanskrit Day, PM thanks those involved in promoting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday thanked everyone involved in promoting, teaching and using Sanskrit language.

Sanskrit Day is observed every year on the full moon day of the Hindu calendar month of Shrawan.

In a tweet in Sanskrit, the prime minister described Sanskrit as a beautiful language which has made India a repository of knowledge for many years.

He urged everyone to work towards making Sanskrit more popular.

Will soon get back to work after recovery: CM

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, who is currently undergoing treatment for COVID-19 at a hospital here, on Monday said there was no need for anyone to worry and he will soon get back to work after recovery.

In a video released by his office, the Chief Minister said the health of the people of the state was his priority and requested them to follow

measures like maintaining distance and wearing masks to control the spread of virus.

"Last night around 8:30-9:00, as soon as I got to know that I was corona positive, I came to the hospital and I'm undergoing treatment.

Doctors after tests last night and this morning have said that there are no issues and I will recover and go out soon," Yediyurappa said in the video message.

Doctors to decide on admission, discharge of patients

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Aiming to free up private hospital beds for COVID-19 patients requiring emergency treatment, the West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission in an advisory said that only the doctor will decide on admission or discharge.

The decision of the examining doctor taken without any extraneous consideration or recommendation will be deemed final, it said.

If the number of waiting patients is more than the number of vacant beds, the doctor



on duty would examine each patient and allot beds to the

most deserving ones ignoring any extraneous considerations

or recommendations. The decision of the doctor on duty will be final and binding upon all, said an advisory from the Commission.

The examining doctor will also take the final call on shifting a patient from the general bed to the ICU or ITU, the advisory stated.

We have noticed that patients refuse to go home without a confirmatory coronavirus negative report though the discharge guidelines state that clinically fit patient can now be sent home even without testing negative. Following this we have decided on this

new advisory so that patients who need to be hospitalised do not have to wait as they do get any vacancies, one member of the Commission said.

If the patient wants he/she can shift to a safe house after being discharged from the hospital but will not be allowed to occupy a bed pending a negative COVID-19 report, he said.

In West Bengal there are 55 private hospitals so far treating COVID-19 patients.

With 37.88 per cent occupancy there are at the moment 11,552 beds for patients of the pandemic in West Bengal.

A long haul

As talks for pullback continue, they are just a diversion as it isn't easy for China to give up Pangong Tso



As the Chinese are reluctant to significantly pull back from Pangong Tso, fortifying their positions around it, and making concessional retreats at other sites just to keep talks going, India should be prepared for the long haul. And though a Siachenisation at the heights would mean a waste of man and resources on both sides, China seems to be preparing for a stakeout this winter at least. For all the diplomacy around eastern Ladakh, it is just a diversionary tactic as the Chinese will not forfeit what they have gained in Pangong Lake and Depsang areas. That's because this geographical wedge between

Gilgit-Baltistan in the west (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir), where China is heavily invested in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Aksai Chin in the east, is an irritant to its regional supremacy, strategically and economically. And it wants an unhindered run of the highway from Xinjiang to Tibet, 179 km of which is under Indian shadow. So far, its contiguous hold on Central Asia, Pakistan and beyond was a low-cost, undemanding exercise, playing as it did on smartly interpreting its version of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on the ground. As it is unmarked and fluidic, it has justified its salami slicing to perceptual differences and pre-empted counter-attacks by heaving down with military presence and developing border infrastructure, the scale of which has held India back from a robust counter-challenge for years. But now that we have ramped up our border infrastructure, China is extremely uncomfortable about the proximity of the Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) road to sensitive areas and strategic highways to the north of the Karakoram Pass. And as Galwan has shown, our troops are more than capable of bloodying noses in high altitude warfare. So China simply won't give up the spurs it has now because it doesn't want to compromise its edge in the Karakoram. Already, it has browbeaten India at the talks table by calling for a buffer zone, which means our forces cannot patrol up to the points they used to because of the Chinese insistence on a no man's land. This would allow it to build resources on its side unmonitored and reverse any disengagement move made so far at short notice. This clause also makes Indian vigilance difficult besides burdening soldiers with knife-edge preparedness at all times. China is hoping that it will be able to renegotiate the status quo at Pangong Tso by wearing out our troops and patience, particularly during a long, hard winter. If anything, the "push and extract" policy might continue even as nominal concessions are made to show that it is committed to the dialogue process. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) cannot be written off simply because it has had a history of winter offensives, be it the occupation of Tibet or the incursion of 1962.

For China, the loss of troops at Galwan is a loss of face. And the fact that it has maintained somewhat of a radio silence on casualties means that it will strike back. Right now, tainted by the Wuhan virus, China may have stretched itself too thin in using the pandemic to reshape its imperial dream of colonising the world. But it won't acknowledge India's neo-assertiveness by withdrawing. Instead, it will consolidate, given that it will be the only economy to register growth, even if it is as low as one per cent, and will bet big on fighting for Asian pride against a US-dominated West. Despite the US opposition, it has already got aggressive in the South China Sea, claiming islands, setting up bases and enveloping South and Southeast Asians with its transactional economic largesse and debt-trapping. Many have given in to the bullying but India hasn't. Besides, with the US using us as its proxy, we will increasingly become a pawn in the game of two big powers for world domination. If China loses its stakes in India, the second biggest Asian power, how would it be able to convince other Asian nations to go with its hegemonic vision? So there will be need-based engagement all right but coercion will be constant. India may not match up to its economic and military might as yet and while it develops self-sufficiencies of its own, it has to take on a partnering role with both Western and regional countries. It can challenge China in the Indian Ocean region, get more active in the Quad initiative with US and Japan and use its international goodwill as a nation that respects "rule-based order" to build a case against China's aggressive tactics. And it must now confront the boundary question, insist on marking the LAC. For years of denial and yielding to the Chinese template of working around the boundary dispute have only left us with trade dependencies and a deficit. Today, it is eastern Ladakh but if the territorial push in Bhutan is any indication, China may very well expand its claim lines in Arunachal Pradesh now, just to stretch us beyond our extremities. We should be wary of the fact that the PLA, which has been pitching tents, building roads and marking territories since 2013 and which directly takes orders from Chinese President Xi Jinping himself, may lie low but not go silent.

All wasn't lost

Chennai techie finds Pragyan, the rover on-board Chandrayaan-2, intact while assessing NASA images



In some good news for India, which is grappling with the twin woes of an ailing economy and the deepening coronavirus crisis, a Chennai-based techie has claimed that the rover on-board Chandrayaan-2, the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO's) moon mission, is intact on the lunar surface and had even moved a few metres. India's second mission to the moon had ended in disaster as a last-minute software glitch led to the Vikram lander crash-landing on the lunar surface, just 500 metres short of touchdown. Yes, we were ambitious to land on the dark side of the moon, which bigger space-faring nations have not attempted, but the rover's presence is reassurance that while we need to refine our efforts, they have all not gone to waste. And ISRO needs to follow through the Chandrayaan series in mission mode.

Since the failure of the Chandrayaan-2 last year, things have not gone too well for ISRO, with its GISAT-1 launch being mysteriously called off on March 4, a day before take-off citing an ambiguous "technical reason." Plus, the space agency, which had a very busy schedule for this year — with around two dozen launches, including Aditya, India's first solar probe — is having trouble keeping its commitments. Due to the pandemic playing spoilsport, ISRO, too, had to go into a lockdown mode. India's ambitious human space flight programme Gaganyaan, is in trouble because the astronaut training of the four test pilots of the Indian Air Force has been stopped. Besides over 100 manufacturing units in the private sector, that are contracted to manufacture components for ISRO's missions, are shut and the work of producing rockets, satellites and scientific instrumentation is on hold right now. But what is most encouraging is that the rover was found by a Chennai techie, Shanmuga Subramanian, from NASA's images. He had earlier helped NASA find the debris of the Vikram lander, earning him plaudits from the space agency and the gratitude of an embarrassed ISRO. His persistence should be a reason for inducting him and others like him in our space-faring projects. Space nerds should be identified from school and encouraged. It was difficult to detect the rover because it was on the South Pole of the Moon, which is not always well-lit and was missed by the NASA flyby on November 11 possibly for this reason. Not just this, it seems that the rover uploaded commands to the lander, which could not relay them back. Is some data stored there? But with the Vikram lander going silent, we will never know. Whether this translates into any gains for ISRO, only time will tell. But for now, there is something to cheer about in the Indian space community.

Checkmating China

If Trump can be persuaded to see the Baloch quest and Iran as potential allies that could take the Makran coast away from China, it would put a powerful brake on the latter's ambitions



SANDHYA JAIN

Indian analysts seem indifferent to the threat of India losing the railway line from Iran's Chabahar port to Afghanistan and Central Asia and suggest that New Delhi should focus on ties with Arab countries that provide energy security and jobs to millions of Indians. The view that India must choose between the Sunni Arab world and Shia Iran is myopic and contrary to established Indian diplomacy. Certainly, lakhs of Indian Muslims annually visit Saudi Arabia for hajj/umra but the lockdown imposed in March revealed that thousands of citizens visit Karbala and Najaf that are sacred to the Shias. Many work in Iran. Indeed, Commander Kulbhushan Jadhav (ret'd) is believed to have been abducted from Chabahar and pushed across the border into Pakistan.

The stalemate in India-Iran ties is due to US sanctions that cover countries engaging with Tehran commercially. India secured an exemption for the Chabahar port, which may not cover the railway, and stopped buying the light Iranian crude suited to its refineries after the six-month grace period ended. The freeze on its oil revenues seriously hurt Iran's economy, forcing it to seek ways to end its economic and diplomatic trauma.

Tehran moved cautiously, leaking "news" about a \$400 billion deal with China, which seemed credible given Beijing's huge investments across the globe. An unverified 18-page document gave the details of a 25-year Iran-China agreement that Chinese President Xi Jinping had proposed during a visit to Iran in January 2016. It mentioned a \$280 billion investment in Iran's oil and gas industry and \$120 billion across various sectors. Beijing would receive crude oil and gas at discounted prices for 25 years.

New Delhi was alarmed at the possibility of China funding the railway and depriving India of its coveted alternate route to Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan. Envoy Gaddam Dharmendra rushed to meet Iranian Speaker Bagher Ghalibaf and Vice Minister of Roads and President of the Railways, Mohsen Pourseyed Aghaei, to salvage the Chabahar-Zahedan (and possibly Zarang) line. Also at stake is a free trade zone to serve the landlocked Central Asian states. Further, the Farzad-B gas field was discovered by ONGC Videsh in 2012 but its development has been



stuck in wrangling over Iran's desire for two pipelines as opposed to India's insistence on a single pipeline. This is purely a commercial dispute and Tehran needs to be reasonable.

But for Chabahar and related projects, India will have to pioneer some deft diplomacy to break the deadlock between Washington and Tehran or sacrifice its regional ambitions forever. It is no secret that Islamabad is now firmly in Beijing's sphere of influence; its deafening silence on the treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang and refusal to bring its citizens back from Wuhan after the pandemic in order to save China's face leave no scope for doubt on this score. India did not blame China but rushed to bring its students back from Wuhan; now, the Chinese aggression in Ladakh has dramatically altered the situation.

An independent Balochistan offers a way out. At the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, American scholar Selig Harrison had the prescience to realise that the turmoil in Kabul would bring Pakistan's Baloch problem to the forefront (*In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baluch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations*, 1980). Till his death in 2016, Harrison urged

Washington to support Baloch independence in pursuit of its own interests in the region but successive administrations from Nixon-Kissinger remained invested in Islamabad.

Now, the China-Pakistan axis has eroded Washington's relationship with its non-NATO ally. Baloch resistance to Islamabad's unceasing atrocities and resentment against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that encroaches upon their land and resources give America an opening. For, Balochistan is the geostrategic region without which Pakistan is just a landlocked landmass, of no use even to the Army that controls it.

As Italian scholar Valeria F Piacentini observed in 1945, Balochistan is at the crossroads of two "axes", east-west and north-south, of three macro-regions: Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean basin. It forms the hinge between the Indian sub-continent, Central Asia and the Euro-Asiatic steppes and the Iranian plateau; as also the link between regions that gravitate towards the Indian Ocean and its western "sea routes"; the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

This is why London want-

ed Balochistan to be part of Pakistan and nudged MA Jinnah after the Khan of Kalat proved obdurate. Balochistan was annexed in 1948. The CIA-M16 operated from Balochistan to overthrow the then Iranian Prime Minister M Mossadegh after he nationalised the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Washington used Balochistan for its proxy war against Soviet forces in Afghanistan and opened war against the Taliban.

Gwadar Port, China's big prize and *raison d'être* for the CPEC, belongs to Balochistan. Chabahar is part of the same Makran coastline. If US President Donald Trump can be persuaded to see the Baloch quest and Iran as potential allies, that could take the entire Makran coast away from China (depriving it also of the military base it is building in Jiwan peninsula off Gwadar). It would put a powerful brake on China's relentless acquisition of ports and bases across the Indian Ocean littoral.

Iran is a catch for Beijing because like Pakistan, it can join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by land and sea, giving it access to staggering geostrategic space. Tehran could link Beijing with Ankara, which offers access to the

Mediterranean Sea and the nations of North Africa, Central Europe and Europe that comprise its littoral. The Mediterranean Sea opens into the Atlantic Ocean via the Strait of Gibraltar; this could bring Beijing closer to Washington than ever envisaged by the State Department or Pentagon. Beijing in Chabahar would also have access to the Arabian Sea, Strait of Hormuz and Sea of Oman, besides a shortcut to its military base in Djibouti. A US-friendly Balochistan and Iran would end this dream run.

Interestingly, in June 2020, Moscow arrested Valery Mitko, president, Arctic Academy of Sciences, for allegedly giving China information about submarine detection, a reflection of Moscow's anger at Chinese ambitions in the Arctic region. Washington has also arrested citizens in prestigious institutions working covertly for China. It should investigate whether the tales of Russian interference in the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections originated from "friends" in institutions that received lavish Chinese funding. Perhaps Russian President Vladimir Putin has signalled as much.

(The author is a senior journalist. Views are personal)

SOUNDBITE

Swami Swarupnand had warned that August 5 was inauspicious for the stone-laying of Ram temple. This date has been fixed in accordance with Modi's convenience.



Congress leader —Digvijaya Singh

It's (*Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl*) my film, too. Everyone has a right to their opinion, but people are spitting fire against one another. The flak is unfair.



Actor —Angad Bedi

I believe that he (Trump) plans to install himself in some kind of emergency way to continue to hold onto office. And that's why the American people had better wake up.



Top Democrat leader —Whip James Ciyburn

While people boycott Chinese products, cellphone makers in China will continue as title sponsors of the IPL. No wonder China is thumping its nose at us.



NC leader —Omar Abdullah

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Liquor deaths

Sir — It is unfortunate that more than 85 people died and many others were taken ill due to the consumption of spurious liquor in Punjab. The sale of illicit liquor is a thriving business not only in Punjab but in many parts of the country. In fact, India remains one among the countries with the highest number of alcohol-related deaths. And whenever such a tragedy unfolds, Governments react by imposing a ban on the sale of liquor. They fail to either bring tighter regulations or crack down on dens, which operate without a licence as they fulfil a demand while making huge profits.

People take to illicit liquor as they cannot afford to buy licensed brands. Spurious liquor does not attract taxes or duties and, thus, comes cheap. The Punjab Government must set a precedent by constituting a Special Investigation Team which must track down all bootleggers in the State. The Union Government, too, must come up with a multi-pronged plan to curb the sale and consumption of toxic alcohol.

Ramesh G Jethwani
Bengaluru

Plain truths about Rafale

Before the arrival of the Rafale jets, their acquisition process went through many twists and turns. It was in 2000, during the initial years of NDA-I, when the Indian Air Force (IAF) initiated a proposal for the acquisition of 126 Mirage 2000-IIs from Dassault Aviation (DA) for induction from 2004-05 onwards. According to the CAG, the Defence Procurement Board (DPB) discarded the proposal after protracted deliberations till 2004. When the UPA Government came to power, it issued a Request for Proposal for the acquisition of 126 advanced versions of MMRCA in 2007. As per the delivery terms, 18 aircraft were to be supplied in flyaway condition and the balance 108 were to be manufactured by HAL. The RFP was withdrawn based on a report by the Ministry of Defence, which reportedly carried out a statement saying that "the price bid of DA was non-compliant as it was incomplete and not in the prescribed format" yet again. And the NDA-II Government signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) in 2016 for 36 fighter jets at a price aligned to the earlier "incomplete" offer. Delivery of the first batch of 18 Rafale aircraft was to be completed within 53 months and the balance 18 within 67 months from the date of signing of the IGA. The agreement put a lid on the original proposal to manufacture 108 Rafale warplanes by HAL.

Exactly two decades into the process, the ruling Government has landed on the indigenous builder now



to meet the initially projected requirement. The Air Chief Marshal has now confirmed that an order for another 83 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Tejas MK IA, from HAL was being fast-tracked. In a nutshell, IAF initiated a proposal for 126 Mirage 2000-II from DA in 2000 and the Ministry is still preparing to place an order for 83 Tejas MK IA with HAL in 2020. During the intervening 20 years, India has acquired just five Rafale fighter jets out of the 36 ordered and that, too, at a phenomenal cost. Yet, the irony is that confirmed jingoists hit the streets in jubilation on the arrival of the foreign-made Rafales but found no reason to applaud the Tejas, the indigenous-designed and built Light Combat Aircraft.

Haridasan Rajan
Kozhikode

Education revamp

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "New curriculum" (July 31).

The new National Education Policy (NEP) promises a transformational shift, infusing an element of joy and purpose in learning. The new guidelines, if

implemented, will offer students a flexible academic journey where they can pick and choose instead of remaining confined to set patterns. The

loftier goals are to mainstream about two crore out-of-school children. Before and after 1947, matriculation was the requirement for entrance to higher education in colleges. Then, 10+2 streams brought more changes but NEP, 2020, promises the much-needed reforms. Though challenges remain, the new NEP can be a game-changer as it promises to bestow flexibility, improve the skills of the students and grant more autonomy to educational institutions.

Abhijit Roy
Jamshedpur

Exercise in futility

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "New curriculum" (July 31). NEP, 2020, is an exercise in futility. It wasn't debated in Parliament. Increasing the tenure of undergraduate courses makes no sense as postgraduate programmes have been watered down. The only redeemable feature is that it does not disturb the three-language formula system.

Ratnapriya
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Of slavery and history

Judging people for the past is a distraction from the business at hand, which is to clear up the ghastly heritage of racism that slavery has left



GWYNNE DYER

Assessing the people of America's past by today's standards would compel us to cast the majority of our heroes as villains. That seemed to be the line taken by Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas in his opinion piece for *The New York Times*. It caused great outrage, the Opinion Editor had to resign and Cotton was roundly abused for "defending slavery." He probably deserved that. What he actually said was that the "Founding Fathers" of the US saw slavery as the "necessary evil upon which the Union was built." That would sound all right in a classroom, if you then explained that otherwise the slave-owning southern states would not have agreed to a federation of all 13 colonies.

It sounded less well coming out of the mouth of a senator who wants to ban federal funding for a project to improve the teaching of the history of slavery in American schools. Senator Cotton is one of President Donald Trump's loyal soldiers, trying to whip up a white racial panic and consolidate the boss's "base." But that's not the point. The point is that I changed one word in that quote, and that it wasn't Cotton who said it. It was Nigerian journalist and novelist Acha Oluwole, and what she actually said, in an opinion piece for the *BBC*, was this: "Assessing the people of Africa's past by today's standards would compel us to cast the majority of our heroes as villains."

She was talking specifically about her great-grandfather, Nwaubani Ogogo Oriaku, who was a widely respected trader in tobacco, palm oil, and slaves in south-eastern Nigeria in the early 20th century. The Atlantic slave trade had been banned by the European empires a century before but slavery was still a flourishing domestic business in Nigeria and many other African countries. Her great-grandfather became famous by defying the British colonial authorities, who were trying to stamp out slavery within Nigeria. They had confiscated some of his slaves and he marched right up and demanded them back, waving a trading licence that dated back to the previous century.

They were taken aback, apologised and returned his slaves. Indeed, they were so impressed by his boldness and self-confidence that they subsequently appointed him "paramount chief" of his region. So he became a local hero in his own day and is still a hero to Acha Oluwole's family. Slavery was normal in most pre-modern societies, including almost all the kingdoms and ethnic groups of sub-Saharan Africa. Africans had sold slaves north to various Islamic empires in the Middle East for centuries before Europeans showed up on the coast in ships. They were just another set of customers buying in the same market.

Most enslaved Africans didn't travel more than a few hundred kilometres from home, of course. It is estimated that in the 18th century, one-third of the people in what is now Senegal were slaves who belonged to other Senegalese. But the ones who were sold to foreigners probably suffered even more.

Historians believe that around one-fifth of the ten million Africans transported to the Americas over more than three centuries died on board ships. The fatalities among the estimated 17 million African slaves sold to Arab traders and forced to walk across the Sahara or carried around the Indian Ocean in ships during ten centuries were probably just as high. What awaited the survivors when they arrived was pretty appalling too.

But Acha Oluwole is right. The past is a different country and it's pointless to judge people by standards they would not even comprehend. Judging people for past history is a distraction from the business at hand, which is to clear up the ghastly heritage of racism that slavery has left in America.

It is noteworthy that there is no comparable heritage of guilt and racism in the African countries that sold the slaves. Everybody, slaves and masters, was from the same group, and everybody was involved one way or another. We used to do it, now we don't, end of story. Why is it so different in the European countries, and above all in the US? My guess is that it's because slavery, uniquely in the world, had completely died out in Europe by a thousand years ago. When 16th-century Europeans reached West Africa, it was quite new to them.

They took to slave-owning readily enough but they had no traditional framework in which to think about it. Nwaubani Ogogo Oriaku didn't need to justify owning slaves by telling himself they were inferior. He'd bought them fair and square. What's the problem? Whereas American plantation owners had to come up with bizarre racial fantasies to explain to themselves why it was right to own other people — and their great-great-grandchildren are still struggling with those fantasies today.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work'.)

NONE OF THE ILLICIT LIQUOR (DEATH) CASES FROM THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN SOLVED BY THE PUNJAB POLICE. —DELHI CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



WHY DON'T YOU ASK YOUR PUNJAB UNIT FOR DATA AND FIGURES FIRST AND THEN COMMENT ON OUR WORKING. —PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER AMARINDER SINGH

In the name of God

The BJP has already made the construction of the Ram temple a political issue that will hold good for 2024. Ayodhya city has been painted in saffron hues



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

The innocuous-sounding statement of the General Secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, Champat Rai, that the construction of the Ram temple, whose foundation will be laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 5, will be completed within three-and-a-half-years, has political overtones which no one can miss.

"We will try to complete the construction by three years but we have six months extra in case we fail to meet the deadline because of any eventuality. But, mark my words, the temple will be ready with its pristine grandeur by the end of 2023 or early 2024," Rai had said when announcing that Modi would be the chief guest of the ground-breaking ceremony for the Ram temple's construction.

For those who need it to be spelled out, the timing of the completion of the temple is crucial — end of 2023 or early 2024. The Lok Sabha elections are expected by March 2024. This means that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would again use the Ram temple to play the Hindutva card and propel the party towards victory. This time the BJP will go to the masses saying "jo kaha, woh kiya (we did what we said we would do)." The common refrain of BJP leaders and campaigners will be, "We promised the people that the Ram temple would be built in Ayodhya and we fulfilled that promise." I would not be surprised if the party takes a miniaturised model of the Ram temple across villages or puts up such models before the Model Code of Conduct comes into play in every gram Sabha. The process has already begun as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has asked for funds from the people for temple construction. The VHP has set a target of reaching over 10 crore families in five lakh villages across India with an appeal to donate at least ₹100 voluntarily for the temple's construction. It is set to start from Uttar Pradesh (UP) and will then spread out across the country.

The VHP's plan does not end here. The Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, the temple trust which is entrusted with the task of constructing a temple at the Ram Janmabhoomi Complex, in collaboration with the VHP, plans to kick-start the 'Akhand Bharat Week' after the *bhoomi puja* (ground-breaking ceremony). The week will be celebrated from August 16 to August 23 when the Parishad volunteers will go to the villages and tell the masses about the Ram Mandir construction and how this temple will ensure the "akhandata" (integrity) of the country.

The BJP has always used the temple issue to meet its political aims. It has always found a mention in its election manifesto, whose nomenclature has changed with the passage of time. The BJP election manifesto is now called 'Sankalp Patra'. After the famous Rath Yatra carried out by Lal Krishna Advani along with Pramod Mahajan in 1989 from Somnath to Ayodhya, with Narendra Modi accompanying the yatra from Somnath till the border of Gujarat, the BJP saw the potential of the issue to propel the party to great political power.

When the yatra was stopped in Samastipur in Bihar by the then Lalu Prasad Government and Advani was arrested, the whole of India was drenched in the spirit of Hindutva. The rath was stopped on October 23, 1990. This set off a string

FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT TO BE SPELLED OUT, THE TIMING OF THE COMPLETION OF THE TEMPLE IS CRUCIAL — END OF 2023 OR EARLY 2024. THE LOK SABHA ELECTIONS ARE EXPECTED BY MARCH 2024. THIS MEANS THAT THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY WOULD AGAIN USE THE RAM TEMPLE TO PLAY THE HINDUTVA CARD AND PROPEL THE PARTY TOWARDS VICTORY



of events that shaped the country's politics in years to come. Advani's arrest triggered massive protests across the country, sparking communal riots across several towns, especially in north India. Hundreds of *Kar Sevaks* (voluntary workers) marched towards Ayodhya to liberate the Ram Janmabhoomi. Exactly a week after Advani's Rath Yatra was stopped — on October 30 — as many as 28 *Kar Sevaks* were killed in police firing while trying to storm the Babri Masjid. Even before the *Kar Sevaks* had entered Ayodhya, then Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav had claimed that "parinda bhi par nahi maar sakta (not even a bird can enter there)." Mulayam Singh still justifies the police action.

The events that unfolded then only benefited the BJP as its political clout grew exponentially and it grabbed the opportunity with both hands. In the 1991 election, for the first time the party gave the slogan of "Mandir wahin banayenge (we will build the temple there only)" but it was only in 1996, that for the first time, the BJP mentioned the Ram Mandir in its manifesto.

The party reiterated its commitment to facilitate the construction of a magnificent Ram temple at the *Janmasthan* (birthplace) in Ayodhya after coming to power as "this is the dream of millions of people in our land. The concept of Ram lies at the core of their consciousness."

The words remained the same in manifesto after manifesto and in 2019 it said: "We reiterate our stand on the Ram Mandir. We will explore all possibilities within the framework of the Constitution and make all necessary efforts to facilitate the expeditious

construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya."

That commitment was fulfilled in November 2019 when the Supreme Court paved the way for the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya and allowed the construction of a mosque, which incidentally will come up 30 kilometres away from the complex where the original mosque stood.

With the completion of one aim, the BJP has already got ammunition for the elections — which is powerful and emotive. And the subsidiary props can come from more communal pitches like cow vigilantism and the anti-citizenship law protests. Emotion is a very important quotient for winning or losing elections in a democracy. Corruption, religion, nationalism, caste *et al* are some of the issues which have an emotive appeal and can unite people in no time. This is not limited to India only. Even in the US, the slogan "America First" did wonders for Donald Trump. Similarly, in 2019, Balakot supplied the required emotive quotient in the form of nationalism and the BJP and Modi swept the Lok Sabha polls. The BJP has already made the construction of the Ram temple a political issue. Ayodhya city has been painted in saffron hues. Students of the arts faculty of Saket Degree College have drawn pictures of Ram, Laxman and characters of the *Ramayana* on the walls around the city — not even leaving the walls of the Sulabh Shauchalaya toilet complex.

In the backdrop of the COVID-19 guidelines, people have been asked not to go to the Ram Janmabhoomi site where the main function will be held. But the BJP has plans to put up LED screens all across Ayodhya so that peo-

ple can witness the ground-breaking ceremony and watch the Prime Minister lay the foundation stone of the temple on August 5. They argue that it is natural for people to want to witness this historic moment at the Ram Janmabhoomi Complex but because of COVID-19 guidelines they cannot be allowed entry there, hence they can watch it on big screens near their *mohallas* (localities).

The VHP has done its part and has asked people across India to decorate their homes, *mohallas* and *mandirs* and watch the live telecast of the grand ceremony together while singing *bhajans* (hymns). Milind Parande, Secretary General of the VHP, had issued a statement saying that the live telecasts should be accessible to the community on big screens or at auditoria. "People should decorate their houses, neighbourhoods, villages, markets, monasteries, gurdwaras and *ashrams* and distribute *prasad* and also light lamps after sunset," the VHP leader had said in that statement. "Use all means of publicity to make this grand programme available to more and more people in society," he had further said. The paraphernalia is ready. The BJP and its right-wing organisations are all set to milk the situation for political gains. The Unlocked 3.0 guidelines may have asked people to desist from organising religious functions but the BJP Government and the party are ready for such a big event. After all, it is all politics. And an investment made today will hold good later. One wonders if COVID-19 management could be pursued with such intent. Lord Ram would have wanted that.

(The writer is Executive Director, News, Lucknow edition)

No more a matter of public interest

We must act against those misusing PIL, which is considered the most important tool in delivering speedy justice to the underprivileged and the poor



J GOIKRISHNAN

The seeds of the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) germinated in India during the time of Justice Krishna Iyer in 1976 and subsequently in 1979, when the inhuman conditions of 50,000 undertrial prisoners led to their release. The idea that emerged in a movement that was steered by Justice PN Bhagwati was to ensure speedy justice as a fundamental right, which was never within the reach of the poor and the underprivileged.

From being a potent weapon meant to check the failures of the legislature and the executive, the PIL slowly and steadily became a domain

to nurture and pursue private interests. It offered a political theatre for guerrilla warfare in a layered style. It soon became the Frankenstein's monster that could make the legislature and the executive shiver. And this year, the PIL industry wants to achieve its final goal and that is to dictate terms to the Supreme Court (SC) of India.

There has been so much degeneration that Justice Arijit Pasayat underscored that the 'P' in PIL stands for politics, *paisa*, publicity or private interest. This position has been adequately reiterated by the SC in the Ashok Kumar Pandey case. However, the litany of frivolous petitions over a period of time has become so big that PIL activists have started issuing integrity certificates to serving and retired judges and bureaucrats.

"Why is your shirt not buttoned and why are your collars open?" the Chief Justice of India (CJI) asked a PIL lawyer in the ongoing proceedings in Court No 1, following the murder of eight policemen on duty and the subsequent encounter of

Uttar Pradesh's (UP) notorious gangsters, as laid down in the Rajiv Ranjan Singh Lalan case.

However, the PIL action continued. The first round was followed by objections to the appointment of a particular retired judge of the Supreme Court even after the CJI cleared the name. The "bias" of the retired bureaucrat in the commission was mocked. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the State under the Additional Chief Secretary was challenged. Value and virtue certificates from an invisible, point-based human rights curriculum were exchanged and exhibited before the Bench.

How far should the court go to satisfy the petitioners — especially when they have no track record of representing the public at large in any matters of grave concern — and those who attack the reputation of retired judges, whose contribution to the legal system for decades is in the public domain?

How did the apex court deal with such frivolous petitions in the past? In the Mathews Nedumpara case, the

borne out of records, as laid down in the Rajiv Ranjan Singh Lalan case. However, the PIL action continued. The first round was followed by objections to the appointment of a particular retired judge of the Supreme Court even after the CJI cleared the name. The "bias" of the retired bureaucrat in the commission was mocked. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the State under the Additional Chief Secretary was challenged. Value and virtue certificates from an invisible, point-based human rights curriculum were exchanged and exhibited before the Bench.

Should these petitions and their consequent dismissal, as bland as it may appear, soaked in the semantics of apology, not be considered one more assault on the mutilated bodies of the policemen who died on duty? Keeping aside differences on political or ideological leanings, misgivings or otherwise concerning the judiciary, the police force and the graver grouse we have developed towards the criminal justice system, we need to pause and introspect.

The commission is expected, as per the terms of reference, to enquire into the nexus between the criminals and the police/establishment and make suggestions to ensure such events do not recur in the future.

How long do we wait for the commission to function and make appropriate recommendations to fix a broken system? A system in which a history-sheeter with more than 60 heinous offences was out on bail. A system in which "insiders" appeared to have tipped off the criminals. A system in which there is no speedy trial or regular hearings. A system in which the criminals run a

racket from within the jails. A system in which the families of policemen murdered are looking at a long and hard road to justice. A system in which endless aspirations for the idea of justice are only soaked in the body of hope. Just because hope is the only feeling stronger than fear and it is with that hope that we look up to Court No 1 to dispense justice now.

It is time to move beyond simple dismissals and imposition of costs. In spite of settled laws, the tyranny of frivolous petitions is not just obstructing the functioning of the apex court by eating up precious time and resources but is mocking at the very idea of justice. It is time to ensure that just because the highest court has opened its doors to justice, it cannot be converted into a platform for enabling the agenda of one particular section of activist lawyers. It is time to act against those misusing the PIL, which is considered the most important tool in delivering speedy justice to the underprivileged.

(The writer is a Special Correspondent of The Pioneer)

(The writer is Executive Director, News, Lucknow edition)

CAPSULE



SpiceJet operates repatriation flight from Amsterdam

NEW DELHI: SpiceJet said it operated its maiden long-haul charter flight from Amsterdam to Bengaluru and Hyderabad on Sunday carrying 269 Indians. The low-cost carrier said in a press release it had chartered a wide-body A330neo aircraft from Portuguese airline Hi Fly for this flight from Amsterdam in the Netherlands. While the Amsterdam-Bengaluru leg of the flight had the Hi Fly's call sign 5K471, the Bengaluru-Hyderabad leg had the SpiceJet's call sign SG471. "The flight arrived in Bengaluru at 8.58 am IST and the same aircraft then proceeded to Hyderabad with the remaining passengers," SpiceJet said. The twin-aisle A330neo aircraft used by SpiceJet has a configuration of 353 economy and 18 business class seats.



Iran's stock market hits record high amid Covid

TEHRAN: The Tehran Stock Exchange closed at a record high on Sunday, crossing 2 million points for the first time, even as US sanctions, unemployment, inflation and low oil prices batter the Iranian economy. The exchange's website showed it closed at 2,011,492 points, up some 50,000 points from Saturday. Government authorities also offered additional shares of state-owned companies onto the market on Sunday. The Tehran Stock Exchange has seen sharp increases this year, even as Iran struggled with one of the first serious coronavirus outbreaks outside China. Encouraged by a government eager to privatize state-owned firms, average people now have access to the market and can trade shares, earning returns they'd never see in a savings account or a certificate of deposit.



Crude oil futures decline on low demand

NEW DELHI: Crude oil futures fell 1.22 per cent to Rs 2,986 per barrel on Monday as participants reduced their positions on low demand. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude oil for August delivery fell by Rs 37, or 1.22 per cent, to Rs 2,986 per barrel with a business volume of 3,945 lots. Crude oil for September delivery was quoting lower by Rs 38, or 1.24 per cent, at Rs 3,027 per barrel with an open interest of 73 lots. Globally, West Texas Intermediate crude oil was trading 0.99 per cent lower at USD 39.87 per barrel, while Brent crude was trading down 0.76 per cent at USD 43.19 per barrel in New York.

NK Singh: India needs to grow much faster over next decade

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India needs to grow much faster over the next 10 years with the use of technology and reforms in order to become an important global player, 15th Finance Commission Chairman N K Singh said on Sunday.

To achieve the potential growth rate of 7-8 per cent, India has to improve factor productivity and reduce incremental capital output ratio, he said.

Singh said technology, coupled with significant reforms in areas like health, education and maintenance of infrastructure, can make a decisive difference. "If we wish to become important global player, we have to obviously grow much faster over the next 10 years than we did in the past decade," he said at IIT Jodhpur Foundation Day event.



Only technology solutions can enable the realisation of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', he added.

Singh said the coronavirus pandemic has exposed several fault lines in the country's public health care system.

In 2018-19, public health expenditure in India was 0.96

per cent of GDP. This is one of the lowest among peer group countries. Out of this, about 70 per cent of the expenditure on health is undertaken by the states, while only 30 per cent is spent by the union government.

"It has become evidently clear with the current pandem-

ic that investment on health is not just social sector spending, but a great investment in India's economic growth and development. Investment in technology can ameliorate these issues in the health sector," he said.

Singh suggested use of e-learning, electronic medical records, electronic systems for disease surveillance, radiological assessments and readings, and laboratory and pharmacy information systems to significantly reduce inefficiencies and lack of resources for affordable access to health-care.

Talking about use of technology in education sector, he said that in the coming years there would be need for a creative mix or a hybrid between online and offline education.

"Technology must determine the optimum mix of this hybrid," he added.

GMR Infra to divest large part of non-core assets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

GMR Infrastructure is working on disinvestment of non-core assets including land and hopes to yield "significant value" even from 50 per cent of land monetization, according to a document.

The airport-to-port conglomerate in an investor presentation said land at strategic industrial locations will benefit from the possible manufacturing dislocation from China.

"Plan is to divest large part of other assets identified as non-core divestment initiative," the document said and noted that it has 10,500 acres of port and industrial land and "even 50 per cent land monetization" could yield significant value.

About its Kakinada Special Investment Region (SIR) in Andhra Pradesh, the group said that it is in discussion with a large number of clients for monetization of land.

"Government of Andhra Pradesh signed MoUs with Haldia Petrochemicals Ltd to set up a refinery cum petrochem project in 2,500 acres and with HPCL-GAIL consortium for Petrochem complex in 2,000 acres land,"



it said and added in addition pact has been inked with a stainless steel manufacturer for 500 acres and an Australian Lithium Refinery for 100 acres."

The port-based Kakinada SIR in the Krishna-Godavari basin has plans for an all weather multi-purpose deep-water port, a logistics park, a petrochemicals cluster and an eco-industrial park, it said.

As per the document, 4,650 acres area there has been notified as SEZs and utility and environment approvals are in place. In Kakinada SEZ in Andhra Pradesh, however, the company has continued its efforts for various government

approvals and technical studies and added that demand for industrial parks is expected to revive to pre-COVID-19 levels.

The group said Infrastructure has not been much affected in the region due to COVID-19 as the company was able to re-mobilise and commence work quickly as the workers hailed from neighbouring areas and Hosur.

About Krishnagiri SIR (Tamil Nadu), the company said Infrastructure development in 275 acres is in progress with all approvals in place.

GMR Infrastructure Limited's consolidated net loss for the quarter ended March 31.

Bank accounts opened under Jan Dhan crosses 40-cr mark

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 40 crore bank accounts have been opened under the government's flagship financial inclusion drive Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), launched about six years ago by the Modi-government.

As per the latest figure, there are 40.05 crore beneficiaries of this scheme and deposits in Jan Dhan bank accounts are in excess of Rs 1.30 lakh crore.

"Another milestone achieved under world's largest financial inclusion initiative, PMJDY: Total accounts opened under the scheme crosses 40 Cr. mark. Committed to take financial inclusion to the last mile," Department of Financial Services said in a tweet.

Accounts opened under PMJDY are Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) accounts with additional features of RuPay debit card and overdraft. There is no requirement of maintaining minimum balance in BSBD accounts.

Global shares mixed amid Covid waves, recovery hopes

PNS ■ TOKYO

Global shares were mixed on Monday as investors weighed risks from rising coronavirus cases with hopes for a recovery in some places like China.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's weekend comments that President Donald Trump plans to take action on what he sees as a broad array of national security risks presented by software connected to the Chinese Communist Party added to market jitters.

Pompeo's remarks followed reports that Microsoft is in advanced talks to buy the U.S. operations of TikTok, which is owned by the Chinese company ByteDance and is seen as a source of national security and censorship concerns by the Trump administration.

France's CAC 40 added 0.3% in early trading to 4,797.41, while Germany's DAX surged 1.3% to 12,475.63. Britain's FTSE 100 shed 0.3% to 5,879.46. U.S. shares were set to drift lower with Dow futures dipping 0.3% at 26,248.0. S&P 500 futures were down 0.1% at 3,259.38. In Asian trading, Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 gained 2.2% to finish at 22,195.38. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was flat at 5,926.10. South Korea's Kospi edged 0% higher to 2,251.04. Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 0.6% to 24,458.13, while the Shanghai Composite index jumped 1.8% to 3,367.97. Investors were also watching the Caixin manufacturing Purchasing Manager's Index, a private survey which showed China's manufacturing activity grew in July, rising to a higher than expected level of 52.8 on a 0-100 scale where 50



Sensex tanks 667 points; Nifty ends below 10,900

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Slumping for the fourth straight session, equity benchmark Sensex plunged 667 points on Monday following a selloff in index-heavyweights Reliance Industries, HDFC twins and Kotak Bank as soaring COVID-19 cases kept investors jittery.

The rupee too sank 20 paise and settled below the 75 per US dollar mark.

The BSE Sensex ended 667.29 points or 1.77 per cent lower at 36,939.60, while the NSE Nifty tumbled 181.85 points or 1.64 per cent to 10,891.60.

Kotak Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack, falling over 4 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, ONGC, HDFC

Bank, Bajaj Auto and Reliance Industries (RIL).

On the other hand, Titan, Tata Steel, HCL Tech, L&T and SBI were among the gainers.

According to traders, massive selling in index majors RIL and HDFC duo dragged the key indices lower.

Further, foreign fund outflows and concerns over rise in COVID-19 cases across the world kept investors on edge, they added.

The number of cases around the world linked to COVID-19 has crossed 1.8 crore, while the infection count in India has crossed 18 lakh. Globally, however, Bourses in Shanghai, Tokyo, Seoul settled on a positive note, while Hong Kong ended in the red.

Tata Motors shares jump over 8%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Tata Motors on Monday jumped over 8 per cent after the company's first quarter earnings were better than estimates.

The stock rose by 8.30 per cent to Rs 113.40 on the BSE. On the NSE, it jumped 8.45 per cent to Rs 113.50.

The results were subdued,

but better than estimates. Standalone Q1 EBITDA was also better than expected, Emkay Global Financial Services said.

"Tata Motors continues to outperform on balance sheet as well as cost control initiatives," according to a report by

Edelweiss Research. The homegrown auto major on Friday reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 8,443.98 crore for the first quarter ended June 2020.

The company had posted a net loss of Rs 3,679.66 crore in the year-ago quarter.

Total income from operations during the period under review stood at Rs 31,983.06 crore as against Rs 61,466.99 crore in the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal.

The company's British arm Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) reported a 44 per cent dip in net revenue at 2.9 billion pounds during the first quarter.

Lord & Taylor is latest retailer to file for bankruptcy

PNS ■ NEW YORK

New York landmark retailer Lord & Taylor has filed for bankruptcy, joining a growing list of retailers flummoxed by the pandemic.

The company, which was sold to the French rental clothing company Le Tote Inc. last year, filed Sunday for bankruptcy protection

in the Eastern Court of Virginia.

In an announcement on its website the company, one of the oldest American department stores, said it was looking for a new owner.

Like many retailers, Lord & Taylor was already struggling with the shift to online shopping even before the pandemic struck this spring.

'Will continue discussions to buy TikTok in US'

PNS ■ NEW YORK

Technology giant Microsoft has said it will continue talks to purchase the popular Chinese-owned video-sharing app TikTok's American business after its India-born CEO Satya Nadella and President Donald Trump had a conversation.

The statement from Microsoft came days after Trump said that he could use

the emergency economic powers or an executive order to ban TikTok in the US over national security issues.

Redmond-headquartered Microsoft, in a statement on Sunday, said that following a conversation

between Nadella and Trump, it is prepared to continue discussions to explore a purchase of TikTok in the US.



"Microsoft fully appreciates the importance of addressing the President's concerns. It is committed to acquiring TikTok subject to a complete security review and providing proper economic benefits to the United States, including the United States Treasury," the statement said.

Microsoft will move quickly to pursue discussions with TikTok's parent company ByteDance in a matter of weeks and will complete these discussions in any event by September 15, it said.

"During this process, Microsoft looks forward to continuing dialogue with the United States government, including with the President," the company said.

Real estate sentiment all-time low in April-June

Stakeholders remain pessimistic for 6 months: Survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The sentiments in the country's real estate sector hit an all-time low during April-June due to the COVID-19 pandemic and remain pessimistic for the next six months even as stakeholders see slight improvement, according to a survey.

According to 25th survey by property consultant Knight Frank and industry bodies Ficci and Naredco, the current sentiment index fell to 22 in April-June from 31 in the previous quarter. "The current sentiment is recorded to be at the lowest," Knight Frank India



said in a statement. The future sentiment index improved to 41 from 36 during

the period under review but remained in the pessimistic zone.

"With continued economic stress and ambiguity regarding recovery, the current sentiments of the real estate stakeholders in India have been recorded at a low 22 in Q2 2020 (April-June)," Knight Frank India said.

This survey, covering the April-June 2020 period, was conducted in the first two weeks of July 2020.

The survey covers key supply-side stakeholders, which include developers, private equity funds, banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

A score of 50 represents a 'neutral' view or status quo, a score above 50 demonstrates a 'positive' sentiment; and a score

below 50 indicates a 'negative' sentiment.

Knight Frank India Chairman and Managing Director Shishir Bajjal said, "With some of the macroeconomic indicators showing marginal improvement and with the impending festive season in the second half of the year, the stakeholders have shown improved sentiments compared to the previous quarter, albeit they have remained in the pessimistic zone."

He added that at this juncture, the lockdown is expected to ease further by the advent of the festive season, helping to revive economic activity and propel conversion of the pent-up demand.

Bajjal said the central bank and the government have announced stimulus measures that have provided much-needed reprieve to the economy in these testing times.

"However, there is a need for further demand-boosting measures to improve sentiments in the economy," he said.

For the real estate sector in particular, Bajjal said there is a need for measures such as additional tax benefits for buying or renting a house, added incentives for affordable housing, easing of cravability for the sector and a one-time restructuring of developer loans to help the sector recover from this crisis.

Bank of India Q1 net profit rises over 3-fold to Rs 844 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Bank of India (BoI) on Monday reported over three-fold rise in net profit to Rs 843.60 crore for the quarter ended June 30, as pressure of bad loans eased.

The bank had registered a net profit of Rs 242.60 crore in the April-June period of 2019-20. The total income during the period under review increased to Rs 11,941.52 crore, from Rs 11,526.95 crore in the year-ago period, BoI said in a regulatory

filing. On the assets front, the bank witnessed improvement with gross NPAs declining to 13.91 per cent of the gross advances as on June 30, 2020 as against 16.50 per cent in the same period a year ago. Similarly, net NPAs or bad loans too declined to 3.58 per cent, from 5.79 per cent in the corresponding period last year. As a result, the provisioning for bad loans declined to Rs 766.62 crore during April-June of this fiscal, from Rs 1,873.28 crore in the same period a year ago.



Hyderabad

AN UNCONVENTIONAL SOLO RIDER BREAKING STEREOTYPES



When I say riders, I am referring to those who hold the spirit. Not those who just do occasional 10-20km rides and come for meets. So if we are looking at riders who have done some remarkable rides, they are hardly 1%. Support for female riders could be better

Motorcycling has evolved over the years. It is no longer a male-dominated space and over the past few years, we have observed quite a lot of women increasingly choosing motorcycles as their best companion. And when you are a woman solo rider, you not only face the odds on the roads, but also the repercussions of going against gender norms. There are challenges which most of the female bikers face like the lack of toilets on the road and mountains and fueling up after sunset, getting accommodation in remote places, etc. However, taking these issues in stride and staying focused on being better motorcyclists, exploring more uncharted territories, and lastly, relaying it to the world through the

power of social media is Kiran Mortha, a Hyderabad-based female rider. She recalls her incredible first ride to Kanyakumari which coincided with the world motorcycling day. She mentions that she cruised herself up to Kanyakumari through the rains. Her eagerness was to reach Kashmir by July 18 as it happened to be her birthday. She covered approximately 14,000 km in her maiden ride to become the first woman from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to have covered Kanyakumari to Kashmir in her first solo trip.

A psychologist by profession and a voracious reader who would want to own a mini library at her

place, Kiran, from an early age, has only listened to her heart. She feels that Motorcycling is an art and believes that riding can be both liberating and meditative. Speaking of how women are faring in motorcycle riding and the kind of support they receive, Kiran says, "When I say riders, I am referring to those who hold the spirit. Not those who just do occasional 10-20km rides and come for meets. So if we are looking at riders who have done some remarkable rides, they are hardly 1%. Support for female riders could be better." She goes on to add, "India is not an equal society. Crime against women is high and sexual harassment is everywhere. It's a challenge for women. But as women proved it time and again,

there will be a few of us who will beat the system and thrive." Taking us through her journey, she says, "I picked up a love for the motorcycle quite early. My father owned a Yezdi and every time he would work on his bike, I would be his assistant mechanic assisting in opening little screws and nuts, cleaning, oiling, applying shellac and gasket, to placing piston rings - I was probably 7 or 8 when I embarked on this journey. As far as I can recall, I learned to ride at the age of 16. My first ride to

With female motorcyclists having to face repercussions of choosing to tread paths that break gender stereotypes, Hyderabad-based Kiran Mortha, who happens to be the first woman from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to have covered Kanyakumari to Kashmir in her first solo trip talks to **K RAMYA SREE** on her journey, challenges, and more

Kanyakumari to Kashmir coincided with the World Motorcycling Day." Kiran's convenient escape on her Watson (her Royal Enfield Thunderbird motorcycle) is the mountains in Coorg, Madikeri, and the Western Ghats. She rode solo to Khardongla and is the second woman in India to have achieved this feat. What message does Kiran want to give to girls who want to get onto the bike but are restricted from family or because of other external factors? "If you want to do it, the only one who is stopping you is yourself. But when you are becoming a rider, keep in mind: Be a rider in your spirit. Not a Social Media rider. Motorcycling is an art, learn it, love it. Adhere to traffic rules and always stay safe. Be alert and never race on civilian roads. Learn to fix a bike, be your own first mechanic. Always avert danger, be precautionary. Your family will eventually come around," she signs off.

Tech Addiction: Boon or bane amid pandemic?

The pandemic brought in a plethora of changes to our lifestyle — change in eating habits, work, daily routines, sleep cycle, etc. What it also did to the kids, as they're locked in, is increase their screen time. Juhi Kaul, a broadcast auditor and former media instructor and Shivani Wadhwa, an educationist and counselling psychologist discuss the harmful effects of this addiction to the screen, ways to tackle it and more with *The Pioneer's* **SHIKHA DUGGAL**

It is important to monitor and limit their time screen. Children should take as much responsibility as whether it's reporting about cyber-bullying cases or developing pro-active coping strategies such as not engaging with unwanted messages and fact-checking all the information available on the internet.

SHIVANI WADHWA
EDUCATIONIST AND
COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGIST

With the country under lockdown, children are spending a significant part of the day in front of the television, computer or mobile screens. This has been the story of students in many parts of India including Hyderabad which is better served by technology. "The lockdown has brought us closer to the dependency of digital gadgets to the extent that we can't function without them anymore. However, balance plays a key role here because an excess of anything leads to a major disaster. Technology is an addiction — the uncontrollable urge to consume something that's taking over your life. Strangely, smartphones in today's age are as

important as the need to have salt in your food," says Juhi Kaul, broadcast auditor and former media instructor to defence forces of India. But what can be the possible red flags for technology addiction? There are several signs or symptoms that can indicate an addiction to screens or technology. These signs can be useful in helping one decide whether a problem might need professional assessment or not. As parents, a major red flag to look out for is when your child starts passing up opportunities for socialisation. If a child's only interactions are through screen activities, they're missing out on a tonne of learning opportunities. Anxiety develops when the child is away from the internet. Adding to these, there is an increase in non-responsive behaviour, less attentive nature, there's no proper time for meals, and health disorders tend to arise. "A techie addict will stop worrying about what's happening to his/her body, they hardly give a damn about their hygiene or temperamental issues. They hate to attend online classes but love surfing online as they have made their default activity as social media. Either you will find them texting, playing, or binge-watching," adds the media trainer. Parents are posting happy pictures of

children sitting with mobile phones, whereas mental health professionals sound a word of caution. An educationist and counselling psychologist from Hyderabad, Shivani Wadhwa believes digital technologies are aggravating feelings of anxiety, depression, causing loss of social skills, disturbing kids' sleep patterns, leading to cyber-bullying and distorting body image issues. "It is important to monitor and limit their time screen. Children should take as much responsibility — whether it's reporting about cyber-bullying cases or developing pro-active coping strategies such as not engaging with unwanted messages and fact-checking all the information available on the internet. I request kids to use technology to learn and develop their skills, be more engaged in science, and show productivity on while on their respective smartphones," she says. Some other practical tips to tackle technology addiction include making it a rule that you can't be online if the sun is shining when you're at home, avoiding aimless browsing, giving your time online a purpose, challenging yourself to read at least 30 pages of a great book before you check your computer or mobile device, and compiling a list of one-hour evening tasks.



Fitness industry could revive with care, better technology

Though India has entered Unlocked 3.0, the pause in the fitness industry is likely to last longer. The new normal is here to stay as gyms will not be re-opening to the world as they used to be. It has become important for the fitness industry to be very careful, maintain proper hygiene and use technology to avoid any contact that could lead to the transfer of the virus. COVID-19 has created a 'new normal' everywhere and the focus has shifted to health and safety like never before. As the industry heads towards this new direction, the fitness enthusiasts are sitting on the fence — anxious to return yet nervous. "Gyms will have to reassure their members that they have taken all the preventive measures to safeguard them from unnecessary exposure. In Unlocked 3.0, a contactless gym experience with integrated technology at the core of reopening strategy is the only way forward to reduce the risk of any transmission," says Amaresh Ojha, Founder & CEO, Gympik. Every gym irrespective of their scale needs technology for a safer phased exit from the lockdown. "We have upgraded our software to offer a contactless all-in-one gym management to our clients. Be it app-based slot booking, contactless

member check-ins to touchless payments and virtual training, we are committed to supporting our fitness partners to bring back members safely - with minimum upheaval and complete peace of mind. We have also recently released an e-book - 'Gym owner's playbook to survive the Covid-19 challenge' to help the gym owners sail through the crisis," adds Ojha. While gym owners wait for the official guidelines from the government, many of them have modified their SOPs and trained staff on all Covid proof safety and sanitization plans. But getting back to the business at this time may seem like starting afresh, feels Arun Chaudhary, Gym Owner, Sweat Fitness. "We support stringent safety standards at the gym. We have put in place a lot of protocols with the help of technology to ensure social distancing is maintained and each member gets a healthy workout space." "Things have changed completely for us in Unlocked 3.0. Unlike earlier, members can't simply walk into the gym," he said. Viraj Ramesh Trivedi, Gym Owner, Mickey Mehta's Gym Borivali conducted by V.R. Fitness, said, "We have eliminated the biometric access control with a simple touchless QR code-based mobile check-in via our member app."

SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT SEARCHED FOR 'PAINLESS DEATH' ON INTERNET

Late actor Sushant Singh Rajput, who was found hanging at his Bandra residence on July 14, had googled several words related to death and mental disorder towards the end, said Mumbai police on Monday.

Sushant searched for words like "painless death", "schizophrenia" and "bipolar disorder" on Google, according to Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh.

Commissioner Singh revealed these details while interacting with the press on Monday. Sharing the information, celebrity photographer Viral Bhayani posted on Instagram: "Commissioner Param Bir Singh today revealed few things to the press."

"Sushant would search for articles and his name on Google to

find out what was being written about him. He would also search for "painless death", "schizophrenia" and "bipolar disorder". During the press conference, the Mumbai Police Commissioner also said, "All bank statements from January 2019 to June 2020 have been analysed. There were around Rs 14.5 crore credit in the account." The top cop also mentioned that there is a fixed deposit of 4 crores too.

"Till now statements of 56 people have been recorded, all angles are being investigated be it a professional rivalry, financial transactions or health. It has come to surface that he had bipolar disorder, he was undergoing treatment and taking medicines for it. What circumstances led to his death is the subject of our investigation," he said.

Bihar cop heading Sushant probe forcibly quarantined

Bihar Poice IPS officer Vinay Tiwari who has been tasked with heading the probe into actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case by DGP Gupteshwar Pandey has been quarantined by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation hours after he arrived in the city to expedite the investigation.

Bihar DGP Pandey has tweeted that Tiwari was forcibly quarantined on Sunday even before the IPS officer could initiate his probe.

Pandey tweeted, "IPS officer Vinay Tiwari arrived Mumbai today on official duty to lead his police team from Patna but he was forcibly

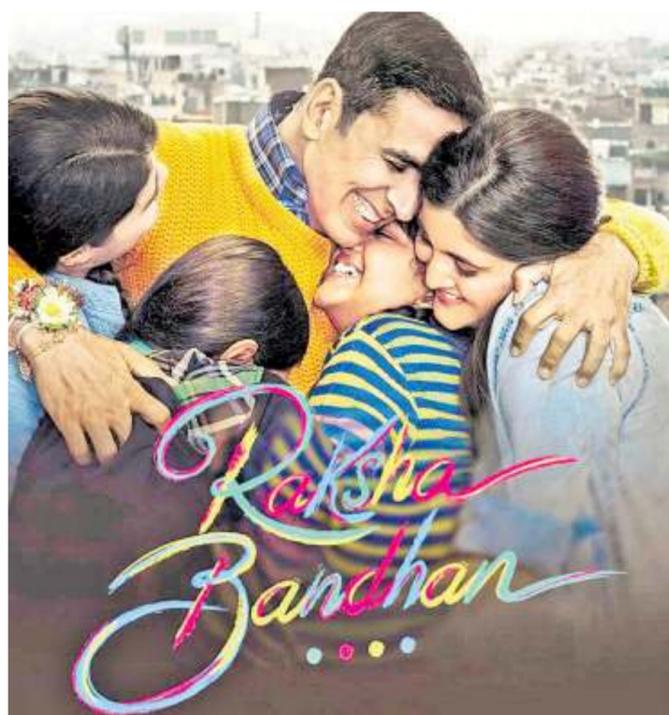
quarantined by the BMC officers at around 11 p.m. Earlier, he was not given a place in the IPS mess when he said that he is staying in a guest house in Goregaon."

Tiwari arrived in Mumbai on Sunday afternoon. He was received at the airport by his four colleagues, who have been in the city for the past few days trying to make headways into the probe that has been with the city police for the last over 45 days.

At the airport itself, Tiwari had said that the investigation into Sushant's death was moving in the right direction.

He then went to a guest house in Goregaon with the other four where he had a long chat with them. On Monday, he was to meet DCP Abhishek Trimukhe of Bandra Zone-9. Trimukhe is looking after the case.

Now, Tiwari will be quarantined till August 15. The BMC, however, did not disclose his whereabouts.



Akshay Kumar announces new film Raksha Bandhan, dedicates it to sister Alka

On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, Akshay Kumar has announced his new film titled Raksha Bandhan, which will celebrate the 'most special bond in the world'. The actor dedicated the film, that will be directed by Aanand L Rai and written by Himanshu Sharma, to his sister Alka. The actor is also collaborating with Rai for Atrangi Rai, co-starring Dhanush and Sara Ali Khan.

Sharing the news on Twitter, Akshay said that Raksha Bandhan was the 'quickest' he has ever said yes to a film. "A story that touches your heart so deeply & so instantly, it's the quickest I've signed a film in my career. Dedicating this film, #RakshaBandhan to my sister, Alka & to the

most special bond in the world...that of a brother and sister. Thank you @aanandrai, this one is very special," he wrote. The film will be presented by Alka and Rai.

"Directed by @aanandrai. Written by #HimanshuSharma. Produced by #ColourYellowProductions @cypplOfficial in association with #CapeOfGoodFilms. Presented by #AlkaHiranandani & Aanand L Rai, in theatres on 5th November 2021. #SirBehneDetiHai100Per centReturn," he added in another tweet.

In 2017, Alka revealed the 'greatest gift' that Akshay (whom she affectionately calls 'Raju'), gave her. She said in a video, "Mummy-Daddy would insist that if I had to stay out late or attend a late night party then I'd

have to ask Raju to accompany me. He would never go with me and always say, 'You have to take care of your own safety.' And I would be like, 'Why?'" She added that she missed many parties because of this.

Alka talked about the void in their lives when their father passed away and how Akshay 'quietly' took over his responsibilities. However, he continued to maintain that she should be able to take care of herself.

It was only when Alka's daughter Simar grew up and went to the US for higher studies that she realised the importance of what Akshay would say. "This has been the greatest gift my brother has given to me and my daughter - The strength to be self-sufficient. Thank you, Raju. I love you," she said.



FUN

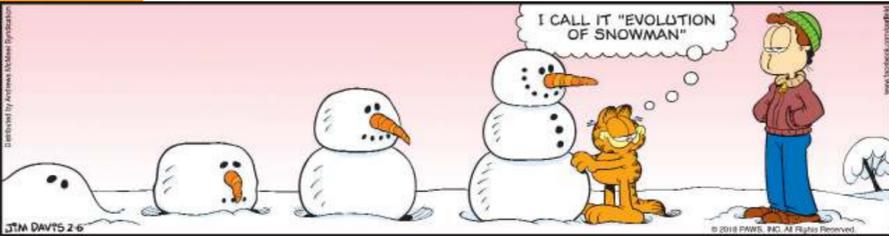
ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



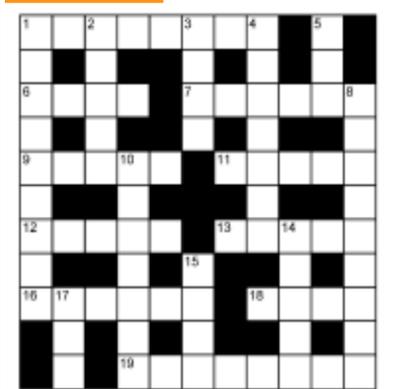
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

4	2	9	8	1	7	6	3	5
1	8	5	9	6	3	4	7	2
3	6	7	5	4	2	1	9	8
6	5	3	1	8	9	2	4	7
2	7	4	3	5	6	8	1	9
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7	4	6	2	3	8	9	5	1
5	3	2	6	9	1	7	8	4
8	9	1	4	7	5	3	2	6

- Rules
- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
 - The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- A tank for live fish
- Mix this with yellow to get green
- Stopped doing something
- A pale purple colour
- A crown-wearing woman
- A female relation
- Workers sit at these in offices
- Hot coals left after a fire
- A list of restaurant meals
- People who work in classrooms

DOWN

- An emergency vehicle
- Normal



Vishnu to play sibling to Kajal in **MOSAGALLU**

When it comes to playing each other's love interest, it is a known fact that every actor and actress is chosen to radiate the right chemistry. But when it comes to on-screen siblings, very few actors have managed to share glorious chemistry on screen as brother and sister.

In the forthcoming Hollywood-Indian project *Mosagallu*, the two talented lead actors Vishnu Manchu and Kajal Aggarwal are being paired as siblings in the movie and share fantastic chemistry. They hope to portray a never-seen-before sibling pair.

Kajal Aggarwal, the actress known for her commitment to her roles in the movies she works, went through a special workshop for *Mosagallu*. "Familial relations in Indian movies are rare when it comes to a leading actor or an actress playing siblings on-screen," says a close source. It's very rare to see star lead actors being paired as siblings in movies. Very few actors like Sharukh Khan and Aishwarya Rai in *Josh* and down south legendary actors NTR and Savitri played each other's siblings onscreen.

The movie which is based on one of the biggest I.T scams in history is currently under-post production.

Bollywood actor Suniel Shetty, Ruhi Singh, Naveen Chandra, and Navdeep are playing very important roles in the film.

Jeffrey Gee Chin from Los Angeles is donning the director's hat for *Mosagallu*.

Talented Hollywood cinematographer Sheldon Chau is said to be pushing his own limits for *Mosagallu*. Produced by Vishnu Manchu under 24 Frames Factor in association with AVA Entertainment, the film was originally scheduled for a worldwide release this summer; but couldn't happen as planned due to the pandemic. The revised date for its release is expected to be announced soon.



Celebs going green with #GreenIndiaChallenge

Accepting her co-star from the film *Ee Nagarani Emaindi* Abhinav Gomatam's #GreenIndiaChallenge, actress Simran Choudhary planted saplings at her home in Kompally on Monday. The actress further nominated her friends including playback singer Vedala Hemachandra, Shreya Rap, Sri Nitish among others, to take up the challenge. She also urged her fans and followers to do their bit to make this world a greener place to live. Actor Rupesh Kumar too, of 22 fame, took part in the #GreenIndiaChallenge and planted a sapling in his garden on the occasion of his birthday. He thanked Rajya Sabha MP Joginpally Santosh Kumar for the great initiative, while also asking fans on twitter to take up the challenge.



Shweta Basu Prasad: My brother and I are like friends

Actress Shweta Basu Prasad has revealed her Raksha Bandhan plans this year. Shweta said that her brother Rahul is good at gifting and the siblings are very close.

"My brother and I are like friends. We both love mithai but we are also health conscious so we try to feed each other mithai (sweets) because we know we are not supposed to be having," she said.

The *Kotha Bangarulokam* actress is also happy that her play is being slated for Raksha Bandhan. The play is available on Tata Sky Theatre.

She said, "In the play, I have a lot of relationships but the one between my brother and me is one of the most beautiful relationships."

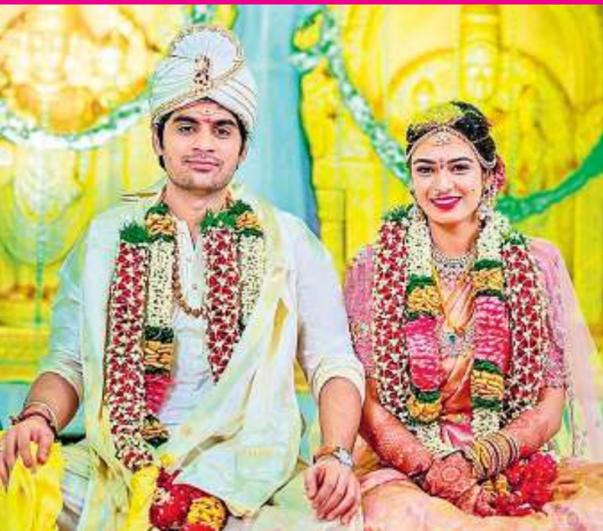
Saaho director Sujeeth ties the knot

After actors Nikhil Siddharth and Nithiin, another personality from the Telugu film industry has tied the knot during the lockdown. *Saaho* director Sujeeth Reddy got hitched to fiancée Pravallika over the weekend in Hyderabad. It was a close-knit ceremony with only family members in attendance.

Photos from the mehendi event and wedding are doing the rounds on social media. While the 29-year-old director opted for a traditional dhoti and kurta for his big day, the bride looked beautiful in a pink zari saree. Pravallika is a dentist by profession.

On June 10, the couple got engaged in an intimate ceremony. They were in a relationship for the past few years. While the engagement took place at a hotel in Hyderabad, the wedding happened at a private resort in the outskirts of the city.

Sujeeth made his directorial debut with *Run Raja Run* at the age of 23. Starring Sharwanand, Seerat Kapoor and Adivi Sesh in lead roles, the comedy-thriller was a success. His second film was the highly anticipated *Saaho* with big names from the Indian film industry — Prabhas, Shraddha Kapoor, Jackie Shroff, Neil Nitin Mukesh, Arun Vijay, Chunky Panday, Tinnu Anand and others.



Bigg Boss 4 contestants under quarantine

Here's big news on one of the most awaited announcements on the small screen for Telugu audiences. The most controversial yet loved show Bigg Boss is back on Star Maa with its 4th season!

Being one of the costliest reality shows for Telugu audiences, like always, there is huge buzz regarding the show.

The announcement was made recently by Star Maa that the reality show will hit the screens soon. Not very long ago, Tollywood actor Nagarjuna shot for the promo of the show as well.

According to the latest update, 16 participants have been finalized for the show out of the filtered 30 candidates. All the 16 participants have undergone COVID-19 tests and tested negative. As a precautionary measure, they are have been put under quarantine under the supervision of the Bigg Boss management.

They will be tested again right before the show begins and only then they will enter the sets of Bigg Boss. The show is going to start on August 30 at a grand level and the promo is expected to be out in a couple of days.

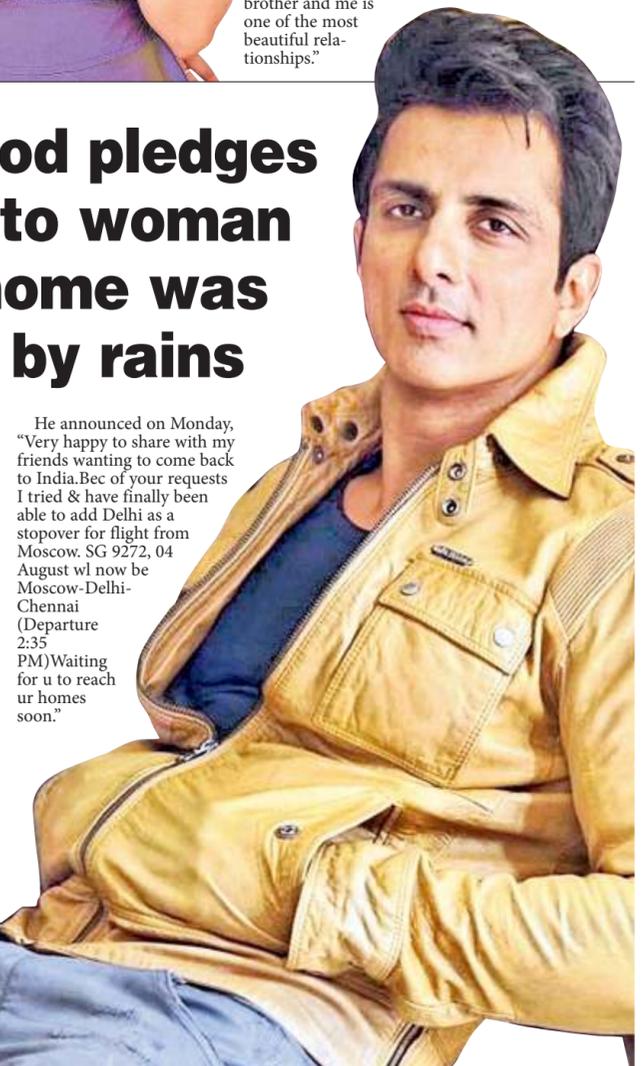
Sonu Sood pledges support to woman whose home was ravaged by rains

Actor Sonu Sood has pledged support for a family in West Bengal, whose home was ravaged by the rains. A Twitter user brought Sonu's attention to the family's plight.

Sharing a video on Twitter, the person wrote in Hindi, "Sonu Sood sir, this family is in Jalpaiguri. The woman's husband is dead. She has a small child but nothing to feed it. The rains have added to their woes. You are her last hope. Please save this family if you can, Sonu sir."

The actor replied to the tweet, and wrote, "Let's help our sister out on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. Let's build her a new house."

Sonu's gesture was met with warm appreciation by his fans. The actor has already found immense love for his sustained efforts to help migrants and the poor during the lockdown period. He started by arranging for buses and trains for migrant workers, and has now begun arranging flights for those stranded overseas. Priyanka Chopra recently called him an inspiration.



He announced on Monday, "Very happy to share with my friends wanting to come back to India. Bec of your requests I tried & have finally been able to add Delhi as a stopover for flight from Moscow. SG 9272, 04 August w/ now be Moscow-Delhi-Chennai (Departure 2:35 PM) Waiting for u to reach ur homes soon."

Most Read NEWS

Dadar gets female figures on signage

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has installed signs at a traffic junction in the Dadar area of Mumbai with female figures to promote gender equality in the city. Maharashtra's environment and tourism minister Aaditya Thackeray shared photos of the newly-installed signs at the junction in Dadar on Twitter Saturday. "If you have passed by Dadar, you will see something that will make you feel proud. @mybmcWardGN is ensuring gender equality with a simple idea - the signals now have women too," he tweeted. According to reports, Mumbai's civic body will change road signs and pedestrian signals at 13 junctions on Cadell Road, a 4.5-km arterial stretch in Mumbai's Dadar and Mahim. This road has Siddhivinayak Temple, Mahim dargah, Mahim church, BR Ambedkar's memorial Chhatyabhoomi and the proposed site for the memorial of Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray. The initiative has made Mumbai the first Indian city to have female symbols on road signages. Many cities in Germany and the Netherlands and Switzerland's Geneva already have female signs on traffic lights. Authorities in Australia's Melbourne have been using female figures to promote gender equality since 2017.



UK considering coin to commemorate Gandhi

The United Kingdom is considering minting a coin to commemorate India's independence hero Mahatma Gandhi, amid growing interest in recognising the contributions of people from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) communities. UK's Finance Minister Rishi Sunak asked the Royal Mint Advisory Committee (RMAC) in a letter to pursue recognition of individuals from those communities, the UK Treasury said in an emailed statement late on Saturday. "RMAC is currently considering a coin to commemorate Gandhi", the Treasury said. Gandhi, who was born in 1869, advocated for non-violence throughout his life and played a key role in India's struggle for independence. His birthday, October 2, is observed as the International Day of Non-Violence. Often referred to as India's "father of the nation", he was assassinated by a Hindu radical on January 30, 1948, just a few months after he led India to freedom from British rule. As part of a global reassessment of history, colonialism and racism triggered by the death in May of a Black man, George Floyd, in the United States after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes, some British institutions have begun re-examining their past.



Magazine cover signed by Steve Jobs sold for \$16k

Apple and Steve Jobs related memorabilia have always found a special place among the collectors. These artefacts have fetched thousands of dollars in the past. Earlier this week, another such memorabilia fetched over \$16,000 (₹11.99 lakhs approximately) in an auction. A Fortune magazine cover signed by late Apple founder Steve Jobs went on auction earlier this week on Nate D Sanders auction site at a starting price of \$11,000. It was sold at a price of \$16,638. What's special about this magazine cover, other than the fact that it is signed by the legendary Apple founder is the back story associated with it. According to the auction site, the magazine signed by Steve Jobs is the Fortune magazine cover from 9 October 1989 issue. It was published shortly after the launch of Jobs' new company NeXT. "Jobs signs in black ink, 'To Terry / Steve Jobs', with his characteristic lower case signature, next to a photo of the charismatic technology icon," the auction site wrote. The auction site shared that the recipient, Terry, was one of Jobs' chauffeur drivers for several years before asking Jobs to sign this magazine. Although Jobs signed the magazine cover, he subsequently called the limousine company to complain about the autograph request.



NASA crew back to earth in first splashdown in 45 years

Two NASA astronauts returned to Earth on Sunday in a dramatic, retro-style splashdown, their capsule parachuting into the Gulf of Mexico to close out an unprecedented test flight by Elon Musk's SpaceX company. It was the first splashdown by US astronauts in 45 years, with the first commercially built and operated spacecraft to carry people to and from orbit. The return clears the way for another SpaceX crew launch as early as next month and possible tourist flights next year. Test pilots Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken arrived back on Earth in their SpaceX Dragon capsule named Endeavour, less than a day after departing the International Space Station and two months after blasting off from Florida. The capsule parachuted into the calm gulf waters about 40 miles off the coast of Pensacola, hundreds of miles from Tropical Storm Isaias pounding Florida's Atlantic coast. "Welcome back to planet Earth and thanks for flying SpaceX," said Mission Control from SpaceX headquarters. "It's a little bit overwhelming to see everybody here considering the things that have gone on the last few months since we've been off planet," Hurley said after arriving back home in Houston Sunday evening where they were greeted by a small masked-gathering of family and officials.



GENOA RETAIN SERIE A PLACE

AP ■ ROME

Genoa secured safety on the final day of the longest-ever Serie A season, while Lecce dropped down to the second division.

Genoa beat Hellas Verona 3-0 to finish four points ahead of Lecce and ensure a 14th consecutive season in the top Italian league on Sunday.

Lecce lost 4-3 to Parma, Brescia and Spal had already been mathematically relegated.

LONGEST SEASON

The coronavirus-delayed season ended almost 12 months after it started on Aug. 24, 2019.

"The longest season in history ends today, in our country's most difficult year in recent memory," said Vincenzo Spadafora, Italy's sports minister. At the start of the lockdown in March, Italy was the epicenter of the pandemic in Europe and has now registered more than 35,000 deaths from COVID-19.

"During those weeks we really thought that the season should be stopped," Spadafora said.

"But thanks to the series of precautions we took and the seriousness of the protocols put in place by the Italian soccer federation, the season was not only able to restart but also be completed."

Due to the virus, the season was suspended for more than three months between March and June.

Juventus sealed a record-extending ninth straight title last weekend.



Genoa players celebrate at the end of the match with coach Davide Nicola after a serie A football match between Lecce and Parma

GENOA SAFE

Antonio Sanabria scored twice for Genoa, which also got a goal from Cristian Romero. Still, it was a nervous finish with Genoa losing

two players to red cards and ending with nine men to Verona's 10.

Lecce, which needed to win and hope that Genoa didn't, fought back from two goals down to equalize by

halftime. But then Andreas Cornelius and Roberto Inglese restored Parma's two-goal lead before Gianluca Lapadula pulled one back for Lecce.

OTHER RESULTS

Udinese beat eighth-place Sassuolo 1-0, Fiorentina defeated last-place Spal 3-1 to finish 10th, and Bologna drew 1-1 with Torino.

Talent is not the problem in our country, says Chhetri

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Birthday boy and iconic Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri on Monday said talent is not the problem in the country and all stakeholders need to ensure that the next crop of players are well looked after.

"Talent is not the problem here. We could have plenty of Olympic gold medals. I know how hard the AIFF works to get a bigger pool of players. It is very important to give the young talented players the right food, training and so on. When all this is done, it can be a monumental growth," Chhetri, who turned 36 on Monday, said during the E-Delhi summit organised by Football Delhi to celebrate the occasion of his birthday.

All India Football Federation (AIFF) President Praful Patel lauded the Government of Odisha for setting an example of how a state government can help sports thrive in a particular region.

"I think states like Odisha need to be commended. They have actively supported every sport. That is something that other state governments should follow too," Patel said. Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, AFC General Secretary Dato Windsor John, Jagdish Mitra, Chief Strategic Officer, Tech Mahindra, Football Delhi President Shaji Prabhakaran were also present in the virtual meet, as was talismanic captain Chhetri.

Patel, during the discussion highlighted the progress that the All India Football Federation has made forward together over the last decade.



"We have come a long way. Globally FIFA now acknowledges that Indian football has to be supported and strengthened for the sport to grow in the region. FIFA and AFC have made it clear that football has to be commercially viable and it has to support the overall ecosystem around it," he opined.

"That is why it is important to professionalise the sport. The I-League was the first step towards that. Now, the ISL has taken it further and made more additions to Indian football."

Sports Minister Rijiju lauded the AIFF for bringing FIFA events to India (2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup and the 2021 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup).

"I complement AIFF for engaging with FIFA to bring this tournament. With such tournaments being hosted in India we will have a brilliant situation where the sport will further mature," he said. "We will ensure that the U-17 Women's World Cup is one of the most successful FIFA events in India."

India get easy draw in Thomas & Uber Cup final

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India have been handed relatively easy draws in the twice rescheduled Thomas and Uber Cup Finals slated to be held from October 3 to 11 in Aarhus, Denmark.

The Indian men's team has been placed in Group C alongside 2016 champions Denmark, Germany and Algeria, while the women's side has been clubbed with 14-time winners China, France and Germany in group D in the draw which was staged at BWF headquarters in Kuala Lumpur on Monday.

Both the men's and women's team are seeded fifth in the tournament, according to the BWF release. Indonesia, 13-time former champions, and six-time former winner Japan will headline as the top seeds for the Thomas Cup and Uber Cup respectively.

The prestigious event was originally scheduled to be held from May 16-24 but was postponed to August 15-23 before finally rescheduling it in

October due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

No tournament has been possible since BWF had shut down their World Tour and other sanctioned tournaments following the completion of the All-England in March due to the global health crisis.

BWF Chief Operating Officer Stuart Borrie said: "We acknowledge the many disruptions this year to our calendar but we would like to assure you that the BWF continues to monitor the ongoing developments surrounding COVID-19 and to plan for a safe return to international badminton."

"We trust everyone within the badminton community is keeping safe and well and preparing for the return to international competition."

In Thomas and Uber Cup Final, the top two teams in each group at the end of the group stage will make it to the knock-out round.

The Indian men's and women's teams had failed to reach the knockout stage in the last edition in 2018.

Ramandeep inspiration for young players: Arshdeep

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian junior men's hockey team core probable Arshdeep Singh wants to take a leaf out of senior player Ramandeep Singh's book on how to manage injuries in his bid to seal a place in the national side.

The 19-year-old Singh missed out on the Six-Nation Championship in Spain last year due to a knee injury. He is inspired by the way Indian men's hockey team forward Ramandeep has dealt with injuries in his international career.

"It was really disappointing to miss out on the Six-Nation Championship in Spain last year. However, I have realized that injuries will be a part and parcel of any sportsperson's career. I look up to the way Ramandeep Singh has dealt with injuries in his career," Singh said.

"He (Ramandeep) is an inspiration for all young hockey players in India. One needs a lot of determination to come back from injuries and now I know how important it is to ensure that I keep checking



on how my body is reacting in every situation," said the young forward in a Hockey India release.

Singh, who has attended several junior men's national coaching camps, said he has been focussing on his fitness in the last few months.

"The last few months have been a huge challenge for all of us. However, I have taken the time to focus on my fitness. I know I am close to receiving an opportunity to play for Indian junior men's team in the near future and I don't want to miss the chance due to an injury."

"I have been practicing yoga to become mentally stronger as well. I have to be

absolutely ready to grab my opportunities whenever they are presented to me," said Singh.

Talking about his future goals, Singh said there is nothing bigger than playing for the country. "Playing for senior team is always going to be my biggest goal. However, I have to first perform at the junior level and get recognized as a skilful player. I will keep working towards my goal in whichever way I can."

"I am sure one day I will walk out on the pitch with the senior Indian team. I will work very hard to ensure that I get a chance to contribute to India's famous victories in the future."

Swann criticises selectors for dropping Broad

PTI ■ LONDON

Former off-spinner Graeme Swann has slammed selectors for splitting England's most successful new-ball pairing of Stuart Broad and James Anderson during the recently-concluded Test series against the West Indies, saying "you don't discard blokes with 500 Test wickets lightly".

England paid the price for dumping Broad in the first Test as they lost by four wickets at Southampton. With Jofra Archer missing the second Test due to a bio-secure breach, Broad returned to take six wickets as England bounced back with a 113-run win. In the third Test, Broad was awarded the man of the match after he took 10 wickets to cross the 500-wicket mark and also scored a crucial 62 with the bat as England sealed the series with a 269-run win.

The experienced Anderson, on the other hand, was included in the first Test but rested in the second match before finally joining his long-time partner Broad in the third Test.

"How stupid did it look to break up England's most successful bowling partnership of all-time when we lost that first Test match?" Swann, who has taken 255 wickets in 60 Tests, was quoted as saying by 'Mirror.Co.UK'.

"Jimmy and Broady have formed one of the most-successful bowling double acts Test cricket has known. Why would you want to chuck it out



before its sell-by date? I can understand the attraction of 90mph pace, and both Jofra and Woody are huge assets."

"But I'm sorry, you don't discard blokes with 500 Test wickets lightly," Swann said.

Broad and Anderson have captured 1,090 wickets between them, with 895 of those scalps coming in the 117 Tests they have played together.

"Jimmy and Broady go together like Morecambe and Wise or Bonnie and Clyde," Swann said.

Swann, a three-time Ashes winner, added that England should not mess with the two experienced bowlers and give them an equal opportunity to try and make it to the 2021 Ashes in Australia.

Trott appointed Poms batting coach

PTI ■ LONDON



Former batsman Jonathan Trott has been appointed England's batting coach for the upcoming three-Test series against Pakistan, starting Wednesday.

The 39-year-old, who scored 3835 runs in 52 Tests between 2009-2015 for England, will be joined by former New Zealand spinner Jeetan Patel and Warwickshire seamer Graeme Welch, the 'BBC' reported.

Trott, who played 68 ODIs and seven T20 matches, has scored 18,662 runs in first class cricket.

England and Pakistan will lock horns in a three-match Test series starting Wednesday at the Old Trafford in Manchester, followed by the next two games in the Ageas Bowl in Southampton.

Azhar, Babar aim to make progress in rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

Skipper Azhar Ali and his Deputy Babar Azam will be aiming to move up the ladder in the ICC Test rankings when Pakistan take on England in the three-match series starting on Wednesday.

According to latest rankings, Azhar, presently 27th among batsmen, will be hoping to regain the form that lifted him to a career-best sixth in December 2016,

while Babar will be hoping to progress from a career-best aggregate of 800 rating points.

Babar is currently sixth after having occupied a career-high fifth place in February. Asad Shafiq (18th) and Shan Masood (33rd) are other Pakistan batsmen to have enjoyed higher rankings in the past but will have to contend with a sharp bowling attack in order to move up again.



In the bowling department, pacer Mohammad Abbas (13th) and experienced leg-spinner Yasir Shah

(24th), who have in the past, been ranked third and first, respectively, and left-arm fast bowler Shaheen Afridi (32nd) are other Pakistan players to watch.

For England, Stokes displaced West Indies captain Jason Holder from the top of the all-rounders' list during their last series and formerly top-ranked Broad rose to third position in the bowlers' list, currently led by Australia fast bowler Pat Cummins.

Woakes happy being away from the spotlight

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

Pacer Chris Woakes on Monday is happy staying away from the spotlight and says he just wants to churn out match-winning performances for England.

Woakes' performances often go unnoticed as the likes of Stuart Broad, James Anderson and Jofra Archer steal the spotlight.

"I honestly really don't mind. I'm not one for being centre of attention," Woakes was quoted as

saying by 'Sky Sports'. "Don't get me wrong, I want to go out on the field and perform and I want to make match-winning performances for England but it really doesn't bother me if I'm first choice to write about or not, to be brutally honest," he added.

The 31-year-old, who has 106 wickets from 35 Tests, feels while he can't join compatriots James Anderson and Broad in the 500 wickets elite club, he still has a lot

to offer. "My stats have been mentioned and they're very good in England, I want to keep working on those, keep improving on them and making them as good as they can be," Woakes said.

"At my age and where I am now at 31, it's unlikely that I'm going to go on and get 500 Test wickets like Jimmy and Broady but I still want to go on and get as many as I

can individually. "I still feel like I can provide really good services to England for many more years to come so I'm happy with how it works and as long as I continue to be able to represent England then I'll be happy," Woakes added. England are in a unique situation with all their pacers fit to play resulting in an intense competition between the speedsters to start the match.

