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Sachin Pilot's ghar wapsi

As face-saver for Raj ex-Dy CM, Cong forms panel to look into issues flagged by him

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA/PNS
NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

The month-long crisis in Rajasthan Congress ended on Monday after rebel leader Sachin Pilot opted for an "unconditional" truce and his MLAs left for Jaipur from Manesar in Haryana.

The breakthrough was worked out by Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, who met Pilot two weeks ago. The process of reconciliation was set in motion in that meeting. Pilot completed the formality of his "home coming" by calling on Rahul Gandhi and later announcing his commitment to work for strengthening the Congress.

For a "face saver" Pilot was offered a three-member committee that would look into the issues flagged by him regarding the functioning of the Rajasthan Government and Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's



style of governance.

KC Venugopal, Ahmed Patel and Priyanka Gandhi are part of the committee set up by Sonia Gandhi to address grievances of Sachin Pilot and his supporters.

Late at night, Pilot and his supporting MLAs, who were camping in a hotel in Manesar, arrived at Rahul

Gandhi's residence where Priyanka, Congress organisational general secretary KC Venugopal and Ahmad Patel were present. The MLAs are believed to have conveyed their grievance to the Gandhis, who promised to look into them.

Talking to the reporters — his first media interaction after he rebelled against Gehlot —

Pilot said, "Sonia Gandhiji heard all our concerns and the governance issues that we raised. Formation of the three-member committee by the Congress president is a welcome step. I think all the issues will be resolved."

Pilot kept repeating that he was only trying to raise issues about governance and functioning of the Government and there was nothing personal in his action against anyone.

Throughout his press interaction, he never named Gehlot but expressed dismay on name calling and invectives hurled on him.

KC Venugopal said Sachin Pilot expressed his grievances in detail. "They have had a frank, open and conclusive discussion. Sachin Pilot has committed to working in the interest of the Congress party and the Congress Government in Rajasthan," he said.

With at least 5-6 of the 18

MLAs supporting him not ready to risk expulsion and the BJP not in a position to help him achieve his objective to topple the Gehlot Government because of lukewarm response from former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, Pilot has few options but to return "home" unconditionally.

Sources said his meeting with Rahul was arranged by Priyanka at Rahul's residence, where both the Gandhis had "meaningful" discussion with Pilot.

Sources said after Pilot left Rahul and Priyanka, met Sonia to discuss the latest developments following which Sonia called on Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot over phone. Gehlot reportedly assured Sonia Gandhi that he will not defy the party irrespective of the decision it takes on Pilot. He left the matter to Sonia and Rahul to resolve.

Continued on Page 6

Pranab tests Covid positive, flooded with 'get well soon'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former President of India Pranab Mukherjee has tested positive for Covid-19 and admitted to the Army's Research and Referral (R&R) Hospital here.

"On a visit to the hospital for a separate procedure, I have tested positive for Covid-19 today," 84-year-old Mukherjee tweeted.

"I request the people who came in contact with me in the last week, to please self-isolate and get tested for Covid-19," the Congress leader, who was the President from 2012-17, said.

Mukherjee on Monday underwent a brain surgery at the Army's Research and Referral hospital for removal of a clot, sources said.

Several leaders wished a speedy recovery to Mukherjee. "We wish former President Pranab Mukherjee a speedy recovery from Covid," the

Ex-Prez was in hospital for brain surgery



Congress said on its official Twitter handle.

Abhijeet Mukherjee, the son of the former President, also tweeted, "I wish my father a speedy recovery! I appeal to all my countrymen to pray for his speedy recovery & good health." Several leaders

from across the political spectrum also wished him a speedy recovery.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot tweeted, "I have come to know former President of India Pranab Mukherjee has tested positive for Covid-19...concerned about his health. Wish him a speedy recovery."

"Wishing Pranab Mukherjee a speedy recovery. I am sure he will be out of this sooner than later," said Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge. Union Minister Piyush Goyal also wished good health for Mukherjee, and said he is confident that the former President will quickly recover from the virus.

Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi said, "Astonishing and matter of concern that former President Pranab Mukherjee tested positive for Covid per press reports. Very active, regular walker, wish him quick recovery and restful convalescence."

629 more test +ve in city

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow reported 629 more coronavirus positive cases, taking the tally to 13,390, while the COVID-19 death toll reached 149 with eight more people losing the fight against the dreaded virus.

Meanwhile, the state's coronavirus tally crossed the 1.26 lakh-mark as 4,197 more people tested positive while 51 more COVID-19 patients died, pushing the death toll to 2,120.

A senior official at the Lucknow CMO office said that in the last 24 hours, 29 people tested positive in Gomtinagar, 25 in Alambagh, 23 in Aliganj, 21 each in Chinhat and Hasanganj 18 each in Indiranagar and Hazratganj, 15 in Jankipuram, 14 in Mahanagar, 13 in Thakurganj, 17 in Naka, 15 in Cantonment, 11 in Madiyaon and 10 in Vikas Nagar.

He said that eight COVID-19 deaths in Lucknow included one in Mayo hospital, two each in Vidya and Integral hospitals,



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath administering vitamin A dose to a child while kicking off the National Worm Eradication Campaign in Lucknow on Monday.

and one each in TS Mishra, Make Well and KGMU hospitals.

With 373 patients being discharged from Covid hospitals in the last 24 hours, 6,904 coronavirus infected people have recovered in Lucknow and at present 6,337 active cases are undergoing treatment. Across the state, 4,197 people tested positive taking the tally to 1,26,722. Besides Lucknow, the dis-

tricts reporting high number of coronavirus cases were Kanpur Nagar where 269 people tested positive, followed by Gorakhpur (255), Prayagraj (223), Ghaziabad (148) and Noida (71).

As many as 4,078 COVID-19 patients were discharged from hospitals, taking the number of recovered people to 76,724. At present 4,7878 active cases are undergoing treatment in the state.

3 die of Covid at Tirupati, over 740 test positive

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Three staffers of the famous Lord Venkateswara temple in Tirumala, governed by the Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), have died of Covid-19 and at least 743 others have tested coronavirus positive since the temple re-opened on June 11 for the public after being close for two and a half months owing to the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

Of the 743 infected, three employees succumbed to the dreaded contagion and about 402 personnel have recovered so far from infection while 338 people were undergoing treatment at different Covid care facilities in Tirupati, TTD Executive Officer Anil Kumar Singhal told reporters.

Singhal denied reports in sections of the media and on social media that TTD had reopened the hill shrine after the coronavirus lockdown for the public with an intention to fill its coffers.

He said the ancient temple was reopened on requests from

devotees and entry was allowed by following strict Covid-19 measures.

About 22,000 people, including regular and out-sourced workers, are employed with the board. Tests have been conducted on 9,102 of these employees till now.

Meanwhile, 2.38 lakh devotees from across the country visited the Tirumala temple in July alone. No devotee, who visited the temple ever since it reopened for 'darshan', has tested positive for the positive,



according to media reports.

The TTD board has arranged screening facility for visitors at the foot of the hill and at other points. The board for the richest temple in the country received about ₹16.69 crore in Hundi collection and about ₹3.97 crore through e-Hundi.

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	5,24,513	18,050	3,58,421
Tamil Nadu	3,02,815	5,041	2,44,675
Andhra Pradesh	2,35,525	2,116	1,45,636
Karnataka	1,82,354	3,312	99,126
Delhi	1,46,134	4,131	1,31,657
Uttar Pradesh	1,26,722	2,120	76,724
West Bengal	98,459	2,100	70,328
Bihar	82,741	450	54,139
Telangana	80,751	637	57,586
Gujarat	72,120	2,672	55,376
Assam	61,738	151	42,326
Rajasthan	53,670	800	39,060
Odisha	47,455	337	33,021
Haryana	42,429	489	35,492
Madhya Pradesh	39,891	1,015	29,674
Kerala	35,515	116	22,616



A medic wearing a PPE collects samples from a woman for Covid-19 rapid antigen testing in Kolkata on Monday PTI

CAPSULE

UGC CHALLENGES DELHI MAHA CANCELLING EXAMS

New Delhi: The UGC in the Supreme Court on Monday questioned the decisions of Delhi and Maharashtra Governments to cancel final year exams of state universities amid the Covid-19 pandemic, saying they were against the rules.

COP KILLED AS TEEN RAMS CAR INTO PATROL VEHICLE

New Delhi: A constable was killed and another injured after a speeding car driven by an inebriated youth rammed into their patrolling vehicle in north Delhi in the early hours of Monday, police said.

MAHA: DIASBLED COW GETS ARTIFICIAL LEG

Pune: A disabled cow got a new lease of life after a team of doctors from a hospital here fitted an artificial leg, helping it to walk properly. A team led by Dr Salil Jain, head of prosthetics and orthotics department at Sancheti Hospital, made the artificial leg and fitted it to the cow from a shelter home on Pune-Solapur highway.

UP WOMAN GIVEN UP FOR DEAD COMES ALIVE

Amroha: An Amroha woman whose relatives were arrested for honour killing after she was declared dead by police over eight months ago has turned up alive. Police have reopened the case and the officer who had investigated the matter has been suspended, a senior officer said. Her father had lodged a complaint on February 6, 2019 that his daughter had gone missing.

Rhea, father, brother grilled for 8 hrs in money laundering probe

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday questioned actress Rhea Chakraborty, her brother Showik, their father Indrajit for the second time in a money laundering probe relating to the allegations of abetment of suicide of film star Sushant Singh Rajput.

The trio appeared at the ED's Mumbai office at 11 am as per the second summons issued by the agency against them, officials said, adding that their questioning continued till late in the evening.

Later, Shruti Modi, business manager of Rhea and Rajput, also joined the probe. All the four accused were also questioned by the ED on Friday.

In the second half, Rajput's friend and roommate Siddharth Pithani also arrived at the ED office for recording his statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. Pithani's statement was earlier recorded by the Mumbai Police as part of their accidental death case probe under CrPC in the alleged suicide case.

The ED confronted the accused with one another as also with discrepancies in their statements relating to Rhea's income and investments along with their banking transactions and IT returns.

Continued on Page 6



Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty and her brother Showik leave after a fresh round of questioning by ED in Mumbai on Monday PTI

Sushant death case blown out of proportion as elections are due in Bihar, Rhea tells SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

Actress Rhea Chakraborty on Monday told the Supreme Court the Sushant Singh Rajput death case has been blown out of proportion as elections are due in Bihar and claimed she was being subjected to media trial due to "constant sensationalisation" causing her "extreme trauma".

Chakraborty, 28, also submitted in an additional affidavit filed in the SC she should not be made "scapegoat of political

agendas" in the case, and alleged that Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is "reported" to be responsible for registration of the FIR in Patna against her. There was no immediate reaction from the Bihar Government.

She said the "constant sensationalisation" was causing extreme trauma and infringement of privacy of her rights came a day ahead of the next hearing of her plea for transfer of the Bihar police FIR against her from Patna to Mumbai.

Faesar quits politics; speculation rife about 2nd innings as IAS babu

His resignation in Jan 2019 has not been accepted yet

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Former IAS officer Shah Faesal, who had launched Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Movement (JKPM) in March 2019, stepped down from the post of the party president on Monday claiming he was not in a position to "continue with political activities".

Shah Faesal was detained in the second week of August 2019 at the IGI Airport in Delhi and was later sent back to the

Valley. Thereafter, he was detained under the Public Safety Act, which was revoked in the first week of June 2020. Since then he has remained confined to his home amid speculation that he may resume his bureaucratic career soon as his resignation has not been accepted so far.

Faesal had resigned in January 2019 to protest unabated killings in Kashmir and marginalisation of Indian Muslims.

The official website of the Jammu & Kashmir General Administration Department says, "The officer has submit-

ted his resignation which has been forwarded to the DOPT, GOI for acceptance". There is no mention whether his resignation has been accepted or not.

According to the statement issued by the JKPM, "The State Executive Committee of J&K Peoples Movement (JKPM) in an online meeting today discussed the ongoing political developments in the State. In the said meeting, the request of Dr Shah Faesal to spare him from the organisational responsibilities was discussed."

Continued on Page 6

NIA team in UAE to probe ₹14.82 cr Kerala gold smuggling

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A two-member National Investigation Agency (NIA) team has gone to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to probe the Kerala gold smuggling case.

The NIA team reached Dubai on Sunday night to investigate the sensational gold smuggling case and is expecting the UAE authorities to share more evidence on the involvement of Kerala officials in the scam, many of whom are suspected to have visited that country. The collection of evidence

from that country will further help in unravelling the larger racket involving Kerala officials.

"The NIA will interrogate one of the key accused in the case — Fazil Fareed — and a couple of more accused who have been taken into custody by the UAE authorities," agency officials said here.

The NIA took over probe into the case on July 10 in which the accused have been booked under stringent provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and other offences under the IPC. The key accused in the case

include Sarith PS, Swapna Prabha Suresh, Fazil Fareed and Sandeep Nair and others in connection with the seizure of 30 kg of 24 carat gold worth ₹14.82 crore at Trivandrum International Airport on July 5 by the Customs (Preventive) Commissionerate, Cochin.

The said consignment was found camouflaged in diplomatic baggage from UAE that is exempted from inspection as per the Vienna Convention. The consignment was to be received by accused Sarith PS who had worked in the UAE Consulate earlier as Public Relations Officer.

Rafale jets start practice sorties at LAC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The first five Rafale jets, which came to India last month, have started practice sorties to familiarise themselves with conditions in Himachal Pradesh, which shares the Line of Actual control (LAC) with China. After a few weeks, these jets are likely to fly in Ladakh where the standoff is on for the last three months between the Armies of India and China.

Based at the Ambala airbase after arriving from France on July 29, the five Rafales are going through their paces with intense flying day and night.

Continued on Page 6

Over 90% population covered under surveillance, contact tracing: CMO

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Over 90 per cent of the population of Lucknow has been covered under surveillance and contact tracing aimed at containing the spread of coronavirus, Chief Medical Officer Dr Rajendra Prasad Singh said on Monday. He said they were working on the same plan of testing and tracking and expecting the cases to come down in few days.

“Though the number of coronavirus cases is at 600-700 per day for some time now, we have attained a stationary level and it may decline in the coming days. Also, these high figures are because of the increased levels of testing being carried out in the district,” the CMO said.

He said death toll was rising because people were hiding the problem and not getting the elders tested but were giving them medicines prescribed by nearby doctors. “Covid-19 patients have to be necessarily taken to hospital at the earliest,” he said. However, he added that the death rate in the district was less than the national average.

On Monday, five patients died at KGMU on Monday. Spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh said that a 65-year-old woman from Chiragpur in Betiya, who was admitted on August 3, died on Monday. She was suffering from extrapulmonary tuberculosis. A 57-year-old man from Deoria also died on Monday. He suffered cardio-



A bylane in Harinagar area of Balaganj sealed after detection of coronavirus positive case

Pioneer

pulmonary arrest and brain hemorrhage. The third victim was a 60-year-old woman from Shahganj and she died of septicemia.

A 30-year-old woman from Saadatganj, who was admitted on August 6, also died on Monday due to acute respiratory distress while a 43-year-old woman from Kamtaganj (Sultanpur), who was admitted on August 9, died on Monday. She was suffering from diabetes and hypothyroidism.

Meanwhile, head of Transfusion Division (KGMU)

Dr Tulika Chandra said their stock of blood was depleting with no blood camps being held due to Covid-19.

“The blood we are giving to the Covid-19 patients is not being replaced as the number of patients is increasing. People are scared to donate blood because of the picture of community transmission which is emerging, which is also affecting our stock,” she said. She further said that among the efforts which they were making was that they were asking blood donors to come and individu-

ally give blood.

She said the patients who had recovered from coronavirus were also apprehensive of donating blood.

Meanwhile, incharge of ICU-1 (SGPGI) Dr Zia Hashim, while sharing the success stories of Covid patients in their ward, said: “There was one male patient who was admitted 15 days back. We started his medication immediately and then put him on non-invasive ventilation. He was on ventilation for five days and then he was shifted to the

high-flow oxygen and then we successively reduced the oxygen. Now, we have shifted him from ICU to the pulmonary ward and he will soon be discharged. The challenging part was that he was on the verge of intubation but because he got immediate therapies within 48 hours, his requirement of oxygen reduced considerably. The success part was that we were able to prevent him from going on ventilation.”

Regarding the youngest patient that they treated was a 23-year-old girl, who was on mechanical ventilation but was successfully retrieved. She also had some kidney problem,” he said.

He added that there were 22 patients in the ICU unit and four patients are were on high-flow oxygen. “Till now, plasma has been given to six people in the ward and four have survived,” he pointed out.

Meanwhile, spokesperson of RML Hospital Dr Sriresh Singh said they have had 18 deliveries of Covid-19 patients in the last two weeks, with 13 being normal deliveries and the rest being C-section.

He said some of these were patients who had tested positive at their own hospital while others were those who had been referred by the Integrated Control and Command Centre.

There are three hospitals working as referral centres for pregnant women, including KGMU, Lok Bandhu and RML hospitals.

Rly contractor staged attack on himself

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the arrest of four gunslingers, the Alambagh police claimed to have unravelled the mystery behind the attack on railway contractor Surendra Kaliya on Monday.

Kaliya's cavalcade was attacked in the evening on July 13 and his private gunner Ramroop Yadav of Etah had suffered injuries. Kaliya had later lodged a case against jailed mafia-turned-politician Dhananjay Singh.

In his initial statement, Kaliya had told the police that he got the track doubling work between Shahganj and Jafrabad

railway stations and was being threatened to let go of the contract. The police cross-checked Kaliya's claim and found it untrue. The needle of suspicion then turned towards Kaliya and the police suspected that staged the attack on himself to frame some of his rivals. The police got a lead and they later laid their hands on the suspects involved in the crime.

A team of police on Monday nabbed four persons, identified as Yashvendra Singh, Sachin Shukla and Sultan Ali (trio of Alambagh) and Ashish Kumar Dwivedi of Rae Bareilly. The accused owned up their crime during interrogation.

The team recovered three country-made pistols, 18 live cartridges and an SUV which they used as a getaway vehicle after executing the crime.

A police spokesman said the accused disclosed the name of one of their aides as Sumit Singh of Kailashpuri in Alambagh. Sumit was with the arrested persons in the SUV at the time of attack while two of the accused were still unidentified. “The unidentified accused had fled the scene on a bike and the police are working further on the case,” he said. He added that the complainant, Surendra Kaliya, was absconding and the police were hunting for him.



Janmashtami preparations at Alambagh police station on Monday

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Tipsy tenant attacks friends of landlord's son

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A tenant attacked two of the friends of his landlord's son at their house in Gomti Nagar Extension on Sunday night. He also thrashed the landlord's wife. Those injured were identified as Lalji and Shyamu (both of Chinhat), who were admitted to hospital. The police said they were hunting for the accused, identified as Subhash Rai, who lives in the house of Kishan Pal Tiwari of Lokpriya City.

As per reports, Subhash reached the house in a drunk state around 10 pm on

Sunday and started mouthing expletives. When landlord's wife Ashok Kumar confronted him, Subhash indulged into a verbal spat with her. As she called her son Shakti, the latter informed his friends Lalji and Shyamu. However, the issue subsided after a while and Ashok Kumar did not report the matter to police.

“Subhash reached my room and started abusing me. He caught me by my hand and twisted it. Lalji and Shyamu rushed to my rescue but Subhash attacked them with a knife,” Ashok Kumar told the police.

Meanwhile, four persons were arrested for bludgeoning to death their rival over a land dispute in Gosainganj on Sunday night. The deceased was identified as Bhai Lal (30) of Rakibabad locality in the area. Those arrested were identified as Phoolchand and his sons Nanhku, Sanjay & Santosh, and his brother-in-law Vishal. Bhai Lal is the nephew of Phoolchand.

As per reports, Bhai Lal had a dispute with Phoolchand over a piece of land which is located opposite their houses as both used to stake their claim on it. Around 9 pm on Sunday, Bhai Lal's

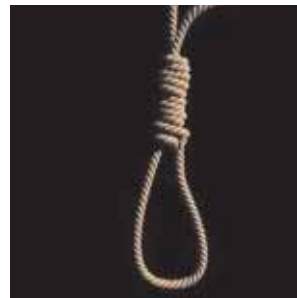
wife Nisha called her parents complaining that Phoolchand and his family were abusing her and her husband. On the information, her father Buddhu, along with his wife Nirmala and their daughter Ranjana, reached the village. They demanded an explanation from Phoolchand and it snowballed into a brawl, during which Bhai Lal suffered head injuries. He was rushed to hospital where he was declared brought dead.

Inspector, Gosainganj, DK Kushwaha said a case was registered and further investigation was underway. He said the police arrested all the

22-year-old girl found hanging

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 22-year-old girl ended her life after locking herself in a room at her house in Gudamba on Monday afternoon. As per reports, Kavya Verma of Chuiyapurwa locality was found hanging from the ceiling with a dupatta tied around her neck around Monday afternoon. When the doors were broken, the family found the music system on and a song was being played at high volume. Her father Rameshwar, who is a carpenter, told the police that Kavya went to the room around 11 am and bolted the door from inside. “She later switched on the music system. We thought she was practising



dance as would do in leisure. When she did not open the doors for over an hour and the music system was still on, we became apprehensive.

“Her mother gave her calls but she did not respond. It was hard to find what exactly happened to her, so we

Police said they recovered a suicide note in which she had written that nobody should be held responsible for her extreme step

broke open the doors, only to find her hanging from the ceiling,” Rameshwar said. The police said they recovered a suicide note in which she had written that nobody should be held responsible for her extreme step.

Meanwhile, upset over a verbal spat with his family

members, a youth attempted suicide by jumping into the river under Gomti Nagar police station area on Monday afternoon. However, police personnel present there pressed divers into action and the youth was rescued.

As per reports, the 25-year-old resident of Hussainganj reached the riverfront around 2 pm and jumped into the river after parking his scooter on the roadside. Divers pulled out the youth from the river and rushed him to hospital. He was later discharged from the hospital. Gomti Nagar SHO DK Singh said the youth was unhappy with his family over some issue and took the step due to the same reason.

New KGMU VC takes charge



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Gen Dr Vipin Puri took charge as new Vice-Chancellor of King George's Medical University on Monday. He held a meeting with Covid task force soon after taking charge where he gathered information on the facilities

available for Covid-19 patients and took stock of the current situation. Throwing light on the coordination of various committees, he said that collective efforts should be made in these times and responsibilities be discharged in a skilled manner. “Looking into the medical aspect, the priority of KGMU

will be to give high-quality treatment,” he said. The Vice-Chancellor will formally talk to mediapersons on Wednesday. Earlier, soon after his appointment on August 1 by Governor Anandiben Patel, he had stated that his primary goal would be to make KGMU a centre of excellence.

NSA slapped in Dr Ayub

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Lucknow police slapped National Security Act (NSA) on Peace Party's chairman and former MLA Dr Ayub, who is lodged in jail for getting an objectionable advertisement published in a newspaper. He was arrested from Gorakhpur a couple of days back by a police team of Hazratganj.

A spokesman said the police slapped NSA on Dr Ayub on the recommendation of the District Magistrate. “Ayub had got an advertisement published in an Urdu newspaper recently. The content of the advertisement was inflammatory and against the law of the country,” he said.

Ramayana Rangshala webinar organised

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Ramayana Rangshala webinar, organised by Ayodhya Shodh Sansthan of Culture department and Ramayana Centre (Bhopal), was attended by actors who had played a role in Ramayana, including Vinu Dara Singh who has played the role of Hanuman in many TV shows.

The webinar was chaired by joint director, Culture, Yogendra Pratap Singh. He proposed that a script of Ramlila should be prepared that impresses people of all age groups. Director of Ramayana Centre (Bhopal) Rajesh Srivastava said the centre is collecting all the old films based

THE WEBINAR WAS CHAIRED BY JOINT DIRECTOR, CULTURE, YOGENDRA PRATAP SINGH, WHO PROPOSED THAT A SCRIPT OF RAMLILA SHOULD BE PREPARED THAT IMPRESSES PEOPLE OF ALL AGE GROUPS

on Shodhmitra Ramayana of Bhopal, which is important for the encyclopedia being documented by the Culture department. He also discussed the script of Ramayana in films. Actor Raghuveer Yadav



said he listened to Ramayana as a child and its impact was great. He gave example of how the *chaupai* of Ramayana is sung on different occasions.

Raghuveer Yadav has sung songs of Ramayana in many

films and television serials. Vinu Dara Singh was present as special guest.

About Ramanand Sagar's creation of Ramayana, he said when Ramanand Sagar told his children that the Ramayana for TV was to be made, his children started laughing. Aslam Khan, who played various characters in Ramanand Sagar-produced Ramayana, said competitions should be organised to develop interest among children. He also narrated the dialogue of his character Samudra Devta, played in the Ramayana. Ramlila's young artiste Rajeshwar Sitohal in Mauritius discussed the status of Ramayana in Mauritius that introduced her to acting.



Women making purchases for Janmashtami at Sadar Bazaar on Monday

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बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा
Bank of Baroda

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Sale Notice for Immovable Properties "APPENDIX-IV-A (See Proviso to Rule 8(6))

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso of Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, Constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Bank of Baroda**, Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** basis for recovery of below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Assets/s/Dues/Reserve Price/E-Auction date & time, EMD and Bid increase Amount are mentioned below:

Date of Auction: 16.09.2020		Last Date of EMD Submission: 14.09.2020 upto 4.00 P.M.					
Sl.	Name & Address of the Borrower/Guarantors	Description of the Immovable Property with known encumbrances, if any	Total Dues	Date & Time of E-Auction	Reserve Price/EMD/Bid Increase Amount	Status of Possession (Constructive/Physical)	Property Inspection Date & Time
1.	Borrower- Mr Sanjeev Agarwal S/o Sri Kameshwar Nath and Lalita Agarwal W/o Sanjeev Agarwal	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of H. No D 2-4/32 Sector O, Mansarovar Yojana, Kanpur Road, Lucknow in Ward- Vidhyavati Devi Nagar within the Registration Sub-District Lucknow and District Lucknow, Bounded: North : 12mt Wide Road, South: Plot No 4/89, East: Plot No 4/33, West: Plot No 4/31	Rs. 37,50,465/- + Interest + other charges	16.09.2020 01:00 PM to 2:00 PM	70,52,000/- 7,05,200/- 10,000/- (Bid Increase Amount)	Constructive	11.08.2020 to 11.09.2020 between to 10:00 PM to 4:00 PM
2.	Borrower- Mrs Jarin Khan w/o Mohd Ahtram Khan and Mr Ahtram Khan S/o Wasiuz Zaman	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No-106, First Floor, BCC Gravity Apartment Situated at CP-14/CP/105, Avas evam Vikas Parishad, Rajajipuram, Near Tikait Rai Talab, Lucknow. Total Area 1000 Sq Ft. Bounded: North: Common Passage, South: Open to Sky, East: Flat No 105, West: Flat No 107	Rs. 3336150/- + Interest + other charges	16.09.2020 01:00 PM to 2:00 PM	31,50,000/- 3,15,000/- 10,000/- (Bid Increase Amount)	Constructive	11.08.2020 to 11.09.2020 between to 10:00 PM to 4:00 PM

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of Baroda secured website i.e. **www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm & https://ibapi.in**. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorised officer on Mobile No. 7565003608

Date: 10.08.2020, Place: Lucknow **Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda**

161 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 161 COVID-19 patients have been detected here on Monday. With this, the total number of cases has reached 4,716. Besides, the district also saw four more deaths increasing the toll to 85. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 131 patients recovered from home isolation and the total number of patients cured at home has increased to 1,443 while 44 recovered from the hospitals. With this, the total number of patients discharged from the hospitals has reached 1,487, while the total number of cured patients is 2,930 leaving 1,701 active patients.

According to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh, in the first report received by 11 am during the day, as many as 78 new corona patients were found out of 481 reports received from Microbiology department of Banaras Hindu University (BHU). Till then, the total test reports received were 58,237



Hotspot in Sonarpura (Bhelupura) area in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

and the results of 7,875 excluding 690 RTPCR samples collected a day ago are awaited. Out of these, 53,604 were negative reports while 4,633 positive. The total number of samples collected was 66,802. A woman aged 65 from Sarai Nandan, Khojwa (Bhelupur) died during her treatment at Sir Sundarlal Hospital (SSH) in

BHU. Earlier, the two deaths reported in the district included 56 years old male from Nai Sadak and 32 years old female from Chirahapur (Sarnath) died at SSH BHU. The said young woman was an old patient of tuberculosis. With the addition of 28 red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 1,095 includ-

ing 404 red zones. Two green zones have been converted into red zones again. Besides, there are 691 green zones including 13 new ones.

Earlier, this region of Purvanchal (eastern UP) comprising 10 districts of three divisions continued finding a large number of corona patients when 608 cases were detected on Sunday.

The maximum number of 294 cases was found in Varanasi (4,555), followed by 68 in Jaunpur (2,750), 56 in Ghazipur (1,690), 51 in Sonbhadra (867), 46 in Ballia (2,327), 35 in Mirzapur (1,096), 27 in Azamgarh (1,649), 18 in Mau (708), 13 in Bhadohi (773) and no patient in Chandauli (1,115).

Out of total 17,532 corona positive cases, 10,486 have been cured either at home isolation or discharged from hospitals and the recovery rate has increased to 59.81 per cent. With the increase in death toll to 231, the mortality rate has slightly declined to 1.31 per cent.

Channelise youth energy towards creative activities: Kalraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra said that it is essential to channelise the enormous energy of youth towards such creative activities endowed with human values. 'It is the duty of the alumni of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to work as per the philosophy of Malviyaji and this will be their true homage to him,' he said while inaugurating the launch of the Emergency Response Teams of Mahamana Malviya Mission (Rural Unit), Varanasi for carrying out work in UP and Uttarakhand on Monday through webinar.

Complimenting the mission team, Mishra suggested creating an even bigger network of institutions, students and alumni to combat against any emergent situation such as flood, earthquake etc. in addition to COVID-19. He said that he is happy to note the efforts put in by the mission in collaboration of various organisations such as Roti Bank, Sanjivani Welfare Society, MECHI Foundation, Kashi Katha etc. He also hailed the efforts of Malviya Centre for Innovation,



Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra addressing a webinar of BHU in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

Incubation and Entrepreneurship (MCIE), Indian Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) in creation of entrepreneurship in the region and directed to work for Atmanirbhar Bharat through creation of small skill and entrepreneurship centres at village level, blessing the team for this novel initiative.

Emergency Response Team (ERT) has been initiated at Kota to combat COVID-19 pandemic by IIT BHU's alumni. The core team of ERT consists of Dr Munish Bindal,

Bimlendra Jha, Raja Venketshwar and Prof. PK Mishra, MCIE coordinator. The concept is to connect haves with have-nots through a robust team of dedicated youngsters.

The students of Kota Technical University were trained in the first phase and they created a good database for Kota city to intervene in this pandemic and later on the same can help in any kind of emergency. The MECHI Foundation was the main collaborator of Malviya Mission in Rajasthan whereas, in Varanasi

Malviya Mission has been assisted by All India Roti Bank Trust led by Kishor Kant Tiwari, Sanjivani Welfare Society led by Dr Vidya Sagar Pandey and Kashi Katha led by Dr Awdhesh Dixit. Dr Manu Tandon, an alumnus of IIT-BHU donated an automatic Roti-making machine to Roti Bank to fight against hunger. Malviya Mission at Dehradun is also initiating this programme.

Prof. SN Upadhyay, president of the mission introduced the subject and welcomed the chief guest, while Hari Shankar Singh, general secretary of the national unit briefed about the activities of the mission at the national level.

Dr Munish Bindal conducted the programme at Kota studio and presentation of certificates was done after his deliberations.

Prof PK Mishra, general secretary of Varanasi unit, discussed the concept of ERT and briefed about the activities taken to combat COVID-19. Prof Devendra Bhasin discussed the Uttarakhand's programme. Dr Vidya Sagar proposed the vote of thanks.

ACS for effective contact tracing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) and district Nodal Officer of COVID-19 Devesh Chaturvedi has instructed the administration to ensure effective contact tracing in the district. He was holding a meeting with officers of district administration, health and other departments here on Sunday. He said that all the persons who came into the contact of positive corona patients should be traced within 24 hours.

The envoy of the Chief Minister has asked the officers that arrangements should be made for immediate sampling by marking them all on the portal. 'This is the only way to reduce the increasing number of corona patients,' said the

ACS, directing that the number of rapid response teams and data operators should be increased.

Earlier, District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma also held a meeting to review the progress made in prevention of COVID-19. Taking the matter of negligence seriously in connection with timely contact tracing and data feeding, he has issued show-cause notices to two medical officer incharges of Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) posted at Koniya and Bajardiha Dr Renu Sinha and Dr. Archana Singh respectively. He directed the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and ACOM (RCH) to ensure getting the list of member physicians and MBBS doctors of private hospitals from Indian Medical Association (IMA) in

connection with their honorarium temporarily appointment as per the decision taken by District Health Committee recently so that they can be invited for walk-in-interview soon. The IMA president and secretary in their recent letter had proposed that on proper remuneration etc., the IMA members can serve the corona patients. The DM also asked the officers to ensure taking the community service of those final year students who are studying in Nursing, ANM, Lab Technician and Lab Assistant courses in various Nursing and Paramedical Colleges being run in the district. Sharma has also directed the Chief Medical Superintendent (CMS) of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay (DDU) Hospital to ensure

starting of treatment of corona patients within 15-20 minutes after their arrival in ambulances there. He asked the CMS for an early repair of water purifiers installed in the hospital. He said that the concerned agency (C&DS) should be asked to make the newly-installed fire fighting system functional soon. He also instructed the Health department officers to speed up the sampling work of COVID-19 at six UPHCs including Chowkaghat, Madhopur, Cantonment, Benia Bagh, Bajardiha and Manduadih by ensuring deployment of five lab technicians at each centre. The meeting was also attended by CMO, ADM (Finance and Revenue), SIC SPG Hospital, CMS DDU Hospital, SDMs and ACNOs.

OPD reopens at SSH BHU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

After several months of suspension of its health services due to worldwide coronavirus pandemic, the OPD at Sir Sundarlal Hospital (SSH), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) has reopened here on Monday but with several restrictions. It is one of the biggest hospitals of the region where the patients of several adjoining states apart from Purvanchal (eastern UP) come for treatment and due to the closure, they were facing a lot of inconveniences. During this period, the hospital was providing only telemedicine facilities to the patients.

Though the OPD has been reopened with several restrictions and guidelines, a good number of patients thronged



there. As per the guidelines, only 50 patients will be allowed to be looked after daily. Out of them, 25 patients will be those who get their registration online and the remaining 25 patients will be booked by teleconsultancy. It will be mandatory for the patients and their attendants to wear masks covering noses and mouths

properly. It will also be mandatory to follow the rule of social distancing of two yards.

As per the guidelines, online registration for BHU staff (academic / non-academic), students and pensioners will also be mandatory. Only one attendant / partner will be allowed along with a patient to enter the OPD. All the serious

patients will be treated only in the Emergency OPD. The online registration can be availed through downloaded Aarogya Setu App. All the OPD schedule facilities are available on IMS-SSH, BHU website. Booking can be done on IMS-SSH at http://dexpert-systems.com/bhu by visiting BHU website (www.bhu.ac.in). Booking can also be done by downloading the SSH app from the Play Store from next week.

The Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS), BHU Administration has appealed to the common people to follow the guidelines in this context and cooperate in defeating corona. In this regard, an official notification has been issued by the medical superintendent (MS) of SSH BHU highlighting all the guidelines.

233 test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Despite all the government's arrangements and guidelines for rescue, the number of corona patients in Prayagraj is constantly increasing. From Sunday morning till late night, 233 new positive cases were found. This brings the total figure of corona patients to 4,034.

At the same time, the death toll due to corona has also gone to 75. Three more infected patients died at L1 Swaroop Rani Nehru Covid Hospital.

As of August 3, there were only 2,822 patients of corona, but in six days more than one thousand corona patients were found in the city. Although corona patients are increasing, the recovery of already admitted patients has also increased. So far 1,864 patients have been fully recovered.

There are 1,700 active cases being treated in Covid Hospital and Home Isolation. On Sunday, the report of 1,749 samples has come negative and samples of 1,116 patients have been taken which are yet to be examined.

The three corona patients who died at Swaroop Rani Covid Hospital were suffering from different diseases. According to Dr. Sujit Kumar Verma, the nodal officer for SRN Covid Hospital, a 74-year-old patient was admitted to SRN Hospital on August 1.



Pollicemen stop a motorcyclist for driving two people on a bike in Prayagraj. It may be said here that only one person is allowed on a two-wheeler.

Pioneer

He was also suffering from blood pressure. He could not survive even after the treatment lasted for eight days. A patient living in Ashok Nagar was 52 years old. He too could not be saved. He was prone to COPD and hypertension. A woman has also died, who was a resident of Dhumanganj area. She was admitted on August 7. Her condition was critical. She had blood pressure and sugar disease. She was undergoing treatment after being put on ventilator but could not be

saved. Newly infected: 233, total deaths occurred: 03, Total infected: 4,034, cured: 1,864, Active Case: 1,700, Total Death: 75

On Sunday, 233 new corona patients were found, including officers, health workers and police personnel. Village Development Officer posted in Meja, similarly resident of Prayagraj city and a doctor posted in Fatehpur, a doctor of Kaudihar Community Health Centre, six staff of Daraganj police station have come under

the grip of corona. Of them, five police personnel and a computer operator were also included.

The report of two constable posted at Civil Lines police station, Koraon BDO had also tested positive. Similarly, the report of two people living in other areas including Telierganj, Myor Road, Badshahi Mandi, Stanley Road and two each in Sai Nagar Colony Churchlane, two in Transport Nagar were also infected with corona.

NCR corona warriors working tirelessly to ensure transport of goods & passengers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Approximately 60,000 corona warriors of North Central Railway are working tirelessly to ensure uninterrupted transport of goods and passengers across the length and breadth of the country. Besides maintaining essential transport services, NCR has also taken a series of steps for augmenting medical infrastructure and resources to fight COVID-19 pandemic in an effective manner.

Moving ahead from face cover and sanitiser production, NCR has already prepared approximately 10,000 coveralls

through in house efforts. As on August 8, total 550 formal and informal training programmes on sanitisation and information, education and communication (IEC) have been organised on NCR to equip its medical professionals and other front-line staff with requisite knowledge on novel disease. Screening of Railway employees, their family members and other beneficiaries of Railway medical services have been intensified; and more than 10,600 persons have been examined in five separate clinics being run to examine persons with fever and symptoms like COVID-19.

Treatment of COVID-19 patients is being done regularly in 100 beds level one facilities at Central Hospital Prayagraj and Divisional Railway hospital Jhansi. In the Level one Covid care facility at Central Hospital Prayagraj 144 Covid positive patients have been admitted so far of which 12 have been referred to other hospitals and 92 persons have been discharged after successful treatment. Similarly, at COVID-19 level one facility at Railway hospital Jhansi admissions so far are 85 of which 13 have been referred to other hospitals and 72 persons have been discharged after treat-

ment. Combined admissions stands at 229 patients of which 164 have been discharged after treatment, 25 have been referred to other hospitals and 40 patients are currently under treatment.

Antigen test of COVID-19 is a faster and approved method to detect certain proteins that are part of COVID-19 virus. Using a nasal or throat swab to get sample fluid, antigen test can produce results in minutes. NCR's Central Hospital at Prayagraj has also started rapid antigen test for COVID-19 and as on August 8 as many as 399 tests have already been done.

Efforts made by NCR's BDUs start bearing fruits

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Efforts made by Business Development Units to increase freight loading volume have started bearing fruits over North Central Railway. For the first time 2,464 tonnes of maize was loaded by Prayagraj division for export to Bangladesh generating freight revenue of ₹ 55 lakh. Similarly on Jhansi division De Oil Cake (DOC) was loaded from Rayaru station to Rohanpur in Bangladesh on August 9 generating freight revenue of ₹ 54 lakh.

North Central Railway has taken series of steps like formation of BDUs; short-term and long-term improvements in loading infrastructure and user amenities in 17 goods sheds; bringing efficiency in freight

train operation and implementing various incentives in freight loading.

To provide further impetus to freight loading, station to station (STS) concessional freight transportation rate has been finalised with ITC Limited for loading of food-grains from Dabra and Datia stations to ITC's plant in Bhopal. STS scheme provide concession upto 30 per cent in freight transportation charges for incremental and new traffic against a set bench mark loading of specified commodity between specific originating and destination stations.

North Central Railway is working on Station to Station (STS) proposals for different major freight customers including ITC for incremental and new traffic stream from Etah,

Kherali, Kabrai, Rayaru, Lalitpur, Hathras Fort and Mathura stations of North Central Railway.

For fast, safe and efficient transportation of perishables and non bulk commodities; first Kisan Rail a multi-commodity train between Devlali-Danapur to carry fruits and vegetables has been given scheduled stoppage at Manikpur and Prayagraj Chheoki stations and eight special parcel trains between Okha- Guwahati, Guwahati-New Delhi, Howrah- Amritsar and Jodhpur-Guwahati have been given scheduled stoppages at Tundla, Kanpur Central and Prayagraj Jn stations.

CHATURVEDI TAKES OVER COMMAND: Brigadier AK Chaturvedi took

over the command of 508 Army Base Workshop Chheoki Prayagraj from Brigadier VK Sharma. Brigadier AK Chaturvedi took over the command as Commandant and MD while Brigadier VK Sharma is proceeding on posting to New Delhi. Addressing the fraternity of the workshop Brigadier VK Sharma conveyed his best wishes and felicitations for their valued contribution in achieving the commitments and maintaining cordial industrial relations. He applauded the production achievements and the welfare measures instituted during his tenure and requested all ranks and civilians to render their full co-operation to Brig AK Chaturvedi towards achieving the milestones in the coming future.

Man beats wife to death

ALLAHABAD (PNS): In a sensational incident, a man killed his 32-year-old wife by beating her brutally with lathi in an inebriated state late on Sunday night at Chipodha Majra in Deora village under the Kaundhiara police station in the Prayagraj district. The accused, however managed to escape after committing the crime but the cops acting swiftly nabbed the accused after registering a case on the basis of the written complaint from the deceased's parents' side.

Rajkumari, a resident of Chipodha village under the Kaundhiara police station, was married to Shamsher Bahadur Chaudhary about 12 years ago. Shamsher arrived home under the influence of liquor on Sunday night. The couple got into a late night dispute over trivial issues. It is alleged that

the matter took an ugly turn and beat Rajkumari to death. Shamsher escaped leaving Rajkumari dead. On the other hand, hearing the screams of Rajkumari, people living in the vicinity reached the spot and immediately informed the police. Umesh Kumar Singh, the station incharge of Kaundhiara, reached the spot with the force. The severely injured Rajkumari was taken to the hospital in an unconscious state. She breathed her last on the way. The police took the body into custody and sent it to a mortuary for postmortem examination. At the same time, during investigation and questioning family members and villagers the cops gathered several information about the drunkard husband. On the other hand, people of the

woman's in-laws' members also came to know about the death and they reached the spot. Police registered an FIR against husband Shamsher Bahadur Chowdhury on the written complaint of Rajkumari's brother Rajkumar, and arrested absconding accused husband Shamsher Bahadur Chaudhary. Rajkumari's in-laws house is situated in Chakia, Ghurpur. Her father had already died. Brother Rajkumar told the police that Shamsher used to quarrel with his wife while drunk. Rajkumari's daughter Lakshmi is 5 and Bitani is 1 year old. According to Rajkumar, his sister was 6 months pregnant.

Meanwhile, a woman from Dhumanganj police station area alleged that her daughter had been abducted. When she reached Lucknow in search of

her daughter, the accused threatened her for dire consequences. She has filed a kidnapping case against several people by giving a complaint to the Dhumanganj police. The woman said that on August 4, her daughter was going to the market to buy goods. On the way, the accused Mayur Sahu, Arpit Sahu resident of near Naka Hindola Temple, pulled her daughter in the car and took her to Lucknow. When she came to know, she reached Lucknow the next day and met Mayur and Arpit there. The duo said that their daughter was kidnapped. They allegedly asked her to go back to Prayagraj if she wanted safety for her daughter. Horrified woman returned home. Police have registered a kidnapping case against Mayur, Arpit and others on woman's complaint.



Deputy Chief Minister, Keshav Prasad Maurya addressing a meeting at Circuit House on Monday

Pioneer

Maurya expresses concern over fleecing of COVID-19 patients

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya expressed concern over the fleecing of COVID-19 patients in private hospitals and said standards should be set up immediately and in case of violation, stern action should be taken against the private hospitals.

Addressing a meeting at the Circuit House here on Monday, the deputy chief minister directed the health officials to provided every detail of the infrastructure available in private hospitals.

He said there was need to create awareness among the masses that a cured COVID-19 patient was not a source of further infection. He asked the

district, health and police officials to work in coordination to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Maurya said in view of the massive increase in coronavirus positive cases and the rise in number of COVID-19 deaths every day, the government had decided to provide 200 extra ventilators.

He said people would have to understand that social distancing was the most potent weapon to fight coronavirus.

The deputy chief minister directed officials to launch a cleanliness drive exactly on the pattern of Quit India Movement on priority.

Maurya warned hospital authorities against delay in giving the test results. He said in case a person tested posi-

tive, treatment should be started immediately.

He said the government was making every effort to control the spread of coronavirus and save lives and thus it was the duty of every person, including health and district officials, to lend support to this so that infection may not spread.

Pointing out that a large number of deaths were reported from LLR Hospital in Kanpur Nagar, the deputy chief minister asked the hospital officials to take effective step to curb the death rate.

He said infrastructure should be improved to handle the increase of COVID-19 patients. He said unless the health, district and police officials worked in tandem, the efforts would not be that

effective.

Maurya said that mask was mandatory and people need to constantly wash their hands. He said cleanliness drive should be carried out in rural areas as well.

Those present in the meeting included Industrial Development Minister Satish Mahana, Minister of State for Higher Education Nilima Katiyar, Mayor Pramila Pandey, MP Devendra Singh Bhole and many political leaders, Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Sudhir M Bobde, Covid Nodal Officer Mayur Maheshwari, District Magistrate BR Tiwari, IG Mohit Agarwal, DIG Pritinder Singh, Kanpur Municipal Commissioner Akshay Tripathi, CMO AK Mishra and several others.

SGPGI team recommends 8 more tests for COVID-19 patients

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The two-member special team sent by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath from Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow has recommended eight more tests along with the tests carried out at the LLR Hospital in an effort to check the rising COVID-19 death rate in Kanpur Nagar.

The team said these tests would help doctors understand the degree of infection in a COVID-19 patient and thereby decide the line of treatment.

The team said it appeared prima facie that the prominent and necessary tests on critical

COVID-19 patients were not being carried out and this had resulted in the high death rate at the LLR Hospital.

GSVM Medical College Principal Dr RB Kamal and LLR Hospital's Chief Medical Superintendent Dr Richa Giri said the UP government had given a green signal to the eight new tests which were being made mandatory for the COVID-19 patients. They said these tests costing between Rs 200 and Rs 1,500 would be performed free of cost.

At present these tests are being carried out at private pathologies but the test kits will soon be rushed to the LLR Hospital to start tests in its lab.

The officials said from one

casualty to the present 15 plus deaths every day had become a cause of concern for the government and thus every effort would be made to bring down the rising death graph.

Dr Kamal said Interleukin-6 (IL-6) was a protein produced by various cells which helped regulate immune responses and this made the IL-6 test potentially useful as a marker of immune system activation.

He said IL-6 could be elevated with inflammation, infection, auto immune disorders, cardiovascular diseases, and some cancers and this test measured the amount of IL-6 in blood. He said an elevated IL-6 could mean that the person tested had an inflammato-

ry condition. He said IL-6 was elevated with a variety of conditions and had been associated in some cases with an increased risk of disease development or worsening prognosis. He said increase in IL-6 may be seen in conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and other auto immune disorders, infections, sepsis, a few cancers, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and stroke. He said the other tests to be carried out now would be serum ferratin, serum lipase, D-Dimer, serum fibrinogen, serum LDH, serum amylase and pro calcium test. It may be mentioned that all these eight tests in any NABL laboratory would cost around Rs 6,500.

Kanpur units upbeat at ban on import of 101 defence products

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

With the ban imposed on the import of 101 defence products, city industrialists engaged in production of these items are upbeat. This will also promote the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign of the government.

Chairman of the Industry Committee of Merchants Chamber of Uttar Pradesh and Director of Precitex Equipment Pvt.Ltd., Sunil Sharma, said the Kanpur industrial units were engaged in production of anti-mine boot, fighter plane equipment, defence jacket, alcogel cooker, defence helmet and other small spare parts of the defence arms.

Sharma said of the 20 industrial units producing defence equipment in the country, seven were in Kanpur Nagar. He said with the assistance of the Indian Institute of Technology and the Indian Institute of Science, local units had continuously been upgrading their production technology.

He said his unit was also engaged in the manufacture of

various equipment for the engines of Mig, Mirage and Sukhoi fighter planes which included the link synchronising, collar, shock absorber, ring spacer, coupling piece, bolt set, pin locating and tension ring etc.

Similarly, he said, other local units were also engaged in the manufacture and supply of defence equipment.

He said the equipment so far imported from foreign countries had become costly. But with the promotion of Make in India products, the government would be able to save around 60 per cent of its exchequer.

Mayank Srivastava, Managing Director of NCFD Company which is engaged in manufacture and supply of defence boot and bomb disposal kit for the past several years, said the ban imposed on import of defence equipment would pave the way for setting up new industrial units and open employment avenues to youths.

Mineral Oil Corporation of the city has developed a defence cooking stove to pre-

pare tea, milk, dal, rice and vegetable even in minus 60 degree centigrade temperature. It is being used by the army men in Siachen and Ladakh areas and can boil water within 15 minutes.

City industrialists engaged in manufacture and supply of defence equipment said the MSME was also working in this sector. They said if the government withdrew the condition of submitting bank guarantee, the MSME units could prosper at a rapid pace.

"In fact, their lakhs of rupees are blocked in the shape of bank guarantees as there is rule to deposit 10 per cent of the total order's cost in the shape of bank guarantee. This results in blocking their working capital and they find it difficult to arrange additional money to manufacture the goods," they said.

LOCKDOWN HITS AQUARIUM, PET BUSINESS

The lockdown due to coronavirus pandemic has affected the fish (aquarium) and pet business adversely.

Ajay Nishad, an aquarium dealer in Yashodha Nagar, said, "We cannot order fresh fish stock as the fish die when the shop remains closed during lockdown."

Nishad said that earlier he used to buy new fish stocks every week but now he was not able to buy new fish stocks even monthly. He said the government should also focus on the business of small shopkeepers as the middle class was most affected by lockdown.

Nikita, an aquarium shop owner in Govind Nagar, said that there was no sale these days, as people were buying less aquarium. Atindra Ghosh, an aquarium shop owner at Naveen market, said that he was not able to order new stock due to transportation problem. Swapnil, a pet shop owner in Naveen market, said that the sale of pets had been affected to a huge extent during lockdown. He said that people were not buying pets due to the fear of coronavirus.

Swapnil said many of his pets like puppies and birds had died in the shop during the lockdown.

UPSIDA to start online sale of industrial plots

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) is all set to start online sale of its vacant industrial plots.

The layouts of 154 industrial plots would soon be made available on UPSIDA's new website.

With the help of GIS mapping, industrialists would now be able to collect information about the vacant plots from their place. The allotment of plot would also be made online.

UPSIDA Chief Executive Officer Mayur Maheshwari said information about the vacant industrial plots, their sale and allotment would be made available online within one month.

He said the new arrangements were made in view of COVID-19 pandemic as the aspiring entrepreneurs found it difficult to personally visit the spot to purchase an industrial plot.

UPSIDA's technical team has been deputed on the job to ensure online display of vacant industrial plots within a month.

Apart from collecting online information about the area, rate and other terms and conditions for purchasing a plot, entrepreneurs would also be able to know the status of industrial units situated and running in different industrial areas.

They were, hitherto, required to visit UPSIDA office several times to purchase a plot and collect other related information.

The online arrangements would facilitate them a lot and save them from wasting their time for this work.

Farmer electrocuted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A farmer was electrocuted to death in Magrasa Raha village in Vidhnu police station area late Sunday night.

Police sent the body for autopsy.

Due to heavy downpour, a farmer, Dilip Diwakar, sleeping at the rooftop came down to his room late Sunday night. When he was plugging the fan to the switch board of his newly-constructed house, he suddenly came in contact with live wire and was electrocuted to death.

On Monday morning, when his younger son Piyush went to the room, he found Dilip lying unconscious. He was immediately taken to Vidhnu community health centre where the doctors pronounced him dead.

240 more test +ve

KANPUR (PNS): Kanpur Nagar reported 240 new cases of coronavirus infection on Sunday.

Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 240 more people tested positive for coronavirus infection between Sunday evening and Monday evening, taking the tally to 8,676.

He said with 56 COVID-19 patients being discharged from hospitals, 2,636 infected persons had been cured and there were 4,692 active cases in the city. The CMO said with 8 more COVID-19 deaths in the city, the death toll stood at 284 on Monday. He said 2637 samples were taken for testing.

Meanwhile, noted chest specialist and former head of respiratory diseases department of Murari Lal Chest Hospital, Prof Sudhir Chaudhary, who is currently heading research work through various case studies, said with the inclusion of more tests there was every possibility that there would be a breakthrough and COVID-19 deaths would be minimised.

He said it had been decided in principle to immediately conduct PCT (pro calcium test) and it would give direction for treating the case and the results would be much improved.

CDO inspects ongoing works

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Chief Development Officer (CDO) Avinash Singh has asked the officials related with the rural development to generate more man-days in villages and benefit more and more persons under welfare schemes.

These views were expressed by at Chhanbey block office during inspection. Reviewing the ongoing schemes he took a village development officer (VDO) to task for false reporting. He directed the field staff to engage minimum 60 labourers in each village. He directed the authorities concerned to give priority to women under MNREGA. He instructed the staff to engage migrant labourers as a drive and provide them job under MNREGA. Besides, the CDO visited Bhaausingh Ka Poora village and inspected the community toilet which was under construction. He inspected the other ongoing works too and

issued necessary directives to the working agency.

REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES: ARTO (Administration) Ravi Kant Shukla said that registration of 5,892 private vehicles had been kept as suspended. Giving details about the provision under which the action was taken, he said that a vehicle was registered only for 15 years. The renewal of the registration was a must after that, he added. He said that in case of delay in renewal the owner would be fined ₹5,000 if found a default-er during checking. The ARTO said that renewal was being done in his office on priority basis and any one could contact him personally for it.

CAUGHT: The Adalhat police have nabbed two bike thieves and recovered two stolen bikes on Sunday. On being tipped off by an informer that a bike deal was in process near a culvert located at Ranibagh which seemed to be

suspicious and the police immediately raided the place. The suspects there told the police both the motorcycles which they had were stolen from different parts of Varanasi. The police lodged an FIR, arrested the duo and took the motorcycles in their custody. The accused were identified as Tilak Sahni and Ankit Sahni, residents of Garhava Ghat, Varanasi. Meanwhile a cattle smuggler carrying a reward of ₹15,000 was nabbed by Kachhawaan police. As per the reports, the police was already active for arresting the wanted smuggler and got inputs about the presence of the accused in the area. Acting on it the police arrested the criminal from Katka village. He was identified as Shakeel, a resident of Moose village under Gopiganj police station in Bhadohi. On the other hand the Halia police have arrested two thieves along with a pumpset recently.

Two youths meet tragic end

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAULI

Two youths were killed on the spot when an uncontrolled Bolero collided with a truck parked on the road near Rema village under the Alinagar police station on the national highway on Sunday. Three people were seriously injured. All of them belonged to an area under the Mohania police station area of Bihar. They were returning home after hospitalising an acquaintance in Varanasi. On getting information police reached the spot and sent the bodies for the post-mortem examination. As the condition of the injured was serious, they were referred to the trauma centre. Reports said that Pradeep Maurya (22), a resident of Maharo village under the Mohania police station area of Bihar, Anuj Jaiswal (32), Dinesh Tiwari (35), Rita Devi (36), residents of Jaipur village and a resident of some other village were returning to Mohania after getting an ailing person admitted in a private hospital in Varanasi. They had reached near Rema village when the Bolero went out of control and collided with with a ballast-laden truck parked on the side

of the national highway. As a result Pradeep Maurya and Anuj Jaiswal died on the spot. Besides the driver, Dinesh Tiwari, Rita Devi and another person were seriously injured. On getting informa-



tion police reached the spot and sent all the injured to the district hospital for treatment from where the doctors referred them the trauma centre in view of their critical condition, last reports received here said. On the other hand the Alinagar police sent the bodies of both the deceased to the district hospital for the post-mortem examination. In this regard Alinagar police station incharge inspector Brajesh Chandra Tiwari said that the bodies had been sent for the post-mortem examination and the injured had been referred

to the trauma centre from the district hospital. Besides their families had been informed about the matter.

In another incident Saroj Yadav (22) was seriously injured when she hit by a speeding motorbike near Kanjehra village on the Syedraja-Zamania national highway around 8 pm on Saturday. Her family members admitted her to a private hospital at the district headquarters in a critical condition for treatment. However, the motorbike rider managed to escape from the spot after the incident. Reports said that Saroj, wife of Gautam Yadav, a resident of Kanjehra village, had gone to the western side of the village on Syedraja-Zamania Road for easing herself around 8 pm when the speeding bike rider who came from Kandwa side pushed her from behind. As a result she fell on the road and was seriously injured. When the other women who were with her raised an alarm the villagers reached the spot and informed her husband, Gautam, about the matter. Her family members then rushed her to a private hospital at the district headquarters where she was undergoing treatment.

SHO's appeal to people

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

In view of the forthcoming festival of Shri Krishna Janmashtami a peace committee meeting was held at Lalganj police station on Sunday in which eminent people of the society took part. Station House Officer Mahendra Kumar Saroj appealed to people to celebrate the festival while following the Covid-19 protocol. He urged those present in the meeting that without the cooperation of people fight against the pandemic

could not be won so they should convince the people to avoid gatherings and perform



prayers while following the social distancing guidelines. A peace committee meeting was also held at Adahlat police sta-

tion on Sunday.

LUNCH PACKETS DISTRIBUTED: Extending a helping hand to the needy the city kotwali police distributed lunch packets among them on Sunday. For noble cause the police selected the slum locality, temples and district hospital premises. Station House Officer (SHO) Ravindra Pratap Yadav distributed them among the needy. He assured the people of such localities that police was with them and they should feel free to call him any time in future too.

Two apprehended

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAUIN

The police arrested two youths who had recently fled with the purse of a woman, Vinita Rathore, wife of Sudeep, a resident of Jawahar Nagar, which was kept on a motorcycle near the petrol pump on Ait Road in Konch city. At a press conference held on Sunday, CO Rahul Pandey said that the Kotwali police under the direction of SP Yashveer Singh and the guidance of ASP Dr Avadhesh Singh and under his leadership had been engaged for arresting the criminals. On being tipped off by an informer about the presence of criminals involved in the above incident near the railway crossing on Ghudia Road on Sunday the inspector incharge, Imran Khan, and Sagar police outpost incharge Sanjeev Katiyar along with constables Vivek Kumar, Ashish Tiwari and Kamlesh reached the spot and caught Labrej, son of Afzal, a resident of Lajpat Nagar, and Rajkumar, son of Rajaram, a resident of Mahantnagar, while their accomplice, Rahul Yadav, son of Badelala, a resident of Tilak



Nagar, escaped from the spot. Police have recovered a pistol of 315 bore and three cartridges from the possession of Labrej along with a Deluxe motorcycle without a registration number. The police also recovered ₹1,300 in cash and a mobile phone. The police have sent both of them to jail under relevant sections of law and intensified a search for their absconding accomplice, Rahul, in this connection.

Meanwhile on the instructions of SP Yashveer Singh to check criminals Mandi outpost incharge S-I Ramveer Singh apprehended a motorcycle thief recently. The accused identified as Ashish Dwivedi alias Ashish Pandit belonged to Indira Nagar in Orai, was caught from Rath Road. Three stolen motorcycles were also recovered from his possession.

Woman dies in road mishap

CORRESPONDENT ■ MAHOBA

A 35-year-old woman was Adied on the spot when a dumper hit a motorcycle from behind on the Charkhari bypass road on Sunday morning. The deceased was identified as Rajkumari, resident of Kirari village. Pushpendra, a

resident of the village, who too injured in the incident had been admitted to the district hospital. The police impounded the dumper. Meanwhile a case was registered against the dumper driver in this connection following a complaint made by Asharam Rajput, father-in-law of the deceased.

3 criminals held

CORRESPONDENT ■ LAKHIMPUR

The Kotwali Sadar Police during checking arrested three miscreants recently. Inspector incharge Ajay Prakash Mishra said that he along with SSI Shiv Prakash Pandey were checking vehicles near Lalpur barrier. When they got information that three suspicious people were coming to Lakhimpur on a bus. At this the police arrested Mohammad Aslam, Chand Babu and Noor Mohammad, residents of Karanpur Nibha under Phardhan police station. Police was looking for them in connection with cases registered against them under the Gangster Act at Phardhan police station. The SP had declared a reward of Rs 15,000 on the head of Mohammad Aslam, Rs 10,000 each on the heads of Noor Mohammad and Chand Babu. Inspector incharge said that all three were vicious criminals. Criminal cases were registered against them at the several police stations of the district.

TWO DROWN: Two cousins, Tejpal Gautam (22), son of Mishrilal, and Indresh (18), son of Sobran Gautam, belonged to Chaura village who had gone to graze their animals in an area under the Isanagar police station drowned in a drain recently. On getting information about the matter their family members rushed to the spot along with villagers and recovered both the bodies. The police sent the bodies for the post-mortem examination.

BJP leader shot at by terrorists, succumbs in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

Abdul Hamid Najar, the Bharatiya Janta Party leader who was critically injured after being shot at by unidentified terrorists on Sunday in Ompora area of central Kashmir's Budgam district, succumbed to his injuries early Monday morning.

Najar had received at least four bullet injuries. According to official sources, "his liver was punctured". He was operated upon by the doctors but he could not survive and breathed his last early Monday morning.

The 38-year-old was being treated at the SMHS hospital in Srinagar.

Najar was the district president of Budgam BJP Other Backward Class (OBC) Morcha.

He was targeted by the unidentified terrorists when he was out on a morning walk in the area.

His last rites were performed by the family members in the afternoon. Around one dozen BJP workers across Kashmir valley have so far tendered their resignations fearing for their lives.

Death toll climbs to 49

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The death toll in Friday morning's devastating landslide at Rajamala near Munnar in Kerala reached 49 by Monday evening as search and rescue team of the NDRF retrieved six more bodies from the debris in the region. The fate of 22 more persons who went missing remains unresolved even as rescue workers were going ahead with their mission as this report is filed.

Frequent downpour and mist have made rescue operation difficult but efforts were on to locate the missing persons, all workers in tea plantation owned by the Kannan Devan Company of the Tatas.

A new controversy has erupted over the discrimination shown by the Kerala Government towards the deceased in the landslide. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan announced a solatium of ₹2 lakh to the families of each of those who lost their lives. Vijayan had announced cash relief of ₹10 lakh to the families of each of those who died in Friday's Air India air crash at Kozhikode Airport. Those injured were given ₹2 lakh and those who suffered minor injuries were

IDUKKI LANDSLIDE

allocated ₹50,000.

"This is not fair and the Kerala Government should accord the victims of Rajamala landslide the same importance and recognition they gave to those who died and injured in the air crash. The Chief Minister should understand that human lives are the same whether they die in air crash or landslide," said V Muraliedharan, Minister of state for external affairs who visited the landslide spot.

Things took an ugly turn when volunteers of Seva Bharati were refused entry to Rajamala for retrieving the dead bodies and help the relations of the victims in performing the last rites. The LDF Convenor A Vijayaraghavan alleged that the Seva Bharati workers have come to propagate Hinduism and not for helping the people in distress.

Local residents said the Sb activists were the first to reach Rajamala with provisions and life saving materials like blankets and medicine for those who survived the nature's fury.

Swapna Suresh's bail plea rejected

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The NIA Court in Kochi on Monday rejected the bail application moved by Swapna Suresh, the kingpin in the Gold Smuggling Scam busted by the Customs.

Judge Krishnakumar also upheld the decision of the NIA to slap Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) against Swapna which would make it difficult for her to come out on bail in the near future.

The Judge said there were sufficient grounds that prima facie prove that the gold smuggling operation undertaken by Swapna was linked to terrorism. "It is based on the case diary as well as other documentary evidences submitted by the NIA that the bail application is being rejected," said the verdict.

Swapna Suresh and her partner-in-crime Sarith were arrested by the sleuths of NIA from Bangalore where they have gone in hiding after the Customs officials of the inter-

national airport in Thiruvananthapuram busted the gold smuggling which was happening through diplomatic channel.

The probe by the Customs and NIA took the investigation to M Sivsankar, the then principal secretary of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and minister for higher education K T Jaleel, former SIMI leader.

Sivsankar was questioned by the NIA and the Customs officials for almost 24 hours in connection with the case while there are strong reports that Jaleel may be grilled by the agencies for his association with the UAE Consul General and attaché based at the capital city. The customs and NIA have arrested ten persons in connection with the gold smuggling.

The NIA believes that the money generated through the smuggling is being diverted to fund terrorist activities and anti-India programmes.

56 prisoners in Bareilly test +ve

Bareilly: As many as 56 inmates of two prisons in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh have tested positive for coronavirus, officials said on Monday.

District Surveillance Officer Ashok Kumar said 51 inmates of the central jail and five inmates of the district jail tested positive for Covid-19. The jail inmates were tested after an inmate of the central jail died due to Covid-19, Kumar added.

The district has so far reported 3,773 coronavirus cases with 98 deaths. Meanwhile, according to a report from Banda, a journalist died due to Covid-19 on Sunday.

Anjani Nigam, 52, was admitted to the Banda Medical College and later referred to the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow on Saturday when his condition deteriorated. **IANS**



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Dy CM Sushil Kumar Modi planting a tree as part of closing ceremony of Mission 2.51 trees on the occasion of Bihar Earth Day in Patna on Sunday. As part of the drive by Bihar Environment Department, 347 crore sapling have been planted across the State in 10 months initiated by Principal Secretary Dipak Kumar Singh

Kolkata: Fire breaks out at building on Pollock Street

Kolkata: People had a narrow escape when fire broke out at a commercial high-rise in busy Pollock Street area of north central Kolkata.

The fire broke out in a building that houses several corporate offices and banks late in the afternoon however was arrested with the help of 10 fire engines and a hydraulic ladder which was further used to rescue people trapped on the first floor, State Minister Firhad Hakim said.

The immediate reason of the fire was not known he said adding investigations would be carried out after the flames were completely doused. **PNS**

Sri Lankan Jamaatis trapped in violation of visa rules

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Foreign Tablighi Jamaatis caught in several districts of UP and Delhi have been released after fines and short punishments.

However, the allegation of violation of visa rules has become an impediment in the bail of two Sri Lankan Jamaatis caught in Aligarh.

Therefore, their release was not possible and their bail got dismissed from the sessions court today. After this, efforts have started in the High Court for their bail and for this, the Sri Lankan Embassy has appointed a lawyer.

During the early period of the coronavirus infection period, people of Jamaat were

quarantined all over the country amidst the noise of spreading infection from the Jamaatis involved in the Tabligi Jamat of Delhi.

Action was also taken against them in the Lockdown Violation, Pandemic Act. During this action, two Jamaatians of Sri Lankan origin caught in the city are badly trapped.

They are accused for violation of Indian visa rules. Due to this, the issue of their return to their country is stuck.

According to the government data and Aligarh police records, there were 72 Jamaatis came in the district at that time. In the Dharpakad campaign, 13 in Rangrejkan, 12 in Atiyyan, 10 in Govind Nagar, 102 in

Kasimpur, 9 in Junglegarhi, 16 in Pilauna and the rest Jamaati in Faiz Mosque area were caught.

Out of these, 13 people stayed in the Rangrejkan Mosque area. Among them were two Sri Lankans named M o h a m m a d Murshidurrahman and MJ Hippalpur Rahman. Their investigation and passport verification revealed that both of them visited India for 90 days in February on a tourist visa. According to the rules, during this time they should not have participated in any religious procession here.

Therefore, they were accused of lockdown violation, epidemic act, disaster act, visa rule violation. Their pass-

ports were confiscated and they were sent to jail.

According to Advocate Aale Navi, who is representing the matter as the Sri Lankan Embassy has taken the process forward by taking interest in the matter. The Embassy has appointed advocates. This is important to mention that foreign Jamaatis who were caught in Delhi, Saharanpur, Baghpat etc. in the country, were all released. Jamaati of other states of the country were also released.

114 die, 5,914 test +ve in Tamil Nadu

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

14 deaths and 5, 914 new Covid-19 patients by Monday evening. This is the information furnished by the Government of Tamil Nadu on Monday about the situation in the State on

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रान्समिशन कार्पोरेशन लिमिटेड ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

प्रतिष्ठित, अनुमयी एवं ई-निविदा हेतु पंजीकृत निर्माताओं या उनके अधिकृत प्रतिनिधि/आपूर्तिकर्ताओं से पारेषण दक्षिण-पूर्व क्षेत्र, प्रयागराज के अन्तर्गत निम्न सामग्री की आपूर्ति हेतु निविदाये दो मागों में उनके सम्मुख अंकित तिथि एवं समय तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा के माग प्रथम एवं माग द्वितीय निम्नलिखित तिथि एवं समय तक उद्घाटन सरकार के ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट सिस्टम के अन्तर्गत देवसाइट www.etenderup.nic.in पर अपलोड किये जा सकेंगे। निविदा शुल्क एवं वरिहर राशि आरटीजीएस/एनईएफटी के माध्यम से जमा करायी जायेगी। निविदा खुलने की तिथिअति तिथि एवं समय (यदि अवकाश हो तो आने के कार्यदिवस में) पर खोली जायेगी। निविदा की वैधता खुलने की तिथि से 06 माह होनी चाहिए। सशर्त निविदाये किसी भी दशा में स्वीकार्य नहीं होगी। ई-निविदा सॉ-05/युओओ(पावडपूग)/2020-21, पारेषण क्षेत्र दक्षिण – पूर्व, प्रयागराज के अन्तर्गत विभिन्न उपकेंद्र हेतु 110V/48V Battery Set की आपूर्ति। निविदा प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि 14.09.2020 समय 17:00 बजे। निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.09.2020 समय 15:00 बजे। निविदा प्रपत्र शुल्क (जीएसटीडी सशर्त) ₹ 4,720 /- (₹ 4 लाख हजार सात सौ बीस मात्र) वरिहर राशि ₹ 44000 /- (₹ 4 चौबीस हजार मात्र)। निविदा प्रपत्र की हार्ड कॉपी डाक द्वारा अथवा व्यक्तिगत कार्यालय के माध्यम से किसी भी दशा में स्वीकार नहीं किये जायेंगे। निविदाओं से सम्बन्धित विवरण / डाउनलोड / संशोधन / विस्तारिकरण हेतु निविदा खुलने की तिथि तक वेबसाइट www.etenderup.nic.in पर देखी जा सकती है। निविदाओं को बिना कारण बताये अस्वीकृत / विमाजित करने का अधिकार मुख्य अभियन्ता (पावडपूग), प्रयागराज के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। **अधिसारी अभियन्ता (रं), कूँ**
मुख्य अभियन्ता (पावडपूग), प्रयागराज
पत्रांक— 1172 दिनांक 10.08.2020 "राष्ट्र हित में ऊर्जा बचाये"

account of coronavirus.

As on Monday evening, there were 53,099 active Covid-19 cases in the State, lesser than the 53, 336 persons with the pandemic as on Sunday evening. Though the numbers were outwardly smaller compared to Sunday, the ground reality is that Tamil Nadu remains critical with the pandemic refusing to show any sign of subsiding.

Chennai had 976 Covid-19 patients on Monday. But Chengalpet diagnosed 483 new persons while Kancheepuram (310) and Thiruvallur (399) continued with unabated pandemic.

There were 15 districts other than Chennai, VChengalpet, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur with high number of Covid patients while others showed less than 100 cases.

Why deprive farmers of PM-Kisan scheme: Bengal Govt to Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Days after alleging that the State Government was withholding information from him on vital issues Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday shot off a letter to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee requesting her to allow the State farmers to avail of the benefit of pro-farmer Prime Minister Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme which was being blocked by her Government.

Urging the Chief Minister to undo the injustice being meted out to the tillers he wrote that he was distressed at the how the 70 lakh odd farmers of the State were being deprived of the central scheme. Claiming that the farmers of Bengal has already lost the total benefit amounting to about ₹8,400 crore "which was their due and right," Dhankhar wrote "it is distressing to note that 70 lakh farmers continue to be denied the benefits of PM-Kisan

Samman Nidhi," adding "while each farmer all over the country has so far received ₹12, 00 our farmers have been denied of this legitimate right on account of insensitivity and confrontational stance of the State Government. He said that the farmers of other States had received ₹92,000 crores thanks to the PM Kisan scheme whereas "no amount has come to our State," this, he said required some "soul-searching and immediate amends," he said.

Dhankhar further wrote that the Central Govt scheme has been running from 2018 with 100% funding from Govt of India adding "The amount is directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries"

As there was no middlemen or commission, the amount directly went into the farmers' accounts he said, wondering "why this is not been done by the State Govt. This unfortunate

lapse, is painfully harmful to the interests of the farmers. This 'cruel joke' and historic injustice on the farmers should make me realise that governance has to be for the benefit of the people at large," and urging the Chief Minister to "take steps to undo this injustice to our fanners."

The Governor who has no love lost with the Trinamool Congress Government, had last week alleged that the State Government departments were not only not sharing information with him but also not responding to the queries vides Right to Information. Responding to the Governor's remarks and the letter senior TMC leader Tapas Roy said that "he is the only Governor in India who pinpricks his own government through twitter... It seems that being a senior advocate he is holding the BJP's brief and acting accordingly in Bengal," ever since he came in this State last year.

As cases spike, Kerala Govt ropes in police to fight pandemic

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

As the number of Covid-19 Apatients showing no possibility of coming down, Kerala has sought the assistance of the State's Police force to combat the pandemic fighting mechanism, according to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Addressing the media in his daily press briefing, Vijayan said he has appointed Harshita Attaluri, inspector general of police as the nodal officer in charge of hiruvananthapuram rural district and S Sreejith, IG, as the officer in charge of coastal region.

The decision is in the

background of 1,184 new persons testing positive for Covid-19 in the last 24 hours ending Monday evening 6 pm. "Seven persons succumbed to Covid-19 during the last 24 hours. What is concern is the number of persons getting infected through social transmission. On Monday, 956 persons out of the 1,184 tested positive contracted the pandemic through social transmission. 114 persons could not explain how and where they contracted the pandemic. We diagnosed 106 expatriates and 73 persons from other parts of the country on Monday with the pandemic," said Vijayan. Hew

also said that 41 health workers too tested positive for the pandemic. "The task of controlling the spread of the pandemic has been handed over to Neighbourhood Watch System and the Janamythri Police. We are afraid that the local community clusters are almost sure to become Large Community Clusters," said Vijayan. The testing of samples in the State continued to hover in the 20,000 to 21,000 range. "During the last 24 hours we tested 20,583 samples. Regarding the district-wise testing, Malappuram topped the table on Monday with 255 positive cases.

Faesar quits politics

From Page 1

Dr Shah Faesar had informed State Executive Members that he is not in a position to continue with political activities and wants to be freed from the responsibilities of the organisation, said the statement.

It was decided to accept his request so that he can better continue with his life and contribute whichever way he chooses, added the statement.

Feroze Peerzada, currently holding the post of party vice president was appointed as president of the party till formal elections can be held for the post of president," the statement read further.

Rafale jets start practice sorties at LAC

From Page 1

This is part of the drill to make the versatile planes operationally ready, sources said here on Monday.

Though the jets will be formally inducted into the "Golden Arrow" squadron later this month, planners are keen to expose the jets to all kinds of Indian conditions and therefore a batch of at least 12 pilots are engaged in intense flying, they said.

Given the volatile situation at the border in Eastern Ladakh, the IAF has already

mobilised most of its other frontline fighter jets, including SU-30, Jaguars and MIG-29, to forward bases all along the 4,000 km long LAC stretching from Ladakh to Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and

Arunachal Pradesh.

In fact, the newly inducted Apache attack helicopters are flying regular operational sorties near the LAC in Ladakh and Chinook heavy-lift helicopters practicing runs to ferry troops and equipment in the region. This deployment is to boost the Indian Army which has bolstered its troop strength besides bringing forward heavy guns and tanks. This measure was undertaken at the Chinese scaled up their strength at all four "friction points".

Realising the sensitive nature of the LAC at present, the planes are not flying very close to the LAC in Himachal Pradesh and will follow the same routine in Ladakh, sources said. India and China have an agreement about "no-

fly" zone where in fighter jets of two sides have to conduct sorties at least 15 km from the LAC in their respective regions.

The ongoing intensive practice sorties are also testing Indian specifications fitted into the Rafales. The 13 India Specific Enhancements (ISE) are part of the Rs 60,000 crore deal for 36 Rafale jets.

The ISE include Israeli helmet-mounted displays, radar warning receivers, low-band jammers, infra-red search, and tracking systems among others. In addition, the Rafale is armed with the Meteor missile considered a game-changer in the region with a range of over 150 km, SCALP long-range stand-off attack, air-to-ground missile, and MICA multi-mission air-to-air missiles.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, AYODHYA-AMBEDKAR NAGAR CIRCLE, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, AYODHYA

E-Tender Notice (Second Call)

No. 3935/1Bhawan Ayo Ambel/E-Tendering/2020 Dated : 04.08.2020

1. The S.E. Ayodhya Ambedkarnagar Circle, U.P. P.W.D, Ayodhya invites on behalf of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, percentage rate composite bids on two bid system from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PWD in Class A category for BUILDING WORKS, registered contractors in any central or state departments or government/semi government undertakings for building works as specified in General Conditions of Contract for Building Work.

Sl. No.	Di-stt.	Name of Work	Esti-mated cost (Rs.In Rs.)	Bid Secu-rity (Rs.In Rs.)	Cost of bid Docu-ments	Times of Com-pletion	Address of Executive Engineer CD-1, PWD, Barabanki	Address of Super-intending Engineer Ayodhya Zone PWD, Ayodhya	Address of Chief Engineer, Ayodhya Zone PWD, Ayodhya
1	Barabanki	In the financial year 2019-20, construction work of government ITI building in total area of 0.901 hectares (2.23 acre) in gata no. 364 in village Ashokpur Chachu-sarai of Ashokpur block under twani artik vikas yojna.	900.00	18.00	(Stationary Charges Rs.2000 Cost+ Tender cost Rs. 354) Total Rs.2354.00	18 Months	Executive Engineer CD-1, PWD, Barabanki	Superintending Engineer, Ayodhya Zone PWD, Ayodhya	Chief Engineer, Ayodhya Zone PWD, Ayodhya

2. Time allowed for completion is including Rainy Season.

3. Validity of bid will be 90 days.

4. Bid document with detailed terms and conditions will be available online on website <http://etenderup.nic.in>.

5. Bids must be submitted online only at e-tendering portal of <http://etenderup.nic.in> from 20-08-2020 to 25-08-2020 upto 12.00 hours. Bidders have to upload/download all documents according to the provisions of G.O. No. 1/2018/3070/78-2-2018/42 17/2017(22) Dated 03-01-2018. Technical bids received online will be opened on 26-08-2020 at 12:30 hours.

(Kishore Kumar Pahuja)
Superintending Engineer,
Ayodhya Ambedkar Nagar Circle,
P.W.D, Ayodhya

U.P.: 154114, Date : 07.08.2020
बिज्ञान वेबसाइट www.up.gov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

Sachin Pilot's ghar wapsi

From Page 1

Sources said that no action will be taken against rebel MLAs. It has also been promised that the rebel Ministers of the Pilot camp will again be given the ranks of Ministers. Even if not immediately, Cabinet expansion will be done soon.

Sources said Pilot during the last few days had made back channel attempts through senior leaders of the party to have a word with the Congress' first family which he ignored despite several attempts made by the party leadership to pacify him.

Late Monday night when reports began to trickle in that dissidents staying at a hotel in Gurugram have started returning to

Jaipur, Priyanka reached at party troubleshooter Ahmed Patel's residence to deliberate further on Pilot's future.

Congress organisation general secretary KC Venugopal had visited Gehlot and his MLAs in Jaisalmer on Saturday and informed them about a possible end to the month-long stalemate. Venugopal urged the CM to not give any fresh statement against Pilot.

"This time the party was quick to respond as Jyotiraditya Scindia exited and joined BJP after blaming the same leadership for not giving him a personal audience for over a year. Yes, we can say the party this time was sensitive in handling the internal affairs as Scindia case could be an eye opener for them,"

said a senior party leader.

The move ahead of the Assembly session on Friday where the Congress is likely to go for a trust motion is significant as this is being seen as a step forward in breaking the deadlock in Rajasthan where Pilot along with 17 MLAs raised a banner of revolt against Gehlot.

Another party leader said that the meeting of Pilot with Gandhis was a "positive development" but speculated that Pilot must have put certain conditions agreeable to Gandhis after so much mudslinging in recent days.

"Much has changed over the last one month. Pilot has been removed as both Deputy Chief Minister and State unit chief of the

party. Any negotiation will happen only when both sides take a clear stand on who is willing to walk how many steps. We have to also keep in mind that right now the talks are limited to Delhi and the views of Rajasthan's top leadership will also be crucial," said the party leader.

Sources said that Pilot has assured Congress high command that he will end his rebellion and there will likely be no action against rebel Pilot loyalists.

Pilot is unlikely to get any role in Rajasthan Congress or Gehlot Government for now but he might be roped in for key responsibilities in AICC. The month long battle started by Pilot witnessed allegations against Union Minister Gajendra Singh for toppling the

Government and the matter reached the Rashtrapati Bhawan as well as Prime Minister Narendra Modi in form of a serious charge by Gehlot.

Source mentioned that disciplinary action initiated against Pilot loyalists Vishvendra Singh, Ramesh Meena and Bhanwarlal Sharma may be dropped for now as Sharma already met Gehlot ending his rebellion. Singh and Meena, who were dropped from the Gehlot Cabinet along with Pilot last month, may get back their portfolios.

Gehlot on his part immediately called a meeting with the Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee (RPCC) president Govind Dotasra in Jaipur to discuss handling of the day's development.

Health officials fear Covid spike in festive season



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

With no let-up in the covid-19 cases which crossed the 22-lakh mark on Monday, health officials are now keeping their fingers crossed in view of the upcoming string of festivals like Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Navratras, Dussehra, Diwali and Chatth in the coming months.

The officials fear a further spike in cases during the people's participation in these festivals.

For the last five days, in fact

after Raksha Bandhan, a Hindu festival, which was on August 3, India has been reporting more novel Coronavirus infections than any other country in the world. On Saturday, India's over 64,000 new infections comprised more than 22 per cent of all the cases detected globally, said an official from the Union Health Ministry.

He pointed out that while the United States and Brazil which have greater number of people infected by the virus till now, have been finding fewer number of new cases every day



during this period, while India's case numbers have been increasing steadily, with more than 60,000 new cases for the last three days.

Many Northern States like the Uttar Pradesh had allowed opening of sweet shops and those selling rakhis on Sunday in view of the Raksha Bandhan festival on Monday. Soon after, various parts of the Uttar Pradesh like Lucknow reported huge surge in the Covid-19 infection cases.

Now, with a series of festivals coming up in the next few

months, which are celebrated across the country, we fear more cases on anvil, said the official.

"Though State Governments have been urging people to not to congregate at public places, but being major festivals many times citizens fail to adhere the norms of social distancing and visit the markets to purchase sweets and other items for prayers.

"We have also observed that people tend to visit their relatives during festival times as a ritual and do not follow mask wearing norms, thus leaving

India's fatality rate falls amid rise in cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the total coronavirus patients across the country crossed the 22-lakh mark, India's fatality rate dropped to its lowest two per cent in the last 24 hours whereas the recoveries reached a new peak of over 15 lakh so far.

The latest data shared by the Union Health shows that the current Case Fatality Rate (CFR) is two per cent and is steadily declining even as the country tested a record over 1,000 deaths in a single day,

pushing the death toll so far to 44,386.

The Ministry said the fatality rate is at its lowest and India is among the countries with lowest fatalities.

"Early identification of cases has also led to steep fall in percentage of active cases," it said.

Early identification helps to ensure timely and prompt isolation of mild and moderate cases and hospitalisation of severe and critical cases, thereby leading to effective management of cases, the Ministry

said.

The Ministry data further mentions that India's COVID-19 recoveries have crossed the historic peak of 15 lakh on Monday, more than twice the active cases while recovery of 15,35,743 patients, it said, has been made possible because of the policy of aggressive testing, comprehensive tracking and efficient treatment.

Better ambulance services, focus on standard of care and use of non-invasive oxygen had given the desired results, it said.

With the highest-ever single-day recoveries of 54,859 patients in the last 24 hours, the recovery rate had scaled another high of almost 70 per cent.

The record recoveries ensured that the actual case-load of the country, namely the active cases, has reduced and currently comprises only 28.66 per cent of the total positive cases.

India has posted more than 9 lakh recoveries compared with active cases (6,34,945).

accounted for about 82 per cent of all the cases in the country, both in terms of total caseload, as well as new cases so far.

The number in India reached 22 lakh on Monday, and at this rate, India is poised

to overtake Brazil within a month's time. In the last three days, Brazil has been adding more than 50,000 new cases daily, but in India, everyday around 60,000 cases are being added up to the total tally, pointed out the official.

Modi reviews flood situation with CMs of 6 States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday urged the flood affected States for extensive use of innovative technologies and local investments for the development of forecast and early warning systems. PM was reviewing the flood situation in six States with Chief Ministers of Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala. The States complimented central agencies including NDRF for prompt co-ordination and timely deployment of rescue operations.

Chief Ministers Sarbananda Sonowal, Nitish Kumar, Yogi Adityanath, Uddhav Thackeray and Pinarayi Vijayan appraised the flood situation in their States. Karnataka was represented by Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and Ministers of State Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy and Nityanand Rai also participated in the review meet.

Modi emphasised on better coordination between all central and state agencies to have a permanent system for forecasting of floods and extensive use of innovative technologies for improving forecast and warning system. Prime Minister said that over the past few years, our forecasting agencies like India Meteorological Department and Central Water Commission have been making concerted efforts to make better and more usable flood forecasts. They are trying to provide not only rainfall and river level forecast but also location specific forecast of inundation. There are pilot efforts underway to also use innovative technologies such as artificial

PM dedicates Chennai-Andaman & Nicobar submarine optical fibre cable link

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday dedicated to the nation, 2,300 km submarine optical cable connecting Andaman and Nicobar Islands to Chennai, which is set to be a big leap in the communication technology. Modi congratulated the engineering team which finished this prestigious project in 18 months. The foundation stone for this project was laid by the PM on December 30, 2018 at Port Blair.

Addressing the function thru video conferencing, Prime Minister said this great leap in communication technology will boost the development of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Modi admired the laying of cables for about 2,300 kilometers under the sea as surveying in the deep sea, maintaining the quality of the cable and laying of the cable with specialised vessels is not

an easy task.

The project also had to overcome challenges such as high waves, storms and monsoons and the tough times owing to Corona Pandemic. Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad also attended function and praised the engineering team in executing this project in speedy manner.

Modi said providing better and cheap connectivity to the people of Andaman & Nicobar Islands is the responsibility of the country.

PM said the Submarine Cable is one such effort to prove that A & N Islands are not far away from Delhi and from the Hearts of the Mainland. "Submarine Cable will help A&N in getting cheaper & better connectivity and all the benefits of Digital India, especially in improving online education, tele-medicine, banking system, online trading and in boosting tourism," said Prime Minister.

intelligence to improve locations specific forecast, for which States should provide necessary information to these agencies and timely disseminate the warnings to local communities," said PMO in a statement.

Prime Minister mentioned that investment should be increased in localised early warning system so that people in a particular area can be provided with timely warning in case of any threatening situation such as breach of river embankment, inundation level, lightning

etc. "Prime Minister also emphasised that in view of COVID situation, while undertaking rescue efforts, States must ensure that people follow all health precautions such as wearing of face mask, hand sanitisation and maintain adequate physical distance and relief materials must include provision for hand washing/ sanitizing and face masks for the affected people. In this regard, special provisions should be made for elderly people, pregnant women and people with co-morbidity.

EIA 2020 criticism is premature as draft is not final: Javadekar



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar on Monday termed 'immature' the criticism of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), 2020 from green activists and political parties including the Congress, and said that all suggestions will be considered before the draft is finalised.

"The criticism of the EIA, 2020, was 'premature', as the document is merely a draft at this stage. As per rules, only 60 days notice is to be given, but owing to Covid-19, we extended it up to 150 days," Javadekar said on the sidelines of the ministry's World Elephant Day celebrations.

"Thousands have sent their views, but some are overeager and hence they are protesting. People jumping at the draft [EIA] is not a fair practice. It is just a draft right now, we will take a call on these views and then it will be finalised."

The Minister also

slammed the Congress, alleging that its erstwhile government did not consult people on such decisions.

"The erstwhile United Progressive Alliance-led government did not consult the people on key environmental decisions. I have mentioned this in my letter and reply to [Congress leader] Jairam Ramesh," he said. "This is all unnecessary and premature."

Javadekar also objected to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's comments earlier in the day. Gandhi called the draft a "disaster" and urged people to protest against it. "Those who want to now protest, during their regime took many of the big decisions without consultations," Javadekar said.

On Sunday, Rahul Gandhi had said the draft (EIA) notification, 2020, is "not only disgraceful, but it is also dangerous".

"Not only does it have the potential to reverse many of the hard-fought gains that have been won over the years in the battle to protect our environment, but it could also potentially unleash widespread environmental destruction and mayhem across India," Gandhi wrote in a post on a social media platform calling youth to protest against it.

The new updates to the

draft 2020 EIA notification prescribe the procedure for industries to assess the ecological and environmental impact of their proposed activity and the mechanism, whereby these would be assessed by expert committees appointed by the environment ministry.

Several environmentalists and organisations have alleged that the draft notification does away with the requirement for public consultation for a number of projects that could create an adverse ecological impact.

Ramesh had said last month the draft notification reduces public participation in all steps of the environmental clearance process by "lessening the notice period for public hearings and doing away with them for a large category of projects".

On August 5, the Karnataka High Court directed the Ministry of Environment to not publish the final draft notification until September 7 as it noted that it was published on March 23, two days before the imposition of the nationwide lockdown to control the coronavirus, people had not been able to file objections to the document. It also criticised the publication of the document only in Hindi and English.

Work for installation of smog tower in Delhi has started: Centre to SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre Monday told the Supreme Court that work for installation of smog tower at Anand Vihar in east Delhi has started and soil samples have been taken for examining the structural stability.

Smog tower is a structure designed as large-scale air purifier to reduce air pollution.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra that an memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed for the project of installation of smog tower and IIT Bombay and Tata Projects Limited are in touch with University of Minnesota for transfer of technology.

The bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Krishna Murari, was informed by Mehta that as on August 8, site survey has been done and soil samples have been taken and are being examined.



Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu speaks after virtually laying the foundation stone for a housing complex for Rajya Sabha employees in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

Further hearing needed in 2009 contempt case against Bhushan, Tejpal, says SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said further hearing was required in the 2009 criminal contempt case against activist-lawyer

Prashant Bhushan and journalist Tarun Tejpal to examine whether comments on corruption against judges per se amounted to contempt or not.

A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra and comprising

justices B R Gavai and Krishna Murari posted the matter for hearing on August 17.

The top court had in November 2009 issued contempt notice to Bhushan and Tejpal.

Elephant conservation is vital as it balances ecosystem: Minister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Every-year, at least 500 people are killed by jumbos and 100 elephants lose their lives as they come into conflict with humans in search of food and migration from one habitat to another in the country.

This is a matter of concern, said Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar at an event here after release of a document on best practices of conflict management and launch of the national portal of project elephant which will have all the data and details of elephant

"We do not kill animals. Animals are revered in India. We have to devise good conflict management practices. We have also started a fodder and water augmentation programme in elephants' habitat and corridor," Javadekar said on World Elephant Day on Monday.

As per the last census conducted in 2017, India is home to 30,000 elephants while over 2,700 are in the captivity. Addressing the event, Javadekar said elephant conservation is vital as it balances the ecosystem. Elephants have to be kept in forests for which fodder and water augmentation programme has been initiated, the minister said, adding that by next year results will start showing.

"The Government has taken initiative of fodder and water augmentation in forest areas so that animals will get food and water in forest area and will not come outside," he said adding that LiDAR technology is being used for it.

Union Minister of State for Environment Babul Supriyo said, it is a moment of pride that India is having 60 percent of Global population of Asian Elephants.

Maha deaths drop to 293, cases dip to 9,181

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a marked drop in the number of Covid-19 infections and fatalities, Maharashtra on Monday witnessed 293 deaths taking the total pandemic toll in the State to 18,050, while a relatively low 9,181 people tested positive for Coronavirus.

After the disturbing weekend that saw the pandemic claim 665 lives (275 on Saturday and 390 on Sunday) and leave an alarming 24,070 others (12,822 on Saturday and 12,248 on Sunday) infected, Coronavirus appeared to have become less ferocious on the first day of the week, going by the death and infection tallies. Of the 290 total deaths reported on Monday, Mumbai accounted for accounted for 46 deaths, while there were 43 deaths in Pune and 42 in Thane.

As the fatality figure dropped below 50 mark for the second consecutive day, the total Covid-19 toll Mumbai - with 46 fresh deaths -- rose from 6,799 to 6,845, while the infected cases increased by 925 to touch a total of 1,24,307.

Apart from 46, 43 and 42 deaths reported from Mumbai, Pune and Thane respectively,

there were 22 deaths in Raigad, 21 in Nagpur, 16 in Sangli, 12 in Kolhapur, 9 in Jalna, 8 in Ratnagiri, 7 each in Ahmednagar, Solapur, Aurangabad and Nanded, 6 each in Palghar and Latur, 5 each in Jalgaon and Beed, 4 each in Nashik, Satara and Amravati, 3 each in Nandurbar and Osmanabad and one each in Dhule, Hingoli, Akola, Yavatmal, Buldhana and Chandrapur.

In a related development, as many as 6711 patients were discharged from hospitals in the state after full recovery, taking the total number of patients discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year to 3,58,421. The recovery rate went up to 68.33 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 3.44 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the state at 1,47,735. Pune, which has emerged as the second worst-affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 1,14,703 infections and 2771 deaths till now.

With 105904 infected cases and 3008 deaths, Thane continued to be the third-worst hit district in Maharashtra.

Army starts enquiry after families allege 'ultras' killed in Shopian were labourers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Mystery behind disappearance of three labourers hailing from Rajouri on Monday deepened further after social media reports claimed the three "suspected terrorists" killed in Amshipora Shopian "encounter" on 18 July 2020, have been reportedly identified as the missing labourers of Rajouri on basis of photographs shared by the families.

As the news spread like wildfire on various other social media platforms, disgruntled politicians in Kashmir valley issued lengthy statements demanding a probe into disappearance of three labourers from Rajouri in south Kashmir district of Shopian.

Reacting to these social media posts, Srinagar based Defence Spokesman, Col Rajesh Kalia issued a statement which read, "We have noted social media inputs linked to the operation at Shopian on July 18, 2020. The three terrorists killed during the operation have not been identified and the bodies were buried based on established protocols. Army is investigating the matter".

It is learnt the family members of three labourers from Rajouri have registered a missing report in police station Rajouri.

Before going off the radar, the three labourers had reportedly informed their family members on July 17 that they had reached Shopian and had taken a room on rent. Since then the family members have not heard anything from them.

Itija Mufti, daughter of PDP Chief and former Chief Minister Mehnbooba Mufti, currently operating the Twitter account of her mother posted a tweet which read "Shocked to hear about reports of 3 missing labourers reportedly killed in a staged encounter at Shopian. Armed forces have a free hand to operate with impunity. Explains why bodies are allowed to decompose at unknown locations. Probes into recent encounters must be ordered".

Jammu & Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Monday sought an impartial and time bound probe to unearth the mystery behind the disappearance of three poor labourers of Rajouri district.

Assam Police chief tests corona +ve

IANs ■ GUWAHATI

Assam's Director General of Police Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday and has gone in for home isolation, officials said.

According to a senior Assam Police official, health workers have begun tracing the people who have come in contact with Mahanta. Despite many attempts, Mahanta himself was not reachable.

"Since March, around 30 people directly and indirectly associated with the Assam Police Headquarters have tested positive. The infected include senior officials like the Inspector General of Police, Law and Order, and the Deputy Inspector General, Administration," said the official, who did not want to be named.

A total of 2,259 Assam Police personnel have tested positive for the Covid-19, but 1,734 have already recovered. However, six personnel succumbed to the disease.

Assam, till Monday afternoon, reported a total of 58,837 coronavirus cases, with 16,364 active cases.

Needed, full-time chief

The Congress needs to conduct inner party elections and get a president though it has saved Rajasthan



If indeed Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi, who met rebel Congress leader Sachin Pilot, have worked out a rapprochement in the troubled Rajasthan Congress, then it is their first decisive move, indicating a generational shift. Their efforts have at least built a tenuous bridge between the old guard and the younger breed. Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot climbed down, as he was told sternly that Pilot needs to be reinstated and given space. This is a high stake game for Rahul if he sees himself as reclaiming the Congress fortunes with his peers, who are getting disgruntled, impatient and sometimes even impervious to the need for accommodating experience.

But then he has to play the part proactively and wisely, not from the shadows as mother Sonia Gandhi will continue to remain interim president for a little longer. He has to have a strategy, rather than running a lone warrior race on social media. Sure the seniors have fattened up their turfs and positions while letting the Gandhis take the credit or blame publicly as the case may have been, but in securing their interests, they have respectively developed the party's matrix creditably and have a depth of experience in political manoeuvring. But they are status quoist, preferring continuity into their sunset years in ways that they understand, choosing fiefdoms over the larger national revival of the party. The fact is the Congress has lost the hunger to be a national alternative in the changed political template of the times that is disruptive, dynamic, performance-driven, result-oriented and avowedly authoritarian. The party looks rudderless and hopeless in comparison. The younger breed, Rahul included, now want to leave their mark, and reclaim some respectability for the party and as Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sachin Pilot have shown, can live down their entitlements, work the ground and deliver results. Ambition is not a bad thing and maybe the propeller the Congress needs, provided it creates a *margdarshak*-like structure for the old hawks the way BJP has. Besides, the elders forget that they were mavericks once and should let the fresh winds blow in, failed as they have in arresting the party's erosion.

But as mentioned before, the party first needs a strategy. And must speak in a united voice. To give the elders their due, they are right in suggesting that Rahul stop the personal attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It is understandable why Rahul, the nation's butt of ridicule courtesy the BJP's online army, and the recipient of digs about his family legacy, is tempted to make it personal. But he is ending up making Modi look like a victim of dynastic snobbery, something that cost the Congress the Lok Sabha election last year. Despite India's unwieldy pandemic and the mishandling of the Chinese incursion in Ladakh, Modi's personality cult remains unaffected. Attacking him is proving counter-productive for Rahul. The Congress needs to work on issue-based campaigns at a pan-India level, be it of economic slowdown, joblessness or the youth. Only when issues are made bigger than the personality will the Congress be able to force a serious discourse beyond the muscularity of Modi or the triumphalism of religiosity. Let's face it, Rahul cannot win a personality war but can present a cogent alternative plan that may yet find takers. Instead of interviewing experts and luminaries, he should get their inputs to prepare this agenda. Besides, while team Rahul is brimming with ideas, they are not tested in the crucible of the political laboratory and they would need seniors in scripting party responses rather than running down past UPA Governments. Rahul should at least insist upon a disciplined public posturing. While he did try to appear responsible and principled by withdrawing from public life after the Lok Sabha rout, the fact is this move made him look like an escapist. If the high command thought this would lead to a yearning among partymen to get him back, that's not the case. Perceiving the party as a rudderless ship, many grassroots workers and members have just migrated to other parties, be it the BJP or federal outfits, to barter their worth. If he was really keen on a rebuild, he should have stuck through the worst. Something that sister Priyanka at least attempted in Uttar Pradesh. Most importantly, if he really wants to be a reformist and take everybody along, he should usher in democracy within by calling for the Congress Working Committee elections at the earliest. There should be a permanent president and not a stopgap one as MP Shashi Tharoor has indicated. Rahul's problem is that he knows that the chair is his; every Congressman would acquiesce to Sonia's wishes on this matter, even his peers. That probably fuels his complacency or stubbornness, depending on which side of the prism you want to look from. But the Bihar and the Assembly elections aren't too far away. So the Congress needs campaign planks than ego wars. And Rahul must engage with other federal front leaders on his own steam than leave that to his mother. The Congress has already frittered away too much time and talk. Now it is action or perish. And the *baba log*, too, are greying.

Atmanirbhar raksha

Shooting from the hip or shooting oneself in the foot? Is a ban on defence items enough to make India self-reliant?



India is one of the world's largest buyers of defence equipment. It is also unique among big nations with large armed forces to have an abysmally small domestic arms industry. The country imports everything — from frontline fighter aircraft to clothing equipment and bulletproof vests worn by frontline infantrymen. It is a trade that has made many people in Delhi very rich and led to a completely corrupt military decision-making process, both from the political front as well as inside the forces. Therefore, should the announcement by the Raksha Mantri, Rajnath Singh, to gradually move a hundred items from the import list to beef up domestic production be seen as a positive? Frankly, yes and also no. Yes because there is a desperate need for India to build up a military-industrial complex of companies, both public and private, that can supply our defence needs in a hurry. To give an example, the speed with which Boeing delivered the last batch of Apache attack and Chinook transport helicopters after the events of June 15 shows just how agile and efficient American military suppliers are. Nobody is saying that India can reach this efficiency, from both a scientific or production standpoint, but the knee-jerk reaction with which our country buys arms from abroad at any sign of trouble has to change. With some notable exceptions such as Larsen & Toubro and various Tata Sons companies, the private sector's involvement in defence production has been abysmal. Mainly because of the Government's reluctance to involve them, thanks to strong Defence Public Sector Unit (DPSU) lobbies among politicians and bureaucrats. Various research institutions, including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), too, must chip in to develop technologies and boost in-house capabilities. Even in an area where India is fairly self-reliant — building surface warships — we barely produce one large capital ship annually. Yet China is churning out destroyers and frigates by the dozen every couple of years. If we are to bridge this gap, Indian industry must be encouraged.

However, there is a counter-argument. For several items on Singh's list, India simply does not have the capabilities. Consider transport aircraft; Indian companies were unable to upgrade the extensive fleet of Antonov 32 medium aircraft. While the Modi Government ought to be complimented on finishing the long gestation period for the Light Combat Aircraft Tejas, its three-decade development story is a joke. We have not built any commercial or military transport aircraft in our history. And even if the proposed measures allow for joint development and Indian fabrication, pretending that we suddenly have the skills to make planes is outright bizarre. The same applies to state-of-the-art radar and sonar systems. If we are to get the best systems, we will have to import them until we are able to reverse-engineer or collaborate with the likes of France and Israel to develop our own. Yes, domestic manufacturing is a start and will save considerable resources but it should not come in the way of ensuring that India's frontline warriors have access to the best technology.



KK PAUL

Recently, the Prime Minister inaugurated the country's largest photovoltaic (PV) cell-based solar energy plant at Rewa in Madhya Pradesh. While inaugurating this 750 megawatt (MW) plant, he stressed upon the need for *atmanirbharta* (self-reliance). Considering that about 80 per cent of our solar power generation equipment is of Chinese origin, the inauguration of the solar plant was timely. The Prime Minister used the occasion to emphasise this aspect. Said he, "India won't be able to fully use its solar power potential if the country doesn't develop better solar panels, batteries and storage manufacturing capacity." India imported \$2.16 billion worth of solar photovoltaic cells, panels and modules in 2018-19.

India is lucky that sunlight is available in abundance here but the challenge lies in the procurement of the PV cells. This has been one of the major constraining factors in our efforts to realise the full potential of solar energy. According to a report submitted by the parliamentary Standing Committee, in order to achieve the target of 100 GW of solar electricity capacity by 2022, India should have had an installed capacity of 32,000 MW by 2017-18. But as of January 31, 2018, the country only had a capacity of 18,455 MW. As per the standing committee, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has to install the remaining 81,545 MW in just four years — this is over 20,000 MW a year and appears difficult to achieve.

However, despite the constraints, the price of solar energy has come down from ₹2-2.50 per unit from ₹7-8 per unit in 2014. A serious lacuna in this entire exercise of achieving the solar power target continues to be our poor record of indigenous manufacturing of solar panels and our near-complete dependency on Chinese imports.

Today, China is the only country that caters to most of the global PV cell demands. It produces the cheapest solar panels. It is difficult for any country to match such low prices. This has led to a situation where China has a virtual monopoly and this may not be desirable in the long run. Our own imports, mostly from China, accounted for 90 per cent

Set new energy goals

Perovskite-based solar cells are a good alternative to silicon-based PV cells. But the problem of degradation due to weather conditions needs to be addressed



PEROVSKITE IS A CRYSTALLINE FORM OF THE CHEMICAL CALCIUM TITANATE. IT MAY SOUND FORMIDABLE BUT FORTUNATELY, ALL THE RAW MATERIALS USED TO MANUFACTURE IT ARE INDIGENOUSLY AVAILABLE. THE PROCESS, TOO, IS MUCH SIMPLER, LESS POLLUTING AND CONSUMES LESS POWER THAN THE PRODUCTION OF SILICON CHIPS

based PV cells, which is the speciality of China, has since been found in the form of Perovskite solar cells. This is also a tried and tested method. According to the work done at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, the efficiency of the Perovskite cells, which was about three per cent in 2006, showed a marked improvement. It has now been determined to be at about 22 per cent, which makes it quite viable.

Perovskite is a crystalline form of the chemical called calcium titanate. It may sound formidable but fortunately, all the raw materials used to manufacture it are indigenously available. The process, too, is much simpler, less polluting and consumes less power than the production of silicon chips.

Perovskite is the product of limestone, which is abundantly available in the country, and titanium oxide, which is obtained from sands containing ilmenite, an ore of titanium. Ilmenite, too, is available in abundance as we have reserves of several million tonnes of this ore in the sands along the shores of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

The present usage of titanium oxide is confined to the paints and pigment industry as

well as in the manufacture of cosmetics and sunscreens as it offers good protection against UV rays.

The absence of Chinese products from now onwards needs to be considered as an opportunity for accelerated research so as to put this technology to commercial use at the earliest. Perovskite-based solar cells have performed exceedingly well in controlled conditions but the problem of degradation due to weather conditions needs to be addressed. The silicon-based PV cells are almost weather proof, so the durability of Perovskite has to be brought up to that level.

Perovskite technology has the potential of being a game-changer in our quest for harnessing solar energy with less polluting and low cost solutions. The renewable energy firm, ReNew Power Pvt Ltd, has already announced that it is in discussion with various States to set up a ₹1,500-2,000 crore facility to make solar cells and modules. The need is for close monitoring and allocation of sufficient funds for research. India can't afford to lose the new solar race.

(The writer is a former Governor and senior advisor at the Pranab Mukherjee Foundation)

SOUNDBITE

It is true, how many times did Sushant go to Patna to meet his father? I have sympathy for his father but there are many things that will surface.

Shiv Sena leader
—Sanjay Raut



You have an audience that is exposed to so much content from across the world, which is why you really have to push the envelope to grab its attention.

Actor
—Kunal Kapoor



It is a disastrous situation for people living without access to safe water and safely managed sanitation. The chronic underinvestment has left billions vulnerable.

UN-Water Chair
—Gilbert F Hounbo



Economic slowdown in the country is a humanitarian crisis. The Government's shock and awe approach to the lockdown has caused tremendous pain to people.

Former PM
—Manmohan Singh



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Humanity exists

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Tragedy in Kozhikode" (August 10). Credit must be given to the local residents, who rushed to the aid of those on-board the ill-fated flight. However, many people forgot to follow COVID-19 protocols, the downpour and even the possible danger of a fire. It must be noted that the airport area has been listed as a pandemic containment zone. Their help in spotting passengers and later disseminating information using social media were outstanding gestures. There were large queues of blood donors at hospitals even at midnight, proving that humanity, humanness and hope are still alive.

M Pradyu
Kannur

Avoidable crash

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Tragedy in Kozhikode" (August 10). The Kozhikode plane crash incident is a reminder that the findings of the safety audits were not taken

Lessons from a series of tragedies

This refers to the editorial, "Tragedy in Kozhikode" (August 10). Tragedy after tragedy seems to be unfolding even as the COVID-19 pandemic shows no signs of slowing down. The hooch tragedy in Punjab, fire accidents in Ahmedabad and Vijayawada, landslides in Idukki and the plane crash in Kozhikode have all occurred in quick succession. The hooch tragedy in Punjab claimed 113 lives and highlighted how bootlegging and consumption of spurious brew continue in times of crisis. The incessant rain caused a landslide in Idukki, Kerala, which flattened a row of 20 houses of tea estate workers. More than 40 people died. The estate workers were not evacuated in time to escape the nature's fury. Every year, the living quarters of these workers become precarious during the rainy season, a fact that underlines the vulnerability of labourers to natural disasters. The workers must be provided with safe accommodation.

The Kozhikode plane crash turned the homecoming of Indian repatriates into a tragedy. Poor meteorological conditions, low visibility and the less-than-adequate length of the "table-top" runways are said to have led to the crash. The exact cause will be known in the coming days. Local residents and security personnel braved unfavourable weather conditions to rescue the passengers trapped in the debris. Then, the fire that broke out at an Ahmedabad hos-



pital snuffed out the lives of eight COVID patients. It was attributed to short-circuit in a life-support system. The fire at a hotel-turned-COVID facility in Vijayawada claimed the lives of 11 people. This happened due to the Government's callousness and the management's negligence. The fire tragedies in Ahmedabad and Vijayawada were very much avoidable. All such incidents should be a wake-up call for the Government to ensure that health facilities are well-equipped and fire-proof. Flying protocols, too, need revision. Indian aviation deserves better.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

seriously. In a similar incident in 2010, a Boeing 737 aircraft had overshot the tabletop runway at the Mangalore airport,

killing 158 passengers and crew. Experts had warned of a repeat but all in vain. The present crash has proved no lessons

were learnt by the authorities.

Why was such a big aircraft allowed to operate from a tabletop? Why did the operators

allow water to collect on the runway? Given that the pilot had already aborted an attempt to land sensing the condition, why wasn't the aircraft diverted to a nearby airport? Although a few recommendations of the aviation safety report submitted to the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 2011 were implemented, lapses remain. Instead of jumping to conclusions, we must wait for reports to emerge. Hereon, suggestions of the audit report must be implemented without any delay.

V Nagendra Kumar
Hyderabad

Focus on safety

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Tragedy in Kozhikode" (August 10). The Karipur airport is in a hilly area and has a tabletop runway. This has been a matter of concern since long as four major incidents have taken place in the past. Authorities need to focus on improving safety levels.

Aditi
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

State laws don't hold water

India needs a comprehensive national water law, which should be a collection of rules and principles to address all related issues in the country



RATNESH KUSHWAHA

Water is a unique substance as it is one of the few materials on Earth that exists naturally as a solid, liquid and a gas. There is an estimated over one billion cubic kilometre of water on our planet, which covers nearly three-fourth of the Earth's surface. Though this seems an inordinately huge amount, less than one per cent of it is fresh and usable and is found in lakes, ponds, rivers and groundwater. Though it is not possible for life on the planet to exist without it, about 97 per cent of the water covering the Earth's surface is salty ocean and not suitable for drinking without desalination. So, here's how the Earth's freshwater is spread around the globe: A whopping 70 per cent of freshwater is locked in ice caps; less than one per cent of the freshwater is readily accessible; Brazil, Russia, Canada, Indonesia, China and Colombia have 50 per cent of the world's freshwater reserves. Sadly, about one-third of the world's population lives in "water-stressed" countries, defined as a nation's ratio of water consumption to water availability. Countries labelled as moderate to high stress consume 20 per cent more water than their available supply.

India is home to nearly 17 per cent of the world's population and is bestowed with just four per cent of the total water resources. In our country, 50 per cent of the annual rainfall is received in approximately one month, resulting in non-optimal utilisation due to our limited water-harvesting capacity. We optimally utilise only 36 per cent of the total rainfall that translates into about 252 billion cubic metres of water getting harvested against a total rainfall of 690 billion cubic metre. India is still coping with issues like water pollution, water purity and a worsening potability factor. All these may lead to scarcity in the coming years. That, too, in most parts of our country. Despite this, water laws in India are largely a State-based subject. These have been crafted from various formal and informal laws, various kinds of rules and principles which evolved over the years in a parochial and casual manner.

The Indian Constitution has empowered the States to legislate in this area. Therefore, they have exclusive powers regarding framing of rules and guidelines on all water-related issues like irrigation, canals, water management, embankments and so on. Though the Indian Parliament adopted the Water Act in 1974 but the objective of the Act was skewed towards prevention, control of water pollution and the maintenance/restoration of the wholeness of water. This implies that it was designed to assess pollution levels and to penalise the polluters. In the present situation, where India's population is ascending at a rapid pace and water resources are limited, various challenges are emerging, like indiscriminate usage of groundwater, encroachment of water bodies and water pollution, to name a few. There are also various related issues like rejuvenation of moribund rivers, interlinking of rivers, riparian rights and negotiations with neighbouring countries on sharing resources which traverse both the nations.

Apart from these challenges, if we analyse water resources from a development perspective, there is a need to do a lot in the field of inland waterways in the country, interlinking of rivers and water management for better irrigation plans or promoting water-based economical projects like fisheries and developing fox nut (*makhana*) clusters.

The existing legal framework concerning water in India is mostly complemented by human rights dimensions. The overall picture is that there is multiplicity of principles and rules in the water sector and a lack of an overall framework. This is largely the legacy of the colonial Government, which was more focussed on irrigation work. As a result of this, basic principles of water laws applied in India are derived from these irrigation Acts, like the Northern India Canal and Drainage Act, 1873. Thereafter, Acts like the Madhya Pradesh Irrigation Act, 1931, the Regulation of Water Act, 1941 and the very recent Bihar Irrigation Act, 1997 came into existence, in which it was provided that all the rights on surface water shall rest with the State Government.

One trend which should be followed and must be highlighted is the gradual formalisation of national water laws by taking into confidence all the stakeholders. This should ultimately and amicably replace the existing local laws, incorporate every part of water resource and its components and address all water-related issue comprehensively. Any law is a collection of rules prescribed under the authority of the State or nation so as to manage, preserve and ensure proper use of our water resources. India needs a comprehensive national water law, which should be a collection of rules and principles to address all kinds of issues which the country is encountering or may encounter in the foreseeable future.

(The writer is an Advocate, Patna High Court and a water activist)

SYED ABDUL MALIK WAS A POET, WHO WAS INDULGING IN INTELLECTUAL JIHAD IN THE COUNTRY.

—BJP LEGISLATOR FROM HOJAI
SHILADITYA DEB

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



THE COMMENTS MADE BY DEB ARE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED AND EXPOSE HIS LOW MENTALITY AND LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

—LOP IN ASSAM ASSEMBLY
DEBABRATA SAIKIA

Bailout or blowout?

When the wheels of the economy on ground zero are stuck and there is little demand for credit, lowering of interest rates will not help in any way



UTTAM GUPTA

Following marathon deliberations of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) over three days, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) Governor, Shaktikanta Das, made four important announcements under the central bank's bi-monthly monetary policy review on August 6.

First, Das warned that India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is set to contract in 2020-21 but did not give a specific forecast. He also cautioned that "while an early containment of the COVID-19 pandemic may impart an upside to the outlook, a more protracted spread of the pandemic, deviations from the forecast of a normal monsoon and global financial market volatility are key downside risks." Furthermore, the MPC sees "upside risks to food prices and elevated headline inflation during the second quarter of the current financial year (July-September), which would ease in the second half."

Second, "in respect of MSME (micro, small and medium enterprise) borrowers facing stress on account of the economic fallout of the pandemic, lending institutions may restructure the debt under the existing framework, provided the borrower's account was classified as standard with the lender as on March 1, 2020; this restructuring will have to be implemented by March 31, 2021." The banks will have to make an additional provision of five per cent on restructured loans.

Third, large companies will also be eligible for one-time restructuring without declaring it as a non-performing asset (NPA) or requiring a change in the promoter/s. The borrower account has to be standard as on March 1. The decision on the restructuring scheme has to be taken by December 31 and restructuring must be implemented within six months. An additional provision of 10 per cent on the restructured loans should be made. An expert committee under KV Kamath will recommend to the RBI the required financial parameters, along with the sector-specific benchmarks for this special window.

Fourth, the policy repo rate — the interest rate charged by the RBI on loans it gives to banks — remains unchanged at four per cent. The reverse repo rate or the interest rate the banks get on their surplus funds parked with the RBI also remains unchanged at 3.35 per cent. Further, the RBI will continue with the "accommodative" stance of the monetary policy as long as necessary to revive growth and mitigate the impact of COVID-19, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target.

The first announcement is on expected lines even as intermittent lockdowns by States and associated disruptions in both supply and demand have dashed all hopes of a V-shaped recovery in economic growth (as alluded to by the Chief Economic Advisor, KV Subramanian during the initial stages of the pandemic). Several agencies, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have projected a significant deceleration in growth.

As regards the second, this is an extension of the existing scheme of one-time restructuring introduced last year. That was applicable to restructuring plans implemented by March 31, (over 5,00,000 MSMEs had benefited from it). Following a commitment given by the Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, in the Budget for 2020-21, the scheme was extended to December 31 this year. For a borrower to be eligible, his/her aggregate exposure, including non fund-based

“THE RBI MAY HAVE PAUSED NOW BUT BY MAINTAINING AN ACCOMMODATIVE POLICY STANCE, IT HAS KEPT THE DOOR OPEN FOR A RATE CUT IN THE FUTURE. THIS SHOULD BE AVOIDED. INSTEAD, IT NEEDS TO WORK ON OTHER FRONTS SUCH AS CREDIBLE MEASURES TO REDUCE NPAs, GOADING BANKS TO BE PROACTIVE IN LOOKING FOR VIABLE PROJECTS FOR FUNDING (MONEY IS NOT A CONSTRAINT AS THE MEASURES ANNOUNCED BY THE RBI ON MARCH 27/APRIL 17 HAVE MADE AVAILABLE PLENTY OF LIQUIDITY TO THE TUNE OF ₹5,00,000 CRORE). STEP UP INVESTMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SO ON



facilities, of banks and NBFCs (non-banking financial companies) should not be beyond ₹25 crore as on January 1. Further, the borrower's account was in default but was a "standard asset" as on January 1 and continues to be classified as a "standard asset" till the date of implementation of the restructuring (according to an RBI notification in February). In addition, the borrowing entity is GST (Goods and Services Tax) — registered on the date of implementation of the plan except those that are exempt from GST-registration. The RBI has now further extended this to restructuring plans implemented till March 31, 2021 with some relaxation in the conditions.

The exposure limit, including non fund-based facilities of banks and NBFCs to the borrower, should not exceed ₹25 crore as on March 1. Further, the account should be standard as on March 1 (against January 1 earlier).

Via the third announcement, the RBI has extended huge relief to large corporates, too. Unlike the existing arrangement under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), wherein the loan account gets a NPA tag and the promoter stands no chance of retaining the firm, the proposed one-time restructuring treats the account as standard and there is no change in the promoter/s. This special dispensation is meant only for "COVID-19 related stress" and the Kamath committee will have to ensure that the facility is not misused. In other words, all stressed accounts prior to March 1, as well as those which were unaffected during the pandemic, must be excluded.

With the introduction of the above one-time restructuring for MSMEs and corporates, the need for extending the moratorium on servicing of loans (this was initially allowed by the RBI for three months from March 1-May 31 and for a further three months ending August 31) automatically becomes redundant. While the latter was merely a deferment

of the payment liability, the former offers concrete relief by extending the period of repayment, relief in interest and so on.

The Governor sees the scheme as a win-win for both, the lenders and borrowers. According to him, while this will enable the latter to sail through the crisis period without getting permanently impaired, the former's balance sheet will look healthier (as this will put a lid on the NPAs) and they will be able to expand credit for supporting revival of growth. Hopefully, things pan out as per his wish. If not, the banks could be in for bigger trouble even as borrowers come up with more demand for restructuring.

Coming to the fourth announcement, Das has done the right thing by applying the pause button on the repo rate. Ever since he took charge (December 2018), the RBI has handed out a cumulative reduction in repo rate of 2.5 per cent, of which a 1.35 per cent cut was prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. Despite this, during 2019-20, growth in the GDP hit a low of 4.2 per cent.

This was because other factors such as compression in demand (due to massive loss of jobs and decline in incomes) and increasing risk-aversion of banks to lending (during 2019-20, bank credit grew by 6.1 per cent, down from the 13.4 per cent growth during 2018-19) were at work.

Apart from these factors coming in the way of spurring growth, even the cut in the repo rate was not fully transmitted (according to Das, reduction in lending rate was just about 0.6 per cent), thanks to the high cost of the banks' funds (an overwhelming share of these comes from public deposits of varying maturity) on the one hand and high NPAs on the other.

Both these factors make the lending rate downward inflexible. After the COVID-19 crisis, the RBI has reduced the rate by 1.15 per cent (0.75 per cent on March 27 and 0.4 per cent on May 22) thereby bringing the rate down to a

record low of four per cent. And this has come at a time when the intermittent lockdowns are simply not allowing economic activities to get into full swing. When the wheels of the economy on ground zero are stuck and there is little demand for credit, how will lowering of its cost (interest rate) help?

At this juncture, therefore, it makes no sense to keep lowering the policy rate. It sounds like the driver is merely pressing the accelerator while the car is in the neutral gear. He will only end up burning fuel without any outcome. Far from any help in giving a boost to growth (as the real bottlenecks lie elsewhere), this will do collateral damage. For instance, each time the RBI cuts the policy rate, it expects banks to follow suit. This will propel the latter to pay less to depositors on fresh deposits or when the old ones come up for renewal.

The RBI may have paused now but by maintaining an accommodative policy stance, it has kept the door open for a rate cut in the future. This should be avoided. Instead, it needs to work on other fronts such as credible measures to reduce NPAs, goading banks to be proactive in looking for viable projects for funding (money is not a constraint as the measures announced by the RBI on March 27/April 17 have made available plenty of liquidity to the tune of ₹5,00,000 crore), step up investment by the Government, especially in infrastructure and so on.

By propelling demand — both investment and consumption — and helping businesses run, this will also help reduce the cost of "one-time" restructuring and bring about a real improvement in the banks' balance sheet in the near term. Meanwhile, all-out efforts should be made for early resumption of economic activity even while strictly complying with Coronavirus-related protocols and guidelines.

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

New performance measure metrics needed

With students crossing the virtual threshold, everyone is trying to decode employability skills in educational institutions and workplaces



SHARAD MEHRA

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." This quote by one of America's founding fathers, Benjamin Franklin, encapsulates the challenges and possible solutions to the new-age education in India and across the globe in today's pandemic-afflicted world. With millions of students crossing the virtual threshold and Work From Home becoming the new normal, everyone is trying to decode employability skills, performance metrics in educational institutions and workplaces. Amid the uneasy and unpredictable change, one thing is certain: The human spirit won't change — and that's our biggest solution.

Now let's step into a more familiar

past of conventional classrooms. Here, body language, facial expressions, physical projects and practical experiments were integral to learning, besides theory and concepts. Learning outcomes took into account personality traits, cognitive skills, life skills, critical thinking and more, for creative and conventional courses. But the digital world has turned these features into challenges. Or, not.

For instance, for fashion design studies, real-world scenarios and industry-live projects that hinged mainly on sensory and cognitive skills, put a big question mark on virtual teaching of concepts and practical training. The challenge was how to keep students engaged and achieve the desired outcomes? Teaching from books was fine but what about practical learning? The answer to this was, by understanding the process backwards. For example, construction stream students were asked to take apart a stitched garment at home and understand the process, in reverse. They were asked to raise open-ended and close-ended questions and prioritise them. For styling, students used

their mobile phones and narrated stories with the limited resources available while they were at home. In the textile stream, students developed interesting and innovative prints using natural dyes.

Similarly, the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, Dehradun, decided to take the Coronavirus challenge head-on by developing AeroOpt, an airport management tool to improve efficiency at counters, staff requirements for boarding gates and immigration security with social distancing norms. Both these instances highlight how critical thinking, innovation, creativity and adaptability were channelled as everyone struggled with the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. And this is exactly what is needed now: A design-thinking approach, with problem-solving skills, critical thinking, risk-management and most importantly adaptability.

With these developments, one aspect is clear: To shape and mentor this kind of an approach, boxed methodologies cannot be a point of reference. Instead, we need to look at

alternative approaches to teaching, experimentation with available resources, providing critical feedback and delivering learning assessment outcomes. This means re-structuring pedagogies and adapting courses to the online mode with necessary tweaks and improvisations. Learning assessment is a fundamental feedback mechanism in education, allowing all stakeholders of the learning process to understand what is being learned and where learning resources need to be focussed. The wheels are moving now. But is India prepared to handle these on a larger scale for the next phase? Yes, because we have tremendous technology expertise and political will to tide through. Besides the Digital India initiative, strong indicators come from the recent move by our Government to encourage more Foreign Direct Investment in education, provide ₹3,000 crore for skill development and recognise foreign online degrees for Indian students. At present, the Centre and States are collaborating with broadcasting services to deliver education through television and radio. But for these media to suc-

ceed, it is important to operationalise talent and skills. These can be done via projects, classroom discussions, encouraging feedback and curiosity. In my estimation, these key metrics will define the future:

Critical thinking: This is a key skill that equally defines both educational and professional spheres. With the pandemic-induced restrictions, how do teachers enhance critical thinking? The answer is, by asking for real-time projects drawn from the students' immediate environment and asking for solutions from different perspectives. How can things be made better? Is there a new way of looking at a situation? How will more people benefit from a solution? Is this safe and has every loophole been plugged? These are some indicators for enhancing critical thinking.

Adaptability and innovation: In a 2018 Barclays Life Skills Report in the UK, 60 per cent of the employers have clearly stated that adaptability has become more important now than during the previous decade. Therefore, how do you respond to a situation and how quickly do you adapt to change?

Are you able to control your thoughts, emotions and behaviour under pressure or in certain situations? Adaptive students are certain to be a professional success, wherever they go. Some of the world's best innovations have debuted in the worst situations. Are you willing to experiment, take risks and create something new? An innovator will always be valued in every situation.

Empathy and collaboration: How do you respond to your peers? Are you supportive, understanding and display compassion? Are you a team player and do you believe in taking individual credit? Do you believe in "We" over "I"? These values are critical to the future. The pandemic has eroded everything that we took for granted in workplaces, businesses, economies and even our education systems. This sudden pause from the physical world is significant to herald change. And remember, as Greek philosopher Socrates said, "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."

(The writer is CEO Asia Pacific Region, Global University Systems)

FOREIGN EYE



WILDLIFE CAUGHT IN CROSSHAIR

Wildlife conservation is costly and reliant on philanthropy and Western visitors as well as far-sighted policy-makers. While the environmental benefits of a permanent reduction in long-distance air travel are indisputable, it also threatens the viability of wildlife tourism. While COVID-19 doesn't affect animals and ecosystems in the way it affects humans, it is putting them at risk. (The Guardian editorial)

Sensex rises for 3rd day, gains 142 pts

L&T SPURTS OVER 4 PC

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex notched up gains for the third straight session on Monday, buoyed by engineering, finance and pharma stocks amid positive cues from global markets.

After rallying 390.12 points during the day, the 30-share BSE benchmark pared some gains to end 141.51 points or 0.37 per cent higher at 38,182.08. Similarly, the NSE Nifty dimbed 56.10 points or 0.50 per cent to close at 11,270.15.L&T was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying 4.81 per cent, followed by M&M, Sun Pharm, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, SBI, ICICI Bank and Titan.

On the other hand, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints, Maruti, Bajaj Finserv, UltraTech Cement and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards, shedding up to 1.26 per

cent.According to traders, market sentiment was positive amid firm cues from global indices and consistent foreign fund inflows.

Global markets rose following positive factory output data from China, though escalating US-China tensions capped the gains. Bourses in Shanghai and Seoul ended on a positive note, while Hong Kong settled in the red. Markets in Tokyo were closed for a holiday.Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading with gains in early deals. "Today's trade was characterised by heightened activity in defence and pharmaceutical stocks, the former due to the proposed changes being implemented favoring domestic producers and the latter due to earnings..."

"On the broader market too, we witnessed investor interest across stocks in the sugar sector as large integrated sugar complexes have demonstrated success in their distillery operations," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Defence stocks in limelight; zoom up to 9 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Defence stocks on Monday jumped up to 9 per cent after the announcement that India will stop the import of 101 weapons and military platforms like transport aircraft, light combat helicopters under a staggered timeline till 2024, in a mega push to boost domestic production.

Shares of Bharat Electronics Limited zoomed 9.17 per cent, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd 8.74 per cent, Astra Microwave Products 5.48 per cent, Bharat Dynamics 4.16 per cent, BEML jumped 3.95 per cent and Apollo Micro Systems 3.63 per cent on the BSE. "Government's action to boost domestic defence productions helped gains in

defence stocks," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. In a mega push to boost domestic defence production, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday announced that India will stop the import of 101 weapons and military platforms like transport aircraft, light combat helicopters, conventional submarines, cruise missiles and sonar systems under a staggered timeline till 2024 Making the announcement on Twitter, the defence minister estimated that the domestic defence industry would receive contracts worth almost ₹4 lakh crore within the next five to seven years as a result of the decision to prune the import list of defence platforms and equipment.

Sebi amends rules for filling of executive director posts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has made changes pertaining to the proportion of executive director posts to be filled up through different modes and composition of selection committee.

Besides, Sebi said an employee, who has put in at least seven years as junior accounts assistant and junior engineer and have requisite qualifications, can be considered for the post of 'Grade A' officer at the regulator.

With regard to the position of executive director (other than law), Sebi said two-thirds of the total posts will be filled up from internal candidates and the remaining one-third to be filled up by deputation or contract basis.

In case of non-availability in any category - internal and deputation or contract - the post may be filled from

other categories, the regulator said in a notification dated August 5.

Earlier, 50 per cent of the total post of executive directors were required to be filled in from internal candidates and the remaining 50 per cent were to be recruited by deputation/ contract and/or direct recruitment.

Besides, the regulator said chairman, two other members of the board and two external experts, to be nominated by the chairman, will constitute the selection committee for executive director position.

In June, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) had invited applications to recruit two executive directors. Currently, Sebi has eight executive directors.

Further, Sebi said, "An employee working as junior secretarial assistant, junior accounts assistant, junior

library assistant or junior engineer, who has completed minimum seven years of service and possesses the requisite qualifications for officer Grade A..., may be considered for switch over to Grade A in the officer cadre against the vacancies."

This will be within the overall 10 per cent vacancies arising in a calendar year or as notified by Competent Authority.

The switch over to grade A officer is subject to such employees qualifying in the departmental test and interviews conducted by the competent authority or by an outside agency engaged by Sebi.

To give effect to these, Sebi has amended employees service regulations. The regulator is in the process of hiring 147 officers in Grade A -- general, legal, information technology, engineering, research and official language streams

Bank of Baroda posts Q1 net loss of ₹864 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Bank of Baroda on Monday reported a standalone net loss of ₹864 crore during the quarter ended June of the current fiscal year, due to higher provisions and contingencies.

The bank had posted a net profit of ₹710 crore in the same quarter a year ago."On account of provisioning on standard accounts of ₹1,811 crore, bank reported a (standalone) net loss of ₹864 crore in Q1 FY21 and consolidated net loss stood at ₹679 crore," Bank of Baroda said in a regulatory filing.Interest income of the lender during the April-June quarter of 2020-21 was down by 2.38 per cent to ₹18,494 crore as against ₹18,944 crore in the year-ago quarter.

Covid-19 likely to alter consumer behaviour permanently: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A survey has said that the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to alter the consumer behaviour permanently and cause lasting structural changes to the consumer goods and retail

industries.

The demand for local goods and brands is growing as consumers are hesitant to step out of their safety zones to resume previous consumption patterns, according to Accenture COVID-19

Consumer Pulse Research report. The survey polled 2,500 consumers in India among 45,000 respondents globally, between March and June, it said.

"The India leg of the survey found that 90 per cent of

consumers are making lasting changes to how they live, work and shop, and there is no going back to the pre-pandemic world for consumer brands," the report said.

The survey found that the pandemic is causing more people

to shop for groceries online.

The demand for local products, digital commerce and omnichannel services such a home delivery, chat features and virtual consultations is surging, and is likely to endure beyond this crisis, it

said. Consumers are now focused on their most basic needs while cutting back on nonessentials, the report said.

"They are more mindful of what they are buying, striving to limit food waste, shopping more cost consciously and are

making healthier and environmentally sustainable choices," it said.

As many as 85 per cent of the consumers in India said that they are shopping more health-consciously and are focusing more on limiting food

waste. While, 75 per cent of consumers said they are being ore cost-conscious when shopping for products and 71 per cent feel that quality, safety and trust are the most considered brand attributes in purchase decisions.

NIFTY 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY 50	11270.25	11337.30	11238.00	11270.15	56.10	
CIPLA	760.00	814.50	751.35	797.70	69.05	
M&M	605.00	640.80	605.00	629.90	29.45	
LT	925.00	970.00	925.00	959.95	44.30	
TATAMOTORS	119.95	124.70	119.70	123.35	4.25	
SUNPHARMA	526.00	550.80	526.00	544.10	18.15	
NTPC	86.80	88.70	86.15	88.70	2.90	
TECHM	668.00	687.35	662.70	684.00	21.55	
UPL	483.85	496.50	474.45	493.75	13.45	
DRREDDY	4605.00	4758.60	4605.00	4691.65	118.15	
JSWSTEEL	241.00	246.35	238.55	246.00	5.80	
SHREECEM	22200.00	22530.00	21939.55	22330.00	419.90	
INFRAEL	194.00	198.15	191.90	196.30	3.70	
ICICIBANK	339.50	364.95	337.35	364.20	6.25	
ITC	196.40	199.65	196.40	199.45	3.40	
SBIN	191.85	195.50	191.70	193.75	3.10	
TATASTEEL	405.75	411.55	399.60	409.80	5.75	
ADANIPORTS	329.00	333.95	325.70	331.25	4.60	
KOTAKBANK	1349.00	1380.00	1346.20	1361.00	18.50	
TTIAN	1093.00	1114.60	1084.00	1103.20	12.15	
HDFC	1794.00	1811.00	1789.30	1796.60	18.90	
POWERGRID	176.85	178.80	176.25	177.75	1.80	
ZEEL	150.60	154.00	149.00	151.60	1.50	
IOC	86.60	87.70	86.20	87.20	0.80	
HDFCBANK	1044.00	1064.00	1043.80	1052.00	8.15	
ONGC	79.50	79.75	78.90	79.15	0.50	
HINDALCO	176.90	179.00	174.40	178.60	1.00	
HDCLIFE	616.00	617.95	607.00	609.65	2.70	
HCLTECH	694.95	694.95	685.10	693.25	2.95	
GAIL	97.25	97.90	96.30	97.10	0.20	
INDUSINDBK	512.00	517.55	506.55	509.80	0.80	
HEROMOTOCO	2718.00	2718.00	2674.15	2708.90	2.70	
BRITANNIA	3959.95	4005.00	3929.00	3937.00	2.20	
INFY	948.90	956.80	945.30	950.55	-0.35	
WIPRO	280.00	281.20	276.60	277.15	-0.25	
BHARTIARTL	564.30	565.00	554.80	559.80	-1.00	
COALINDIA	131.00	131.15	129.00	129.50	-0.25	
HINDUNILVR	220.80	222.75	219.80	220.50	-0.55	
AXISBANK	434.00	437.00	429.30	431.80	-1.50	
BAJAJ-AUTO	3001.70	3025.00	2971.00	2989.85	-11.85	
TCS	2318.00	2325.00	227.65	2283.00	-12.35	
GRASIM	64.00	64.35	62.70	63.15	-4.40	
NESTLEIND	16789.95	16899.95	16640.00	16650.00	-138.60	
ULTRACEMCO	4048.00	4048.00	3961.00	3969.50	-34.75	
RAJNANCA	3494.00	3556.85	3437.20	3434.05	-30.25	
BAJAJFINSV	6509.95	6570.00	6363.00	6404.00	-63.15	
RELIANCE	2159.10	2165.00	2108.10	2121.60	-24.85	
BPCL	421.00	424.40	413.50	414.85	-4.90	
MARUTI	690.00	678.20	657.60	659.00	-80.00	
ASIANPAINT	1810.00	1824.30	1777.00	1784.00	-22.25	
EICHERMOT	21898.00	21999.00	21240.00	21330.00	-477.35	

NIFTY NEXT 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	27406.90	27610.25	27369.70	27526.05	395.60	
DIVISLAB	3063.30	3293.00	2963.30	3120.75	335.90	
LUPIN	886.90	999.40	886.05	953.10	73.25	
GICRE	141.95	152.00	141.15	150.90	10.00	
NAUKRI	3320.00	3584.40	3320.00	3542.00	229.10	
AUROPHARMA	913.00	967.50	913.00	953.60	47.15	
ABBOTINDIA	17198.00	17350.00	16900.00	16995.00	796.00	
MOTHERSUMI	99.90	108.25	99.55	104.50	4.70	
PEC	87.85	89.95	86.75	89.40	3.95	
GLD	142.50	149.00	142.40	148.30	6.45	
CADILAH	393.20	409.80	392.15	405.15	14.25	
BIOCON	402.20	414.50	400.70	413.75	14.30	
NMDC	89.75	92.30	88.40	92.25	3.15	
ICICIPRULI	473.00	484.15	470.60	482.50	12.10	
ICIGI	1370.65	1424.00	1365.00	1388.85	32.50	
TORNTHARM	2949.80	3030.00	2945.00	3009.90	68.85	
ADANTRANS	254.95	261.95	250.10	255.00	5.30	
PIDILITIND	1384.90	1408.90	1358.10	1400.50	22.20	
OFSS	2950.00	3010.00	2942.15	2974.00	44.30	
PETRONET	245.50	249.00	243.30	248.00	3.50	
MCDOWELL-N	590.90	598.80	588.00	595.30	8.40	
AMBUJACEM	221.00	223.50	219.55	222.50	2.95	
INDIGO	949.95	957.00	931.20	951.20	11.95	
BANKBARODA	48.95	49.25	47.90	48.90	0.55	
HINDPETRO	215.80	217.90	213.65	215.50	1.90	
MARICO	370.00	375.80	367.20	373.15	3.15	
PEL	1483.00	1512.35	1467.60	1476.15	11.95	
SCICARD	758.55	769.00	757.10	761.00	3.05	
BAJAJHLING	2733.00	2762.95	2700.00	2709.95	8.90	
HAYVELLS	612.00	620.90	608.20	610.75	1.20	
AGL	1402.10	1408.95	1386.10	1400.20	2.80	
ICC	390.00	392.30	385.45	389.00	0.75	
PNB	33.00	33.30	32.70	32.85	0.05	
UBL	970.00	972.45	961.45	965.90	0.40	
HDFCAMC	2384.00	2395.00	2361.00	2365.00	-4.00	
COLPAL	1462.00	1465.00	1431.85	1454.00	-2.95	
BOSCHLTD	1365.00	1389.80	1350.50	1362.95	-28.70	
NHPC	20.60	20.70	20.35	20.40	-0.05	
SBILIFE	880.00	882.00	861.80	866.00	-2.60	
PGHH	10301.00	10380.00	10175.00	10280.00	-31.40	
SRTRANSFIN	678.00	686.60	670.10	674.00	-2.75	
BERGEPAINT	560.00	564.75	545.00	552.45	-2.70	
DABUR	515.00	528.00	506.35	509.05	-3.25	
GODREJCP	691.20	696.35	680.20	683.90	-5.20	
DMART	2138.40	2145.00	2100.00	2118.80	-19.60	
PAIGEIND	19130.00	19190.00	18710.00	18765.00	-246.85	
BANDHANBNK	309.65	311.90	300.00	302.10	-5.40	
SIEMENS	1143.00	1152.00	1120.80	1131.00	-21.35	
MUTHOOTFIN	1221.00	1226.00	1158.00	1176.00	-41.00	
HINDZINC	254.90	257.70	237.50	242.60	-10.35	
CONCOR	433.00	438.90	365.95	386.80	-69.10	

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP	NMDC	90.00	92.50	88.40	91.75
RELIANCE	2156.50	2164.95	2108.25	2119.60	HDCLIFE	611.00	617.45	607.05	608.80
AXISBANK	435.00	437.20	429.40	430.95	RECLTD	111.70	111.70	107.00	107.90
TVSMOTOR	421.50	426.00	415.50	418.55	APLTD	1056.50	1097.95	1056.00	1086.95
CIPLA	763.40	814.45	751.55	795.65	SHREECEM	22290.00	22521.90	21962.45	22388.95
BAIFINANCE	3495.00	3555.00	3414.15	3441.75	NATCOPIHARM	790.00	859.00	786.05	850.55
HDFCBANK	1041.70	1064.10	1041.70	1051.00	BEML	681.00	695.95	674.60	682.25
LIT	926.00	970.00	925.00	959.70	M&MFIN	137.60	137.60	133.25	134.05
TATAMOTORS	119.95	124.65	119.55	123.80	GAIL	97.50	97.80	96.35	97.05
IDEA	9.00	9.19	8.82	8.99	HFCAL	14.58	17.16	14.50	17.13
BEL	105.20	113.90	104.50	108.30	NAUKRI	3350.00	3575.25	3339.15	3530.75
DIVISLAB	3062.00	3228.05	3062.00	3117.10	MEGH	68.00	69.45	63.10	63.75
INFY	950.75	956.65	945.60	951.10	ULTRACEMCO	4010.00	4040.00	3962.05	3970.00
SBIN	191.75	195.40	191.55	193.80	CANBK	101.95	102.60	101.60	101.85
IBULHSGFIN	195.00	212.60	195.00	204.70	PEC	87.45	89.95	86.85	89.60
AUROPHARMA	910.00	967.60	910.00	949.10	SPARC	181.95	191.25	181.70	187.75
LUPIN	881.20	977.70	881.20	957.85	CHOLAFIN	209.05	213.25	207.40	209.50
RBLANK	192.00	191.70	180.10	181.10	ITI	139.90	145.50	139.90	141.20
LAURUSLABS	1030.00	1125.05	1030.00	1125.05	PFIZER	4400.00	4783.00	4391.80	4606.05
LAURUSLABS	562.50	565.05	555.00	558.35	FDC	352.00	354.00	342.70	345.60
M&M	606.00	640.55	600.60	629.15	COLPAL	1459.00	1465.75	1433.00	1447.10
MOTHERS&UMI	99.25	108.10	99.25	104.90	ADANIANT	193.65	198.10	192.30	195.60
INDUSINDBK	511.20	517.25	506.70	509.35	BAIAJ-AUTO	3002.00	3023.80	2971.20	2992.60
ITC	196.15	199.60	195.75	198.80	JIJUBLANT	855.00	884.00	841.50	874.40
CONCOR	444.90	444.90	372.20	386.35	FEDERALBNK	55.05	55.30	53.65	53.90
PEL	1487.00	151.130	1468.25	1475.05	CANFINHOME	871.90	94.90	368.30	389.10
BATAINDIA	1230.00	1270.00	1220.30	1234.60	CENTURYTEXT	33.00	33.50	31.70	32.30
GLNMARK	453.50	476.50	453.50	471.15	ALKEM	3049.00	3067.00	2942.00	2977.50
STAR	520.05	615.95	520.05	609.10	DELTAICORP*	111.00	113.90	105.40	109.20
SUNPHARMA*	527.90	550.70	527.05	543.75	ROMDYENGINE	67.90	70.20	66.30	69.00
HDPC	1789.00	1810.75	1779.25	1798.70	ICICIGI	1360.00	1424.25	1360.00	1382.40
MAJUTI	647.00	672.00	657.40	660.05	ADANIGAS	163.80	167.90	162.00	163.20
BAJAFINSV	686.00	6570.00	6368.45	6407.60	TATAELXSI	906.00	1027.70	982.90	1018.10
SKRTRANSF	677.50	686.00	670.50	673.55	PNB	32.90	33.25	32.70	32.90
DREDDY	4601.00	4754.80	4601.00	4692.85	BLISSGVS	13.00	13.50	12.80	12.95
ICICIBANK	359.00	364.95	357.55	363.60	IDFC	20.30	21.10	20.30	20.70
BHEL	36.00	37.60	35.85	36.25	BOSCHLTD	13625.10	13882.95	13526.05	13591.35
HINDUNILVR	2211.25	2226.00	2199.30	2207.05	ICICIPRULI	47.00	48.60	47.00	48.29
WZL	149.00	153.95	148.90	151.20	ADANIPOWER	36.65	38.70	36.55	37.60
JINDALSTEL	199.45	203.90	196.20	201.55	UJIVAN	2447.00	247.95	235.55	237.80
DLF	141.95	150.10	141.95	148.45	SIEMENS	114.00	1149.40	1121.00	1131.70
ASHOKLEY	50.60	51.80	50.45	51.40	INFRATEL	193.30	198.00	191.90	196.90
UPL	484.35	496.50	478.45	493.70	COROMANDEL	791.05	807.00	787.95	792.15
TATASTEEL	404.60	411.45	399.60	410.15	PNPD	1960.00	1986.40	1912.30	1930.75
TATACONSUM	522.95	525.80	511.50	520.45	NTNC	86.50	88.70	86.30	88.10
IPCALAB	1967.10	2175.00	1967.10	2099.60	IGL	394.95	394.95	385.60	389.20
VIPIND	260.85	263.25	258.90	259.85	SAIL	37.80	38.30	37.20	38.00
IOC	86.50	87.70	86.25	87.10	TATACOFFEE	106.80	110.50	106.60	108.90
SRF	4109.00	4275.00	4065.60	4224.75	WASCOINDIA	7010.00	7018.00	7000.05	7009.00
HCLTECH	697.95	697.95	685.20	692.30	WOCKPHARMA	311.05	324.55	310.50	318.40
BHARATFORG	432.05	434.80	419.50	427.05	RAYMOND	228.00	265.70	254.80	260.35
BANDHANBNK	311.15	312.00	300.00	301.40	MARICO	371.70	375.60	367.40	372.75
MUTHOOTFIN	1220.00	1226.00	1158.10	1173.30	COCINSHIP	34.00	35.00	33.05	34.25
VEDL	122.00	126.20	121.65	125.25	ACC	1408.90	1408.90	1386.85	1399.65
TTIAN	1097.00	1114.35	1084.85	1107.80	NAM-INDIA	273.55	282.00	272.30	277.75
BIOCON	403.35	414.25	401.00	412.40	POWERGRID	177.10	178.75	175.70	177.30
BPCIL	422.80	442.40	413.75	415.05	NIITTECH	1952.00	2016.45	1952.00	1988.40
CADILAHC	391.00	407.90	391.00	405.00	SBILIFE	878.60	888.00	862.00	865.75
MANAPPURAM	162.10	163.00	156.30	158.60	SCI	61.00	62.35	60.00	60.75
HINDPETRO	615.20	617.90	213.80	215.20	CEATLTD	891.55	905.95	890.00	893.30
GRASIM	23.20	24.80	62.65	63.30	HIMATSEIDE	72.10	85.35	72.10	84.35
VIPRO	281.90	281.25	276.75	277.15	BALKRISNA	1380.00	1380.00	1340.00	1362.40
TCS	230.00	2324.35	2275.65	2281.60	EQUITAS	51.25	53.20	50.65	52.00
EMAMILTD	63.00	309.15	263.00	307.35	GODREJCP	69.90	69.65	68.025	68.14
GMM	5299.95	6050.00	5249.00	5692.60	STRECH*	125.00	132.90	125.00	129.90
GRANULES	320.00	335.90	318.70	329.05	WABAG	127.00	151.40	127.00	149.30
BRITANNIA	3951.25	4004.35	3922.10	3933.95	COALINDIA	131.00	131.15	129.05	129.20
TORNTPHARM	2940.60	3029.15	2940.60	3011.90	INDHOTEL	78.90	81.40	78.40	80.90
ASIANPAINT	1815.80	1823.95	1778.20	1782.45	HAYVELLS	611.15	620.85	608.30	611.90
CAPPL	607.00	622.05	555.35	570.50	IEX	187.00	199.00	185.25	194.30
DABUR	515.00	528.00	506.45	508.20	HONAUT	31799.45	32220.15	31000.00	31933.00
HDFCANK	2375.25	2395.00	2361.50	2364.30	HAWKINCOOK	4690.00	4795.00	4616.00	4750.35
BANKBARODA	49.00	49.00	47.90	48.55	AIJANTHARM	1272.00	1759.35	1706.15	1723.55
JUBLFOOD	1887.75	1916.75	1867.60	1879.50	DCBBANK	84.15	87.75	82.00	82.55
DMART	2131.05	2149.00	2098.50	2115.40	ABBOTINDIA	17000.00	17350.00	16900.00	16975.75
HINDALCO	177.00	179.05	174.35	178.60	DEEPAKFERT	153.60	154.00	147.20	148.75
JSWSTEEL	240.00	246.40	238.70	244.95	INDIAKEM	118.00	119.40	117.20	117.80
PNBHousing	220.95	248.70	219.05	238.10	AMBER	170.00	174.80	167.80	171.20
KOTAKBANK	1343.00	1380.00	1343.00	1360.35	RELAXO	63.80	64.85	63.15	63.97
TECHM	670.00	687.25	662.65	681.35	TATACOMM	85.00	85.70	82.18	85.30
TATAPOWER	50.45	51.90	49.85	51.45	ASTRAZEN	3450.00	3480.00	3312.55	3378.55
APOLLOTYRE	123.60	128.15	122.90	127.40	PAGEIND	19100.00	19192.05	18721.50	18759.35
APOLLOHOSP	1479.00	1798.75	1749.00	1785.40	BERGEPAINT	561.00	563.15	545.30	551.65
ESCORTS	1129.00	1137.00	1099.15	1114.60	POLYCAP	846.00	868.40	830.50	857.10
IRCTC	1326.05	1335.00	1320.00	1324.15	GODREJPROP	880.05	909.80	880.85	890.90
BSOF	144.80	151.00	140.25	148.05	ADANISTRANS	254.00	261.45	250.00	254.90
GSPL	207.10	214.70	205.10	211.70	NESTLEIND	16900.00	16900.00	16643.25	16667.00
PIDILITIND	1392.95	1407.40	1358.90	1398.95	NOCIL	113.25	116.95	111.55	112.60
HINDZINC	253.10	257.20	237.55	243.10	BAYERCROP	623.00	624.00	6025.00	6041.80
BDL	45.90	465.10	432.80	436.50	VOLTAS	599.00	599.00	585.75	586.75
MXL	1675.05	1734.60	1650.20	1694.90	DIXON	790.00	8122.20	7832.25	8061.75
HAL	1035.00	1070.40	1006.45	1030.75	ASHOKA	60.50	63.00	58.50	62.80
ADANIPORTS	328.50	333.85	325.70	331.25	GODFREYPHLP	950.00	989.90	932.50	960.60
BBTC	1361.00	1566.80	1353.95	1530.00	VAIHABAGBL	1700.00	1725.00	1682.25	1692.25
FRETAIL	112.00	112.50	107.10	107.45	TATACHEM	30.00	30.04	29.40	30.10
INDIGO	948.00	965.90	930.80	952.90	DALBHARAT*	784.55	790.50	774.00	779.65
EICHERMOT	21793.20	21950.00	21251.00	21342.55	CHASUMER	12.00	12.00	11.00	11.15
BALRAMCHIN	131.90	138.00	130.95	136.70	JSWENERGY	48.50	51.35	48.50	50.80
NAVFLUOR	1959.80	2139.55	1897.85	2127.45	SYNGENE	47.15	485.90	468.00	481.60
LICHSGFIN	260.00	265.60	260.00	263.05	CYIENT	340.00	361.75	339.55	359.20
HEROMOTOCO	2725.00	2725.00	2674.05	2701.85	BAJAJCON	182.35	186.55	180.10	182.65
IDFCFIRSTB	28.50	28.80	28.00	28.35	PVR	113.00	1143.25	1116.20	1125.60
MGL	967.00	970.00	947.00	967.70	MRF	63000.00	63506.10	61743.95	61891.00
ADANIGREEN	385.00	388.75	370.60	373.45	SUBASCHEM	43.00	44.25	42.50	43.60
ONGC	79.10	79.70	78.90	79.05	ADAMPJACEM	221.00	223.40	219.45	221.65
SBICARD	757.80	769.00	755.40	760.90	NH	304.20	333.00	303.00	323.75
L&TFH	63.55	64.20	63.15	63.65	HEXAWARE	39.50	40.00	39.10	40.08
DEEPAKNI	613.50	615.55	583.00	588.65	SSWOLAR	239.75	268.00	239.75	256.60
AMARAJABAT	717.00	722.00	712.00	714.90	HEG	79.10	804.90	781.55	789.70

Chinese hackers targeting US Prez poll: NSA

They want Trump to lose re-election attempt: O'Brien

Washington: Chinese Government-linked hackers have been targeting US election infrastructure ahead of the 2020 presidential election, White House National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien said on Sunday, indicating a more active level of alleged Chinese interference.

O'Brien's comments appeared to go beyond a statement released on Friday by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence which

said China "has been expanding its influence efforts," and that Russia was already trying to undercut Democratic candidate Joe Biden. But did not specifically accuse Beijing of hacking attempts against U.S. election-related systems.

"They'd like to see the President lose," O'Brien said on CBS' "Face the Nation." "China — like Russia, like Iran — they've engaged in cyberattacks and phishing and that sort of thing with respect to our

election infrastructure, with respect to websites and that sort of thing."

China has consistently denied U.S. government claims that it hacks U.S. companies, politicians or government agencies. "The U.S. presidential election is an internal affair, we have no interest in interfering in it," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said in April.

O'Brien said the United States had seen hackers try to

infiltrate websites belonging to Secretary of State offices around the country, which are responsible for administering elections at the local level, and collecting data on Americans.

"It is a real concern and it's not just Russia," he said. "There will be severe consequences for any country that attempts to interfere in our free and fair elections." The National Security Council did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The ODNI declined to comment or clarify whether O'Brien's com-

ments contradicted their own.

The ODNI previously said that "adversaries" seek to compromise the private communications of American political candidates and penetrate U.S. election systems ahead of November's election. And that China would prefer President Donald Trump does not win reelection. Multiple reviews by US intelligence agencies have concluded that Russia acted to boost Trump's 2016 campaign and undercut his rival Hillary Clinton's chances in that election.

Agencies

BEIRUT BLAST — LEBANON GOVT RESIGNS AMID PUBLIC FURY

AP ■ BEIRUT

Lebanon's Government resigned on Monday amid widespread public fury at the country's ruling elite over last week's devastating explosion in Beirut. The move risks opening the way to dragged-out negotiations over a new Cabinet amid urgent calls for reform.

Prime Minster Hassan Diab headed to the presidential palace to submit the Cabinet's group resignation, said Health Minister Hamad Hassan. It follows a weekend of anti-government protests in the wake of the Aug. 4 explosion in Beirut's port that caused widespread destruction, killed at least 160 people and injured about 6,000 others.

The moment typified Lebanon's political dilemma. Since October, there have been mass demonstrations demanding the departure of the entire sectarian-based leadership over entrenched corruption, incompetence and mismanagement.

But the ruling oligarchy has held onto power for so long — since the end of the civil war in 1990 — that it is difficult to find a credible political figure not tainted by connections to them.

Although Diab's resignation had appeared inevitable after the catastrophe, he seemed unwilling to leave and only two days ago made a televised speech in which he

offered to stay on for two months to allow for various factions to agree on a roadmap for reforms. But the pressure from within his own Cabinet proved to be too much.

Diab's government was formed after his predecessor, Saad Hariri, stepped down in October in response to the demonstrations. It took months of bickering among the leadership factions before they settled on Diab.

EGYPT MOVES 'DANGEROUS MATERIALS' FROM AIRPORTS

Cairo: Egypt's Civil Aviation Ministry said after Lebanon's massive explosion last week it was moving "dangerous materials" held at airports nationwide to more secure locations. The ministry is "taking precautionary measures with regards to dangerous materials, either immediately releasing them or transferring them to safe storage spaces well outside the range of airports and residential areas," it said in a statement Sunday. The statement referred to materials held in "cargo bays and storage warehouses in Cairo's airport and all airports nationwide", without specifying which kind of materials would be moved. **AFP**

Portland protesters set fires, 2 officers hurt

Portland (US): Protesters outside a Portland police union building set fires and used a mortar to launch commercial grade fireworks at police and officials said Monday that two officers were injured and 16 demonstrators were arrested.

A day after demonstrators managed to get inside the union building and set a fire, the protesters on Sunday night blocked a road and set dumpsters fires outside it, police said in a statement.

The fireworks were launched at police as they tried to clear out the demonstrators and one of the two officers treated at the scene suffered a burn on her neck.

The demonstrators who were arrested face misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct or interfering with a peace officer. Their detentions came after nine protesters were arrested Saturday night and 24 Friday night.

Sunday night's demonstration came after demonstrators marched to the building from a nearby park. As police moved to break up the gathering, the commercial-grade fireworks were thrown at officers, police said.

The department released

photos of the officers' injuries, including a photo of a face covering that the statement described as being "partially melted" from the fireworks.

The protests in Portland have happened nightly for 70 days since George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis.

The violence reached an apex when protesters targeted a federal courthouse last month that was defended by federal agents who lobbed tear gas at the attacking demonstrators in two straight weeks of nightly confrontations.

The federal agents withdrew more than a week ago amid hopes for calm, but the violent protests have resurfaced miles from the courthouse.

Three officers were injured in a protest Saturday night, including two who were treated at a hospital and released.

And on Friday night, demonstrators defied orders to disperse and hurled rocks, frozen or hard-boiled eggs and commercial-grade fireworks at officers.

Some filled pool noodles with nails and put them on the road, causing extensive damage to a patrol vehicle, police said. **AP**

Hong Kong newspaper raided, tycoon detained under new law

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong authorities broadened their enforcement of a new national security law on Monday, arresting media tycoon Jimmy Lai, searching the headquarters of his Next Digital group and carting away boxes of what they said was evidence.

In the evening, police also arrested prominent pro-democracy activist Agnes Chow Ting at her home, according to a tweet by fellow activist Nathan Law, who is

currently in Britain. A post on Chow's official Facebook page said police had arrived at her home and that her lawyers were rushing to the scene.

Two days after Chinese and Hong Kong officials shrugged off sanctions imposed on them by the U.S., the moves showed China's determination to enforce the new law and curb dissent in the semi-autonomous city after months of massive pro-democracy demonstrations last year.

Lai's arrest and the search of his Next Digital group

marked the first time the law was used against news media, stoking fears that authorities are suppressing press freedom. Next Digital operates Apple Daily, a feisty pro-democracy tabloid that often condemns China's Communist Party-led government.

Apple Daily's popularity stems from its celebrity news and flamboyant stories, but it is also known for investigative reporting and breaking news coverage. It has frequently urged readers to take part in pro-democracy protests,

Trump trails Biden in two key battleground States: Opinion poll

Washington: Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden is leading President Donald Trump by as much as six percentage points in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, two battleground states the Republican leader had won in the last election, according to a new opinion poll on Monday. Voters in these two states think the US is doing poorly and that Biden would do a better job than Trump in handling the coronavirus outbreak, the CBS News reported citing the findings of its poll tracker. **PTI**

Trump's pandemic relief orders are limited in scope

AP ■ NEW YORK

President Donald Trump's new executive orders to help Americans struggling under the economic recession are far less sweeping than any pandemic relief bill Congress would pass.

Trump acted Saturday after negotiations for a second pandemic relief bill reached an impasse.

Democrats initially sought a USD 3.4 trillion package, but said they lowered their demand to USD 2 trillion. Republicans had proposed a USD 1 trillion plan.

The are questions about how effective Trump's measures will be.

An order for supplemental unemployment insurance payments relies on state contributions that may not materialise.

PARIS MAKES FACE MASKS MANDATORY US HITS 5 MILLION CORONAVIRUS CASES

AFP ■ PARIS

Face masks became compulsory in tourist hotspots in Paris on Monday amid warnings of a resurgence of coronavirus cases, as infections in the world's worst-hit country the United States topped five million.

The requirement came as France along with much of Western Europe sweltered in a heatwave, with temperatures soaring above 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit).

The blistering heat sent crowds flocking to beaches at the weekend despite health warnings about the risk of infection.

In Berlin, thousands of children returned to school on Monday after the summer break, sporting masks which are compulsory in common areas like school courtyards. Schools in some other German regions also reopened, though with differing rules on masks.

"No child forgot their masks this morning, so we see everything is back to normal," said Domenica Aciri, headmistress of the Carl Orff primary school in Berlin.

In Pakistan, all restaurants and parks were allowed to reopen Monday, as well theatres, cinemas and public transport, after the country saw a drop in new cases for several weeks.

"Anything but second lockdown." People in Paris aged 11 and over are now required to wear the masks in crowded areas and tourists hotspots.

These include the banks of the Seine River and more than

a 100 streets in the French capital, including tourist destinations like Montmartre, where the Sacre Coeur basilica is located.

Several French towns and cities have already introduced similar measures, as well as parts of Belgium, the Netherlands, Romania and Spain. "All the indicators show that since mid-July the virus is again circulating more actively in the (Paris) region," said a police statement at the weekend.

Paris residents interviewed by AFP generally supported the decision on masks.

"I think it's a very good idea, we should maybe have done it sooner," Bertrand, 28, said in the popular Rue des Martyrs in central Paris.

"Since we don't understand enough about this illness, the best thing is that we protect ourselves."

The masks are "restrictive" but necessary "if we want to avoid a second wave in Paris," said Marion, 24, wearing a bright green mask. "Anything

except a second lockdown."

Globally, nearly 20 million cases have been officially registered. The death count is at least 7,31,500 worldwide.

The United States is by far the worst-hit country with nearly 1,63,000 deaths. On Sunday, it reached the extraordinary milestone of five million coronavirus cases, according to according to John Hopkins University.

President Donald Trump's Democratic opponent in the presidential election, Joe Biden, tweeted that five million coronavirus cases was "a number that boggles the mind and breaks the heart."

"Unworkable, weak" relief

The figures came as Trump was accused of flouting the constitution by unilaterally extending a virus relief package. The package — announced by Trump on Saturday after talks between Republican and Democrat lawmakers hit a wall

Covid seems to lack seasonal pattern: WHO

AP ■ LONDON

The emergencies chief for the World Health Organization (WHO) said Covid-19 doesn't seem to follow the seasonal patterns that some viruses exhibit, making it harder to control.

Unlike other respiratory viruses like influenza that spread mainly in the winter, the coronavirus pandemic is accelerating in the summer. That's

despite earlier predictions from some scientists and politicians it would fade in the heat.

"This virus has demonstrated no seasonal pattern as such," said Dr Michael Ryan at a press briefing on Monday. "What it has clearly demonstrated is that if you take the pressure off the virus, the virus bounces back," he said.

Ryan said the UN Health agency continues to advise

countries even where Covid-19 appears to be under control, such as those in Europe, to maintain measures to slow virus spread. He called for countries where transmission remains intense, such as Brazil, to adopt measures so that communities have the necessary support they need to implement strategies like social distancing, wearing masks, and self-isolating if they have symptoms.

China greets 'old friend' Mahinda Rajapaksa on his massive win

Beijing (PTI): China has greeted "old friend" Mahinda Rajapaksa on taking over as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka following a landslide victory and assured him full support, as Beijing looks forward to advancing its strategic cooperative partnership with Colombo.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has greeted Rajapaksa, saying that the Sri Lankan leader has been long committed to promoting the friendship between the two countries.

Rajapaksa, during whose previous tenures China made billions of dollars of investments in the island nation, enjoys a close rapport with Chinese leaders for consolidating bilateral ties.

Commenting on Rajapaksa being sworn in as prime minister, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here on Monday that "China and Sri Lanka enjoy traditional friendship and we have been advancing our strategic cooperative partnership based on sincere mutu-

al assistance and ever-lasting friendship. We have been expanding and deepening our cooperation across the board".

Significantly Rajapaksa has been greeted by the Central Committee of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) headed by President Xi Jinping.

The CPC's greetings were conveyed to Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party (Sri Lanka People's Front) of Rajapaksa which had emerged victorious in the elections.

Conveying the CPC message to Rajapaksa personally, the Charge d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Sri Lanka Hu Wei said Rajapaksa is an "old friend" of Xi and has assured him to "have confidence in our support," Sri Lanka news portal Colombo Page reported.

Hu met with Rajapaksa and passed on a congratulatory letter from the CPC, expressing heartfelt congratulations to him for winning the general election, it reported.

The two sides also exchanged in-depth views on

GLOBE TROTTING

PAK COURT INDICTS ZARDARI IN GRAFT CASE

Islamabad: An anti-corruption court in Pakistan on Monday indicted former President Asif Ali Zardari through video link in a graft case where he was accused of influencing authorities to release loans to front companies. As Zardari could not appear in the court due to "illness", the indictment was carried out through video link, which was the first such indictment in the judicial history of the country.

EXPLOSION FLATTENS BALTIMORE HOMES, 1 DEAD

Baltimore: A major explosion leveled several houses as it tore through a Baltimore neighborhood on Monday, killing at least one person and critically injuring three while at least five others including children were trapped, firefighters said. The Baltimore Sun reported it was a natural gas explosion, citing fire officials, but said the exact cause remained unknown.

193 PAK PILOTS GET NOTICE OVER 'FAKE' LICENCE

Islamabad: Pakistan's aviation regulator has issued show-cause notices to 193 pilots suspected of having "dubious" flying licence after completing the scrutiny process of 262 pilots in the wake of a major scandal, according to a media report on Monday. The scandal over pilot licences in Pakistan emerged from an investigation into the crash of a Pakistan International Airlines plane on May 22 in Karachi that killed 97 people. The inquiry determined that nearly one-third of Pakistan's pilots cheated on exams but still received licences from the country's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

TALIBAN READY FOR PEACE TALKS

Kabul: Afghan peace talks are expected to begin within days after authorities announced Monday they would soon start releasing hundreds of Taliban prisoners accused of brutal attacks including on foreigners. The fate of some 400 Taliban prisoners has been a crucial hurdle in launching much-delayed talks between the Taliban and the Afghan Government, who had committed to completing a prisoner exchange before negotiations could start.

BELARUS PREZ WINS 6TH TERM, PROTESTS ERUPT

Minsk: Election officials in Belarus said on Monday that President Alexander Lukashenko has won his sixth consecutive term with over 80 per cent of the vote after facing his strongest challenge in 26 years and protests over his cavalier brushoff of the coronavirus, political repression and the country's deteriorating economy. Thousands of people took to the streets in a number of Belarusian cities and towns protesting the early count that indicated Lukashenko's landslide victory.

IRAN SHUTS NEWSPAPER FOR COVID DEATH REPORT

Tehran: Iran shut down a newspaper after it published remarks by an expert who said the official figures on corona cases and deaths in the country account for only 5% of real toll. Mohammad Reza Sadi, editor-in-chief of *Jahane Sanat*, said authorities closed his newspaper, which began publishing in 2004.

China, India jointly safeguarding peace at borders, Beijing's priority: Official

Beijing (PTI): China and India jointly safeguarding peace and security along the borders and the two countries together maintaining sound development of bilateral ties is one of Beijing's future diplomatic priorities, a senior Chinese official said here on Monday.

Asked about China's diplomatic priorities in future as the international landscape is undergoing changes unseen in a century due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese foreign

ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian outlined Beijing's plans to enhance bilateral ties with the US, Russia, the European Union, Japan and India.

Zhao was responding to a question by China's official Xinhua news agency at a regular foreign ministry briefing.

"We will continue to improve relations with neighbouring countries," he said.

"For the China-India relationship, the two sides should jointly safeguard peace and

China will continue to deepen strategic mutual trust and expand shared interests with its neighbours and other developing countries.

security in the border areas and maintain a steady and sound development of bilateral ties", he said.

Zhao's comments came in the backdrop of the border row between India and China in eastern Ladakh.

He said China will continue to deepen strategic mutual trust and expand shared interests with its neighbours and other developing countries.

"We have actively planned and developed our relations with other major countries, responded rationally to the unreasonable pressure the United States has piled on

China, made new progress in advancing China-Russia relations under the strategic guidance of the two heads of state and sustained cooperation as the main tone of China-EU relations," he said.

The spokesman also said that China will also undertake cooperation in drug and vaccine research and development, provide assistance to countries in need to the best of its ability and improve global public health governance.

The huge loans sparked concerns globally after Sri Lanka handed over its Hambantota port to a state-run Chinese firm in 2017 for a 99-years lease as a debt swap amounting to USD 1.2 billion.

The Colombo Port City project also funded by China is currently being built along the city's coastline on 269 hectares of reclaimed land.

DOCYARD
DR GS LAMBA

Chief of Gastroenterology & Hepatology
SRI BALAJI ACTION MEDICAL INSTITUTE



Fight the silent killer

Hepatitis is today's one of the major health concern. According to a study around 290 million people across the world are living with viral Hepatitis unaware. In some cases of Hepatitis symptoms don't occur even for years and in some cases it can even cause liver failure. Liver's proper functioning is necessary for the better health of even other organs in the body.

Hepatitis B is a type of liver infection. If a person is exposed in adulthood, most are able to clear the virus from their bodies without treatment. For other people, acute hepatitis B leads to life-long infection known as chronic hepatitis B which can result into liver failure, liver cancer if not treated on time. Basically, this infection spread from infected blood, unsafe sexual practices and from infected mother to child. Prevention is the key and early treatment is the best way to prevent its complications. Never ignore symptoms like:

- Fever
- Repeated episodes of vomiting
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite and Jaundice

Hepatitis can be asymptomatic even for decades and can convert into chronic liver failure.

Hepatitis B and C: Both Hepatitis B and C are caused majorly by blood contact. In Hepatitis B around 90 per cent cases come out normal while 10 per cent may go on to develop chronic infection. In some of these patients virus remains active causing progressive liver damage and finally resulting in liver cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer. While early detection is the key, one major trait of Hepatitis C is that it doesn't

While early detection is the key, one major trait of Hepatitis C is that it doesn't show any symptoms even for decades, and when the symptoms appear the liver is already damaged to a great extent. Around 80 per cent cases of Hepatitis C convert into chronic liver disease

show any symptoms even for decades, and when the symptoms appear the liver is already damaged to a great extent. Around 80 per cent cases of Hepatitis C convert into chronic liver disease.

Hepatitis A and E: Unlike Hepatitis B and C these are caused by consumption of infected water or food. The infected person develops symptoms like fever, loss of appetite and vomiting followed by jaundice. In majority of people complete recovery would occur without any permanent damage to liver. Treatment is mainly symptomatic.

Prevention: Following steps would help in preventing Hepatitis B & C :

- Safe blood transfusion.

Blood should be tested to rule out hepatitis B&C before transfusion.

■ Apart from other life threatening infections intravenous drug abusers are at a very high risk of hepatitis virus infections. Avoid such practices.

■ Tattoo lovers should be aware that reuse of same needle used on other persons can bring the infection. Ask for fresh needles.

■ People taking salon services like manicure, pedicure, shaving etc should be aware that contamination by blood of these instruments carries the risk of hepatitis infection. Blades, nail cutters etc may accidentally cut the skin get soiled with blood. It is not wise to use same tools on other people

■ Avoid unsafe sexual practices.

■ Do not use reusable syringes or needles. Always insist on disposable syringes and needles.

■ Pregnant mothers with hepatitis B infection should seek proper medical advice to prevent transmission of infection to the newborn infant.

■ Get yourself vaccinated against hepatitis B

While Hepatitis A and E can be prevented by:-

- Maintaining basic hygiene
- Consumption of properly cooked food, and clean filtered water.

Hepatitis B and C are now very much treatable. Early diagnosis and treatment can save the liver and prevent development of liver failure and liver cancer.

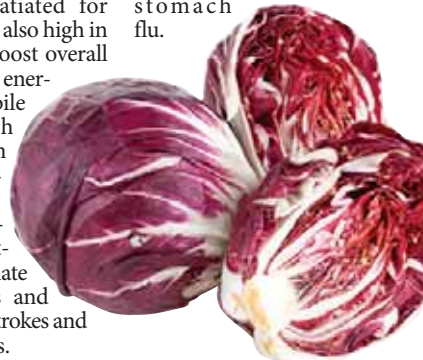
SUMMERCoolERS

RADICHHIO: Radicchio, also known as red cabbage, is one of the excellent sources of Vitamin K that strengthens the bone and is good for the treatment of Alzheimer's.

The vegetable promotes weight loss due to high fibre content. It makes one feel full and keeps one satiated for longer. Radicchio is also high in antioxidants that boost overall health, wellness and energy. It promotes bile production which improves digestion and reduces cholesterol.

Radicchio contains inulin that naturally helps to regulate blood sugar levels and reduces the risk of strokes and other heart diseases.

As the veggie has high fibre content, it helps in colon cleansing. Also radicchio has been used to fight intestinal worms and parasites to great effect. Polyphenols found in radicchio help neutralise free radicals and give a mental sharpness, keen eyesight and lower incidence of stomach flu.



BACK YOUR BACK

Over four lakh Indians above the age of 60 years are suffering from the symptoms of degenerative scoliosis and over 12 lakh across age brackets have some sort of spinal stenosis. DR SK RAJAN tells you the signs to look out for

Our lower back (Lumbar spine) consists of five big bones *aka* vertebrae in the lower part of the spine between the ribs and the pelvis with intervening soft cushion like pads referred to as discs. Each of the bones have a hole in them and these holes align to form a pipe for passage of spinal nerves. Narrowing of this passage is referred to as Lumbar Canal Stenosis (LCS). This stenosis results in compression of the nerves traveling through the lower back into the legs.

While it may affect younger population due to developmental (birth related) causes, it is more often a degenerative (wear and tear) condition that affects people age 50 and older. The discs may become less spongy as you age, resulting in reduced disc height and bulging of the hardened disc into the spinal canal. Currently, it is estimated that over four lakh Indians above the age of 60 years are suffering from its symptoms and over 12-15 lakh across age brackets having some sort of spinal stenosis.

Depending on the severity of the condition, Lumbar spinal stenosis may or may not produce symptoms. While the narrowing of the spinal canal itself does not produce the symptoms but due to the inflammation of the nerves caused by the increased pressure attributes to the cause. Varying from person to person the various symptoms include:

- Pain, weakness, or numbness in the legs, calves, or buttocks
- Pain may radiate to one or both the legs (resembling a painful condition referred to as Sciatica)
- In rare cases, there is loss of motor functioning in the legs, and loss of bowel control.
- Excruciating pain while walking that may subside while bending for-

ward, sitting or lying down.

Degenerative spondylolisthesis and degenerative scoliosis (curvature of the spine) are two conditions associated with lumbar spinal stenosis. Degenerative spondylolisthesis (slippage of one vertebra over another) is caused by arthritis of the facet joints. Most commonly, it involves the L4 slipping over the L5 vertebra. It usually is treated with the same conservative or surgical methods as lumbar spinal stenosis.

Degenerative scoliosis occurs most frequently in the lower back and more commonly affects people age 65 and older. Back pain associated with degenerative scoliosis usually begins gradually and is linked with activity. The curvature of the spine in this form of scoliosis often is relatively minor, so surgery is required when conservative methods fail to alleviate pain associated with the condition.

Diagnosis
Based on the medical history, symptoms, hereditary risk factors, physical examination and diagnostic tests are required to confirm the condition. Radiology tests including X-rays, CT Scan and MRI are helpful in identifying the structure of the vertebrae and outline of the joints. These imaging techniques help the surgeons a detailed view of the spinal canal, its content and the structures around it. 3 D imaging produced through MRI are also helpful in analysing the nerve roots, adjacent areas, any enlargements, degeneration or tumors.

In specific cases a myelogram may be required, which is a special X-ray of the spinal cord that is taken after injecting a contrast material in the surrounding cerebrospinal fluids (CSF). This is helpful in monitoring the pressure on the spinal cord or on the related nerves due to the compression, herniated disc, bone spurs or tumors.

Degenerative scoliosis occurs most frequently in the lower back and more commonly affects people aged 65 and older. Back pain associated with degenerative scoliosis usually begins gradually and is linked with activity

tion, herniated disc, bone spurs or tumors.

While medication and physical therapy remain the first line of treatment module, surgical intervention is only preferred when these fails to provide relief.

Medications & injections: Anti inflammatory medications and analgesics may be helpful in the initial stages to subside pain. But in case the pain is persistent or worsens with time, the doctor may prescribe other medications or injections. Epidural injections also help in reducing pain and swelling, but is only a temporary relief method followed.

Physical therapy: this along with prescribed exercises may help stabilise your spine, build your endurance and increase your flexibility. Therapy may help you resume your normal

lifestyle and activities.

In those cases where these conservative options fail, surgery may be the only resort. Depending upon age, overall health, associated co-morbidities and pre-existing conditions doctors may consider the type of surgery.

Surgical treatment

There are several different surgical procedures that can be utilized, the choice of which is influenced by the severity of your case. In a small percentage of patients, spinal instability may require that spinal fusion be performed — this decision generally is determined prior to surgery. Spinal fusion is an operation that creates a solid union between two or more vertebrae. This procedure may assist in strengthening and stabilising the spine, and may thereby help to alleviate severe and chronic back pain.

Decompressive laminectomy: The most common surgery in the lumbar spine is called decompressive laminectomy, in which the laminae (roof) of the vertebrae are removed to create more space for the nerves. A neurosurgeon may perform a laminectomy with or without fusing vertebrae or removing part of a disc. A spinal fusion with or without spinal instrumentation may be recommended when spondylolisthesis or scoliosis occurs with spinal stenosis. Various devices (such as screws or rods) may be used to enhance fusion and support unstable areas of the spine.

The benefits of surgery should always be weighed carefully against its risks. Although a large percentage of lumbar spinal stenosis patients report significant pain relief after surgery, there is no guarantee that surgery will help every individual.

The writer is Head, Spine Surgery, Agrim institute of Neurosciences, Artemis Hospital, Gurugram

C PLUS



Taking care of your skin's needs is just as important as your overall health.

AAYUSH NARANG tells you how Vitamin C serum can work wonders and do the job

There's a reason why Vitamin C serums became so popular. It has an incredible benefits for skin health because of potent antioxidants. It can help you in brightening your skin, healing surface damage, boosting circulation, stimulating collagen production, and even search free radicals to stop the onset of fine lines and wrinkles. The best news is that a lot of dermatologists recommend Vitamin C serum for all skin types.

Our skin's natural regeneration process gets aided by Vitamin C, which helps our body to heal damaged skin cells. It is touted as one of the best anti-aging ingredients on the market. As consuming antioxidant-rich foods aids your body in fighting off free radicals, topical antioxidants do an equivalent for your skin by helping to offset daily aggressors like UV damage and exposure to air pollution. Even if you're probably getting Vitamin C in your diet, there's no guarantee that it's going straight to your skin. Using serums and other topical products is the most direct to gain these benefits.

Vitamin C's skin-saving benefits aren't restricted to its antioxidant status. It has many other skin-healing assets that make it praiseworthy. For one, because it's highly acidic, when Vitamin C is used topically our skin starts to heal itself by accelerating the assembly of collagen and elastin. Remember: Collagen and elastin are both present protein fibers that help keep skin plump and firm. So, in helping to market collagen production, topical vitamin C can help prevent premature aging of the skin.

Another cool thing about the ingredient is that it contains a property that inhibits your skin's melanin production, which is what causes skin discoloration like dark spots and hyperpigmentation. With continued topical use, Vitamin C can help prevent dark spots from forming within the first place. It's a greater brightening agent that works to fade brown spots without changing normal skin pigmentation.

A serum is that the preferred sort of Vitamin C. They generally comprise a perfect delivery system and are considered to be used before moisturiser. While Vitamin C used in the morning or evening, most people prefer to apply it during the day as its antioxidant assets act as a guard to bounce pollution and other environmental attackers. In terms of when you should use it in your routine, a three-step system of cleansing, treating, and moisturising. That second step would be Vitamin C application, followed by moisturiser unless you've got oilier skin and like to use a serum on its own.

If you're new to using the ingredient on your skin, start slowly. It's potent stuff, so you only need a few drops for each application. It's best to start out with a low concentration and work your way up as your skin grows more accustomed to the ingredient.

The writer is Sales and Marketing Head, International Business, Rowan Bioceuticals

DadiKaKehna

Our hair becomes dull and lifeless during monsoon. But there are many ingredients in our kitchen that can help restore the shine and give the bounce. ROSHANI DEVI shares tips that can help



Rain brings its share of woes. More so when it comes to hair care — be it dry and frizzy or oily and sticky. One of the best remedies to take care of frizz is to make a paste by soaking fenugreek seeds overnight in water, add two ripe bananas and one egg white apply it to the hair and keep it for an hour. Wash using a mild shampoo. Mix yoghurt with a teaspoon of honey. Apply it to the scalp and hair once a week as it takes care of dullness. One can soak



almond paste to be mixed with banana will take care of dryness.

Applying coconut oil 15 minutes before you shampoo helps in preconditioning the hair. It makes hair less greasy.

This is the season for amla. Apply amla pulp mixed with lemon juice. Massage this in the hair and leave it overnight. Wash off with shampoo in the morning.

Soak methi seeds in water overnight. Strain the water the next day and use this water to wash your hair. This will take care of the dandruff and dryness.

TIPTOP

National Faecal Sludge & Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance brought together country's leading policy makers and city leaders to deliberate on Opportunities for Co-Treatment of Septage at Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), through a webinar on July 30, 2020. The discussions focused on recognising the potential for cities and towns to convert existing underutilised sewage treatment plants (STPs) to co-treatment facilities to bring down the contamination of water bodies across the country.

The keynote speaker Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, Director General of National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) said: "Fast but unorganised urbanization has put a load on natural resources. The system has not been able to give as much priority to wastewater management, or any other waste disposal, as compared to services such as provision of drinking water and other infrastructure needs."

SLIMLINE

Antara, a part of the \$3 bln Max Group, has announced remote COVID care packages customised for seniors. The comprehensive and contactless COVID Care at Home packages are designed for seniors with mild symptoms to avoid the hassle of hospitalisation. This announcement follows Antara's recent foray into the 'Assisted Care Services' space with the launch of two new lines of business — 'Care Homes' and 'Care at Home'.

Antara's 15-day Home Isolation Care

Speaking about his experience in Kanpur while working for the Clean Ganga Mission, he highlighted the huge capacity utilisation gap that was observed in the STPs, along with inadequate presence of a sewage network across the city. He further emphasised on the need for co-treatment especially in river cities in order to curb the dumping of septage into river bodies. "There is an essential need to focus on the interests of river cities by merging urban planning with river management," he said.

The NFSSM Alliance, which works closely with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, comprises of numerous national and international organisations that are actively working for implementation of sustainable sanitation solutions in the country. The Alliance has been instrumental in the passage of India's first National Policy on FSM in 2017 which cascaded to 19+ states in India.

Package aims to help patients with mild symptoms recover at home and offers: Comprehensive remote assessment for holistic care; Essential medical kit for health tracking and self-isolation; Daily vital monitoring by nurses, Regular telephonic doctor consults to track progress; Respiratory rehabilitation by experts to aid recovery; Physiological counselling to manage anxiety; a Nutrition plan to boost immunity as well as preventive counselling for non-affected family members.

INBRIEF

The times of the Covid pandemic proved the importance of yoga to bring positivity, health and mindfulness to everyday life. Yoga became a friend to the world to help people heal themselves from trauma, anxiety, stress and even improve upon their immunity.

In a bid to provide a healthy life to its followers, Grand Master Akshar expanded his digital presence during the lockdown phase. His Facebook Page became the go-to guide to embrace a healthy lifestyle for more than 20 million online users. Many people across the world leveraged the quarantine phase to adopt healthy habits and fitness routine. In this regard, The Akshar Yoga Facebook page came to the rescue of many by providing the right guidance.

Akshar Yoga Ashram also organised many live sessions to address queries of yoga practitioners, Spiritual seekers and Yoga enthusiasts. The sessions were vibrant and full of valuable knowledge. Thousands of people attended these live programs to have their queries answered about various issues such as health, wellness, stress, anxiety, Diabetes, blood pressure and so much more.

The courses that were conducted included weight loss exercises, yoga for beginners, yoga for therapy, daily yoga classes for overall fitness, stress relief, mental balance and more.

Special Himalayan meditation techniques were revealed by Grand Master Akshar, such as Siddho Hum Dhyana, Aarambh Dhyana, Chandra Graham Meditation and Surya Graham Meditation. He is dedicated towards the welfare of people and is actively involved in spreading awareness on yoga. He has also launched many books of yoga and its benefits across the levels — beginners, advanced, professional.

STILL HUNGRY TO PLAY

England pacer Anderson ignores retirement whispers, eager to bounce back



James Anderson celebrates the dismissal of Babar Azam during 2nd day of 1st Test. AP
AFP ■ SOUTHAMPTON

James Anderson insisted on Monday he is still “hungry” to play Test cricket after speculation the England great was considering retirement. Anderson recently turned 38, an age where many previous pace bowlers would have long since retired. Given his age, Anderson’s meagre match haul of 1/97 during England’s three-wicket win in the first Test against Pakistan completed on Saturday inevitably led to speculation about his future. By his own admission, Anderson, England’s all-time leading wicket-taker, “did not bowl very well” at his Old

Trafford home ground, where one of the ends is named after him, as England went 1-0 up in a three-match series. But the swing specialist, whose 590 wickets are the most taken by any paceman in Test history, said he should not be written off after one poor game. “I want to play as long as I possibly can,” Anderson told reporters during a conference call on Monday. “If I keep bowling the way I did this week, the opportunity to retire will be taken out of my hands. It will be a selection issue,” he added ahead of Thursday’s second Test at Southampton. “I’m still hungry to play the game. I think the frustration for

me this week was that, after one bad game....the sort of whispers (about retirement) that go around, I don’t think that’s really fair.”

‘EMOTIONAL’
Reflecting on his own performance in the first Test, Anderson said: “It’s one of those things, everyone has a bad game, every now and then.

“I’ve not bowled very well and felt out of rhythm. For the first time in probably 10 years I got a little bit emotional on the field, got a bit frustrated, let it get to me a little bit.

“It reminded me of when I first started playing, when you get frustrated and a little bit angry you try to bowl quicker and quicker and it doesn’t help. Hopefully, I can show people I’ve still got what it takes to play Test cricket.”

Anderson, a veteran of 154 Tests, added: “I don’t think it’s the toughest period of my career. I’m sure I’ll have another bad game in my career. I just don’t want every time I have a bad game for there to be whispers going round that I’m going to pack in.”

Anderson is now in sight of becoming the first pace bowler to take 600 Test wickets and overhauling the England Test appearance record of 161 held by retired former captain Alastair Cook, one of his best friends in cricket.

“I want to be bowling well and contributing to England winning games of cricket,” said Anderson. “That’s been my focus throughout my career and will continue to be my focus. If I get 600 wickets then great; if I don’t, then I’m happy with what I’ve got.”

As for surpassing opening batsman Cook’s cap record, which would be a remarkable achievement for a pace bowler, Anderson said: “154 does sound like quite a lot of games. But I feel like I’ve still got quite a few more left in me. If I can go past Cooky it will probably be the one thing I’ve got up on him.”

Buttler should always be in Eng Test side: Warne

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

Jos Buttler is the “whole package” and that is why the wicketkeeper-batsman should be a regular in England’s Test side, feels Australian spin great Shane Warne.

Buttler was under immense scrutiny due to lapses behind the stumps during the first Test against Pakistan last week. He missed two chances against opener Shan Masood on 45, who went on to score 156, helping Pakistan put up 326 on the board in their first innings.

However, the 29 year-old, who had also been struggling with the bat for some time, played a crucial 75-run knock in the second innings and shared a century stand with Chris Woakes to help England win the first Test by three wickets.

“He should always be in the side. Jos is a very good and reliable keeper but, occasionally, you’re going to have a few bad days — it wasn’t easy out there, either,” Warne told *Sky Sports*.

“But Jos should always be in your side because of what he’s capable of, with the bat especially. And then his keeping, he’s a good leader among the team as well — there’s a calmness about him — he’s the whole package.

“He’s always one of the first pencilled in for me,” Warne added.

Buttler changed the complexion of the game with his aggressive batting. He struck seven boundaries and a six in his 101 ball-75, helping England, who were reeling at 117 for five, chase



down the 277 run target.

“What really impressed me with Buttler was the way he went about it, he trusted himself, said ‘I’m the man, I’m going to get this done’.”

Warne added that Buttler’s positive approach helped his non-striker Woakes, who struck a match-winning unbeaten 84 after having averaged only 5.22 in his last six Tests.

“He just played beautifully; and that helped Woakes at the other end, who had been struggling for form, but came in and played extremely well. I’m very happy for Woakes and, in particular, Buttler. It was a fantastic chase, against a quality attack, on a good pitch,” he said.

Pak must move on from Old Trafford defeat: Misbah

Manchester: Pakistan cannot dwell on their defeat by England in the first Test at Old Trafford as it would make it tougher for them to respond in the next two matches, coach Misbah-ul-Haq has said. “It was a thrilling Test match and full credit must go to England for the way they fought back, came from behind and took the game away from us,” Misbah wrote in his column on the Pakistan Cricket Board’s website.

“There is disappointment,

of course, but we must not keep that feeling in our minds otherwise it will be difficult to come back... the team believes we can fight back.

“Sometimes luck doesn’t favour you, sometimes the opposition plays well — that’s the beauty of the game.”

Misbah praised opener Shan Masood, who scored 156 in the first innings, as well as pacemen Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah who picked up two wickets each.

“It was a brave decision to

bat first against England’s bowling attack in those conditions,” the 46-year-old said.

“Shan Masood batted really well and... should be given a lot of credit for his innings. He’s been working so hard... he’s changed a few things in his setup. He’s a different batsman.

“The bowling was also excellent. It’s a young seam attack, apart from Mohammad Abbas, and both Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah did really well.” **Agencies**



Atletico Madrid players train during team's training session. ATM/Twitter

2 Atleti players test virus +ve

Correa & Vrsaljko return positive while other remain unaffected as the Spanish giants prepare for Champions League quarters

AFP ■ MADRID

Atletico Madrid breathed a sigh of relief on Monday after further coronavirus tests on their players and staff turned up negative, allowing the team to travel to Portugal on Tuesday for their Champions League quarter-final against Leipzig.

Tests at the weekend had revealed two coronavirus cases at the club, which Atletico confirmed on Monday to be players Angel Correa and Sime Vrsaljko.

Both players are asymptomatic and will remain isolated at home while the rest of the squad will return to training in the Spanish capital on Monday afternoon, before flying to Lisbon on Tuesday for Thursday’s game against Leipzig.

“The first team and members of the coaching staff underwent new PCR tests yesterday, the result of which has been negative in all of them, after the appearance of two positive cases in the tests carried out on Saturday,” Atletico announced on Monday.

“As a result, 21 first-team footballers plus academy players Alex Dos Santos, Manu Sanchez, Riquelme and Toni Moya will travel to the Portuguese capital tomorrow (Tuesday) to gather for the Champions League quarter-final.”

The club said the case of Vrsaljko “is considered resolved by the health authorities as he generated antibodies several months ago”.

Atletico added that “tests were also performed on relatives living with the two positive

cases, all of which were also negative.”

The original plan was for Atletico to travel to Portugal on Monday night, with a session scheduled on Tuesday at Benfica’s Seixal training ground.

The timetable has had to be adjusted but the team will stay in the same hotel in Lisbon, where all the Champions League’s remaining games are taking place in a compressed format without fans.

Uefa had stated Atletico would have to have a minimum of 13 players available, including one goalkeeper, to fulfill the fixture, amid fears that more positive cases could emerge.

A planned training session on Monday morning had been called off, with all players and staff instructed to stay at home.

REGULAR TESTING

The ‘final eight’ format begins with Atalanta against Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday, with the final scheduled for August 23.

Uefa protocol for the tournament states all clubs must undertake testing between 10 and 14 days before their first game in Portugal, as well as another round of tests before leaving their home country.

Final tests are then completed the day before kick-off, which will be replicated for all further fixtures in the competition.

Atletico were keen to reassure Uefa that they have followed a strict protocol since the La Liga season ended on July 19. Weekly tests were carried out by the club on July 26 and August 2.

Sancho will stay at Dortmund

AP ■ DORTMUND

England winger Jadon Sancho will stay with Borussia Dortmund for the upcoming season amid reported interest from Manchester United, club sporting director Michael Zorc said on Monday.

Dortmund “plan on having Jadon Sancho in our team this season, the decision is final. I think

that answers all our questions,” Zorc said at a training session.

The 20-year-old England international, who has a contract with the German club until 2022, had a stellar season with the Bundesliga runners-up and has been reportedly targeted by several top clubs, including Manchester United after the club qualified for next season’s Champions League.

Athletics can grow further in post Covid world: Coe

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe on Monday claimed that more people took to running to stay fit during the coronavirus-forced lockdown, something his sport can capitalise on once the world is back to being normal.

Coe said athletics can benefit from the new-found habit of more people taking to walking and running and his sport will try to build on it to broaden its base.

“We are uniquely placed

to help local, regional and national health objectives. Research has shown that throughout the lockdown, more people are exercising than before. Some research even say there is 80 per cent increase at the global exercise pattern,” he said at an online media seminar organised by Asian Athletics Federation.

“Athletics is the main beneficiary because people are doing exercise through running or walking. That is a very big asset. We will not take it for granted but will try to build on it in the post pandemic peri-



Collin Morikawa holds the Wanamaker Trophy after winning the PGA Championship golf tournament at TPC Harding Park on Sunday. AP

Mandeep latest hockey player to catch corona



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian hockey team forward Mandeep Singh has tested positive for Covid-19, becoming the sixth national player to contract the dreaded infection, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Monday.

The 25-year-old from Jalandhar is asymptomatic and is being treated along with the other five players by doctors in Bengaluru, where the national camp is due to start on August 20 at the SAI centre.

“Mandeep Singh, a member of the Indian Men’s Hockey team, who was given the Covid test (RT-PCR) along with 20 other players at the National Camp at SAI’s National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, has tested Covid positive, but is asymptomatic,” the SAI said in a statement.

“He is being administered treatment by doctors, along with the other five players who have tested positive.”



Fiona Ferro, right, and Anett Kontaveit pose with the trophy after final. WTA/Twitter

Ferro upsets Kontaveit to win Palermo Open

AFP ■ PALERMO

Unseeded French player Fiona Ferro beat No 4 seed Anett Kontaveit 6-2, 7-5 in the final to win the 31st Palermo Ladies Open, the tournament marking the return of tennis after a five-month shutdown due to coronavirus.

Ferro needed one hour and 43 minutes to seal the straight-sets victory. Her solid serving saw Ferro deliver four aces in the match before her ease to a 6-2 win in the first set.

However, Kontaveit who had ousted top seed Petra Martic in the semi-finals started to come into her own at the end of the first set.

The gain in momentum

was evident when she broke early to get into a 2-0 lead but Ferro upped her game to break straight back.

The Frenchwoman won three games on the bounce to make it fives apiece before a service winner saw her through.

It was Ferro’s second WTA title win as she maintained fine form since the coronavirus lockdown when she had gone unbeaten in two exhibition tournaments before the Palermo Open.

She won the first WTA event after the pandemic dropping just one set.

“This title means a lot, especially after five tough months of practice,” Ferro said after the game.

Willian confirms Chelsea exit

The Brazilian who spent seven years at the club won two Premier League titles, an FA Cup, a League Cup and the Europa League at Stamford Bridge

The 32-year-old Brazil winger has been linked with a move to Arsenal after he failed to agree a new contract with the Blues.

Willian rejected Tottenham Hotspur to join Chelsea from Russian outfit Anzhi Makhachkala for £30 million (\$39 million) in 2013.

He scored 63 goals in 339 appearances and won five trophies, two Premier League titles, an FA Cup, a League Cup and the Europa League.

However, an ankle injury prevented him playing in the FA Cup final loss to Arsenal and Saturday’s Champions League last 16 second leg thumping by Bayern Munich.

“The time has now come to move

After five wonderful years my stage at Chelsea FC comes to an end. Thanks a lot to the club’s board, to the coaches and teammates I’ve had, and of course to the fans: thank you for the experience of being a member of your big family. I’ve been very happy here, you’ve made me feel like home.

It’s been a pleasure and an honour to play for this club and win the Premier League, FA Cup and Europa League titles, as well as competing in one of the world’s best football leagues. I made the right choice, I take with me wonderful and unforgettable memories.

I say farewell very pleased with this stage of my career, and I’m also very excited with the next to begin. Thanks and good luck for the future.

Come on Blues!!!

on. I am certainly going to miss my team-mates,” he said.

“I will miss all the staff at the club who’ve always treated me like a son and

I will miss the fans.

“I leave with my head held high, safe in the knowledge that I won things here and always did my best in a Chelsea shirt.”

Willian — a member of the Brazil squads at the 2014 and 2018 World Cup finals — said he had never regretted his preferring Chelsea to London rivals Spurs.

“They were seven wonderful years. In August 2013 when I received the offer from Chelsea, I was convinced that this was where I had to play,” he said.

“Today I am certain that it was the best of decisions. There were so many happy times, some sad, there were tro-

phies and it was always very intense. “There was also criticism, which is normal, what is important though is that both the affection and criticism drove me to always give my all in every training session, every game, to be constantly improving until my very last minute in a Chelsea shirt.”

Willian leaves along with fellow veteran Spain winger Pedro, who is joining AS Roma on a free transfer.

The 33-year-old European championships and World Cup winner also issued a heartfelt farewell message as he brought the curtain down on his half a decade spell at the club.

“After five wonderful years my stage at Chelsea FC comes to an end,” he wrote on *Instagram*.

“It’s been a pleasure and an honour to play for this club and win the Premier League, FA Cup and Europa League titles, as well as competing in one of the world’s best football leagues.

“I made the right choice, I take with me wonderful and unforgettable memories.”