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Pilot back to recover lost ground

Cong may again entrust him with some key responsibility in State politics

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

After calling off his rebellion against Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Congress leader Sachin Pilot returned to Jaipur on Tuesday amid indication that the party high command may again entrust him with some "significant" responsibility.

There were telltale indications of this proposition. To start with, the high command set up a three-member committee consisting of senior leaders to look into the issues raised by Pilot and some MLAs against Gehlot's style of functioning.

If Pilot was not going to be associated with the State Government or State Congress, there would have been no need to set up such a committee, which would primarily ensure better coordination between Pilot and Gehlot in the future.

Secondly, throughout the day in his different media interaction and interview, Pilot never said he was not looking to regain the post of Deputy Chief Minister or the State president. "I've left it to the high command," was his stock replies to pointed questions about his future, though he kept asserting he would continue to serve people of Rajasthan.

Thirdly, Pilot made it a point to emphasise he has nothing personal against Gehlot, whom he addressed as an "elderly" and "experienced" leader.

Against this background it looks obvious that Pilot and his supporting MLAs could hope to get their pound of flesh, though it may take time.

On his arrival in Jaipur, he was greeted by hundreds of his supporters. Pilot said he was pained by the words used against him, but he would like to forget and move on.

"I am sad, shocked, and hurt due to the kind of words used against me," Pilot said. He said there should not be any space for "personal ill-feelings" in politics and there should not be any vendetta politics.

"I have not demanded any post from the party but have said that MLAs have raised issues and there should be no vendetta politics against them," he told reporters at his residence.

He said differences can be ideological, on functioning or thoughts but in politics, there is no space for vendetta. "I had and have good relations with all leaders," he said.

"I am happy that the party leadership heard our issue to be it related to functioning, development, workers participation, self-respect, etc. The AICC has constituted a committee, which in a time-bound manner will address the issues," said Pilot.

Pilot was fired from his post of Deputy CM as well as State Congress chief after he rebelled against the Ashok Gehlot Government last month.

"We never spoke or did anything against the party or party leadership. Several people spread many rumors and raised many questions but we remain on the stand that we took 30 days ago," Sachin Pilot said.

Congress leader Sachin Pilot being welcomed by his supporters on his arrival at his residence in Jaipur on Tuesday PTI

6 Manipur Cong MLAs resign from Assembly, also quit party

Imphal: Six Congress MLAs in Manipur have submitted their resignation from the Legislative Assembly and also quit the party on Tuesday. The six legislators who had handed over resignation letters to Speaker Yumnam Khemchand Singh the previous night, formally informed the Congress office here about leaving the party.t

Covid-19 deaths cross century mark in Chhattisgarh

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The death toll in the Covid-19 pandemic in Chhattisgarh crossed the century mark on Tuesday as five patients died in different districts. The total now stands at 104.

Also, 313 fresh cases were detected and 222 patients were discharged from hospitals following their recovery on Tuesday, officials said.

A 52-year-old man from Nandi Chowk in Rajnandgaon was admitted in Dr BR Ambedkar Memorial hospital Raipur on August 9 with breathlessness and pneumonitis in both lungs.

He suffered cardiopulmonary arrest on August 9 and died. He was later found Covid positive, the officials said.

A 59-year-old man from Sikola Basti in Durg had fever for the past one week and later had breathing trouble. He was brought to Ambedkar Hospital where he died on Monday night. The man was Covid positive.

A 34-year-old man from Neora Tilda block in Raipur was admitted in Ambedkar Hospital following breathlessness, cough and fever on July 29.

He too died due to Covid, pneumonia and respiratory distress, the officials said.

A Covid positive 50-year-old woman from Santoshi Nagar in Raipur was admitted in Ambedkar Hospital on Monday. She died the same day.

An 18-year-old youth from Rajnandgaon was admitted in AIIMS Raipur on August 8 with head injury and fractured thigh bones after an accident.

He was also found Covid positive and died of cardiac arrest on Monday morning, the officials added.

With these fatalities, the total number of Covid positive deaths has reached 104 in Chhattisgarh.

Also, so far 12,938 people have been found Covid positive in the state, of which 9,239 were discharged upon their recovery in hospitals. Currently there are 3,595 active Covid patients in Chhattisgarh.

Eminent poet Rahat Indori dies during Covid cure

PTI ■ INDORE

Famous Urdu poet Rahat Indori, whose powerful and lucid poetry filled halls and connected with the young and old alike, died of a heart attack at a hospital here on Tuesday while being treated for Covid-19, his son said. He was 70.

The teacher-turned-poet had been admitted to hospital on Tuesday morning after he tested positive for the disease. He is survived by three sons and a daughter. "He was admitted for coronavirus treatment but died after suffering a heart attack," son Satlaj Indori, also a poet, told PTI.

Indore District Collector Manish Singh said Indori was undergoing treatment at the Sri Aurobindo Institute of Medical Sciences.

In the morning, the lyricist-poet tweeted about his Covid-19 diagnosis and said he will keep everyone updated through social media.

Pranab critical, on ventilator support

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former President Pranab Mukherjee continues to remain critical on ventilator support post-surgery for a brain clot, the Army's Research and Referral (R&R) Hospital said on Tuesday.

The Tuesday evening medical bulletin said the former President "has not shown any improvement and his status has worsened. He remains on ventilator support".

Mukherjee underwent emergency life-saving surgery for a brain clot on Monday.

In a statement, the Army Hospital said, "Pranab Mukherjee's health condition continues to remain critical at Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi Cantonment. The former President, who underwent life-saving emergency surgery for brain clot on August 10, 2020, has not shown any improvement and his health status has worsened. He remains on ventilator support."

A multidisciplinary team of doctors is constantly monitoring Mukherjee's health.

The former President, 84, was admitted to the military hospital on Monday afternoon and was tested Covid-19 positive. "On a visit to the hospital for a separate procedure, I have tested positive for Covid-19 today. I request the people who came in contact with me in the last week, to please self isolate and get tested for Covid-19," Mukherjee tweeted on Monday afternoon.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited the R&R Hospital on Monday and enquired about the former president's health. Singh was at the hospital for around 20 minutes.

Russia 1st to develop corona vaccine amid safety concerns

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the race to develop a Covid-19 vaccine, Russia has become the first country in the world to register a vaccine against coronavirus disease. Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the approval of a coronavirus vaccine for use on Tuesday, claiming it as a "world first," and one of his daughters has already been inoculated amid continued concern and unanswered questions over its safety and effectiveness.

The vaccine has been given regulatory approval after less than two months of testing on humans. The vaccine was named 'Sputnik V' in reference to the 1957 launch of a Soviet satellite, which opened space to exploration by humans.

"This morning, for the first time in the world, a vaccine against the new coronavirus was registered in Russia," Putin said during a televised video-conference call with Government Ministers. "One of my daughters had this vaccine. I think in this sense she took part in the experiment," Putin said.

He said that his daughter had a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 Fahrenheit) on the day of the first vaccine injection, and then it dropped to just over 37 degrees (98.6 Fahrenheit) on the following day. After the second shot she again had a slight increase in temperature, but then it was all over. "She's feeling well and has high number of antibodies," Putin added.

Meanwhile, Dr Randeep Guleria, Director of the New Delhi-based All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), has said, "First, we need to be clear that the vaccine is safe. That is the first standard that the world will look at for mass production."

He also said that if the vaccine makes antibodies, how long would they last for, also needs to be answered.

The claim of victory by Putin in the global push to make an effective vaccine against Covid-19 comes amid suggestions that Russia has cut essential corners in its development. The vaccine has yet to go through crucial Phase 3 trials where it would be administered to thousands of people.

UP XII topper dies in chase by eve-teasers

PTI ■ BULANDSHAHR/LUCKNOW

A 20-year-old woman, on a visit home from the US where she studied, died in Bulandshahr in a road accident, which her family alleged happened because two motorcycle-borne men were following her two-wheeler and harassing her, officials said on Tuesday.

The daughter of a tea-shop owner, Sudiksha Bhati died Monday morning near Aurangabad when she was riding pillion on a motorcycle with her younger brother, a minor, they said.

The two were en route to their maternal uncle's home in Bulandshahr's Khanpur area from their house at Deri Scanar village in Gautam Buddh Nagar's Dadri tehsil, the officials said.

The eldest among six siblings, Bhati had an envious academic record. "She got admitted in our school in 2011 in Class 6. In 2018, she scored 98 per cent marks in class 12 examination and topped the district," said Bishwajit Banerjee, the principal of Sikandrabad Vidyagyan School, Bulandshahr.

She then went onto win a ₹3.8-crore scholarship from Babson College, Massachusetts (US), and was pursuing a graduation course in entrepreneurship, he said.

She had come to India due to the coronavirus pandemic and was scheduled to go back to the US on August 20.

They also alleged that while going to her maternal uncle Monday, she was being harassed by the two unidentified persons during the ride which led to the accident.

Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Atul Kumar Srivastava said there was traffic on the route when the accident happened.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL
CASES: 23,25,026
DEATHS: 46,185
RECOVERED: 16,35,848
ACTIVE: 6,42,520

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	5,35,601	18,306	3,68,435
Tamil Nadu	3,08,649	5,159	2,50,680
Andhra Pradesh	2,44,549	2,203	1,54,749
Karnataka	1,88,611	3,398	1,05,599
Delhi	1,47,391	**4,139**	1,32,384
Uttar Pradesh	1,31,763	2,176	80,589
West Bengal	1,01,390	2,149	73,395
Bihar	86,812	465	57,039
Telangana	82,647	645	59,374
Gujarat	73,238	2,695	56,516
Assam	61,738	155	43,587
Rajasthan	54,887	811	40,399
Odisha	48,796	349	34,806
Haryana	43,227	500	36,082
Madhya Pradesh	40,734	1,033	30,596
Kerala	36,932	121	24,042

Sushant case: Bihar, Maha slug it out in SC

Apex court seeks written submission by August 13

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bihar and Maharashtra Governments sparred in the Supreme Court on Tuesday over jurisdiction to probe film star Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

While the late actor's father told the Supreme Court that the Mumbai Police was not probing his son's death "in the right direction" even as the Maharashtra Government contended that Bihar Police lacks jurisdiction in the actor's alleged suicide case.

The submissions came before the apex court in response to a petition filed by actress Rhea Chakraborty, accused of abetting Rajput's suicide, seeking transfer of the Bihar Police FIR against her and others to Mumbai police.

The Bihar Government submitted before the SC that the FIR lodged in Patna in the case is legal and valid and alleged that there is non-cooperation from Maharashtra.

The Bihar Government further contended that even Rajput's post-mortem report was not given to Patna Police by Mumbai Police, and refuted the allegation of political pressure in the case.

Senior advocate Maninder Singh, representing Bihar Government, told the bench that no FIR has been lodged in Mumbai yet with regard to Rajput's death.

Reserving verdict on Chakraborty's plea, the SC asked all the related parties in the matter to file their written submissions, not more than two pages each, by August 13.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Maharashtra, told a bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy that there was complete lack of jurisdiction of Bihar in the case.

During the nearly three-hour hearing, Singhvi further said that he has never seen such sensationalization being attached to a transfer petition.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh representing Rajput's father Krishna Kishore Singh said that his matter is only about a proper investigation of the case and according to him Mumbai Police were not investigating in the right direction.

Advocate Singh said the mark on Rajput's neck does not appear to be of hanging and it appears to be of a belt.

Singh said the family of the deceased has not seen the body hanging and what they had seen was his body lying on the bed.

ED quizzes SSR's roommate, sister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after grilling actress Rhea Chakraborty and her family members, the Enforcement Directorate ED on Tuesday questioned late film star Sushant Singh Rajput's friend and roommate Siddarth Puthani and business manager Shruti Modi besides recording the statement of deceased actor's elder sister Meetu Singh in the ongoing money-laundering probe.

The ED has not traced anything to prove that Rhea fraudulently siphoned off ₹15 crore from Sushant's account, as alleged by his father. .

Pithani and Modi arrived at the ED's Mumbai office at around 11 am in keeping with the summons but Meetu Singh reached a while after 1 pm. Modi is a named accused in both the abetment to suicide of Rajput and resultant money laundering case in the matter.

It's the first time a member of Rajput's family is appearing before the ED in the case

CAPSULE

MY ACT WAS SEEN AS TREASON: SHAH FAESAL

Srinagar/New Delhi: Shah Faesal, the first resident of Jammu & Kashmir who topped the civil services exam in 2009, on Tuesday said his decision to join politics last year had done more harm than benefit as his "innocuous act" of dissent was seen as an "act of treason".

SC STAYS NGT ORDER ON GODREJ APARTMENTS

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday set aside a National Green Tribunal order quashing the environmental clearance granted to a high-rise luxury project by Godrej Properties Limited and Wonder Projects Development Private Limited in Bengaluru.

MUSEUMS FOR TRIBAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS

New Delhi: The Tribal Affairs Ministry on Tuesday said all nine museums dedicated to tribal freedom fighters will be completed by the end of 2022.

191 JAIL INMATES TEST VIRUS POSITIVE IN BASTI

Basti: As many as 191 inmates of the district jail here were found COVID-19 positive, a senior official said on Tuesday. According to M Ramesh Chandra, 374 inmates of the jail were tested through rapid antigen tests in a camp organised here on Monday, and of these 191 were found positive though they did not show any symptoms. The camp was organised on the directives of the district administration, Chandra said.

Delhi records 8 deaths, lowest in 2 months

New Delhi: The national capital recorded 1,257 fresh coronavirus cases, and eight deaths, the lowest in over two months, in the last 24 hours, authorities said on Tuesday.

This is the first time in over two months that the daily number of deaths has dropped below 10, said Delhi Government's health bulletin.

On August 5, Delhi recorded 11 Covid-19 deaths, indicating a significant improvement in the situation in the city.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said in a tweet, "Delhi recorded just 8 deaths on Tuesday. It is after many days that the number has gone below 10. We have taken several steps to reduce the number of fatalities due to the coronavirus."

BJP MP calls BSNL staff 'traitors' for delay in services in calamity-hit areas

Hegde calls for privatisation, says some 85K will be fired

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Former Union Minister and BJP MP from Uttara Kannada Anantkumar Hegde has sparked a major controversy by calling BSNL employees "traitors" and "anti-nationals" who would be fired as they refused to work.

In a video of an event in Kumta in his parliamentary constituency on Monday, the MP was seen saying the State-owned BSNL was a blot on the country as even after being provided money, infrastructure and a ready market, the PSU telecom employees just refuse to work.

"The only cure for that is privatisation which our Government will do. Some 85,000 will be fired and later on more need to be fired," he was seen saying in the video. Hegde was so angry with BSNL due to the delays in restoring services in calamities affected areas. He was seen sharing the lackluster and non-caring attitude of BSNL employees.

The Opposition Congress criticised Hegde's remarks, saying the comments only showed his own worth. The party also said the Centre was out to privatise everything and this indicated its inability to govern.

Krishna Janmasthan temple out of bounds for devotees

Mathura: Janmashtami festival in Krishna Janmasthan will be observed on Wednesday with all the rituals, but the devotees will not be allowed entry to the temple due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, arrangements have been made to live stream the 'puja' for devotees. The sanctum sanctorum of the Janmasthan will be given the shape of a 'Purnendu Kunj', sparkling with gems like pearls, diamonds and ruby.

Railways suspends all passenger services

New Delhi: The Railways has stated that all regular passenger train services will remain suspended till further notice, but 230 special trains will continue to be in service. "This is to bring to the notice of all concerned that as decided and informed earlier as well, regular passenger and suburban train services will continue to remain suspended till further notice," a statement from the Railways said.

Capt demands fiscal package from Centre amid pandemic

SAYS PUNJAB TO HIT COVID PEAK IN SEPT

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Underlining that Punjab is likely to hit peak in September, the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Tuesday demanded liberal fiscal package from the Centre, flexibility in terms for State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) COVID-19 related expenses, and increased testing capacities in the Central Government labs, besides seeking a review of UGC's decision on mandatory exams for exit classes.

Capt Amarinder, during virtual meeting of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Ministers of some states to review the COVID situation, sought a liberal financial package for states to fill the collection gap caused by the pandemic while pointing at surge in COVID-19 cases and 50 percent revenue decline for the first quarter of the current fiscal in Punjab.

He said that the current cap of 35 percent in State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) for COVID related expenditure, as per MHA guidelines, is not sufficient to meet the current requirements.

Citing the state's rising cases of COVID, the Chief Minister urged the Prime Minister to review the UGC decision on mandatory exams for exit classes to be held by September 30.

"Punjab may not be in a position to conduct exams in September as it may be facing its peak at that time," he said, suggesting promoting these students promoted on past performance and internal assessment, with option to take exams later for those wanting to improve their performance.

He also sought Central Government's assistance for online school education, especially for poor children of classes X and XII. More money was needed for creating the infrastructure needed to support online education, he added.

Though Punjab was conducting 23,000 tests per million for COVID (higher than the national average), and planned to increase RT-PCR tests from 12,000 to 20,000 in the next 15 days, it needed to scale up the testing capacity further, the Chief Minister stressed while requesting the Prime Minister to direct the Central Government institutions in Chandigarh and Punjab to increase testing capacity, as already written to him earlier.

Expressing concern over the state's mortality rate of 2.4 percent, Capt Amarinder said that though it was lower than the all India deaths per million and 91 percent of the fatality cases were with co-morbidity, it was still higher than neighbouring Haryana. Patients were coming to hospitals late and 86 percent deaths were occurring in tertiary hospitals, he added.

Capt Amarinder also requested immediate operationalisation of COVID testing and treatment at AIIMS Bathinda, where OPDs are already functional, saying, "this will be useful for the people of southern Punjab".

Noting that PGIMER Chandigarh is a premier tertiary care facility for Punjab, he also sought increase in hospital's bed capacity and strengthening of the existing PGI Satellite Centre at Sangrur, especially for COVID treatment.

The Chief Minister further urged the Centre for immediate commencement of work on the newly sanctioned PGI Satellite Centre at Ferozepur.

"While of the three already sanctioned need medical colleges, Mohali Medical College will start classes this year, more such institutions were needed," said the Chief Minister, requesting for new colleges in the aspirational districts of Gurdaspur, Sangrur or Malerkotla, as well as Moga. COVID has shown that we need to strengthen public facilities in health, he added.

Giving an update on the state's COVID situation, Capt Amarinder said that it had seen cases go up from 500 to 1000 in two weeks, with positivity rate of the last five days at 8.73 percent. "The majority of cases are coming from Ludhiana, Jalandhar, and Patiala cities, though cases are increasing in all districts," he added.

The number of micro-containment zones was being increased in high incidence districts like Ludhiana, Patiala and Jalandhar, he said.

To augment its fight against COVID, the state has opened two Plasma Banks (in Patiala and Amritsar), with another set to open soon at GMC Faridkot, the Chief Minister informed the meeting.

CAPT'S DEMAND LIST

- ❒ Punjab seeks liberal fiscal package amidst rising corona cases
- ❒ Demands flexibility in terms of SDRF COVID-related expenses
- ❒ Seeks increased testing capacities in Central Govt labs
- ❒ Seeks review of UGC decision on mandatory exams for exit classes
- ❒ CM suggests promoting exit class students on past performance and internal assessment with an option to take exams later who wanted to improve their performance
- ❒ Seeks Centre's assistance for online school education
- ❒ Requests immediate operationalisation of COVID testing and treatment at AIIMS Bathinda
- ❒ Seeks increase in bed capacity and strengthening of existing PGI Satellite Centre at Sangrur
- ❒ Urges for immediate commencement of work on newly sanctioned PGI Satellite Centre at Ferozepur
- ❒ Requests for new medical colleges in Gurdaspur, Sangrur or Malerkotla, and Moga districts

CAPT SPEAKS

- ❒ Punjab records 50% revenue decline for the first quarter of current fiscal
- ❒ CM says Punjab may not conduct exams in September as per UGC decision as it is likely to face its peak at that time
- ❒ At mortality rate of 2.4%, CM points patients coming to hospitals late and 86% deaths occurring in tertiary hospitals
- ❒ Corona cases in Punjab gone up from 500 to 1000 in two weeks
- ❒ Last five days have recorded a positivity rate of 8.73%

Khattar instructs officers to speedily work on CM's announcements

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday directed the officers to immediately inform about the feasibility of Chief Minister's announcements and to invite tenders for them along with uploading their information on the portal.

Khattar presided over a review meeting regarding pending matters related to the Chief Minister's announcements here in which he further specified that when the work of formulation of the schemes commences after the announcements have been made, the Administrative Secretaries should step out in the field to review the progress and inform the local public representatives about it.

He said that the Central Government has included projects related to Indian National Highways and Railways in infrastructure development plans, hence, land can be acquired for these projects under the new Land Acquisition Act.

He further added that land should be acquired for the projects where 70 per cent of the land is available while the remaining 30 per cent should be acquired in the adjoining area so that it can be substituted with private land in future. Its main goal is to complete infrastructure projects.

The Chief Minister said that projects of public use should be given priority.

Additional Chief Secretary TC Gupta, who is looking after the tasks related to implementation of C.M. Announcements, apprised the Chief Minister in the meeting that a total of 8,111 CM's announcements have been made between 2014-20, out of which 4,398 announcements have been completed and 2,388 are still in progress. Also, there were 315 declarations, and 1,032 declarations were still pending.

He also informed that 95 per cent of announcements related to Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department have been completed, while 93 per cent of Public Health Engineering Department and 77.7 per cent of Health Department have been completed. Similarly, the work of announcements related to school education, transport, electricity, public works, development and panchayat, urban local bodies will also be completed within the stipulated time.

GOOD GOVERNANCE TOP PRIORITY, SAYS CM

Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar said that providing good governance to the people of the state is one of the top-most priorities of the present State Government and for this, in the year 2016, a flagship programme named CM's Good Governance Associates was started in Haryana. Addressing the fifth batch of the CM's Good Governance Associates here, Khattar said, "It is the duty of each CMGGA to ensure that along with working with the system they should also work for the betterment of the society.

The path of good governance comes through e-governance, therefore connecting people with the government schemes is the most important task of every Associate."

He said that as we have already announced that 2020 will be observed as Susashan Sankalp Varsh, therefore despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, no stone was left unturned to convert this crisis into an opportunity. During this period many IT initiatives have been taken so as to ensure that people of the state get a corruption-free and transparent system and benefits of welfare schemes reach down to the grassroot levels.

"Many new initiatives including Antyodaya Saral, Saksham Haryana, CM Window, Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao etc were introduced to bring about a change for the betterment in the society," he said.

Khattar added that the mandate of the State Government is to provide ease of living, bringing transparency, Zero tolerance to corruption, and providing an efficient public delivery system.

11 more Covid-19 deaths in Haryana, State's toll reaches 500

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Eleven more Covid-19 deaths were reported in Haryana on Tuesday, taking the toll to 500 as 798 fresh cases of the infection pushed the total in the state to 43,227.

On the day, 798 patients of the disease were discharged from different hospitals of the State. Of the total number of cases, 10,404 have been reported in Faridabad with the highest 121 new Covid-19 cases on the day, making it the worst-hit district in the State.

According to the Health department's daily bulletin, four fatalities were from Panipat, two from Faridabad and one death each toosk place in Gurugram, Sonipat, Panchkula, Kurukshetra and Ambala. With this, Covid-19 deaths in Haryana have risen to 500.

Faridabad is the hardest-hit among the 22 districts in the state and has reported not only the highest number of cases, but also the most number of fatalities at 144. Gurugram has reported 9,854 cases and 126 deaths. The districts which reported fresh cases include Karnal (38), Gurugram (69), Sonepat (56), Rewari (73), Ambala (69), Rohtak (42), Panipat (107), Palwal (47), Kurukshetra (40), Yamunanagar (26) and Kaithal (21), as per the bulletin.

The number of active cases stands at 6645, while 36082 patients have been discharged after recovery. As of Tuesday, the State's recovery rate was at 83.47 per cent, while the rate of doubling of infections was 29 days.

ONE DEATH, 75 FRESH CASES IN CHANDIGARH

The union territory of Chandigarh on Tuesday reported one death and 75 fresh COVID-19 cases. With this, the total positive cases reached 1670 while COVID-19 toll stood at 26 in the city. There were 628 active cases till the evening.

"A 81 years old woman, who was a resident of Sector 43 succumbed to COVID-19 on August 10 in PGIMER. She was tested as COVID positive in PGIMER on August 10 and had expired on the same day. She had a previous history of heart disease and stenting. She had come to the PGIMER for treatment of her heart ailment," stated Chandigarh Health Department's evening bulletin.

411 fresh cases of Covid reported in U'khand

Tally mounts to 10432 in State; 6470 recovered; 2 patients die on Tuesday

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The number of novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) patients in Uttarakhand scaled to 10432 on Tuesday with the State health department reporting 411 fresh cases of the disease. Deaths of two patients were also reported on the day which increased the death toll to 136 in the State.

The authorities discharged 169 patients from different hospitals after their recovery on Tuesday. The State now has a total of 6470 recovered patients which puts the recovery percentage at 62.02 per cent. The doubling rate of the disease in Uttarakhand is at 23.82 days.A 75 year old male expired at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh while a 33 year old male was reported dead at Sushila Tiwari Government Hospital Haldwani on the day.

The authorities reported 143 patients in Haridwar, 82 in Dehradun, 49 in Nainital, 39 in Tehri, 36 in Almora, 32 in Udham Singh Nagar, 10 in Uttarkashi, nine in Pauri, eight in Champawat and three in Rudraprayag district on the day.

The administration discharged 53 patients in Haridwar, 26 in Nainital, 24 in Dehradun, 23 in Pithoragarh, 14 each in Bageshwar and Udham Singh Nagar, four each in Almora and Chamoli, three in Champawat and Uttarkashi districts.The State now has 3787 active patients of the disease with Haridwar removing Udham Singh Nagar from the top position in the table of active cases with 1104 cases. Udham Singh Nagar is now at second place with 1054 active cases of the disease.

Nainital is in third position with 595 active cases while Dehradun is in fourth position with 411 active patients of Covid 19. Uttarkashi has 146, Tehri 114, Pithoragarh 89, Pauri 70, Almora 66, Champawat 65, Rudraprayag 28 active cases of Covid-19. Bageshwar district with 18 active patients is at the bottom of the table.

The administration has set up 479 containment zones to prevent the spread of the disease. In Haridwar district alone 399 containment zones have been set up. Udham Singh Nagar district has 37, Nainital 27, Dehradun seven, Champawat four, Tehri and Uttarkashi two each and Bageshwar one containment zones.

OFD aligns to Atmanirbhar Bharat call of PM Modi

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In what can be termed as good news for the trekkers, wild life enthusiasts and the bird watchers, a State of the craft telescope which hitherto was only available to armed forces, would be accessible for the general public

Informing the media persons the general manager of Ordnance Factory Dehradun (OFD), P K Dixit said on Tuesday that the factory has started production of the telescope after successful trials.

He said that under the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme, the ordnance factory has started production of many products. Under the scheme, a day light telescope for assault rifles was inaugurated on Tuesday. Informing about the telescope which would be available for the general public, Dixit said that it would cost in the range of Rs 20 – 25 lakhs. This telescope earlier was being made exclusively for the armed forces but now under the Atmanirbhar Bharat it is being produced for open market sale.

The MD claimed that the telescope mounted on T-90 tanks which earlier were being imported for about Rs 40 lakh a piece are now being produced here at only Rs three lakh per telescope. Elaborating further he said that the telescope is indigenous and weighs 4.6 kg. Dixit added that the OFD has also started producing Zoom telescopes which are used with the 7.62 MM machine guns. Considering the requirement of the Army, the ordnance factory has also devised a special telescope with mobile camera voice recorder device.

Punjab to release nearly 4,000 more prisoners

High powered panel based on SC order decides to decongest jails to 50% of authorized capacity

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

In view of the spike in COVID-19 cases and to ensure compliance with health protocols in the state's jails, Punjab Government has decided to bring the number of prisoners to the 50 per cent of the authorized capacity so as to provide adequate space for keeping the prisoners under quarantine besides ensuring social distancing.

In accordance with the decision, 3,500 to 4,000 prisoners would be released soon whereas earlier, 9,500 were released, said the state's Jail Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa on Tuesday.

"This exercise is being undertaken considering the relaxations in lockdown restrictions, increase in number of new inmates owing to spiraling of crime rate, regarding which the recommendations were made by the High Powered Committee on the orders of the Supreme Court," he said.

The Minister said that the average admission in Special Jails is around 3,000 per month, due to which the present population of jails stands at around 17,500, which is approximately 73 percent of the total capacity. "449 prisoners and 77 prison officials have tested COVID-19 positive till date. Most of the above cases have been detected in last few weeks though 2-levels of testing of all prisoners had started since mid-May," he said.

Considering the challenges faced by the Prison Administration related to containment of COVID and related issues, the third meeting of the High Powered Committee was held on July 31, to achieve further decongestion of jails to bring the population down to around 50 percent of authorized capacity, ensure sufficient social distancing, provide sufficient space for quarantining those being shifted from Special Jails to the regular jails.

"Since 80 percent of total population is of under-trials, the criteria for recommending the release of prisoners was of under-trials only, and mainly of those accused under NDPS Act, with recovery up to intermediate quantity and not having more than three cases," he said.

Other sections of IPC which have been included for recommending release on interim-bail are 379 (theft), 420 (cheating), 406 (criminal breach of trust), 452 (house trespass), 323 (for causing hurt), 324 (causing hurt), 188 (violation of prohibitory orders), 336 (act endangering human life), 316 (causing death of quick unborn child), 279 (rash and negligent act endangering life), 170 (impersonation of a government official), 337 (causing hurt by rash and negligent act), 338 (grievous hurt by act endangering life), 315 (preventing a child from being born), and 498-A (subjecting a married women to harassment).

In addition to new criteria, it has been re-iterated that interim-bail of all prisoners, presently out from jail on interim-bail, may be extended further till the notification of Epidemic Diseases Act 1897 is in force.

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Srl. NO. (1) E-Tender No. 66-ST-TENDER -2020, Date 06.08.2020.
Work : "Extension of Hiring of One (01) Nos. of Non-AC Diesel driven road vehicle innova/Duster/Scorpio or similar vehicle for the official use of ADSTE/MDGR for a period of Thirty-Six (36) Months." **Tender Value : ₹ 6,46,650/-** (Rupees Six Lakhs Fourty Six Thousand Six Hundred Fifty only).
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The complete information of above e-tender Notice is available over website **www.ireps.gov.in.** Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above tender.
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AIIMS Rishikesh now has helipad on campus

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated the helipad at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Rishikesh on Tuesday. This development will now enable seriously ill and persons injured in accidents to be brought by helicopter directly to AIIMS. Training has been provided for this at the institute.

After landing of the helicopter it will take nine minutes to transport the patient in an ambulance to the trauma centre. Rawat said that the mountain state is more prone to disasters and accidents.

In the past three years, the lives of more than 100 people have been saved by transporting them to the hospital by helicopter. Rawat further said that AIIMS Rishikesh is the nation's first institute to have a helipad on campus. Addressing doctors of the institute, he asked the senior doctors to take special care of Covid-19 patients. He also expressed concern at the way Covid was changing its form. He appreciated the doctors, sanitation workers and all others working in the field to tackle the Covid pandemic.

Along with examination of patients, it is also important to keep them psychologically strong. He further said that AIIMS Rishikesh should be able to reach patients in remote areas too. The institute doctors also conducted a mock drill demonstrating the transporting of a patient from the helipad to the trauma centre.

Vidhan Sabha speaker and Rishikesh MLA Prem Chand Agrawal, Rishikesh mayor Anita Mamgai, AIIMS director Ravi Kant and others were also present on the occasion.

56,000 teachers to get promotion soon

BHUBANESWAR: About 56,000 teachers in the State would be given promotion and the process for it would be completed by this month.

A decision to this was taken following a direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, informed School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash.

Besides, steps are afoot to vitalise all Directorates under the S&ME Department. For every district, a senior official has been deployed as Nodal Officer to supervise various programmes. They would hold discussions on various issues with senior officials of the concerned department every Monday.

On Monday, S&ME Principal Secretary Satyabrata Sahu held a meeting with all Directors and Additional and Joint Secretaries of the department regarding promotion of 56,000 teachers and filling of vacant posts.

Health services to recruit 763 Medical Officers

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State health services of Uttarakhand would soon get 763 medical officers (MO). On the directive of the State Government, the Uttarakhand Medical Services Selection Board (UMSSB) has released the recruitment advertisement for these posts.

The interested candidates would have to submit their application forms on the website of UMSSB till August 31. Out of 763 posts, 25 are reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC), 143 for Other Backward Castes (OBC) and 107 for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) while 251 posts would be unreserved.

The candidates should be between 21 to 42 years of age on July 1. An examination fee of Rs 2000 would have to be paid by candidates of General and OBC categories while for others the fee is Rs 1000.

The chairman of the UMSSB, Dr D S Rawat said that the examination schedule is of 100 marks out of which interview would be of 50 marks. The marks obtained in the MBBS degree would have a weightage of 20 marks; the additional degree (PG and diploma) would have 10 marks.

Apart from them the work experience would also be counted and a weightage of 20 marks would be given to it. The selected MO would be inducted in the pay scale of 56100- 177500 (level 10) of state health services.

It is pertinent to mention here that UMSSB had recruited more than 400 MOs for the state health services in the month of April this year. In view of the outbreak of the Covid-19, the state government had given permission to the board to recruit 276 more doctors than the advertised posts last year.

CM hails contribution of State's first woman MP

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday paid glowing tributes to Chhattisgarh's first woman MP and social reformer Minimata, saying she dedicated her entire life for human welfare and women's rights.

Minimata is the epitome of social reformation, and the Chhattisgarh government is following her footsteps to achieve women's welfare, he said on her death anniversary after garlanding her picture at his residence.

On the occasion, Baghel inaugurated the newly-built Minimata Memorial Air-Conditioned Building worth ₹44 lakh at New Rajendra Nagar via video conferencing.

Speaking about her contribution to the freedom movement, he credited her with doing significant work towards alleviation of social stigmas and evil practices such as untouchability, child marriage, poverty and dowry.

The Chhattisgarh government has started the Minimata Amrit Dhara Yojana for providing safer drinking water in each and every household in villages

She always took the initiative for helping people and ensuring justice. She played an important role in getting the anti-untouchability legislation passed in Parliament, the Chief Minister said.

Baghel said that Minimata's contribution towards Dalit and women welfare will always be remembered.

Starting from the first parliamentary election after independence, the highly-respect Minimata was elected to the Lok Sabha on Congress ticket five times from present day Chhattisgarh -- in 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967 and 1971.

She died in a plane crash on August 11, 1972.

Hasdeo Bango Dam in Chhattisgarh has been named after Minimata. The Chhattisgarh government has started the Minimata Amrit Dhara Yojana for providing safer drinking water in each and every household in villages.

Urban Administration and Labour Minister Dr Shivkumar Dahariya presided over the programme, which was organized by Guru Ghasidas Sahitya Sanskriti Akademi and Satnami Samaj.

Payment-to-get-admitted video is fake: Government

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh's Health Department on Tuesday dubbed as fake a video circulating on social media claiming that non-Covid persons are being admitted in hospitals as the state government is giving money on admission of each Covid positive patient.

"This video is completely fake and things told in it are baseless. Earlier, a fake video was circulated in which a young girl identifying herself as a resident of Devendra Nagar in Raipur was shown asking assistance from Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. After investigation it turned to be a false video," an official press release said.

Such videos not only create fear among people but also fuel turmoil, the statement said.

Such videos not only create fear among people but also fuel turmoil, the statement said

The government said that in Chhattisgarh every Covid-19 positive person is being provided free treatment at special hospitals.

Asymptomatic and patients with mild symptoms are being treated in Covid care centres across the state. All the samples are promptly tested, officials said.

The government warned of strict action against people circulating fake or baseless videos, audio, pamphlets or so-called news. It said that FIRs will be filed in such cases and action taken under the Epidemic Diseases Act.

Baghel to unfurl tricolor in Raipur, Speaker in Korba

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will unfurl the tricolor at the main Independence Day event at the Police Parade Ground in Raipur on August 15.

The government has nominated Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries for reading out the Chief Minister's message to the public and for flag hoisting in district headquarters, an official statement said on Tuesday.

Assembly Speaker Dr. Charandas Mahant will unfurl the national flag at Korba while Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu will do so at Mahasamund, Health Minister T.S. Singh Deo in Balodabazar, Agriculture Minister Ravindra Chaubey in Durg, Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar in Rajnandgaon, Women and Child Development Minister Anila Bhendia in Raigarh, School Education Minister Dr. Premasai Singh Tekam in Bastar, Excise Minister Kavasi Lakhma Dhamtari, Urban Administration Minister Dr. Shivkumar Dahria in Surguja, Food Minister Amarjit Bhagat in Balod, Higher Education Minister Umesh Patel in Bilaspur, Revenue Minister Jaisingh Agrawal in Gaurella-Pendra-Marwahi and Public Health Engineering Minister Guru Rudrakumar in Janjgir-Champa.

Raman Singh made manifold assets: Cong

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee on Tuesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to order a probe against former Chief Minister Dr Raman Singh as his assets were much beyond his known sources of income.

A complaint has been lodged with the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The Congress demanded that Dr Raman Singh should reveal the details of the assets held by him and family members to the people.

Addressing the media at the party headquarters Rajiv Bhavan, Congress leaders quoted the details of income cited in election affidavits filed during assembly elections from 2003 to 2018 by Dr Raman Singh and his wife Veena Singh. They demanded to know how a family without any business or industry or land holding increased its assets 10 times more.

The Congress leaders said that Raman Singh's assets totalled ₹1.4 crore on completion of his first term in 2008. This rose to ₹5.61 crores in 2013, an increase of 5-fold. By the end of his third tenure in 2018, the election affidavit put the worth of his property at ₹10.72 crores.

The IT return states an income of ₹14.60 lakh for Raman Singh and ₹12.52 lakh for his wife in 2012-13. In the same year, around ₹28 lakh as loan was pending against Raman Singh which was repaid in five years. In 2018 the balance loan amount was shown as just ₹3,000.

The Congress leaders cited different points of Raman Singh's affidavits like holdings in gold, silver, savings and money in bank accounts.

The leaders also raised the issue of assets held by Raman Singh's son Abhishek Singh, who was a MP from Rajnandgaon.

The Congress has demanded a probe into all the assets held by the family of Raman Singh.

Waning popularity of CM, Cong diverting issue: BJP

Chhattisgarh BJP President Vishnudeo Sai said the allegations against Dr Raman Singh were being raised by the Congress to divert the 20 months of governance failure and the waning popularity of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

He was reacting to the allegations raised by Congress leaders against the former Chief Minister.

Sai said that Congress leaders should ask their own Chief Minister why he still fears the popularity of the former Chief Minister and why he (Baghel) had become so unpopular so soon.

The BJP leader said when the Gandhi family does not do any work, how does it hold such large assets. Leader of Opposition Dharamlal Kaushik said in a statement that if there is evidence, then why is the state government not taking action against Dr Raman Singh and his family. He accused the Congress of raising baseless allegations as part of its strategy of character assassination.

Employment Assistant sacked for irregularities

STAFF REPORTER ■
BAIKUNTHPUR

A Village Employment Assistant in Baikunthpur in Chhattisgarh's Korea district has been sacked after he was accused of irregularities and a probe found him guilty.

Janpad Panchayat Baikunthpur, Chief Executive Officer Sanjay Rai, said in a statement that residents of village Amarpur complained that the Assistant, Rajkumar Sahu, had entered names of nine beneficiaries in ground levelling work. They were given lesser work but higher amount of wages was withdrawn against their names.

The villages demanded an investigation.

Rai said that a probe panel set up by the Zila Panchayat visited Amarpur and recorded the statements of villagers and evaluated the work done.

The team also found that Sahu did add names of nine beneficiaries under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. Against the sanctioned work and amount, lesser work was allocated to the beneficiaries but full amount was filed through online.

Based on a report which found Sahu guilty, a recommendation was made for his termination.

Rai stated the report and recommendation was forwarded to Korea Collector Satya Narayan Rathor who terminated the Assistant from the service with immediate effect under the Contract Recruitment Rules 2012.

Chhattisgarh Urban Administration and Development, Labour Minister Dr. Shivkumar Dahariya felicitated meritorious students and women for their exemplary work in social sector at a function at New Rajendra Nagar, Raipur, on Tuesday to mark the 48th death anniversary of the first woman MP from the state, Minimata. *Pioneer Photo*

Two policemen suspended for violating quarantine protocol

STAFF REPORTER ■
KAWARDHA

Two policemen have been suspended for violating the Covid-19 quarantine protocol in Chhattisgarh's Kawardha district, police said on Tuesday.

"Two policemen were suspended after they were found disobeying the quarantine protocol," Kawardha Superintendent of Police K.L. Dhruv said.

According to the police, the in-charge of Podi police outpost and a head constable posted there gave their samples for Covid testing on August 6. However, instead of getting themselves quarantined, they freely roamed around.

Kawardha's Additional Superintendent of Police Anil Kumar Soni said the two policemen also attended a 'Spandan' programme held on Tuesday in which several policemen took part.

'Spandan' is a special programme launched by Chhattisgarh Police to stop suicidal tendencies among policemen.

"Both the policemen tested Covid positive after the programme. They have put others also on risk and were therefore suspended," Soni said.

Maoist killed in C'garh, weapons seized

STAFF REPORTER ■
KANKER

A Naxalite was killed in a gun battle between security forces and Maoists in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district, police said on Tuesday.

Guns, live bullets and other items of daily use were seized from the encounter spot, a senior police official said.

"We had launched an inter-district counter insurgency operation on the borders of Kanker and Kondagaon districts in which different teams of BSF, DRG (District Reserve Group), STF (Special Task Force) and police from seven stations were deployed," Inspector General of Police (Bastar) Sundarraj P told The Pioneer over phone.

On Monday evening, a joint team of DRG and STF (Bravo 8) had a face-off with armed Maoists in the jungle of Sindurmeta in the Kanker police station area, about 150 km from Raipur, the officer said.

Seeing the police force, the Maoists opened fire. The police retaliated. After intermittent firing, the Maoists slipped into the jungle. Later, during a search of the area, police found the body of a male Maoist clad in Naxalite uniform.

While searching the area, police also found a .303 rifle, a 315 rifle, solar plates, radio, battery charger, wire, pressure cooker, IEDs, Naxalite literature, medicines and other items of daily use in huge quantity.

The identity of dead Maoist is yet to be ascertained, the officer said.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता लोक निर्माण विभाग (भ/स) संभाग क्रं.2 जगदलपुर

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

क्रमांक-2429/NIT-4/2020-2021/व.ले.लि. दिनांक 10.08.2020

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Aggressive testing needed to contain Covid: Modi

PM interacts with CMs of 10 States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday pointed out that 10 States account for 80 per cent of the total Covid-19 cases and asked for aggressive testing and exchange of best practices to contain the pandemic. .

The Prime Minister interacted with the Chief Ministers of ten States and reviewed the coronavirus situation in the country and further measures required to check its spread. He interacted with the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, Bihar, Gujarat, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh was also present in the meet.

Modi said the battle against the coronavirus could be won if the situation in these ten States where 80 percent of active cases (six lakh) are concentrated, could be contained, he said.

"Today, 80% of active cases are in the 10 States whom you represent. Across the country, there are more than 6 lakh active cases are mostly in these 10 states. Therefore, it is important that we talk and exchange best practices and learn from each other's experience", he said.

"If we defeat corona in these 10 States, the whole country will overcome this disease", Modi said.

The Prime Minister observed in some States such as Bihar, UP, Telangana and West Bengal, testing rates were low, but the positivity rate was high. He urged these four states to ramp up testing.

He also insisted on contact tracing. "Experts are now saying that if we can identify and trace the infection in the first 72 hours, the disease treatment is easier," he said.

Citing the "Delhi model" to contain the pandemic, Modi said: "The template for this is the same for all, to separate containment zones, 100% screening, isolation, tracing and treatment."

Prime Minister said the number of testing has reached seven lakhs per day and is also increasing continuously.

He said if we try more in focussed way then we can achieve the target to bring down Case Fatality Rate to less than one percent.

"The average fatality rate is much lower than in the rest of the world. It is a matter of satisfaction. It is constantly decreasing. The percentage of active cases has decreased and the recovery rate has increased. So this means that our efforts are proving effective", Prime Minister said.

Modi said there was a phase when Covid19 had become a huge problem in some districts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi but " we held a review meeting and a committee was formed under the chairmanship of Union home minister Amit Shah and to a great extent, we achieved desired results", Prime Minister said.

This is the seventh video conference of the Prime Minister with the states Chief Ministers since the outbreak of the pandemic and also the first meeting of Modi with chief ministers during Unlock 3.0 on the coronavirus pandemic.

Since March , Modi had interacted with the Chief Ministers and reviewed the coronavirus pandemic in India. During his interactions, he had called for strict adherence to Centre's guidelines and the social distancing norms to check the spread of Coronavirus.

India, the third country worst hit by the COVID-19 pandemic recorded a spike of 53,601 coronavirus cases on Tuesday, pushing the total tally to 22,68,675. The country tested a record over 871 deaths in a single day.

The number of recoveries mounted to almost 16 lakh, more than twice the active cases. Out of the total cases, over 6,39,929 are active cases while 15,83,489 have recovered from the disease and 45,456 people have lost their lives in the fight against the virus which has no proven cure or a vaccine yet.

Armed forces ready for deployment even during winter months in Ladakh, PAC told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the stalemate continues at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China reluctant to pull back its troops, the Indian armed forces are ready for a long haul. Presenting this assessment to a parliamentary panel, the military also said the process of disengagement and de-escalation is likely to take more time.

Led by Chief of Defence Staff(CDS)General Bipin Rawat, the armed forces also informed the Public Accounts Committee(PAC)that the Services are geared for deployment even during the winter months in Ladakh in the present situation. This is significant as temperature drops to minus 20 degrees in the region and winter sets in by September end.

The parliamentary panel was apprised of the ground situation at the moment at the volatile border in Eastern Ladakh and informed that the process of disengagement and de-escalation may take longer, sources said here on Tuesday. This comes in the backdrop of no substantial reduction of troops and withdrawal by the Chinese even after six rounds of military level talks besides scores of parleys at the diplomatic level.

Apprising the lawmakers of the current position, the military top brass, however, assured them that the armed forces are ready to face any challenge and are operationally ready. Moreover, adequate logistical arrangements are underway to enable the soldiers to perform their duties during the harsh winter months, the panel was informed.

As regards the time-consuming disengagement and de-escalation process, sources said it was a complex issue and both the sides were dealing it with utmost caution. Also, India all along maintained that China has to restore status quo ante. It means the Chinese forces will have to go back to their positions as existing in April end.

The stand-offs started with the Chinese intruding into the Pangong Tso(lake)area on May 5 and obstructing an Indian army patrol. It led to a scuffle between soldiers of the two armies. At present, the "friction points" include Galwan valley, Hot Springs and Gogra besides Pangong Tso.

While the Chinese have withdrawn in considerable numbers from Gsalwan, Hot Springs and Gogra, they are not ready to retreat from the Pangong Tso. In fact, some more rounds of talks are likely in the coming days at the military and diplomatic levels to sort out this contentious issue, sources said.

Not willing to take any chances in the present scenarios, the Indian army has also ramped its troop strength besides bringing forward heavy guns and tanks. This move was undertaken after the Chinese buildup at all the "friction points" and the Depsang Valley. It has amassed more than 15,000 soldiers on its side of the LAC in the Depsang region leading to Major Generals of the two armies holding talks to defuse tension there last week.

On strengthening troop levels during winter months in Ladakh, sources said more than 20,000 troops are now ready to be deployed at a short notice in any operational areas on the LAC.

The troops are acclimatized for high altitude stints as most of the personnel have already served in the Siachen glacier and other tough terrain in the mountains.

Expert committee to identify effective Covid vaccine in fight against virus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The expert committee on vaccine administration, chaired by NITI Aayog's Dr VK Paul, will meet on Wednesday to consider "selection, logistics and ethical aspects" of procurement and administration of vaccines against the coronavirus disease that has claimed over 45,000 lives and infected over 22.70 lakhs people in the country.

"The panel will decide to identify the COVID-19 vaccine that are effective in fight against the virus. The committee will also chalk out a plan how the vaccines should be procured. Finally, the panel will prepare a strategy on inventory management, distribution, and administration," Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said at a press briefing here on Tuesday.

The high-level panel includes AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleria, representatives of the ministries of external affairs, biotechnology, information technology, the Director General of Health services, India's Aids Research Institute, the Indian Council of Medical Research, and also representatives from states.

The panel's terms of reference constitute all matters related to logistics of vaccines and ways to address issues of equity etc, said the official when asked if the Government plans to tie-up with Russia which has recently announced manufacture of a vaccine to curb the Covid-19.

The committee members will decide which vaccine or vaccines will be effective for Indian citizens. The task force will also chalk out a budget and discuss how capital can be raised for procurement, distribution of the vaccine. Moreover, the high-level panel will prepare a strategy on inventory management and administration.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) scientist Balram Bhargava, India has three vaccine candidates in different phases of the clinical study.

The first is inactivated virus vaccine which is being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the ICMR. The vaccine has completed its Phase-1 study on one site and has started Phase-2 clinical trial.

The second is the DNA vaccine being developed by Zydus Cadila. This vaccine has also begun its Phase-2 trial at 11 sites.

The third is the Oxford University-AstraZeneca vaccine that will be manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII). The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has given approval to SII to conduct Phase 2 and 3 clinical studies in the 17 sites in the country.

Once the vaccines are ready, the Government will work on priority and fair distribution of vaccine, to look out logistic and roll out in a cold chain, stockpiling, and training people who are being given this vaccine.

USA meets Lord Rama at Huston, via Kerala's Ramayana Month

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

People in Huston, US, may not have heard of Kerala's Karkkadaka month (the Malayalam equivalent of Sravan) but thanks to Ramayana, people in the far away continent are getting to know more about Indian heritage and Kerala.

While Hindu households observe Karkkataka as Ramayana month in Kerala, Hindus who went to far away places in search of livelihood and education took with them a portion of Karkkadaka. The net result? A Lord Krishna Temple at Houston, more famous as Sri Guruvayurappan Temple and recitation of Ramayana throughout Karkkadaka. Yes, more than a hundred households join the Ramayana recitation every evening at this temple for the entire month and they make the neighborhood reverberate with the lyrics known for its devotion, dedication and Bhakti towards the Maryada Purushotham. For nearly a decade Dr Rekha Nair, a paramedic scientist, has been reciting Ramayana at this Huston Temple with silent prayers for people in Kerala as well as the rest of the world.

"The numbers have increased manifold over the years. This year due to Covid-19 norms, we use the social media to propagate the message of Lord Rama. Every evening one person comes to the temple and recite Ramayana which is aired through the social media page of the temple. Others join the session from their homes," said Dr Nair.

Desi def industry gets ₹8,722.38-cr booster

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Giving a boost to the Indian defence industry, the Defence Acquisition Council(DAC)chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday cleared proposals worth ₹8,722.38 crore including procurement of 106 Basic Trainer Aircraft(BAT). They are manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited(HAL)

Giving details, defence ministry officials later said with the HAL having successfully developed Basic Trainer Aircraft (HTT-40) Prototypes and certification process underway, the DAC approved procurement of 106 Basic Trainer Aircraft from the HAL. It will address the basic training requirements of the IAF. Post certification 70 Basic Trainer Aircraft will be initially procured from the HAL and balance 36 after operationalisation of HTT-40 fleet in the IAF. The DAC is the apex body to approve acquisition plans of the armed forces.

To improve the fire power of Navy, the DAC approved procurement of an upgraded version of Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM), which is fitted as the main gun onboard Navy and Indian Coast Guard (ICG) warships

To improve the fire power of Navy, the DAC approved procurement of an upgraded version of Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM), which is fitted as the main gun onboard Navy and Indian Coast Guard (ICG) warships, from Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL). The upgraded version of SRGM has enhanced capability to perform against fast manoeuvring targets like missiles and Fast Attack Crafts. The guns have considerable engagement range.

In view of the availability of requisite capability for indigenous development of the ammunition, both in terms of 'Manufacturing' and 'Technology', the DAC approved procurement of 125 mm APFSDS (Armour Piercing Fin Stabilised Discarding Sabot) ammunition for the Army as a 'Design and Development Case'. The ammunition being procured will have a 70 per cent indigenous content. The DAC also gave approvals that are likely to speed up the procurement of AK- 203 assault rifles and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle(UAV) upgrades.

EC explores 'blockchain technology' for remote voting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) has explored the potential of using blockchain technology to enable remote voting. Speaking at a webinar organised by the EC and the Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA), Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra emphasised that in designing a technology based solution, the primary consideration should be the ability to "inspire trust of all stakeholders, assure integrity of electoral process and secrecy and inviolability of ballot."

Blockchain is a system in which the database of recordings (a 'chain') appears on multiple computers at the same time even as it is updated with any new digital information ('a block').

This distributed collection of the information has led some to claim that this system can overcome issues of over-centralisation.

Chandra expressed his concerns over geographical hurdles in voting.

Top educationist in TN questions logic behind opposition to Hindi

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Tamil Nadu's top educationist has come out in the open questioning the logic behind the State Government's decision not to allow the three-language policy prescribed in the New National Education Policy of the Union Government.

Prof E Balagurusamy, former vice-chancellor, Anna University and former member of the Union Public Service Commission, in a hard hitting letter to Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisami has expressed his anguish and disappointment over the State Government's stance that the three-language formula was "saddening and painful". The educationist , held in high esteem all over India described himself as a victim of the two-language formula implemented by the five-decade long Dravidian rule in Tamil Nadu.

Immediately after the announcement of the National Education Policy, Palanisamy had said that his government would not allow in Tamil Nadu the three-language formula envisaged in the policy.

"Ours is the only State in the country that has been denying its students an opportunity to learn any other Indian languages other than Tamil for more than five decades now. I am one of those who were badly affected by the two-language formula," Balagurusamy said in a letter to the Chief Minister, copies of which were released to the media.

He said the decisions of the governments led by the Dravidian parties ruling the State since 1967 have deprived the poor and rural students studying in government schools of learning any additional language while the rich and urban joining the CBSE, central and private schools have the freedom to study any language they wish.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

RAHUL

General Public is hereby informed that one boy **Namely:** Rahul, **S/o:** Late Om Parkash, **R/o:** H.No. 183, D-5, Kunwar Singh Nagar, Nangloi, Delhi, **Age:** 16 Years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Long, **Wearing:** Red Colour Shirt-Blue Jeans Pant and Red Slipper in feet has been missing/kidnapped since 26.06.2020 from the area of P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi. In this regard **FIR No. 727/20, U/s 363 IPC, Dated 07.07.2020** has been lodged at **P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped boy but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing/kidnapped boy please inform the undersigned.

Web-site : http://cbi.nic.in
E-Mail ID: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
DP/297/OD/2020

SHO
P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi
Ph.: 011-25946700, 25946710

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Guidelines for covid-survivors soon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid reports that Covid-19 survivors are facing health issues post recovery, the Union Health Ministry is preparing guidelines to help such patients manage any long-term complications.

"A group of experts in the Ministry is presently seized with this issue and working on a guidance note for recovered people and possible complications that may afflict them," said Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary, Health Ministry on reports of lung ailments in some of the patients who have recovered from COVID-19.

The ministry's technical wing, or Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) which is looking into the matter, includes several domain experts. Dr Rajiv Garg, the director-general health services, chairs the group. The group includes experts from AIIMS, Delhi, representatives from the ICMR and World Health Organisation's India office.

"This group provides an expert opinion on various topics from time to time… it has been responsible for providing technical inputs to draft guidelines on issues related to testing, isolation of patients, home isolation dos and don'ts, clinical management of Covid-19 cases in and outside hospitals…"

There have been global studies too wherein researchers have found that the infection free patients faced one or many health issues like fatigueness, breathlessness, psychological distress - including problems with concentration and memory - and a general decline in quality of life.

For instance, a research team - involving multidisciplinary specialists from the University of Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust and Leeds Beckett University – had followed 100 people recovering from Covid-19, four-to-eight weeks after being discharged from hospital in Leeds and found such health issues among the survivors.

The findings - Post-discharge symptoms and rehabilitation needs in survivors of COVID-19 infection: a cross-sectional evaluation - have been published in the Journal of Medical Virology.

The researchers identified a pattern of longer-term symptoms likely to be experienced by people who were hospitalised with the Covid-19 infection.

Some patients, particularly those who had been in intensive care, had symptoms associated with cases of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). PTSD symptoms are a well-recognised component of post- intensive care unit syndrome caused by a variety of factors including fear of dying, invasive treatment, pain, delirium, inability to communicate, weakness, immobility, and sensory problems and sleep deprivation.

Meanwhile, the Union Health Ministry said that for the first time in the country, the COVID-19 fatality rate has fallen below 2 per cent and is currently at 1.99 per cent.

Metro Railway, Kolkata
Kolkata's Pride

CORRIGENDUM-1

Against **Open Tender Notice No.: S&T/Works-8A-2020.** The Tender Closssing date & time should be read as **02.09.2020, 15 hrs.** instead of 24.08.2020, 15 hrs. Bidding start date should be read as **19.08.2020** instead of 10.08.2020. Other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged.

Dy. CSTE/C

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION RAMBAN

(Short Term) NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
Fresh e-NIT No 17 of 2020-21 dated 10-08-2020 to e-NIT No 14 of 2020-21 dated 17-07-2020 (E-tendering).

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Ramban invites tenders by e-tendering mode on **Item/%age rates** from approved and eligible Contractors/Firms registered with J&K UT. CPWD, MES & Railways for the following work:-

S.No 1. Name of Work :- Construction of Kanga Bhatni road km 5th and 6th by way of 25 mm thick SDBC over 75 mm thick WBM Grade III. (Under State Plan).(Fresh 2nd time) **Name of Division :-** PWD (R&B) Division Ramban, **Estimated cost of Work (in Lacs) :-** 27.46, **Cost of Tender Doc.(in Rs) :-** 1000 **Earnest Money (In Lacs) :-** @ 2% of Adv. Cost,**Time allowed for completion :-** 01 Month, **Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid) :-** 25-08-2020 at 12.00 A.M, **Class of Contractor :-** Hot Mix Plant Holder/ A & B Class

S.No 2. Name of Work :- Construction of 1 No H.P culvert alongwith approach R/wall in km 1st RD 900-925 and Constt. of R/wall and B/wall with drain in km 2nd RD 740-770 , Const. of B/wall with drain in km 2nd RD 825-850 and Providing and Laying of WBM Grade II in km 2nd RD 250 to km 3rd RD 500 on Mugji to Dharam road. (Under Distt Plan), **Name of Division :-** PWD (R&B) Division Ramban, **Estimated cost of Work (in Lacs) :-** 23.95, **Cost of Tender Doc.(in Rs) :-** 600 **Earnest Money (In Lacs) :-** @ 2% of Adv. Cost,**Time allowed for completion :-** 02 Months, **Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid) :-** 25-08-2020 at 12.00 A.M, **Class of Contractor :-** "A,B & C " Class

S.No 3. Name of Work :- Construction of 02 No Pipe culvert in km 1st RD850-865 , RD 940-965 and Constt. of B/wall in km 1st RD400-485 and Providing and Laying 150 mm thick WBM Grade II in km 1st on Lohar Mohallah Ziarat Sharief Dharam road. (under SC/ST), **Name of Division :-** PWD (R&B) Division Ramban, **Estimated cost of Work (in Lacs) :-** 21.50, **Cost of Tender Doc.(in Rs) :-** 600 **Earnest Money (In Lacs) :-** @ 1% of Adv. Cost,**Time allowed for completion :-** 02 Months, **Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid) :-** 25-08-2020 at 12.00 A.M, **Class of Contractor :-** "SHG"

S.No 4. Name of Work :- Improvement / Up-gradation of road from Horticulture Complex Govindpura Ramban by way of P/L150 mm thick WBM Grade II in patches , 75 mm thick WBM Grade-III and 25 mm thick SDBC. (Under RC). (Fresh 2nd time), **Name of Division :-** PWD (R&B) Division Ramban, **Estimated cost of Work (in Lacs) :-** 6.92, **Cost of Tender Doc.(in Rs) :-** 600 **Earnest Money (In Lacs) :-** @ 2% of Adv. Cost, **Time allowed for completion :-** 01 Months, **Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid) :-** 25-08-2020 at 12.00 A.M, **Class of Contractor :-** Hot Mix Plant Holder/ A,B,C&D Class

Position of AAA = Available
Position of funds = Available
1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice :- 10-08-2020
2. Period of downloading of bidding documents :- From 11-08-2020,10.00 A.M to 24-08-2020, 4.00 P.M

No. DIP/J-3312/20
Dated: 11.08.2020

Sd/- (Er. Maqbool Hussain)
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division Ramban

Mamata again demands State dues from Modi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has once again asked the Central Government to clear the State's dues that had gone beyond ₹50,000 crore.

Raising the issue during the Chief Ministers' meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi Banerjee on Tuesday said that the Centre owed ₹52,000 crore to Bengal in terms of funds that were to be sent to the State on various accounts. The stated amount is exclusive of ₹4,153 crore that the State will get from the Centre towards the settlement of GST, she added.

Bengal is "yet to receive ₹4135 crore towards GST compensation and overall outstanding dues of ₹53,000 crore from the Central Government," Banerjee said requesting in addition for more high flow nasal canulas and ventilators.

Reminding the Prime Minister that the "Centre has raised the FRBM limit from three per cent to five per cent but only 0.5 per cent out of the increased 2 per cent has been made unconditional," she requested the Centre to "make the remaining 1.5 per cent unconditional too for one year."

Ruing the fact that the Centre had sent paltry amounts towards fighting the pandemic she said the Bengal Government had spent more than ₹2,500 crore whereas it had received from the Centre only ₹125 crore. Besides, Banerjee also raised the issue of corona vaccine asking the Centre to "immediately" issue guidelines.

"Regarding the vaccine, the central government should authorise which vaccine is to be procured and used. It must issue guidelines in this regard," sources quoting her said.

Priyanka slams UP Govt on girl's death during chase

Lucknow: Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has slammed the Yogi Adityanath government over the Bulandshahr accident in which a US student was killed.

The accident, which took place on Monday, was apparently caused when motorcycle-borne men chased the girl who was on a scooty with her uncle.

In a tweet, Priyanka said, "There is no fear of the law in UP and women are getting increasingly insecure. It appears that the state government does not take incidents of eve teasing seriously." *IANS*

Teenager raped by neighbour in UP

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

In a colony of Bannadevi area of the city, youth raped a teenager who went to a neighbour's house to take onions on Monday evening. The mob gathered at the screaming of the teenager and grabbed the accused and beat him fiercely. When the matter reached the BJP leaders, the fight broke out. All the leaders including the former mayor reached the police station in support of the teenager. Up late in the night, the police station created a ruckus for action. Police has also taken the accused into custody. Action is being taken by investigating the case on the basis of complaint.

Late in the evening, the victim went to her friend's residence in the neighborhood to ask for onions where her friend's maternal uncle was already present. He dragged her into the room and raped her. The local people gathered as the teenager screamed. They saw the teenager lying in blood. People took her to the hospital. At the same time, grabbed the accused from spot and beated him.

Bonded labours still exist in UP

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Despite the Supreme Court's order to ban the bonded labour, a large number of such labourers are working in different brick kilns of Aligarh and Hathras district.

Although the labour department of Uttar Pradesh has rescued 670 bonded labourers, including 20 fron Aligarh and 21 from Bulandshahr, from clutches of brick kiln owners till now. Sources said most of rge kiln labourers belong to Atrauli tehsil. More than 30,000 labours are hired to work at kilns situated in UP, Haryana, Punjab and Delhi. Some organised gangs are involved in arranging bonded labourers.

They lay advance money to the labourers and send them to different district. The agents charge a high commision from kiln owners fo these labours.

Nearly 1,200 bonded labours have been rescued from different places. Of the 1,200, more than 220belongs to Atrauli region in Aligarh district.

1,417 fresh cases in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala Police have started preparing a data bank of persons who do not wear face masks while they come out of their houses.

"Though the police officers would only warn the law breakers for the first time, the violators would be fined ₹2,000/- when they are caught the second time without masks," Pinarayi Vijayan, Chief Minister of Kerala, told reporters in his daily press briefing on Tuesday.

Vijayan said that 1,417 new persons were tested positive for Covid-19 on Tuesday while 1,426 patients were cured of the pandemic.

Vaishno Devi Yatra to begin from August 16

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Jammu & Kashmir Government on Tuesday set a ceiling of permitting a maximum number of 5,000 pilgrims per day to visit Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine nestled in Trikuta hills from August 16.

The yatra was suspended to the cave shrine on March 18 ahead of the imposition of nationwide lockdown.

The Government had earlier decided to throw open the gates of all other major shrines and religious places like Charar-e-Sharif,Hazratbal,Nangali Sahib,Shahdara Sharief,Shiv Khori where devotees visit from all parts of the union territory and the country from August 16.

According to the fresh guidelines issued by the administration, "a maximum number of 500 pilgrims per day will be permitted within this ceiling in a graded manner from outside Jammu and Kashmir".

Pilgrims coming from outside Jammu & Kashmir will undergo 100 percent antigen testing along with those visiting the shrine from red districts of Jammu & Kashmir. A detailed set of guidelines for worshippers and other stakeholders in and around these religious places were also issued.

256 die, 11,088 +ve in Maha

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a noticeable drop in the Covid-19 triggered fatalities and an increase in the number of infections, Maharashtra on Tuesday witnessed 256 deaths and 11,088 infected cases in various parts of the state.

With the fresh fatalities and infections, the Covid-19 toll in the state mounted to 18306, while the total number of infected cases jumped to 5,35,601.

Of the total 256 deaths reported on Tuesday, Pune accounted for 53 deaths, followed by 48 deaths in Mumbai and 43 deaths Thane.

As the fatality figure dropped below 50 mark in Mumbai for the third consecutive day, the total Covid-19 toll Mumbai rose by 48 from 6,845 to 6893, while the infected cases increased by 917 to touch a total of 1,25,224.

Apart from fresh deaths reported in Pune, Mumbai and thane, there there were 27 deaths in Kolhapur, 15 deaths in Nashik, 12 in Nagpur, 11 in Palghar, 7 each in Jalgaon and Solapur, 5 each in Ahmednagar and Sangli, 4 in Raigad, 3 in Beed, 2 each in Dhule, Satara, Ratnagiri, Jalna and one death each in Aurangabad, Parbhani, Latur, Osmanabad, Nanded, Buldhana and Wardha. In addition, there was death of one from another state.

Meanwhile, as many as 10088 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 3,68,435. The recovery rate went up to 68.79 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 3.42 per cent.

Capt Deepak Sathe cremated with full State honours

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Mumbaikars bade an emotional farewell to Wing Commander Deepak Sathe (retd) -- who was killed in the ill-fated Dubai-Kozhikode Air India Express flight crash on Friday last, as he was cremated here amid the State honours on Tuesday.

People from the north-eastern suburbs of Mumbai who had lined up on either side of the road and people from the balconies of the housing societies en route paid last respects to Wg Cdr Sathe, as his funeral procession of passed from Nahar Amrit Shakti complex at Chandrivli to Tagore Nagar electric crematorium at Vikhroli, where he was cremated in the presence of family members, defence officials and friends.

Chants of 'Capt. Deepak Sathe Amar Rahe' rent the air, as late Capt Sathe's funeral cavalcade, escorted by the Mumbai Police, proceeded from the Nahar Amrit Shakti complex where Sathes live in Jalvayu Vihar building, on its final journey.

Capt Sathe's body had on Sunday afternoon been flown from Kochi and kept at an Air India facility near Terminal 2 of the Chhatrapati Shivaji international airport for some time before being taken to Bhabha Hospital at Bandra, from where the mortal remains were brought by his sons Shantanu and Dhananjay to the family home at Chandivli on Tuesday morning.

The pilot's father Col. Vasant Sathe (retd) (87) and mother Neela (83), who reside in Nagpur, had reached Mumbai on Monday to have a last glimpse of their son.

HE WAS A LOVING HUSBAND, A CARING FATHER: FAMILY

Mumbai: After the funeral of late Wing Commander Deepak Sathe (retd), his family on Tuesday released a touching tribute in his memory, describing him as a "loving husband and caring father".

"Deepak Sathe was a loving husband and caring father and we are deeply pained by his tragic demise. He was a family man and loved to spend time with family and friends whenever possible. He was a calm, composed, simple, and genuine person who persistently imbued happiness in people around him, his family members Sushma, Shantanu and Dhananjay said.

Covid-19 patient dies awaiting treatment by Kolkata pvt hospital

Kolkata: A 60-year-old female coronavirus patient died in an ambulance outside a private hospital in Kolkata while allegedly awaiting admission as her family failed to deposit in time Rs 3 lakh demanded by the staff.

The incident took place at Desun Hospital on the EM Bypass here on Monday night. The patient had been brought from East Midnapore's Tomluk. The deceased's husband had died of Covid-19 three days ago.

Her family said that when they took the patient to the hospital they were asked to deposit Rs 3 lakh. They said they immediately deposited Rs 80,000 and asked for an hour to arrange the remaining amount. But, they alleged, the hospital authorities categorically told them that doctors would not be able to start treatment unless the full payment was made.

Later, they arranged Rs 2 lakh more and deposited the amount in a bank account, but the patient had died by then in the ambulance. Despite repeated attempts, hospital authorities refused to issue any media statement on the issue.

"Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has clearly given instructions to all private medical fecilities not to delay treatment in such emergencies. This is absolutely uncalled for," Indian Medical Association (IMA) President and Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha MP Shantanu Sen said.

Sen also urged the bereaved family to approach the state medical regulatory commission with a formal complaint for necessary action against the hospital authorities.

In another incident of alleged medical negligence in adjoining Howrah district's Jaiswal hospital, coronavirus positive patient Moumita Ghosh was denied proper care. Ghosh was admitted to the hospital for the past seven day but suddenly developed respiratory problem and asked for oxygen support. She went live on the social media to seek help.

Later, West Bengal Minister Laxmi Ratan Shukla responded to her video appeal and made arrangements to ensure an oxygen cylinder for the patient. *IANS*

Bengaluru Zoo to gift lions to safari

Bengaluru: The Bengaluru Zoo will gift three lions and a lioness. A pair to the Gadag zoo, and two lions to a Shimoga safari, both within the state limits under animal exchange programme earmarking the just celebrated World Lion Day, an official said on Tuesday.

"Bengaluru Bannerghatta Biological Park has decided to gift two male lions -- Dharma and Arjuna to lion and tiger safari Tyavarekoppa in Shimoga, which is 320 km northwest of Bengaluru," said Executive Director Vanashree Vipin Singh.

It will also gift a lion and a lioness -- Nakula and Nirupama to Gadag Zoo which is located 391 km northwest of the city.

According to Singh, the gifts were meant to celebrate the World Lion Day that was celebrated on Monday.

A proposal recommending the exchange is being submitted to the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) in New Delhi for approval.

The biological park has four units -- a zoo, safari, butterfly park and a rescue centre sprawling over 732 hectares of land and accommodates 2,279 animals. The zoo is nestled in the forests of Champakadhama Hills inside the Bannerughatta National Park. *IANS*

Illuminated Sri Krishna Janambhoomi temple wears a deserted look on the occasion of Krishan Janmashtmi, in Mathura onTuesday PTI

Karnataka, Emory varsity to set up immunology centre in B'luru

IANS ■ BENGALURU

Recognising the importance of immunology at a time when the coronavirus pandemic is terrorizing the world, Karnataka government has announced that it will set up an immunology and vaccine research centre in the city in collaboration with renown Emory University from the USA, said a minister on Tuesday.

"Keeping in mind the importance of immunology in the future, the state is very keen to establish an immunology and vaccine research centre in the city in collaboration with the Emory University," said Deputy Chief Minister C.N. Ashwath Narayan.

Narayan held a webinar with Rafi Ahmmad, director of Emory Vaccine Center and discussed the importance of immunology, which is critical to address vaccines, infectious diseases, cancer research and others.

"The results of researches done now in the field of immunology will be the solution to problems of coming days. Hence, investments done in this area are going to fetch fruitful results," told Ahmmad to Narayan in the webinar.

The Emory professional explained that the entire world is pondering about immunology and effective vaccine at this juncture.

According to Narayan, the state government is very keen on finding novel coronavirus diagnostic tests and is looking at the larger benefits of setting the vaccine centre.

"The state has a very robust ecosystem suitable for research and innovation. It needs to be focused on research in the development of vaccines, clinical trials, and translation of research studies to the benefit of the larger society," he said.

He highlighted that Bengaluru houses up to 20 institutes of national eminence which are being engaged in vaccine development activities.

"All these will be integrated and the government is ready to support through policy implementation. The rigid restrictions which were in place earlier with regard to clinical trials are now being relaxed," pointed out Narayan.

Ahmmad said Emory Vaccine Center has developed highly specified and sensitive rapid test for Covid-19 which was adopted by hospitals in Atlanta, Georgia state, USA, where the university is located.

The Emory professional said the university is also engaged in plasma therapy, human molecular antibodies developments and other areas.

Doctor-turned Mizo MLA saves woman's life, helps deliver baby

Aizawl: Mizoram's legislator ZR Thiamsanga proved nothing short of an angel for a pregnant woman amid a medical emergency, as he conducted a caesarean operation on her and helped deliver a healthy baby boy.

Those who know the 62-year-old qualified doctor turned MLA would be hardly surprised, given the fact that he is known for his penchant for extending a helping hand to those in need in the past too.

The Mizo National Front's lawmaker told IANS on Tuesday that both the 39-year-old woman and her newborn were doing fine.

Thiamsanga said that during a visit to coronavirus-affected and quake-hit areas of remote Champhai district on Monday, he came to know that the pregnant woman was bleeding profusely and in a critical condition at the state's Champhai district hospital and rushed there.

""C Lalhmangaihsangi, pregnant with her second child, was bleeding profusely and her condition was critical. As there was no gynaecologist present at the hospital at that time, I performed an emergency caesarean operation and helped deliver a healthy baby boy," Thiamsanga told IANS over phone from Champhai, bordering Myanmar.

The woman hailing from the remote Ngur village could not be move to Aizawl, about 200 km from Champhai, given her condition. "The lone gynaecologist posted at the Champhai hospital too was on leave," he explained.

"Today, I inquired and hospital nurses told me that both the mother and the newborn are healthy and normal," the lawmaker said.

Thiamsanga got his MBBS degree in 1985 and did his doctorate in Medicine in 1995 from the Regional Institute of Medical Science in Imphal in Manipur. He retired as head of department (Obstetrics and Gynaecology) at the Aizawl Civil Hospital in May 2018. Later, he was elected to the Assembly in November 2018 as MNF candidate. *IANS*

Kerala Police beginS probe into cyber attacks on journalists

IANS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Police on Tuesday began a probe into the complaint given by the Kerala Union of Working Journalists after some mediapersons came under cyber attack for posing inconvenient questions to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

State Police Chief Loknath Behra said in a statement that the Hi-tech Enquiry Cell and the Police Cyberdome have started the probe.

For the past few days a journalist couple working in a TV channel and another woman journalist with a different TV channel had come under unprecedented cyber attacks.

The major issue for the attackers seemed to be that these journalists were asking inconvenient questions to Vijayan in particular and the CPI-M in general.

This issue was first taken up by Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chennithala who slammed Vijayan's press secretary P.M. Manoj for taking on the journalists, when he is not supposed to indulge in such acts being a government servant.

When mediapersons raised the issue with Vijayan on Monday night he said he had no knowledge of what had happened and when specifically asked about Manoj, he pointed out that, "Manoj like many of you is also a journalist."

Vehicles stuck in mud after flash-floods triggered by a cloud burst on Dunadni-Bunjawah link road in Kishtwar district of Jammu & Kashmir on Tuesday PTI

As cases surge, so does loot by Agra's pvt hospitals

IANS ■ AGRA

When Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma was told at an official meeting that the private hospitals in Agra were charging more than Rs 15,000 daily for Covid-19 patients, he was taken aback.

Sharma told district officials to adopt appropriate measures to bring down the tariff at par with Lucknow where the daily charges were Rs 6,800.

In the last 10 days there have been numerous complaints against the private nursing homes for overcharging distressed Corona patients and their kin. The bills worked out to more than Rs 1 lakh for a week's stay at the facility. A level-3 nursing home charges around Rs 17,000 a day with ventilator and ICU support while the level-1 charge on an average around Rs 11,000 a day.

These rates are 10X to 12X the tariff fixed by the state government. The nursing home owners say the patients want 'A' class facilities and are willing to pay for it. A section of the society feels no cost is too high for a life saved, a private hospital manager said.

The general perception about government hospitals is negative. "You go with one problem and return with two," a patient who recovered at a private hospital said.

However, the doctors at the district hospital and the SN Medical College Covid hospital vehemently deny the charge. "We are giving high quality services and the recovery rate reflects this. SN Medical College is fully equipped with latest gadgetry and facilities to take up any challenge. Don't forget a number of critical cases are referred to us here by the private nursing homes," a senior government doctor claimed.

The IMA meanwhile, has offered a Rs 600 daily package for those in home quarantine. The expenses on medicines and equipment are separate but consultations by the specialists and frequent monitoring is included in the fees, Dr Sanjay Chaturvedi, secretary IMA told IANS.

Meanwhile, 33 fresh cases were reported in the past 24 hours taking the Agra tally to 2,136. The number of active cases has increased to 318, while the number of recovered stands at 1,717. So far, 68,149 samples have been tested.

In Mathura 33 new cases were reported, over a dozen from the ISKCON temple complex. Mainpuri reported 22, Etah 21, Firozabad 22 and Kasganj 13.

District authorities in Mathura clarified that outsiders would not be allowed to enter the Sri Krishna shrines in Braj Mandal. Rituals connected with the Sri Krishna Janamashtmi will be streamed live for the benefit of the devotees.

"Like Raksha Bandhan, Janamashtmi festival will also be on a low key, the fervour is clearly missing," a 'Panda' of the Vishram Ghat said.

"Vrindavan lanes are deserted, even the simians are distressed, the morale is low, may be Sri Krishna will dispel the clouds of gloom," hoped Jagan Nath Poddar, convener of Braj-Vrindavan Alliance.

So far the trend continues to remain alarming. For the local administration, the new worry is the spread of Dengue and Malaria. The health department of the municipal corporation has stepped up sanitisation and cleaning work. People have been told to ensure there was no stored water around, an official of the District Malaria office said.

RAIPUR | WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 12, 2020

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Nepal at it again

After Lord Ram, KP Oli wants to appropriate the legacy of Buddha in his continuing political tirade against India

That China has made inroads in our neighbourhood by debt-trapping our allies and is now muscling in politically to re-configure their equations with us isn't surprising. So far, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have worked out a "trade with China" and "historical ties with India" strategy to play the two Asian majors against each other and extract concessional gains in the process. But looks like Nepal wants to obliterate the civilisational ties and shared heritage it has had with India, overturn history and claim its independent standing, which is almost impossible given the origins of the sub-continent. In fact, Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli is now appropriating shared cultural icons of Nepalese origin and claiming an intellectual property right over their legacy. First, he tried to own Lord Ram, saying he was born not at Ayodhya but in Nepal. Nobody took him seriously in the absence of any historical evidence. Now he is trying to reclaim Buddha as distinctly Nepalese. The controversy followed External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's speech at CII where he referred to Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Buddha as two great Indians. Various Nepalese leaders, including Opposition leaders and former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, reacted immediately, terming the reference "objectionable." The official statement laid stress on historical and archaeological evidence, which prove that Buddha was born in Lumbini, Nepal. India though was quick to put the lid on the row, saying that no one could doubt that Buddha was born in Lumbini but the emphasis was on the Buddhist heritage shared by the two countries. India has never attempted a cultural takeover of Buddha at any time, religiously attributing his birth to Nepal. Similarly, Nepal cannot deny the fact that he spent most of his life in India, attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, delivering key sermons at Sarnath and ultimately leaving the earthly world at Kushinagar. Besides, someone like Lord Ram and Buddha cannot be defined by their geography but by their philosophy that the whole world has adopted. In that sense, anybody, anywhere can quote them as inspiration. Though, Lord Buddha made India his *karmabhoomi*, travelling through its length and breadth and preaching the true *dharma*, his followers and practitioners keep him fervently alive in most countries in Southeast Asia compared to India. Does that mean we can claim to be the fountainhead of the bigness of his vision? By that logic, poet laureate Rabindranath Tagore is as much ours as he is of Bangladesh, whose national anthem he wrote and where he spent much time. Having been a Hindu kingdom and given its contiguity with India, Nepal has had the strongest bond with us in terms of shared history, culture and people-to-people contacts. This commonality has been one of the reasons for the open borders between both countries. So now that Oli is putting up cultural barriers, looks like he is determined to eliminate any interdependent associations with India and is decidedly hawkish about China, willing to be its vassal State. In fact, China has upped its cultural diplomacy, too, in Nepal, helping it rebuild old temple complexes and shrines that were damaged in the earthquake of 2015.

Oli's latest tirade against India follows the ongoing cartographic war, where he questioned Indian claims around the Lipulekh Pass based on varied interpretations of British era maps. This despite the fact that the pass is an accepted Indian gateway, according to a 1954 treaty signed between India and China. Although the new road near it, built by New Delhi to facilitate pilgrim traffic to Kailash Mansarovar, is now one of the quickest links between Delhi and the Tibetan plateau, China had not objected to it. In fact, it recognised India's sovereignty by agreeing to expand trade through the pass. But overriding such precedents, Nepal released a revised map showing Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh and Kalapani under its territory. No political party opposed the resolution for reclamation. Yet India has been in possession of this territory for at least 60 years. Even the new road to Lipulekh does not challenge that status quo. Nepal says that the basis for demarcation, the Kali river, originates from a stream at Limpiyadhura, north-west of Lipulekh. Thus Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh are actually on its eastern bank and qualify to be its land. New Delhi has countered this, saying that Kali originates in the springs well below the pass and that while the old map does not demarcate the area north of these springs, administrative and revenue records of the 19th century show that Kalapani was on the Indian side and should be a part of Uttarakhand. China, as in Doklam, has taken advantage of the trijunction area to complicate the territorial confusion and push India backward. But if Nepal has gone so maximalist and nationalist, despite sharing Hindu origins and, therefore, more naturally inclined to the Narendra Modi regime, it means that China has an iron grip on it. India's over-dependence on historical, spiritual and geographical connect as a leitmotif of diplomacy is being tested severely. And though we are investing in bilateral relations on more favourable terms and pushing COVID-19 aid, we can't beat the Chinese, who make up over 90 per cent of Nepal's FDI and are moulding it as their frontier proxy warrior.

Muted festivities

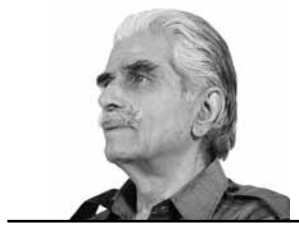
The IPL might be taking place later this year but it is almost certain to be a less extravagant affair than before

No matter what your opinion about Lalit Modi, the fact of the matter is that with the Indian Premier League (IPL), he managed to create a globally competitive and recognised sports league. So much so that the IPL is the world's top franchise-based cricket league and one must keep in mind that China, for all its success in creating brands, has failed in creating a global sports league. That said, as sports have been ravaged, thanks to China's gift to the world, the Coronavirus, the IPL also fell a victim, missing its scheduled slot at the start of the Indian summer. But now sports — from Formula 1 to football — have returned to television screens and spectator-less formats. Even cricket has restarted in England in the safety of a "bio bubble." So the IPL is looking at playing its season in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this winter, or at least has plans of playing.

The UAE, thanks to its relatively compact size that eliminates the need for connecting flights, its close location to India — being away by just 90 minutes of flying time — and large availability of remote resorts, where teams can be sequestered between matches, as well as more than enough cricket stadia, should make the IPL pretty easy to manage. However, whether the IPL will be played with the audience in attendance remains to be seen. The UAE — despite its economy being ravaged by the pandemic and sending hundreds of thousands of expatriate workers from India home — still has a huge base of workers from the sub-continent. Tens of thousands of fans can easily be found to fill the stadia in the UAE replete with their IPL uniforms and tribal loyalties. But will the sponsors bite? The huge player salaries guaranteed by television revenues and on-field sponsors might make things difficult for the teams. Already, the principal sponsor of the IPL has withdrawn because of the ongoing anti-Chinese sentiment in India. While Baba Ramdev-promoted Patanjali wants to sponsor the IPL, will the brash cricket league want to associate with it? Teams will also find it difficult to find jersey sponsors and broadcasters might find it equally difficult to get sponsors on television broadcasts. Conversely, the IPL could be the firestarter the Indian market really needs. Maybe it will drive consumerism again and awaken our economy, which was waylaid by a poisonous scale of the Chinese dragon. The cricket bat can be more effective in beating back the dragon than a French fighter plane or five.

The border challenge

The PLA has blemished the Modi Govt's muscular image created in the wake of Uri and Balakot responses against Pakistan, which won it an overwhelming political mandate



ASHOK K **MEHTA**

One's blood boils watching the way India and its Army are being pushed around by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Roughing up soldiers, intruding/transgressing on the Indian side of the LAC at will and violating border protocols have become second nature to the PLA. And yet, many citizens keep harping that when it comes to joining the battle, Indians are six feet tall. The PLA has no experience to fight in high-altitude terrain; whereas Indian soldiers have been deployed in Sikkim, Ladakh and Siachen for decades. China lacks the regimental system of the Indian infantry and is composed mostly of short-term conscripts compared to India's wholly volunteer Army. The PLA has not fought a war since 1979. Neither have the Indian troops since the skirmish they fought "on our side of the Line of Control (LoC)" against a mixed bag of Pakistani frontier militia and hard-core terrorists at Kargil.

Because the PLA has done a sort of Kargil in east Ladakh, loud thinking can be heard about launching a land-air offensive *a la* Kargil, confined to our side of the LAC to vacate aggression in Ladakh. This comparison has many holes: It likens LAC to LoC, which is delineated with the maps exchanged in 1972 between the two militaries. The LoC is violated regularly by infiltration, cross-border firing and is a hot border. Not a shot has been fired along the LAC since 1975 and a no-shooting protocol exists. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has not carried out any joint military exercises for air support of ground troops along the LAC. Border protocols debar the use of force in settling the boundary question, which includes the LAC.

And yet, rogue actions of the PLA have continued periodically like the intrusions at Sumdorongchu (1988), Depsang (2013), Chumar (2014), Doklam (2017) and now across east Ladakh, stretching over 250 km. They have all gone unpunished. Instead, PLA raw recruits managed to thrash outnumbered Indian soldiers near the Pangong lake on May 17/18 last year so badly that 72 soldiers had to be hospitalised. PLA helicopters chased away an Indian helicopter in the same area around the same time. In short, India has been at the receiving end of PLA depredations except possibly at Galwan. The mystery is, why have Indian troops never done a tit-for-tat counter intrusion?

That the disengagement and de-escalation process has ended in utter failure was recognised by the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) on its website earlier this month but the admission was pulled down within 48 hours. Indian forces have been left with buffer zones at friction points where they have had to withdraw and dismantle their fortifications from the Indian side of the LAC. Worse, the PLA is not permitting these soldiers to exercise their patrolling rights upto established patrolling points, which when connected, roughly align with the Indian LAC.

Still worse is the stubborn refusal of the PLA and its commanders to even discuss the 18-km deep massive intrusion made in Depsang, a repeat of the intrusion in April 2013, from where the PLA withdrew after three months. Crowning the multiple intrusions is the PLA's construction of infrastructure on the Indian side of the LAC. Violative of border patrols, PLA activities are nothing short of acts of war.

Not only has China unilaterally changed the status quo but it has also shifted the LAC several kilometres westwards, attempting to conform to its 1960 claim line. It has also annexed several hundred kilometres of Indian territory. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's in-denial statement of June 19 — "neither has anyone intruded across our border nor is anyone intruding" — has become the great enabler of PLA intrusions. Taking down the belated acceptance of intrusions on the MoD website is supportive of Beijing's actions.

China is rejoicing that Modi has kept the Wuhan spirit alive whereas it is an abysmal failure of summitry. By virtually condoning the Galwan clash, Modi seems to have done the reverse of Nehru's cavalier orders to throw out the Chinese from the Thagla ridge.

The joy and excitement exuded by Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh over the arrival of five Rafales reflected the dire and optionless situation at the LAC. Given the phenomenal spike in the COVID-19 pandemic in India, a debilitating decline in the economy and the military overstretched on two fronts, a Kargil-like response to multiple intrusions will lead to a war that India cannot afford.

India's continental strategy (if there is one) for border management has come unstuck because the PLA has changed the rules of engagement, both on the ground and at the negotiating table. Five rounds of military commander talks, four rounds of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) dialogue and conversations between high ranking Special Representatives on border talks have hit a *cul-de-sac*.

With wholesale intrusions in early May, China delivered an initial *fait accompli*. This was followed by a Chinese-scripted DPP in July end that made cosmetic disengagement to ease tensions at friction points but was tantamount to quarantining Indian soldiers on their own territory. The PLA, on the other hand, dug down like it did at Doklam after disengagement and nobly proclaimed that disengagement is completed. This new *fait accompli* has imposed on India a new status quo without a hint of restoring the May 5 situation.

The Modi Government can pretend it is business as usual: Take down belated acceptance of intrusions from the MoD website, talk tough the virtues of Rafales and most of all, use diversionary strategies to focus on its spectacular political achievements like the grand ceremony at the Ram temple on the same day it erased Article 370 at Jammu & Kashmir a year ago.

In deference to Chinese sentiment, the new status of Ladakh has been played down. The setback at LAC has almost disappeared from TV and media, reflecting India's acceptance of aggression by the PLA. The tragedy playing out along the LAC for 10 weeks, that was essentially concealed by the Government, is a reminder of India's colossal intelligence and operational failures.

It has blemished the Modi Government's tough muscular image created in the wake of Uri and Balakot responses against Pakistan, which won it an overwhelming political mandate. The Chinese PLA has changed that perception. That, too, 60 years after the 1962 war when China gave India a dressing down and withdrew unilaterally, vacating areas it now covets: Tawang and East Ladakh. India's failure to shape and maintain a deterrent has led to the loss of face.

Three days from now, on August 15, Independence Day, Modi will recount his Government's achievements, including the handling of the pandemic. How he will frame the situation along the LAC, where the Chinese PLA has altered status quo and annexed Indian territory, will be worth watching out for.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander IPKF South, Sri Lanka and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff.)

SOUNDBITE

I think there should be dialogue, decency and a *Lakshman Rekha* in public discourse and I haven't crossed that line in the 20 years of my political career.

Congress leader
—Sachin Pilot

Theatres would always overlook small films. That problem is solved now. Everything is equal on the OTT platforms. Not getting a show was a big problem.

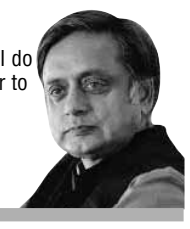
Actor
—Radhika Madan

I'm much more inclined to do it (G-7 meeting) sometime after the election. … We could do it through teleconference or we could do it through a meeting.

US President
—Donald Trump

I welcomed Sonia*ji*'s appointment as interim president last year. But I do believe it is unfair to her to expect her to carry this burden indefinitely.

Congress leader
—Shashi Tharoor



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ill-conceived decision

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "*Atmanirbhar raksha*" (August 11). There is nothing wrong with the Government's call for "vocal for local" but actions such as those taken by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to impose import embargo on 101 items are ill-conceived and may prove to be detrimental in the long run. Instead, the Government should have come out with a clear picture as to how various sectors could reduce dependence on imports so that we gradually start producing world-class products in the country. Such a hasty decision will send the wrong signal to both our domestic suppliers as well as hostile neighbours. Our defence preparedness, too, is not upto the mark.

Bal Govind
Noida

Big boost to agriculture

This refers to the establishment of a ₹1 lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to enhance post-harvest infrastructure in the country. The creation of a comprehensive post-harvest infrastructure can be a game-changer. As per Government data, 16 per cent of the fruits and vegetables and up to 10 per cent of cereals, oilseeds and pulses are wasted in the country due to inadequate storage and warehousing facilities. Most of the existing storage in the country is not owned by farmers. This also means that they are forced to sell their entire farm output at one go after the harvest is over and when the prices are low. Since the AIF is trying to rope in farmers' producers organisations (FPOs) to build such infrastructure, it will hopefully also address this asymmetry and allow growers to dispose of their produce in a phased manner and avail better returns. This will go a long way in increasing the bargaining power of Indian farmers.

However, the economic challenge of boosting growth and incomes cannot be missed. Even before the pandemic struck, the economy was in a bad shape. Disruption caused due to the pandemic made matters worse. If the situation does not revive, it is unlikely that FPOs and other intended beneficiaries of AIF loans will be enthusiastic about committing to such investments. Economic experts say that the economy needs a massive fiscal push to boost economic sentiment as the consumer confidence has plummeted to an all-time low. The actual loan disbursal from AIF early this week was just ₹1,000 crore. This is yet another signal that the actual fiscal boost to the economy doesn't match the scale of the Government's big ticket announcement. This needs to change.

N Sadhasiva Reddy
Bengaluru

Breather for Congress

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Needed, full-time chief" (August 11). In a belated yet pragmatic move, the Congress leadership has succeeded in averting a fall of its Government in Rajasthan. Concerted efforts by the Gandhi siblings have yielded results. This new scenario has paved the way for truce, howsoever fragile, between Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot. Pilot is ready for an unconditional truce and Gehlot has agreed to follow the leadership line. Hopefully, the Rajasthan Assembly session scheduled for August 14 will pass without any hurdle. Grievances flagged by the Pilot camp should be addressed. Rahul Gandhi must now take charge and call for elections to the Congress Working Committee without any delay. Sans a permanent head, the grand old party looks like a rudderless boat.

Azhar A Khan
Rampur

Lessons from Beirut

Sir — The deadly explosion in Beirut is another instance of conscience-keepers of safety abdicating their responsibility. Military ammunition depots, inflammable gas and fuel stations in the energy sector and nuclear facilities exclusively rely on meticulous standard operating procedure manuals.

The presence of 740 tonnes of ammonium nitrate at Chennai port is now suddenly remembered even as some consignments are missing. Universally, we seem to be short of inspired administrators with a grip on their jobs. It is such drift that causes mishaps. The accident in Beirut is a reminder that despite the strict regulation of hazardous substances internationally, the risks remain.

R Narayanan
Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRSTCOLUMN

Modi the messiah of Hindus?

The BJP and the RSS are now convinced that the dream of Ram Rajya is possible with majoritarian dominance

KALYANI **SHANKAR**

Just like August 15, i.e. Independence Day and August 9, which is Quit India Day, a third date, August 5, 2020, has become a historic date for the BJP. While launching the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "history was written today in golden letters." It is indeed a twin triumph for Modi that the colourful *bhoomi pujan* ceremony came on the first anniversary of the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The Ram temple at Ayodhya and the abrogation of Article 370 were two divisive issues for the country. But for Modi it was a matter of fulfilling the BJP's promises to its core Hindu voters. At the *bhoomi pujan* Modi drew a parallel with the freedom movement and by this he has placed freedom from cultural subjugation on a par with the political freedom of India. "Just as August 15 symbolises untiring tenacity, millions of sacrifices and the fervent desire for freedom... similarly this day reminds (one) of the sacrifices made by several generations... for the Ram temple," Modi said and claimed that the "wait of centuries" for the Ram temple had ended. In fact, August 5 marks the demise of what the Congress and the other Opposition parties call "secularism."

The *bhoomi pujan* ceremony for the Ram temple is the beginning of a new cultural nationalism and dominance that was the dream of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for decades. The BJP and the RSS have rejected the idea of composite nationalism and favoured cultural nationalism. The BJP has been agitating for its core agenda since its inception in 1980 though its critics call it a majoritarian agenda. The party is jubilant as in the first year of Modi's second term, he managed to deliver two of the items on the agenda. He was able to do so because of three reasons. The first is that the BJP got a big mandate in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The second is the weak Opposition which has given a free hand to the saffron party. The third is that the BJP does not need to woo the Muslim votebank as the majority is with them.

Let us take Kashmir first. It was on August 5, 2019 that the State was bifurcated and Article 370, that gave special status to J&K, was abrogated. The decision attracted international attention and criticism and even after one year, things are yet to become normal. The entire political class has been under arrest at one time or the other in J&K and even one year down the line, some of the leaders, including former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, remain incarcerated. There is a political vacuum on the one hand and an incapacitated political class on the other. As a result, there has been no political activity in J&K for more than a year. Many demand that the detained leaders should be freed and elections should be held. Since the PDP–BJP Government fell in 2018, J&K has been under continuous Governor's Rule. Former Minister Manoj Sinha took over as the Lieutenant-Governor last week, the second in a year. Militancy in J&K has reduced to an extent but not totally snuffed out. The people of Kashmir have been facing a double whammy, the Coronavirus-induced lockdown on one side and curfew on the other, for the past many months. The promised jobs are nowhere on the horizon and the industry, including shawl, carpet, dryfruit, fruit exports and so on have suffered. Tourism is dead. Communication has broken down and schools and colleges are closed.

In this regard Manoj Sinha's statement after the oath-taking ceremony is significant. "There should be peace and stability in Jammu and Kashmir. The situation of uncertainty should end, terrorism should end. Achieving all this along with accelerated development will be our aim, our mission." The challenges before him include delimitation, Assembly elections, resuming political dialogue and restoring full statehood. The trust deficit should also be bridged and there should be a reconnect with the people.

As for the Ram temple, the Supreme Court's verdict has strengthened the Government's hand. With the law on its side and the Muslims reconciled to the fact that they will have a mosque on the land given to them elsewhere, not much problems are expected. The temple trust would have the support of the State and the Central Government as both are ruled by the same party. Money would be no problem as donations are pouring in. The big temple would be ready by 2023, perhaps just before the 2024 elections. BJP leader Vinay Katiyar has already claimed that major temples at Kashi and Mathura are on the BJP's agenda. Now only the Uniform Civil Code remains on the BJP's core agenda. The Modi Government might think of bringing a law soon when the pandemic is behind us. Along with that, there could also be some measures for population regulation. The BJP and the RSS are now convinced that the dream of Ram Rajya is possible with majoritarian dominance. Modi is their chosen messiah now.

(*The writer is a senior journalist*)

POINT**COUNTER**POINT

THE EIA 2020 DRAFT IS A DISASTER. IT WILL SILENCE THE VOICE OF COMMUNITIES WHO WILL BE IMPACTED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IT UNLEASHES.
—CONGRESS LEADER
RAHUL GANDHI

WE HAVE GOT THOUSANDS OF SUGGESTIONS WHICH WE WELCOME. WE WILL CONSIDER THEM. THEN TAKE A CALL AND COME OUT WITH A FINAL (EIA) DRAFT.
—UNION ENVIRONMENT MINISTER
PRAKASH JAVADEKAR

Not a NEET situation

The International Youth Day is meant to reflect on one of the most serious issues concerning our young people and that is their growing number without employment, education and training

BALWANT **MEHTA** | SIMI **MEHTA** | ARJUN **KUMAR**

Each year, August 12 is celebrated as the International Youth Day (IYD) to raise awareness about the challenges and problems being faced by the young people of today. IYD, which was first observed in 2000, aims to endorse ways to engage the youth and help them participate in affirmative contributions to society. The theme of the IYD this year is 'Youth Engagement for Global Action.' It seeks to highlight the ways in which young people at the local, national and global level are enriching national and multilateral institutions and processes, as well as draw lessons on how to enhance their representation and engagement in formal institutional politics.

As per the United Nations (UN) population prospects, the youth segment (15-29 years) globally stands at 1.8 billion now. Out of the total number of young people in the world, every fifth person (20 per cent) resides in India (366 million) reflecting the importance of this segment in the country. The youth are faced with many challenges and one of the most serious issues concerning them is the growing number of idle youngsters or those who are not in employment, education and training (NEET in short).

NEET youth tend to experience a varying degree of social and economic marginalisation and are more likely to be left behind in mainstream development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030, adopted by the UN in 2015, also set the agenda specifically for target 8.6, which calls for the proportion of youth with NEET status to be substantially reduced in the next 15 years.

The Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020 noted that there has been a continued decline in the participation of young people in the labour force across countries. The population of the youth has increased from one billion to 1.3 billion in the period between 1999 and 2019, but the number of young people engaged in the workforce (either employed or unemployed) has seen a decrease from 568 million to 497 million during the same period.

The most disturbing pattern globally is that one young person out of every five (20 per cent) and 30 per cent of the girls and 13 per cent of the boys among them— those aged between 15 and 24 (which is the international definition of the youth) — are currently classified as NEET. This means that a whopping 267 million out of 1.3 billion young people worldwide are neither gaining experience in the labour market, nor receiving income from work or enhancing their education and skills. This suggests that their labour remains under-utilised.

India, at present, is home to the largest population of youth in the world. The National Youth Policy of India, 2014 defines them as people belonging in the age group of 15-29 years. According to the census data for 2011, the youth constitute 28 per cent of the total population in the country and contribute to over 34 per cent of India's national income. The latest estimates show that they comprise around 27 per cent of the total Indian population of 1.3 billion.

However, a major positive development has been their growing enrolment in the secondary and tertiary-level of education, which has resulted in better-skilled employees and proliferation of decent employment in many countries around the world.

> WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A LARGER YOUTH POPULATION FOR THE NEXT TWO DECADES, WHICH POSES AN IMMINENT CHALLENGE AS WELL — OF LEVERAGING THE POTENTIAL OF THE ABUNDANT HUMAN RESOURCE. THE SPIRAL OF THE UNEMPLOYED IS POSING SOME SERIOUS QUESTIONS ON HIGHER EDUCATION, SKILL DEVELOPMENT, DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND AND INDIA'S FUTURE. THERE ARE OTHER CONCERNS ABOUT QUALITY OF JOBS, DECENT WORKPLACES, UPWARD MOBILITY, WAGES, ASPIRATIONS, COMPETITION ACCRUED BY LIMITED SUPPLY OF NEW JOBS, CONTRACTUAL NATURE OF JOBS, MENTAL HEALTH, OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FOSTERING INNOVATIONS AMONG THE YOUNG MINDS

However, the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for 2017-18 reported a significant increase in unemployment rates for the young segment of the population. A more serious concern is the increasing joblessness among educated youth (15-29 years), which went up nearly three times from 6.1 per cent in 2011-12 to 17.8 per cent in 2017-18. In particular, technical degree holders have been noted to fare the worst with their unemployment rate being pegged at 37.3 per cent, closely followed by those who are post-graduates and above (36.2 per cent), graduates (35.2 per cent), and youth with formal vocational training (33 per cent).

For young women, the unemployment situation is graver in terms of labour force participation as well as unemployment. Women are moving out of the workforce in greater numbers, but among those who remain, unemployment rates are higher than those among men. This holds true even for women who are educated or have received training, and this trend has worsened during the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

One would imagine that the young population with "industry-relevant" formal vocational training would have better job prospects in India. But only 1.8 per cent of the population reported receiving formal vocational/technical training in 2017-18. Young people comprised more than half of those who received formal vocational/technical training, which is in sharp contrast to the 50-80 per cent participation in developed nations.

Around 33 per cent of the formally-trained youngsters were unemployed in 2017-18. Nearly a third of trained young men and more than a third of trained young women were unemployed. Among those who did not receive such training, 62.3 per cent were out of the workforce.

Further, the growing number of NEET is also posing a serious challenge, as it has increased from 70 million in 2004-05 to 116 million in 2017-18. The Government has increasingly been wary of this and has taken steps to deal with this growing challenge. In recent years, it has launched the "Skill India" campaign, which includes an array of initiatives under its purview to bridge the gap between lack of skill training and joblessness. A key initiative under the campaign is the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme and so on.

The PMKVY was envisioned to impart employable skills and help the youth in securing better livelihoods. Although it intends to provide training free of cost, most of the youth who have received formal training have had to personally arrange the fees. The PLFS 2017-18 data shows that only 16 per cent of the youth who received formal training were funded by the Government. Around 73 per cent of the youth underwent full-time training. The coaching period for more than half of the youth exceeded a year and about 30 per cent of them underwent training for more than two years.

However, it was apparent as early as 2016 that there were several issues with the initiative, when a Government-appointed committee to rationalise Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) and improve Skill India, led by Sharda Prasad, found that the programme's targets were too ambitious. Additionally, it was discovered that the spending of the funds allocated for the programme was not subject to adequate monitoring mechanisms. On the whole, most of the youth in the country still remain outside the ambit of formal training and many of those who are able to personally finance themselves in order to undergo months of vocational training, remain jobless. The subsequent decline in budgetary allocations for PMKVY is an indicator that the Government itself is not convinced about its working.

In sum, as argued by economists and researchers, if the youth are properly skilled and absorbed in the labour market, they can contribute to higher economic growth of the country. We are going to have a larger youth population for the next two decades, which poses an imminent challenge as well — of leveraging the potential of the abundant human resource. The spiral of the unemployed is posing some serious questions on higher education, skill development, demographic dividend and India's future. There are other concerns about quality of jobs, decent workplaces, upward mobility, wages, aspirations, competition accrued by limited supply of new jobs, contractual nature of jobs, mental health, opportunities for entrepreneurship and fostering innovations among the young minds. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as the country is moving towards the vision of a new India and an *Atmanirbhar Bharat* (self-reliant India), we need to prioritise the aspirations of the young population for inculcating and strengthening their *atma vishwas* (confidence).

(*Balwant is Research Director, IMPRI and Senior Fellow, IHD; Simi is CEO and Editorial Director and Kumar is Director, IMPRI*)

UP B.Ed 2020 JEE a benchmark in many ways

It is an example for others to emulate, right from the selection of centres to logistics. It shows how fair, safe examinations can be held even in these testing times

MONIKA S **GARG**

Uttar Pradesh (UP) organises a Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for B.Ed. every year, where students compete for almost two lakh seats. Conducting it this year was a challenge in more ways than one. The State had received 4.31 lakh applications for the examination that was initially scheduled for April 8 but got postponed thrice in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and was finally held on August 9.

Last year, it was conducted in only 15 districts with 60 to 130 centres per district. This year there were the twin targets of least movement and ample social distancing. Hence it was decided to host the entrance test in all districts indicated by the candidates. The number of districts was increased to 50 and later to 73. To reduce the number of students congregating in one place, the strength of candidates allotted to a centre was halved, as compared to earlier years. Thus, the number of centres also increased proportionately. Special care was taken to ensure that women and *divyang* candidates were allotted the district of their choice, while other candidates were accommodated at or near their first place of preference.

In the past, B.Ed entrance tests were conducted by the nominated university with the help of other State universities while the Department of Higher Education played a negligible role. This year, the nominated university, Lucknow University, had sought the department's help due to the special circumstances arising out of COVID-19. Ensuring compliance with the directive of the Chief Minister to ensure that there were no incidents of copying or other malpractices during the examination was the department's biggest challenge. This required a marked departure from established practices and it was not easy to change the ways of the management accustomed to working in a particular fashion.

Formerly, 50-60 per cent of the centres were in private institutes and there was a suspicion of malpractices in some of them. To check the menace of cheating, it was decided that examination centres would be set up only in Government and Government-aided institutions. This turned out to be a daunting task. A screening committee was constituted in each district, comprising the district administration, the Secondary Education and Higher Education Departments and a coordinator from Lucknow University. Their task was to identify potential examination centres in the district, including State and Central universities, degree and intermediate colleges, engineering colleges, ITIs, polytechnics and even Government schools. Nevertheless, this was not sufficient. There was so much resistance to change that when requests and persuasions failed to yield results, the organising team ultimately had to be convinced by those at the highest level.

The Deputy Chief Minister and Chief Secretary held a special video conference with the District Magistrates and finally, after a meticulous exercise, success was achieved and 1,089 centres were identified.

The mammoth task of organising the centres, informing the students and mobilising the district administration was done through virtual meetings over the next month. Centres had to be changed because of new containment zones and floods in a few districts. Care was taken to ensure that the candidates did not bear the brunt of any of this and were kept updated through e-mails and SMS. Battling time constraints and infection risks, a programme for training invigilators and superintendents was designed. They were educated in the best practices for infection prevention as well as new anti-cheating measures. The optimum use of technology was witnessed at all levels during the crisis.

Ensuring the safety and health of candidates and staff was the highest priority and adequate monetary allocation was made for sanitisation of each centre — a minimum of ₹4,000 plus an additional ₹20 per candidate if the number surpassed 200 at any centre.

Face masks and sanitisers were provided free of cost. Thermal scanners were used and proper social distance was maintained in and outside the centres. Lucknow University adopted an innovative method for taking the thumb impressions of the students. Instead of the routine common ink pad, an individual disposable ink strip, specially made for the JEE, was given to each student for the purpose.

On the day of the examination, static magistrates and flying squads were deployed and an effective face-detection system was used. The technology uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to collect information of the candidate's face from 27 points and matches him/her with the profile photo on 13 indicators including hair, ears, spectacles and so on. Each candidate's biometric picture was taken on special phones with this app. Other mobile phones and communicating devices were not allowed inside the centre. CCTV cameras that had been specially-installed in each examination centre were continuously monitored through live webcasting at the university's command centre, having 100 screens.

Before the examination was held, there were live debates in newsrooms and drawing rooms on whether this exam should be conducted at all. People argued that admissions to B.Ed could be made based on marks obtained in the final year of college itself and that this test could be done away with in view of the need for safety. However, the fact remains that this would be unfair to all stakeholders as final year exams are not standardised across universities.

Additionally, marking is often done on a bell curve based on the student pool of that university. Thus, the top few students from each university are expected to score higher, irrespective of how they compare with students across the State. Thus, a JEE was conceived years ago. Denying this opportunity to a student body that has already suffered academically due to the Corona crisis would have been remiss.

The option of holding the test online this year was given due consideration, but the digital divide across the State and access issues, especially for the vulnerable sections, weighed against it.

Since this is a prestigious course with fierce competition, it was essential to give a fair and uniform opportunity to all. The result will be declared on September 5 and the new session will commence in October-November. Conducting this exam was an experience worth sharing. It showcased the sensitivity and caution of the State Government and set the trend for holding competitive exams during the outbreak. It is an example for others to emulate, right from the selection of centres to logistics. It shows how fair, safe examinations can be held, even in these testing times.

(*The writer is Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education Department, UP*)

US-TALIBAN DEAL

'Attacks on freed prisoners will jeopardise peace talks'

Islamabad: Ahead of an upcoming release of Taliban detainees held in Afghan prisons, the insurgent group warned the Government in Kabul on Tuesday against any attacks on those released, saying such incidents would jeopardise the peace talks.

A Taliban spokesman told The Associated Press there have been at least 11 such attacks in the past several months — instances when freed Taliban figures were killed, harassed and re-arrested by government forces.

Kabul officials denied unwarranted attacks on freed Taliban. The prisoner release is part of a deal the insurgents signed with the United States earlier this year. A final 400 Taliban prisoners remain in government prisons.

Over the weekend in Kabul, an Afghan traditional council, known as the Loya Jirga, agreed to free the final 400 imprisoned Taliban, paving the way for an early start to negotiations between Afghanistan's warring sides.

The council agreed to an " immediate" release of Taliban prisoners but by Tuesday, they had not been freed. Negotiations between Kabul's political leadership and the Taliban are expected to begin within weeks — and will be held in the Mideast state of Qatar, where the Taliban maintain a political office. The Taliban said the talks could begin within a week of the final prisoner releases.

Taliban political spokesman Suhail Shaheen warned that attacks on newly freed prisoners will drive them back to the battlefield despite orders from their leaders " to stay at home, with their families." Attacks on their homes will " make it impossible for them to stay in their homes," Shaheen said. " Such incidents have happened that they have been re-arrested and also killed."

In recent months, both sides have freed prisoners in line with the deal the Taliban signed with Washington on February 29 to bring an end to decades of war. The government was to free 5,000 — and has already released all but the last 400. The Taliban freed the 1,000 members of the government forces and Afghan officials they had held captive. ***AP***

Malaysia's former Finance Min, wife charged with graft

Penang (Malaysia): Malaysia's former finance minister accused the government of taking political vengeance on Tuesday after a third graft charge was filed against him and his wife was charged with money laundering.

Lim Guan Eng was part of a reformist Government ousted in March and the new Government under Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin is supported by graft-tainted parties defeated in the 2018 general election.

At a news conference after his court hearing, Lim was visibly upset as he told reporters that Muhyiddin's government had targeted his family to break his spirit.

" They are caught in the crossfire. This is completely excessive, just too much. Go for me but leave my family alone," Lim said.

His wife, Betty Chew, was more emotional as she slammed as frivolous and baseless the charges against them, calling it " cruel and terrible" .

Lim, 59, pleaded not guilty to abusing his position as chief minister of Penang state to obtain gratification for his wife related to a workers' dormitory project.

Chew pleaded not guilty to three charges of receiving 372,009 ringgit ($88,584) in unlawful proceeds linked to the same project. A business acquaintance of Chew was also charged with abetting Lim.

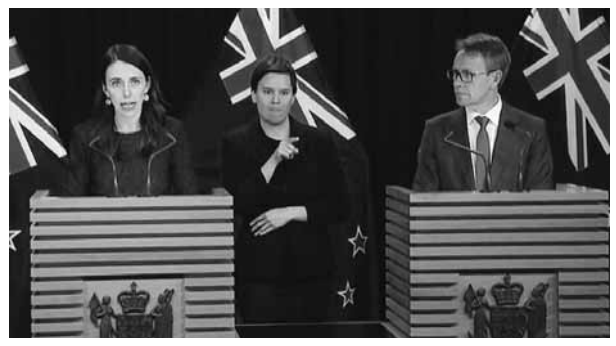
Chew is a lawyer, and Lim said the money was her legal fees. He was earlier charged with soliciting bribe and abusing his power related to a $1.5 billion undersea tunnel project.

Both projects were approved during Lim's tenure as Penang chief minister from 2008-2018, before he became Malaysia's finance minister.

Muhyiddin's Malay-centric government has only a thin two-seat majority in Parliament. Some political observers said Lim's prosecution could indicate a possibility of early elections, which are not due until 2023.

Rights groups have voiced concerns over his government's clampdown on dissent and media independence, with journalists and media groups being investigated. ***AP***

Coronavirus breaks out again in New Zealand after 102 days



New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield attend a news conference in Wellington, New Zealand on Tuesday AP

Wellington: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Tuesday said authorities have found four cases of the coronavirus in one Auckland household from an unknown source, the first reported cases of local transmission in the country in 102 days.

Ardern said Auckland, the nation's largest city, will be moved to Alert Level 3 from midday Wednesday through midnight Friday, meaning that people will be asked to stay at home, while bars and many other businesses will be closed.

" These three days will give us time to assess the situation, gather information, make sure we have widespread contact tracing so we can find out more about how this case arose and make decisions about how to respond to it once we have further information," Ardern said at a hastily called news conference late Tuesday.

"I know that this information will be very difficult to receive," Ardern said. " We had all hoped not to find ourselves in this position again. But we had also prepared for it. And as a team, we have also been here before."

She said that traveling into Auckland will be banned unless people live there and are traveling home.

She said the rest of the country will be raised to Level 2 through Friday, meaning that mass gatherings will be limited to 100 attendees and people would need to socially distance themselves from each other.

Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield said the infections were confirmed after a person in their 50s went to their doctor on Monday with symptoms and was swabbed twice, testing positive both times. Six other people in the person's household were then tested, with three more positive results. " Importantly, the person has no history of overseas travel," Bloomfield said, adding that the source of the infections remains unknown.

Until Tuesday, the only known cases of the virus in New Zealand were 22 travelers who had recently returned from abroad and were being held in quarantine at the border.

The country has been praised globally for its virus response.

New Zealand initially got rid of the virus by imposing a strict lockdown in late March when only about 100 people had tested positive for the disease. That stopped its spread. ***AP***

Opposition candidate leaves Belarus, urges end to protests

Minsk: The top opposition candidate in Belarus' presidential vote, who initially refused to concede her defeat amid a massive police crackdown on anti-government protesters, said on Tuesday she has left for Lithuania and called on her supporters to end demonstrations.

Looking haggard and distressed, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, a former teacher and political novice, apologized to her supporters in a video statement and said it was her own choice to leave the country.

" It was a very hard decision to make," she said. " I know that many of you will understand me, many others will condemn me and some will even hate me. But God forbid you ever face the choice that I faced."

In another video statement released later on Tuesday, she urged her supporters to respect the law and avoid clashes with police.

Her campaign aides said she made the unexpected move under duress. Tsikhanouskaya's husband has been at a Belarusian jail since his arrest in May. " It's very difficult to resist pressure when your family and all your inner circle have been taken hostages," said Maria Kolesnikova, a top figure in Tsikhanouskaya's campaign.

Tsikhanouskaya previously dismissed the official results of Sunday's election showing authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko winning a sixth term by a landslide.

Thousands of opposition supporters who also protested the results met with a tough police crackdown in Minsk and several other Belarusian cities for two straight nights. ***AP***

Bhutan orders first nationwide lockdown as virus cases hit 113

Thimphu: Bhutan ordered its first nationwide lockdown on Tuesday after a returning resident tested positive for coronavirus after being discharged from quarantine and coming into close contact with people in the capital Thimphu.

The case took the total in the tiny Himalayan kingdom to 113, still the lowest in South Asia, and it has yet to record a fatality.

Bhutan, which is heavily reliant on high-end tourists, banned tourism in March after an American visitor tested positive, and ordered a three week mandatory quarantine for everyone returning from abroad.

The lockdown was ordered after a 27-year-old Bhutanese woman, who returned from Kuwait and was discharged from quarantine after testing negative, tested positive at a clinic on Monday. ***Agency***

US says goods from Hong Kong must have 'made in China' tag

Washington: Goods made in Hong Kong for export to the United States will need to be labelled as made in China after September 25, according to a US Government notice posted on Tuesday.

The move follows China's imposition of a national security law on Hong Kong and a U.S. decision to end the former British colony's special status under U.S. law, escalating bilateral tensions that were already rising over trade war tariffs and the handling of the coronavirus outbreak. The latest step will see Hong Kong companies subject to the same trade war tariffs levied on mainland Chinese exporters, should they make products subject to these duties, said the U.S. Customs and Border Protection notice.

It said that 45 days after its publication, goods " must be marked to indicate that their origin is 'China'" .

The step was taken after the United States determined that Hong Kong is " no longer sufficiently autonomous to justify differential treatment in relation to China" .

Trump has made tough talk against China a feature of his campaign for re-election in November.

The United States on Friday imposed sanctions on Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam and the city's current and former police chiefs accused of curtailing political freedoms in the former British colony. ***AFP***

Pompeo opens anti-China, anti-Russia tour in Czech

Prague: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is in the Czech Republic at the start of a four-nation tour of central and eastern Europe expected to focus on threats to the region posed by Russia and China.

Amid post-election violence and concerns about significant democratic backsliding in nearby Belarus, Pompeo plans to use his visit to push his hosts to counter Russian and Chinese influence.

Russia and China are active and seeking greater roles throughout the continent in the energy, infrastructure and telecommunications sectors, a trend the United States is keen to reverse. Pompeo on Tuesday was opening his visit in the Czech city of Pilsen, where he was to visit the Patton Museum and memorial to the World War II liberation of western Czechoslovakia by U.S. Troops.

In his talks, Pompeo will likely face questions about the Trump administration's decision to reduce the U.S. Military presence in Germany. ***AP***

Taiwan says virus aid sent quietly to avoid Beijing protests

Taipei: Taiwan sent COVID-19 assistance to foreign countries surreptitiously to avoid protests from China, its foreign minister said on Tuesday during a meeting with the highest-level American official to visit the island in four decades.

China claims Taiwan as its own territory and has sought to isolate it diplomatically, including barring its participation in forums such as the World Health Assembly.

The trip by US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar comes against the backdrop of a sharp downturn in relations between China and the US and Azar said in his remarks that the US supported Taiwan's participation in international health forums.

China's attempts to isolated Taiwan has compelled the island at times to keep its donations of masks and personal protective equipment under the radar, Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said.

" Truth is, we even had to deliver these supplies quietly in some occasions to keep the recipients free from trouble, trouble from Beijing," Wu said.

Taiwan has brought its virus outbreak under control, and Wu said the island has donated 51 million masks overseas, including 10 million to the US, along with other items of personal protective equipment. He did not name the other countries to which Taiwan has made quiet donations or give other details.

Just 15 countries maintain formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, and China has sought to peel away its remaining allies. Wu said Chinese pressure to accept political conditions for bringing Taiwan under Beijing's control has made life " increasingly difficult."

However, acquiescence would merely turn Taiwan into another Hong Kong, Wu said, referring to recent arrests of media figures and pro-democracy activists under a new security law being enforced in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory. ***AP***

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 15 / 2020-2021 Dated: 11.08.2020

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	19204450	BEARING FOR HITACHI TRACTION MOTOR TYPE HS 15250A	227 NOS	07.09.20
02	07190448A	HOSE CONNECTION 20X550MM FOR AIR SPRING	2189 NOS	07.09.20
03	09202084A	CONTROL ROD SLACK ADJUSTER	7848 NOS	07.09.20
04	09203057	KIT OF PU PAINTS (TWO PACK) FOR LHB RAJDHANI COACHES	240 SET	07.09.20
05	19201945A	IOH MAINTENANCE KIT (SUB KIT IOH-1)	31 NOS	21.09.20

NOTE:- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in** for details.
2. No Manual offer will be entertained. **1740/2020**

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FORM G - INVITATION OF RESOLUTION PLANS

(Under sub-regulation (5) of regulation 36A of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate persons) Regulations, 2016)

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PROSPECTIVE RESOLUTION APPLICANTS OF M/S VENESSA METALS & ALLOYS PRIVATE LIMITED (IN CIRP)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Name of the corporate debtor	Venessa Metals & Alloys Private Limited
2	Date of incorporation of corporate debtor	26-03-2015
3	Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	Registrar of Companies, Delhi , India, under the Companies Act, 1956
4	Corporate identity number / limited liability identification number of corporate debtor	U51909DL2015PTC278447
5	Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	A-93, South Extension Part-2 New Delhi South Delhi -110049
6	Insolvency commencement date of the corporate debtor	19-02-2020
7	Date of invitation of expression of interest	12-08-2020
8	Eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(h) of the Code is available at:	Detailed Expression of Interest contains details of eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(h) of the code and can be sought by email at: vmapl.ip@gmail.com and is also available at : http://sunresolution.in/
9	Norms of ineligibility applicable under section 29A are available at:	Same as stated in (8) above
10	Last date for receipt of expression of interest	27-08-2020
11	Date of issue of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	04-09-2020
12	Last date for submission of objections to provisional list	09-09-2020
13	Date of issue of final list of prospective resolution applicants	17-09-2020
14	Date of issue of information memorandum, evaluation matrix and request for resolution plans to prospective resolution applicants	09-09-2020
15	Manner of obtaining request for resolution plan, evaluation matrix, information memorandum and further information	All the eligible prospective resolution applicants will be sent the documents to their email id. For further information the applicants shall request the resolution professional to his email id.
16	Last date for submission of resolution plans	09-10-2020
17	Manner of submitting resolution plans to resolution professional	In Electronic form, supported by speed post or by hand delivery in sealed covers followed by an email confirmation
18	Estimated date for submission of resolution plan to the Adjudicating Authority for approval	24-10-2020
19	Name and registration number of the resolution professional	Ashish Singh IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00416/2017-18/11230
20	Name, Address and e-email of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	Ashish Singh Reg Add: Unit No. 811, 8th Floor , Aggarwal Millenium Tower-1 Near B T W, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitampura , New Delhi- 110034 Email. ID: ashishsinghcs@gmail.com
21	Address and email to be used for correspondence with the resolution professional	Address: As mentioned in Sr. No. 20 Email id: vmapl.ip@gmail.com
22	Further Details are available at or with	Details can be sought by email at:vmapl.ip@gmail.com and is also available at http://sunresolution.in/
23	Date of publication of Form G	12-08-2020

Sd/-
Date: 11-08-2020 Ashish Singh (Resolution Professional)
Place: New Delhi Reg No- IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00416/2017-2018/11230

CANCELLATION OF TRAINS

This is notified for the information of the general public that Railways have cancelled the following Special trains in view of Lockdown on 20.08.2020, 21.08.2020, 27.08.2020, 28.08.2020 and 31.08.2020 in West Bengal. The details are as under:-

CANCELLATION OF TRAINS

Train No. & Train Name	Date from originating station
02302 New Delhi - Howrah Special Train	19, 20, 26, 27 & 30.08.2020
02301 Howrah - New Delhi Special Train	20, 21, 27, 28 & 31.08.2020
02303 Howrah - New Delhi Special Train	29.08.2020
02304 New Delhi - Howrah Special Train	30.08.2020
02381 Howrah - New Delhi Special Train	20.08.2020 & 27.08.2020
02382 New Delhi - Howrah Special Train	21.08.2020 & 28.08.2020
02357 Kolkata - Amrtisar Special Train	18.08.2020 & 25.08.2020
02358 Amrtisar - Kolkata Special Train	20.08.2020 & 27.08.2020

Note:- For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

Integrated Helpline No. 139 | **Security Helpline No. 182**

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NORTHERN RAILWAY
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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

1742/2020
Public Relations-Northern Railway

Serbia considers buying Chinese missiles despite US warning

Belgrade: Serbia is considering buying a modern Chinese air defense missile system, the Serbian president said Tuesday, as the United States warned that such deals with Beijing could jeopardize the Balkan country's proclaimed European Union membership goals.

Aleksandar Vucic said that " we were thinking, but we have not yet purchased" the FK-3 system — the export version of the Chinese last-generation, medium range HQ-22 anti-aircraft system.

Serbia, which has been beefing up its military mainly with Russian aircraft and armored vehicles, last month received six Chinese CH-92A attack and reconnaissance drones. That made Serbia the first European country to deploy the Chinese unmanned aerial vehicles.

The U.S. Embassy in Belgrade said that " procuring military and defense equipment is a sovereign decision. However, governments should understand the short- and long-term risks and costs involved in doing business with Chinese companies."

" Procurement choices should reflect Serbia's stated policy goal of greater European integration," an embassy statement said. ***AP***

Global coronavirus cases top 20mn

Rome: The number of confirmed coronavirus cases worldwide topped 20 million, more than half of them from the United States, India and Brazil.

Russia has reported more than 890,000 cases, the fourth-most in the world, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally that also showed total confirmed cases globally surpassing 20 million.

It took six months or so to get to 10 million cases after the virus first appeared in central China late last year. It took just over six weeks for that number to double.

An AP analysis of data through August 9 showed the US, India and Brazil together accounted for nearly two-thirds of all reported infections since the world hit 15 million coronavirus cases on July 22.

Health officials believe the actual number of people infected with the virus is much higher than that tally kept by Johns Hopkins University, given testing limitations and that as many as 40 per cent of those with the virus show no symptoms. In Europe, countries that appeared to have gotten their outbreaks under control during nationwide lockdowns and lifted many public restrictions worked to prevent a resurgence of the virus. Finland joined France and Germany in announcing it would test travelers from at-risk countries upon arrival. ***AP***

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

SONAM

KAJAL

General public is hereby informed that a female (depicted in the photo), **Namely :** Sonam **W/o** Hargyan **R/o** M-64, Guru Harkishan Nagar, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped alongwith her daughter (depicted in the photo), **Namely:** Kajal age 11 months since 30.06.2020 from the area of P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. In this regard a case vide DD No. 98-A dated 30.06.2020 has been lodged at Police Station Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. Her physical description is as under :-

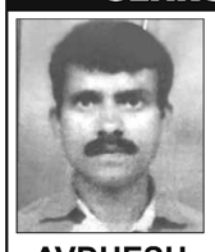
Age : 21 Years, **Height:** 5'1", **Complexion :** Fair, **Face**: Round, **Wearing :** Red colour sari and white colour blouse and hawai chappal in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/Kidnapped female and her daughter, may inform SHO, Paschim Vihar West, Delhi at E-mail Id – **cic@cbi.gov.in** or Website: **http://cbi.nic.in**

Phone:
011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
DP/266/OD/2020

SHO
P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi
Outer Distt., Delhi
Ph. No. 011-25268394, 25280980

SEARCH FOR MISSING



AVDHESH KUMAR

General public is hereby informed that a person (depicted in the photo), **Namely**: Avdhesh Kumar **S/o :** Ramcharan Yadav **R/o :** H. No. 1/322, Jahangir Puri, Delhi **Permanent Address:** Village Udhav Pur Khagiya, P.S. Mauaaima, Distt. Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh has been missing since 01.08.2020 from his house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 24A dated 03.08.2020 has been lodged at Police Station Jahangir Puri, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

Age: 35 Years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion**: Shallow, **Face**: Round, **Built** : Strong, **Wearing**: White colour shirt and black colour pant and black colour chappal in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing person, may inform SHO, Jahangir Puri, Delhi at E-mail Id – **cic@cbi.gov.in** or Website: **http://cbi.nic.in**

Phone:
011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
DP/303/NW/2020

SHO
P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi
North-West Distt., Delhi
Ph. No. 011-27631600

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE

General public is here by informed that one female **Namely:** Chhoti Kumari, **W/o** Vikas, **R/o** H. No. 1, Borola Gaon, Delhi, **Age:** 22 years, **Height:** 5'4", **Face:** Long, **Buit:** Thin, **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Black and Green Saree and Chappel in feet has been missing since 16.07.2020 from area of of PS Mahendra Park, Delhi.

In this regard a DD No. 86A, dated 19.07.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Mahendra Park, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this female but no clue has come to light so far.

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

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO
P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi
Ph. 011-27632501, 27632502
DP/306/NW/2020

Industrial production declines 16.6 % in Jun

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industrial production declined by 16.6 per cent in June, mainly due to lower output of manufacturing, mining and power generation, as per the government data released on Tuesday. According to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data, manufacturing sector production registered a decline of 17.1 per cent, while the output of mining and power fell 19.8 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively.

In a press release, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation issued a disclaimer saying that "it may not be appropriate to compare the IIP in the post-pandemic months with the IIP for months preceding the Covid-19 pandemic".

However, on a monthly basis, the Index of Industrial Production has shown improvement. The index, which was 53.6 in April, improved to 89.5 in May and 107.8 in June, the data revealed.

The IIP had expanded by 1.3 per cent year-on-year in June 2019.

The data further revealed that the contraction in the consumer durables and capital goods segment was 35.5 per cent and 36.9 per cent, respectively during June 2020.

However, consumer non-durables segment posted a growth of 14 per cent.The IIP for April-June period has contracted by 35.9 per cent, according to the data. It had registered a growth of 3 per cent during the same period last fiscal. In view of the preventive measures and announcement of a nationwide lockdown by the government to contain the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, a large number of industrial sector establishments were not operating from March-end, 2020 onwards. This has had an impact on the items being produced by the establishments during the period of lockdown. With the lifting of restrictions in the subsequent periods, industrial activity is now resuming.

Sensex builds on gains amid global rally; HDFC twins sparkle

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex closed in the green for the fourth straight session on Tuesday, propelled by index heavyweights HDFC twins and Reliance, amid robust gains in global equities.

A strengthening rupee, encouraging quarterly results and persistent foreign fund inflows further bolstered market sentiment, traders said. After touching a high of 38,556.27, the 30-share BSE Sensex pared some gains to end 224.93 points or 0.59 per cent higher at 38,407.01.

The NSE Nifty jumped 52.35 points or 0.46 per cent to finish at 11,322.50. The Nifty has extended its winning run to six sessions.

Axis Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying 3.96 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, ITC, HDFC Bank, Tata Steel, HDFC, ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries.

HDFC twins and RIL accounted for over half of the Sensex's gains. On the other hand, Titan, Bharti Airtel, HCL Tech and ONGC were among the laggards, dropping up to 3.73 per cent.

Global markets surged to over five-month highs as investors looked forward to an agreement on a US stimulus package. Market participants also cautiously weighed the news of Russia becoming the first country to officially register a coronavirus vaccine and declare it ready for use, despite international skepticism.

The number of cases around the world linked to Covid-19 has crossed 2 crore, while the infection count in India has reached 22.68 lakh.

"Indian markets continued their positive run, in spite of intraday volatility and unabated virus infections across the country. It was in sync with positive global cues, on the back of expected stimulus measures from the US, improving economic data points from China and the first coronavirus vaccine getting registered in Russia.

"Indian markets continued their run on the basis of earnings results and stock specific news, amidst hopes of another round of stimulus measures by the government. This expectation should ensure liquidity in the markets in the near term," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

₹ settles 12 paise higher at 74.78 against US $

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated by 12 paise to close at 74.78 against the US dollar on Tuesday tracking weakness in the greenback and gains in the domestic equity market.

Forex traders said gains in the domestic currency were supported by foreign fund inflows into domestic equity and debt markets.

Foreign institutional investors were net buyers in the capital market as they purchased shares worth ₹302.88 crore on Monday, according to provisional exchange data.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 74.83 against the US dollar and gained further ground to settle at 74.78, up 12 paise over its previous close of 74.90.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.13 per cent lower at 93.46.

Market participants will track Index of Industrial Production (IIP) numbers scheduled to be released later in the day for further cues, they said.After touching a high of 38,556.27, the 30-share BSE Sensex pared some gains to end 224.93 points or 0.59 per cent higher at 38,407.01. The NSE Nifty jumped 52.35 points or 0.46 per cent to finish at 11,322.50. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.47 per cent to USD 45.20 per barrel. "Indian rupee gained in line with other Asian currencies amid weakness in dollar," HDFC Securities Deputy Head Retail Research, Devarsh Vakil said.

More industry-friendly reforms in mining sector very shortly: Pralhad Joshi

New Delhi: Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi on Tuesday said the Government will come out with more industry-friendly reforms in the mining sector very shortly. "More industry-friendly, productive friendly reforms will be brought to the mining sector very shortly," Joshi said during a webinar on "Indian Mining Industry: Contribution Towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat" organised by FICCI. "At this juncture I would also like to urge the industry stalwarts and stakeholders to share their insights as to how collectively we can collaborate and innovate to make this sector self reliant," he said. The minister also invited investors, explorers and miners to come and explore the huge opportunities that the Indian mining sector offers. The minister said that other issues like illegal mining, environment clearance and forest clearance will be deliberated and suitable action as per the law will be taken in the due course of time.

PTI

₹1-lakh cr Agri Infra Fund to be crucial in enhancing farm sector share in GDP: Farmers' body

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Rs 1-lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund launched by the Government will be crucial in enhancing contribution of the agriculture sector to the country's GDP, especially at a time when it is expected to add to economic stability amid the coronavirus-induced slowdown, according to farmers' body FAIFA.

The Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA) said the fund will be important for farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups, agri-tech players and farmer groups looking to boost the country's agriculture infrastructure.

The federation claims to represent farmers and farm workers of commercial crops across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat.

"Agriculture currently contributes to over 14 per cent of the national GDP and provides livelihood to over 40 per cent of the nation's workforce.

In 2020-21, its contribution towards economic stability is expected to be even higher amid the COVID-19-induced economic slowdown," FAIFA said in a statement.

This fund will be crucial for farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups, agri-tech players and farmer groups looking to boost the country's agriculture infrastructure, it added.

"It will also allow the agriculture sector to help enhance its contributions to the GDP, improve balance of trade, stimulate greater export potential of the farm sector and ensure a stable and prosperous life for farmers by increasing incomes," the farmers' body said.

CII calls for early FTP to raise India's global export share to 5 pc

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body CII on Tuesday asked the Government to come out with new foreign trade policy at the earliest in view of the Covid-19 outbreak to increase India's shares in the global merechandise exports to 5 per cent by 2025.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has also outlined a 10-point agenda for increasing India's exports of goods and services in line with the prime minister's vision of an "Aatmanirbhar Bharat".For developing international competitiveness, key suggestions by CII include re-examining FTAs and tariff structure with an aggressive market-seeking approach, and build India brand and undertake market promotion in key markets.

The CII report, titled 'Re-orienting India's Export Endeavour in the Covid-19 World', states India must aim to achieve 5 per cent share in world merchandise exports and 7 per cent in services exports by 2025.

India's share in global merchandise exports is 1.67 per cent, with a low share in top globally traded items. In services, it enjoys 3.54 per cent share.

The onset of the COVID-19 outbreak that led to a global trade slowdown, affected Indian exports substantially, and led to a drop in Indian exports by 35 per cent in March, 60 per cent in April, and 36.5 per cent in May 2020.

Outlining 10 areas where action is required to boost exports, the chamber said an open and facilitative import environment is required to attract global companies and ensure competitive access to intermediate goods.

In general, higher duties on finished goods and lower duties on intermediates should be applied.CII Director General Chandrajit Banerjee said the pandemic situation has impacted world trade negatively.

However, it also provides a big opportunity for India to better engage with the world and boost its export performance. This is an opportune time for India to strengthen its domestic manufacturing through a strong partnership between the government and industry, he said. "As more and more countries are looking at realigning their trading strategies and diversifying their import sources post the COVID-19 outbreak, India must leverage the present situation to emerge as an alternative destination for sourcing cost-effective, quality products", stated Banerjee.

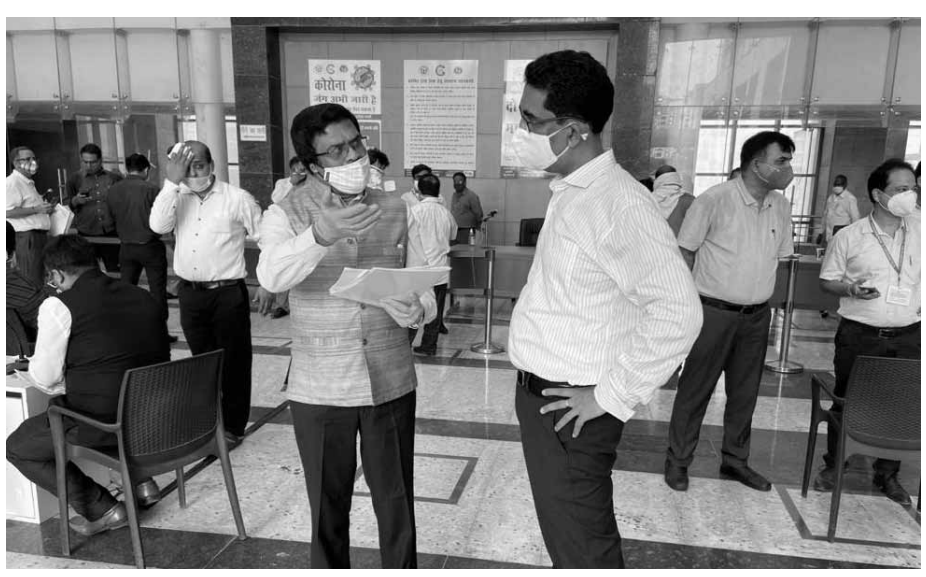
Adani Ports Q1 net profit falls 26 % to ₹758 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) on Tuesday reported 26.33 per cent decline in its consolidated profit to ₹757.83 crore for the first quarter ended June 30.

The country's largest integrated logistics player had clocked a consolidated net profit of ₹1,028.69 crore in the corresponding period a year earlier, the company said in a BSE filing.Its total income declined to ₹2,749.46 crore for the first quarter as against ₹3,216.92 crore in the year-ago period.

The company's total expenses during the quarter under review rose to ₹1,805.24 crore, compared to ₹1,796.34 crore in the year-ago period."In the first quarter of FY21, we were able to perform operationally at par with pre-COVID levels. We kept supply chain running and stood by our customers to prove as a bankable service provider at all times ensuring stronger customer relationships and stickiness in cargo.



Greater Noida Chief Executive Officer Narendra Bhooshan on Tuesday made a surprise public hearing. The hearing was a surprise inspection. All protocols of Covid-19 was followed. Officers concerned were ordered for immediate redressal of the problems by talking to the present allottees/residents themselves. Sachin Kumar Singh, Special Officer was also present at the time of the said inspection

Mankind Pharma ties up with South Korean co for clinical trials of Covid-19 drug

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mankind Pharma on Tuesday said it has collaborated with South Korean firm Daewoong Pharmaceutical Co for conducting phase-I clinical trial of a novel formulation of Niclosamide for the treatment of Covid-19 patients in India.

The trial is designed towards addressing the need for an investigation on this new formulation based on encouraging preclinical evidence for the treatment of Covid-19, Mankind Pharma said in a statement.

"We are excited to collaborate with Daewoong Pharmaceutical Co Ltd to bring novel formulation of Niclosamide (DWRX2003) for the treatment of Covid-19 patients in India. "We believe that the product would provide for a safe and effective alternative to patients suffering from this disease," Mankind Pharma COO Arjun Juneja said. Both the companies have received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to conduct phase-1 clinical trials.

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL & CONTROLLER, RUHS COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES,
Sector – 11, Kumbha Marg, Pratap Nagar, Jaipur - 302033
Ph. 0141-2795624, 634, E-mail : principalruhscms@ruhsraj.org

No. RUHS CMS/Store/2020-21/ 15750 Date. 10-08-2020

Short Term E-bids Notice

Single stage, single envelope short term e-bids are invited upto 02.00 pm of 18-08-2020 for Urgent Supply of 1. RNA Extraction Kit (Manual), 2. RT PCR Test Kit, 3. Fully Automated Viral RNA & DNA Extraction Kit for Covid-19 Test Lab at RUHS College of Medical Sciences, Jaipur. Details may be seen in the Bidding Document at the website **http.//eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** , **www.ruhscms.org**, or **sppp.raj.nic.in**. **(UBN : CMS2021GLRC00025 To CMS2021GLRC00027)**

Raj.Samwad/C/20/3382 **Principal & Controller, RUHS College of Medical Sciences, Jaipur**

RITES Q1FY21 Revenue at ₹379 cr, PAT at ₹65 cr

Gurugram:RITES total standalone revenue has decreased by 33.9% to ₹366 crore on account of lessexports scheduled for the quarter and impact of restrictions & supply chain disruptions due topandemic. Similarly, operating revenue, excluding other income, stands at ₹323 crore inQ1FY21 against ₹519 crore in Q1FY20. EBITDA and PAT stand at ₹94 crore and ₹60crore against ₹151 crore and ₹93 crore, respectively, in Q1FY20.
After making adjustmentfor one-time expenditure on CSR of ₹9.92 crore and donations (PM-CARES Fund) of ₹7crore, EBITDA and PAT stand at ₹111 crore and ₹75 crore, respectively, with improved-margins of 30.4% and 20.6% against 27.3% and 16.8% in Q1FY20, respectively.

MarginsHighlights for Q1FY21 Consolidated Financials

1) Total Revenue stands at ₹379 crore against ₹573 crore in Q1FY20
2) EBITDA stands at ₹121 crore with margin of 31.9% against ₹167 crorein Q1FY20
3) Profit After Tax stands at ₹65 crore with margin of 17.1% against ₹102crore in Q1FY20

Highlights for Q1FY21 Standalone Financials

1) Total Revenue stands at ₹366 crore against ₹553 crore in Q1FY20
2) EBITDA stands at ₹111 crore with margin of 30.4% against ₹151crore in Q1FY20
3) Profit After Tax stands at `60 crore with margin of 16.4% against ₹93crore in Q1FY20.

POWERGRID posts Profit After Tax of ₹2,048 crore for Q1FY21

Total Income rises by 5% to ₹9,817 crore

New Delhi: Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a 'Maharatna' Company under Ministry of Power, GoI and the 'Central Transmission Utility (CTU)' of the country, has posted a Profit After Tax of ₹2,048 crore and Total Income of ₹9,817 crore on consolidated basis for Q1FY21.
On standalone basis, the Company posted Profit After Tax and Total Income of ₹1,979 crore and ₹9,620 crore respectively for Q1FY21. During the quarter, the Company recognized as an exceptional item, the one-time consolidated rebate of ₹1,075 crore to DISCOMs / Power Departments of the States and Union Territories for passing on to the end-consumers on account of Covid-19 pandemic against the billing of Apr'20 & May'20. Excluding the impact of this one-time rebate, the Company's profit increased by 18% over the corresponding period of FY2019-20 on standalone basis.

For the quarter, the Company incurred a Capital Expenditure of about ₹1,906 crore and capitalized assets worth ₹1,184 crore (excluding FERV) on consolidated basis.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

No. 128-W/260/Tender Notice/NIT 06,08,13 & 20/20-21/W-IV **Date: 10.08.2020**

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work.

Invitation of tender through E- Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

1	Name of work with its location.	1. Annual Zone work for maintenance of track on ROK-PNP and ABO-RE section under ADEN/ROK for P.E. 30.06.2021. (NIT 06-W-IV-20-21) 2. Annual Zone work for maintenance of track on DLI-BTI section under ADEN/MSZ for period ending on 30.06.2021 (NIT-08-W-IV-20-21) 3. Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of staff qtrs. and service building on DLI-BTI section under ADEN/ROK for period ending 30-06-2021. (NIT 13-W-IV-20-21) 4. Annual zone work for repair and maintenance of staff qtrs. and service building on DLI-BTI section under SSE/BGZ under ADEN/ROK for period ending 30-06-2021. (NIT 20-20-21-W-IV)
2	Approx. cost of work	(1) Rs. 59,97,953.51 (2). Rs. 69,03,396.09 (3) Rs. 79,81,969.08 (4) Rs. 39,25,776.65
3	Earnest money	(1) Rs. 1,20,000.00 (2) Rs. 1,38,100.00 (3) Rs. 1,59,600.00 (4) Rs. 78,500.00
4	Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender.	Bidding State date Up to 15:00 hrs. on 01.09.2020 opening of e-Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 15.09.2020.
5	Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on !REPS site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in**

1738/20

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Sunita,** D/o **Basant, R/o:** H.No. 114, Gali No. 4, Kh No. 62/2, Krishna Colony, Prahladpur Bangar, Delhi, **Age:** 20 years, **Height:** 5'1", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, wearing Blue colour T-Shirt, Pajama and Shoes in feet, has been missing since 17.07.2020 from her house. In this regard a **DD No. 42A, dated 18.07.2020** has been registered at **P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi**
Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

Website : http://cbi.nic.in
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO
P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi

DP/394/ON/2020 **Ph. No.: 011-27821047, 27822206**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Age:** Approx 40-45 years, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Height:** 5'7", **Built:** Medium, **Face:** Long, **Hair:** Black & White Small, was wearing Light Green colour Sleeve T-Shirt, Blue Lower and Bare feet, was found on footpath near Link Road, New Lajpat Rai Market, Delhi. In this regard a **DD No. 41A, dated 04.08.2020, has been lodged at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.**
His dead body has been preserved in Subzi Mandi Mortuary for 72 Hrs. Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO
P.S. Kotwali, Delhi

DP/443/N/2020 **Ph.: 011-23977100, 8750870121**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Namely:** Munna, S/o: Unknown, **R/o**: Vegabond, Rajouri Garden, Delhi, **Age**: 50 years, **Height**: 5' 6", **Complexion**: Wheatish, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Thin, **ID:** Tattoo over right forearms, **Wearing:** White colour Shirt and light blue colour pant, who was found at Gate No. 05 Metro Station Rajouri Garden, Delhi. In this regard a case **DD No. 0041A Dated 30.06.2020 has been registered at P.S. Rajouri Garden, Delhi.**
Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO
P.S. Rajouri Garden, Delhi

DP/171/WD/2020 **Tel.: 011-25453990**

SEARCH FOR MISSING

Amit Kumar

General Public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Amit Kumar** S/o Sripasad, **R/o** A-1/86, Gali No. 4 Prem Nagar-III, Kirari, Delhi. **Age -** 27 Years, Height 5'7", **Face** Round, **Complexion-** Wheatish, Built: Strong, **Wearing:** White Colour Sandow Banyan and grey colour payjama, bare in Feet has been missing since 18.07.2020 from the area of PS Prem Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a vide DD No. 115-A dated 24.07.2020 at **PS Prem Nagar, Delhi**
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far, If any one having any information about this boy please inform undersigned.

Web-site http://cbi.nic.in
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax.: 011-24368639

SHO
P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi
Mob. 8750870322

DP/288/RD/2020

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown was found on 02.08.2020 at footpath in front of Birla Niketan School, Birla Niketan Marg, Delhi.** In this regard **DD No. 37A, dated 02.08.2020** has been lodged at Police Station, Saket, New Delhi. Dead Body has been preserved in the mortuary of AIIMS Hospital, Delhi for 72 Hours for identification. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

Name: Unknown, Age: About 35 Years, Height: 5'6", Face: Oval, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Medium, Wearing: Parrot & Blue Colour T-shirt and Blue colour Jeans.

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.

SHO
Police Station, Saket, New Delhi

DP/151/SD/2020 **Ph.: 011-29562300, 29561300**

SKILLS THAT MATTER

The ability to innovate and provide effective solutions for unanticipated problems is an important skill that a management graduate should learn, says PROF VINAYTOSH MISHRA

We are witnessing unprecedented times in our lives. The COVID-19 outbreak has completely changed the world as we know it. The people have been forced to remain locked in their homes for months, and it has affected their physical and mental health. Millions have lost their jobs and the unemployment rate is at an all-time high in countries from India to the USA. Historic events such as the COVID-19 outbreak, will have a lasting effect on humanity, and this unique time of pandemic will leave us with many lessons to learn in life and management of businesses. The seven management skills that must be taught in B-Schools to make budding managers better equipped to face challenges affecting businesses, during a pandemic.

The first skill they should learn is to prioritise the tasks. Smaller short-term benefit providing tasks need to be jettisoned paving the way for larger projects and long-term objectives. They should be taught that, if things are not going their way not to lose heart and trying while keeping eye on the larger goals.way not to lose heart and trying while keeping eye on the larger goals.

Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher maintained that change is the only constant in nature. The biggest lesson COVID-19 has taught is that life is full of uncertainties and one needs to be prepared to deal with them. We need to fortify ourselves with new technologies, keep ourselves updated, and identify different goals. Thus the second must have skill a management graduate should acquire is change management.

Suddenly, we have started hearing about the Spanish Flu and how it affected mankind. We are also witnessing how the experience from the past of managing a different strain of coronavirus made South Korea better armed to tackle the COVID-19. This pandemic will provide us with many exemplary case studies on how businesses failed or succeeded in this pandemic. The management students should develop a keen eye and learn a lesson or two from such examples which will give them a hint on what the future holds for them.

To manage unforeseen situations organisations, need to innovate fast. As we have seen, the learning curve for digital technologies has drastically reduced. The pandemic has changed the way essential services like healthcare and education are being delivered. The present approach adopted focusses on physical distancing and digital proximity (PDDP) as a result, online shopping of the essential supplies is at an all-time high. Now businesses should innovate to pave the way for service delivery similar or better than traditional service delivery. The ability to innovate and provide effective solutions for unanticipated problems should be the fourth skill a management graduate should learn.

The first skill a management graduate should learn is to prioritise the tasks. Smaller short-term benefit providing tasks need to be jettisoned paving way for larger projects and long-term objectives

The prevailing tension between India and China has resulted in escalated anger in India. The people are calling for boycotting Chinese products. The Government has banned 59 mobile apps citing security concerns as a reason behind the move. If your business is dependent on the raw materials from China, your supply chain is at risk. Hence, maintaining the balance between global and local should be the fifth skill a B-School graduate should acquire.

Leadership matters, and a manager should demonstrate these skills during tough times. Gone are the days of managers barking orders and expecting employees to dutifully abide. Accountability, responsibility, and transparency are on the rise in the business world. The manager is required to be sensitive, compassionate and demonstrate self-awareness. Thus, Leadership is the sixth skill; I would recommend a manager to learn in a B-School, if at all it could be taught.

A manager should learn to perform a stress test of the organisation, in expectation of a sudden outbreak of calamities like COVID-19. The manager should have the knowledge and desired sensitivity to anticipate the different risks an organisation could face.

They should also have the ability to prepare the risk mitigation strategy for these identified risks. Thus, managing the risk is the seventh skill a manager should acquire.

Finally, it is difficult to predict the future with certainty, but we can acquire the above mentioned skills to be better prepared for the challenges. The future doesn't always unfold as per our plan, thus, lamenting about the past is futile. Henceforth, living in the present, and preparing for the future should be the new mantra of the current times.

The writer is Assistant Professor, FORE School of Management, New Delhi

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Resolve to edge in a little reading every day, if it is but a single sentence. If you gain fifteen minutes a day, it will make itself felt at the end of the year.
— Horace Mann

BTech admission rank list announced

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), has announced the SRM BTech Rank List for 2020 admissions. In the light of the ongoing pandemic, the SRMJEEE which determines entry into the much sought after engineering degree programmes, was cancelled this year, and replaced with rankings based on +2/pre-university/equivalent marks in PCM/PCB submitted by the candidate. A total of 1.36 lakh candidates from across India and overseas had applied for admission to SRM BTech 2020.

The top 10 rankers represent the student diversity of SRM, and come from diverse backgrounds across India: Ekkaluri Harshitha, Andhra Pradesh; R Sanjay, Karnataka; Abhinav Tripathi, Rajasthan; Dharshin Balakrishnan, Tamil Nadu; Shivam Kumar, Bihar; Arun Martin, Kerala; Ajay Parmar, Madhya Pradesh; Rudr Kesar, Jammu and Kashmir; Mayank Singh, Uttar Pradesh and Hil Savani, Gujarat, emerged as toppers in the all India Top 10 Rank list.

On enrolment, top 100 rank holders will be awarded Founder's Scholarship with 100 per cent tuition and hostel fee waiver. The top 101 to 500 rank holders will be awarded SRM Merit Scholarship with 100 per cent tuition fee waiver. The university also offers an incredible range of scholarship to the tune of ₹40 crores benefiting 3200+ students every year, making studying in the university affordable to all.

The next step in the admission process is the rankings along with the allocated branch will be sent to the candidates registered email ID.

Educational toys are here

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In times like these, when kids cannot step out of their homes, it's very difficult to keep them engaged. Most of the parents are concerned about the increased screen time for their children. But what if that screen time can be made hands-on and educational? Now with PlayShifu's Augmented Reality based educational toys, children can sharpen their skills, learn, and play, all at the same time!

Orboot Earth is a one-of-its-kind Augmented Reality globe that transforms your tablet or smartphone into a magical gateway. Travel to any corner of the world and explore thousands of undiscovered trivia. Scan the globe to catch world's wonders pop up in 3D, interact with them, and hear their enchanting stories. Explore wildlife, landmarks, cultures, cuisines, and inventions of various countries. The globe doesn't have borders or names but the Orboot Earth app has detailed information with maps.

It sensitises young minds to cultures and people around the world. Built for ever-curious kids, it sparks their imagination. It helps children with geography, world knowledge, environmental science, social science that in turn develop STEAM skills. Encouraging hands-on play, Orboot Earth's world tour comes with a travel kit — passport, stamp, and lots of stickers for the little globetrotter.

Make way for intelligent engineers

With COVID-19 pandemic, work and workplaces are undergoing a tectonic change. The post Coronavirus world will be in need of skilled engineers who are equipped with the knowledge of AI, ML and RPA, says DR SG GOPALAKRISHNA

Engineering education in India has been at the forefront to create engineering leaders in multidisciplinary fields like chemical engineering, mechanical engineering etc. With time the teaching pedagogy at engineering institutes along with curriculum have evolved dynamically. Earlier the focus was much more on theoretical learning. Now, an integrated approach towards following work-based learning, multidisciplinary programs in emerging courses and a shift towards outward facing engineering courses is being followed.

The pandemic situation in the country has shown that technology has been a huge enabler in times of crises. With the COVID-19 pandemic clouding the world, work and workplaces are also undergoing a tectonic change. The post COVID world will be in need of skilled engineers who are equipped with the knowledge of emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Robotic Process Automation.

In general, experts believe that industrial automation, manufacturing industries will see a sharp rise with the unlocking procedure in the country. MSME and young startups are also expected to pick up. We as consumers are already shifting to e-commerce platforms and are becoming dependent on it. This means, such players will need professionals to handle humongous data to understand consumer behaviour patterns, buying behaviour etc. Here arises the need of data science and data analytics, because when such data is on the web, the need for various forecast and predictions also emerge.

Following are some of the ways in which AI will revolutionise the career journey for engineers in the post COVID world:

Healthcare and AI: As healthcare professionals are working day in and day out to come up with a vaccine that can help the world get back on its feet, AI is a key enabler in this sector. As costs continue to swell in the healthcare industry, cost savings are also crucial. AI plays an important role in medical research. As the government is keen on medical research and the environment is conducive, hospital research, robotic surgeries are some domains where AI can be used.

AI in retail and supply chain: With the unlocking procedure in the country, factories are now under the mounting pressure of cutting costs and increased efficiency in production. The sudden lockdown has also compelled the retail industry to strengthen their supply chain and logistics.Starting from integrating their CRM tool with AI to post sale customer service, everything can be driven through AI.

AI in Industrial Automation: The evolution of new computing technologies and artificial intelligence, industrial automation has become more than just a buzzword. For manufacturing companies, it is essential to come out of their traditional technologies and make changes in their manufacturing processes for eg: re-programming or re-tooling the application. Such industries can optimize scheduling, operator productivity and help in gaining production visibility.

AI in Agriculture: Companies are developing autonomous robots for essential tasks like harvesting. Predictive analytics is being used to develop and track different environmental conditions suitable for crops, service of agricultural machinery, crop yield and weather conditions.

AI in Construction and Real Estate: AI is used in real estate projects to predict cost overruns.Machine learning and AI are used to scrutinise the data and forecast cost based on size of the project, types of contractors, skills and competence level of workforce. It also helps to envision the start and end date of the project.

We can foresee a world post Covid with tremendous changes and opportunities as well. Organisations are already adapting to the new normal and transforming digitally. The engineering talent with skills and different competencies in such emerging technology will help organisations drive through the new normal. A broad understanding of emerging technologies like AI will enable them to create, innovate and collaborate.

The writer is Director, Nagarjuna Group of Institutions

Detailed analysis of IPMAT 2020

The overall level of the exam was easy and the cut-offs are expected to be on the higher side, says ANKIT KAPOOR

After getting postponed many times due to the on-going pandemic IIM Rohtak conducted its Integrated Program in Management Aptitude Test (IPMAT) on July 20, 2020 in a Google form format for its five-year Integrated Programme. Being conducted for the second time this came as a surprise as the exam was conducted through Google form.

While the structure of the paper was changed this year, various guidelines were also issued by the prestigious institute in different forms including the exam to be conducted as an open book exam through Google sheets with weightage being given to the past academics.

Being an MCQ based aptitude test, the questions from last year's pattern were reduced to 60 to be solved within 45 minutes, with 20 questions each in Quantitative techniques, Logical Reasoning and Verbal Ability sections. The marking scheme was that each correct answer will get you 4 marks and each incorrect attempt would get you a penalty of 1 mark.

The difficulty level of the paper was more or less on similar lines of 2019, but overall, it was easy. While many students faced technical glitches and complaints regarding submission of the paper, still the paper was conducted smoothly with some minor delay of 10 to 15 minutes.

The overall level of the exam was easy and the cut-offs are anticipated to be on the higher side. The detailed analysis of each section shows that the quantitative techniques' section had moderate level of difficulty while no questions were asked from higher maths. And a student could easily attempt 13 to 14 questions. While the Logical reasoning section was easy, with only a set of two question being little confusing and 16-17 questions can be considered as a good attempt in this section. One question from the topic 'Dice' was incomplete as the figure required to solve the question was missing.

The Verbal Ability section was again very easy following the footsteps of last year's exam. The questions were direct. There were few questions that were ambiguous, but overall an attempt of 15-16 questions was good.

Post the Aptitude test there was a break of 15 minutes, and the students were then required to write essays on the topics provided as part of the Written Ability Test (WAT). This too was changed this year. The students were given 30 minutes and they were supposed to write on two topics, namely 'Post COVID World' and 'What does being successful mean to you?' Both the topics according to the students were easy and they could write their thoughts in the given time.

Candidates will be shortlisted for Personal Interview on the basis of their performance in the exam which will consist (Entrance Test, WAT, and past academic record).

The writer is Managing Director, Pratham Test Prep

Webinar on new education policy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The All India Technical and Management Council (AITMC) has organised a webinar on the New Education Policy (NEP) which has recently been released by the Government. The impact of the New Education Policy on higher education and the possibilities of skill development were discussed in the webinar.

Aman Mittal (Additional Director, Lovely Professional University), Dr Pramod Pampatwar (Founder Director, VNIT Alumni Association), Preet Sindhu Sihag (CEO, AITMC) and Smt. RajniJhulka (Advisor & Strategist, STEAM) were present as the key speakers. Brijesh Srivastav, producer of the programme *Aap Ki Baat* welcomed all the speakers as the moderator of the webinar. This education policy has been appreciated by all the speakers in the webinar.

Preet Sindhu Sihag (CEO, AITMC) said that this education policy will promote life-long learning. When a person becomes a life-long learner, then he is ready to deal with all the challenges coming in his/her life. This policy will not only help build educated youth but will also create empowered youth. sI am very much confident about the future of our students with the introduction of this policy.

New educational reforms in place

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In continuation of pertinent educational reforms being made of Ministry of Education, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Education Minister launched online the Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Regulations Act, 2020 in a simple ceremony here on August 11, 2020.

Council of Architecture (COA), in a first after educational reforms, brought these reforms in Architecture after 38 years in India.

The occasion was graced by Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Education, Amit Khare, Secretary Education, senior officials of Ministry of Education, Ar Habeeb Khan, President Council of Architecture, Sapna, VP, COA, RK Oberoi, Registerar, COA, Heads of Architectural Institutions, Executive Members of COA and other officials & membersof the Council.

Pokhriyal reminded about the unique historical and architectural beauty of India. He focused on the monuments and temples that put India in leadership position in the world and further said that COA should take inspiration from the present and past treasure of Architecture and bring a paradigm shift in the field of Architecture to make India a leader again.

Sanjay Dhotare also emphasised on the role of architectural and said that Architecture is in built in the history and culture of India and he appreciated the initiative of COA to bring up these reforms which the new generation of Architecture should take as a challenge to turn around the culture and heritage of India.

Khare, Secretary Education appreciated the initiative of COA. The role of Shri RK Oberoi, Registrar , COA was highly appreciated for being instrumental in bringing these Regulations to the light.

Earlier the Education Minister Pokhriyal appreciated the work of Ar Habeeb Khan President of the Council and also asked the young architects to take a leap in the field of Architecture.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Sapna, Vice President of the Council.

JKLU unveils virtual lab

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the times of COVID-19 pandemic when the education has become online and the future of education completely depends upon experiential learning, JK Lakshmipat University, in collaboration with All India Management Association (AIMA), on July 30, 2020 unveiled the first-ever virtual lab for management students for business stimulation exercises in Jaipur.

Dr RL Raina, VC, JKLU, mentioned that the BizLab will expose students to real economic, environmental and business issues related to finance, operations, marketing and other business functions and that with the support of AIMA, it can develop and evolve as the most effective learning tool for management.

The drone market size in the country is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 18% by 2023, creating jobs in various industries offering a plethora of lucrative options, says ARVIND BALI

Take a flying leap

Isn't the concept of machine flying sound amazing? Constant innovations in technology are growing at a fast pace, playing a great role in transforming our lives. Yes, we are talking about eye in the sky technology that has been increasingly adopted for different purposes across various industries. Drones, also known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are equipped with state-of-the-art remote control systems, GPS, HD cameras, and autopilot functions. Also referred to as a ground cockpit, drones are controlled by remote ground control systems (GSC).

The technique has emerged as a boon during the Corona pandemic. States like Gujarat, Telangana, Maharashtra have used the drone for different purposes during Lockdown, whether for monitoring an area, sanitising or thermal scanning, it has proved to be an excellent technique in all places. In view of this, there is a great possibility of increasing its utility in future.

From real estate to construction, agriculture to logistics, and wind energy to defense industries, drones have entered many major markets and are benefiting them to a great extent. The telecom industry is one of the recent industries being revolutionised by UAVs. Drones offer an ideal tower inspection solution to the telecom companies through visual analysis and aid in digitising assets for tower companies.

MARKET SIZE

The UAV market in the country has grown over a period of time. According to the 6Wreserach consulting firm, the drone market size is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 18 per cent by 2023. Drones are at the forefront of the new-age generation technological shift and so, many big corporate companies are investing heavily in the drone space.

The association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International predicts that there will be more than lac new jobs in unmanned aircraft and drone technology by 2025, and the global market for commercial applications of drone technology is expected to reach $127 billion by 2020. New drone jobs will be created across a wide span of industries. In a recent report, FICCI and EY projected that the value of the Indian UAV industry and the market would be around $885.7 million by 2021. The widening possibilities for which UAVs can be used thanks to their flexible and rapidly evolving software and hardware, has led to their employment in a variety of fields.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Drone technology makes it easier to capture visual information and utilise data through enhanced computer models. UAVs offer a great market opportunity for equipment manufacturers, investors, and business service providers.

Drone technique has emerged as a boon during the pandemic. Many States have used drones for different purposes during lockdown like monitoring an area, sanitising or thermal scanning

Employment opportunity area would be passive infrastructure (ground, training center), active infrastructure (hardware and software), drone services and maintenance (customer support, call centers), data drone collection and processing, pilot/operator, engineer, link engineer, and some sectors which are connected to the drone. Things are getting automated which is changing the existing job profiles and leading to upskilling. Many of the things which required human intervention are now getting automated. At the same time, new types of jobs are emerging.

SKILLS

In view of future employment prospects and career opportunities, Telecom Sector Skill Council formed under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) is in the process of designing a curriculum related to drone technology. Low-level to high-level skills will be required in the field of UAV technology. However, skill gaps exist among the workforce and there is a need to fill that gap. Different modules are being worked on by the council to reduce the skill gap so that youth can become skilled and able to get employment in the industry.

Recently, the Director-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued draft guidelines on UAS through a circular titled *Requirements for Operation of Civil Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS)*. The UAV ecosystem within India is currently host to only a handful of companies that are manufacturing and catering to the consumers.

These companies are also concerned about the ongoing discussions on UAS regulations and the fact that they may not be able to meet the market demands.

In the next few years, the country will be the largest importer of drones worldwide. It will also leave many countries behind in terms of usage. Drones have now started being used in industries on large scales. This aerial vehicle will replace the need for manpower and will create new opportunities. These jobs will not only be in the form of remote pilots, but there will also be a dire need of skilled people on the front like drone engineering, operations, monitoring, sales, and marketing.

The writer is Acting CEO, Telecom Sector Skill Council

'Social commerce can help women'

For women looking for business without investment, social commerce within the food industry is an ideal solution, says VARUN KHURANA

Varun Khurana
Founder, Otipy

Social commerce is not a new concept in the country major chunk of social commerce existed only in the fashion, beauty, and retail industries. Today, social commerce is gaining popularity for one of the fundamental aspects of life —fresh food.

A $200 billion fresh produce category is now witnessing major disruption through social commerce. It is garnering the attention of consumer, entrepreneurs, and investors . In fact, consumers are increasingly preferring their food sourced through social commerce for various reasons such as higher credibility, rational price and most importantly, fresher produce (delivered within a day). For women looking to be a part of the business environment without monetary investment, social commerce within the food category is the ideal solution. Let us take a look at how social commerce is playing a key role in helping women make it big in business.

Increasing Internet penetration and social media usage have paved the way for the rise of social commerce. A majority of the population today uses and is in fact hooked onto social media and brands are leveraging this aspect. With the rise in demand for fresh produce,women are joining hands with brands to become resellers within their community to make a mark for themselves in their community by leveraging social commerce. At present, fresh produce is a supply-led model and social commerce is flipping it to demand-led model that further helps in solving the problem of middlemen and wastage. Apart from this, it helps resellers connect with their customers-base efficiently and offer real-time feedback to the farmers regarding the quality of the produce.

For the first time, women are taking the centrestage in spurring the adoption of e-commerce and helping the industry as well as themselves progress. The advent of technology, rapid digitisation of businesses, and easy access have helped drive this change. For women sellers, a slew of features aided by cutting-edge technology such as voice chats/chatbots, real-time updates and feedback to the farmers, and most importantly, WhatsApp-based marketing is coming handy to open more doors to become micro-entrepreneurs.

Women sellers also have a higher average order value, better retention and repeat orders, making them more suitable. In fact, not just urban cities, but women resellers hail from tier-II and tier-III catchment areas are hopping on the fresh produce social commerce bandwagon to fulfill their goals and achieve financial independence with almost no investment. A whopping 68% of women in most platforms sell from tier-II and tier-III cities.

They also help customers gain trust for unbranded products since they usually tend to lean towards known/established brands. In return, social commerce platforms offer easy access for women to build an entrepreneurial empire of their own through community engagement without hindrances.

Social commerce is quickly becoming a multi-million-dollar market in India. With technological advancements, greater digitisation and the availability of regional languages providing easy access and seamless experience, the rise of women entrepreneurs through social commerce is inevitable.

MINDIT

Management students study multiple topics in the domains of business and management and hence are better equipped to handle various crisis situations including a pandemic like COVID-19.The students acquire the required knowledge, skills, and competencies and become adept at the case analyses and problem-solving in response to some real-world problems.

The management students can tackle the crisis after COVID-19 in the following ways:

Healthcare: The management students can sensitise the people about the various dos and don'ts to the citizens and enable them with the required knowledge, skills and competencies and preventive measures to avoid the deadly pandemic of COVID-19.

Education: The management students can sensitise about the various apps and technologies to the children and their parents to enable them to maximize productivity in the process of online teaching, learning, and assessment. This will make the child and their parents more familiar with the software, platform, or app, and hence the outcomes of academic delivery will improve.

Entrepreneurship: The management students can enable the young and budding entrepreneurs by giving them training or assistance. The management students can guide the entrepreneurs from the small and medium enterprises sector by giving them knowledge or assistance in making the business plan.

Hospitality management: The management students can reinforce the importance of hygiene and other allied aspects to the employees working in the Hospitality sector.

Facilities management: The students can focus on getting the whole area sanitised by the latest machines/gadgets by including the right chemicals mixed in water in the right proportions.

Implementation of preventive strategies: The students can implement the various preventive strategies like lockdown, measurement of temperature of all the incoming and outgoing guests by using the thermal infrared scanner, wearing of masks, usage of sanitizers, stoppage of people coming from COVID infected areas, etc.

Design management: The students can work in collaboration with the students of fashion design to focus on producing low-cost masks with better user experience. They can also focus on innovative dress designing for the protection of Doctors, Nurses etc.

Sanitisers: The students can procure the materials used in the process of preparing the sanitisers and prepare them in small packing materials at an affordable cost for the residents of the society.

Lifestyle management: The students can sensitise the residents about the various aspects of lifestyle management so that the residents are able to raise their immunity and avoid falling sick.

Diet management: The management students can inform the people around about the importance of diet management. They can also give them the recommended diet according to the region, season and availability of fruits and vegetables.

Logistics planning and management: The students can work for the logistics planning and management so that the patient can be quarantined on a fast track basis in case someone is diagnosed with COVID 19.

Quarantine management: The management students can get the quarantine management done in a professional manner so that the disease does not spread to other parts of society.

Supply chain management: The students can coordinate with various suppliers and vendors to ensure the supply of eatables and other necessary items to all the residents of the society.

People management: Students can convince people about avoiding unwanted travel for unwanted reasons.

Social distancing management: The management students can come together and sensitise the residents about social distancing. They can also mark the squares and circles with marking paint/chemicals and bring the behavioural change in the residents.

The writer is Professor (Dr) Rana Singh, Vice-chancellor, Sanskriti University

The **University of Illinois invites applications for its Merit Award** that will minimise bright international students' financial strain.

Benefits: The award of the grant is varied depending on the GPA — ranging between $2,000 to $4,000

Eligibility: Entrants can be citizens of any country. Applicants must be wishing to enrol in an undergraduate course at the University of Illinois Springfield.

As supporting documents, candidates can provide the following: Pre-qualification degree, copies of academic transcripts, certificates of English language proficiency, a statement, and a copy of passport.

Admission requirements: Applicants who possess a high school diploma can take part in an undergraduate degree course at the University of Illinois Springfield.

Language requirement: Entrants whose native language is not English will have to submit an official score report from the TOEFL or IELTS.

How to apply: Applicants will be eligible to apply for this application programme if their application for admission in an undergraduate programme has been accepted successfully.

Application deadline: The last date to apply for the merit wasrd is November 1, 2020.

The University of Calgary invites applications for its International Entrance Scholarship. Students entering the first year in any undergraduate degree in the upcoming fall term are invited to apply for the scheme.

Award: $15,000

Nationality: Anyone can apply

Eligibility: Must be an international student entering the first year in any undergraduate degree in the upcoming fall term. Must have satisfied the university's English Language Proficiency requirement. Renewable in the second, third, and fourth year at the University of Calgary, provided recipients to achieve a GPA of 2.60 or more over a minimum of 24.00 units in the previous fall and winter terms. Pre-qualification degree, copies of academic transcripts, certificates of English language proficiency, a statement, and a copy of passport.

Language requirement: If your first language is not English, you will have to fulfil the language proficiency requirement in by presenting one of the following:

How to apply: Students who have received an offer to study in an undergraduate degree program from the university will be eligible to apply for this application .

Application deadline: The last date to aply for this scholarship is December 1, 2020.

GRAPHIC DESIGN AT UFABER EDUTECH
Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4928757
Deadline: August 19, 2020

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AT ACADECRAFT
Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹20,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4928857
Deadline: August 19, 2020

MARKETING AND SALES AT BLINKIN
Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4928968
Deadline: August 19, 2020

PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE HATKE
Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹10,000per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4929410
Application deadline: August 20, 2020

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (SALES) AT MANGALAM DECORS INDIA
Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹13,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4929539
Application deadline: August 19, 2020

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AT BALJ TECHNOLOGY
Location: Chandigarh, Mohali, Zirakpur, Panchkula
Stipend: ₹14,000-₹24,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4929764
Application deadline: August 18, 2020

UAV PILOT AT ALTBIRD ROBOTICS PLC
Location: Ranchi, Lonavla
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹15,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4930038
Application deadline: August 24, 2020

STUDY ABROAD

Online to on-campus pathway is way forward

The University of Canterbury, New Zealand is offering online programmes for one semester for students to continue their studies

With the New Zealand border currently closed to non-New Zealand citizens and residents, University of Canterbury, New Zealand (NZ) is pleased to confirm that students outside of NZ will be able to start a range of programmes in 2020 in an online to on-campus pathway. This pathway will enable students to complete one semester of study online and then come to UC to continue your studies when the NZ border reopens to international students.

The online to on-campus pathway allows you to get started with your studies now, and still continue to be able to benefit from a truly international education and experience.

If you are eager to get ahead in your higher education, then starting your studies online is your best choice right now. Given the present global conditions, studying online is a viable way to begin your international education journey, and is a stepping stone to achieving a world-class qualification. Online study will also allow you to stay at home for a little longer, which is comforting in these times of uncertainty. Plus, you will save money on living expenses and be able to delay travel until a safer time.

The UC has changed the way we charge tuition fees for this pathway, allowing you to try out online learning before you need to pay the tuition fees. The aim is to give you a sense of how it all works and to decide if online learning personally works for you, without any financial risk.

Your tuition fees won't be due until seven weeks after you have begun your online study.

If you have already paid your tuition fees to UC, you will be able to withdraw from your online studies with a full refund up until these dates. We want to offer a chance to get comfortable with online learning, before you are required to make any financial commitment. If you find online learning is not suitable, you can choose to defer your offer and start again whenever you are able to arrive on campus.

IN BRIEF

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE HINDI UNIVERSITY SIGNS MOU

The Atal Bihari Vajpayee Hindi University, Bhopal has signed a MoU with First Aid Council of India. The objective is to educate the students of urban and rural areas who are unable to take education due to lack of resources, provide them employment oriented courses and increase literacy rate. Under this, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Hindi University and FACI will open study centres or extension centres in Madhya Pradesh.

This is a great initiative to increase the employment and self-employment. Through these study centres the university and the First Aid Council of India are going to start a one-year First Aid Specialist Diploma Course, Naturopathy and Yogic Science Diploma Course and Ayurvedic Pharma Diploma Course for students. Scholarships will also be provided to students by the university as per rules of Madhya Pradesh government. By completing this diploma, the candidate will also be able to open their own first aid centres.

Along with diploma courses, a number of certificate courses will also be conducted in this study centres like Ayurveda and Medicine, Unani and Medicine, Homeopathic Pharmacy, Alternative Medicine and Medical Acupuncture and Naturopathic.

55% INDIANS HAVE FACED NEPOTISM IN THEIR CAREER

Based on a recent poll conducted by Inshorts, 80% Indians believe that nepotism i.e. use of power in order to get jobs and other benefits for your family or friends over others isn't a good practice. 55% of these participants, at some point, have faced nepotism in their careers. Additionally, 51% participants believe that it is not only Bollywood that faces nepotism.

58% believe that it can be controlled or reduced and 62% participants will not consider taking a job/promotion by taking a favour from a friend or relative in power. The poll was conducted as a part of the Inshorts Pulse of the nation poll. More than two lakh app users responded.

Nepotism has been a topic of debate since quite long - and it is quite common for people to use their contacts to get a job, internship or a break in career. Be it Bollywood, politics or any other industry, the discussion of merit vs privilege cannot be silenced anymore.

A COURSE ON BIOMIMICRY BY IIT MADRAS

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras is all set to offer a full semester, one-of-its-kind course under the interdisciplinary stream on Biomimicry. As the name suggests is to imitate or look at Nature as a source of inspiration to solve complex problems.

It is the intersection of biology and engineering. You do not have to be either a biologist or an engineer to learn biomimicry, all you need is curiosity.

The course has potential not only in engineering, technology and design, but also in areas like management, human resources, administration, social sciences and the arts. School children can benefit from learning biomimicry and can lead to not just innovating from Nature but also creating a sustainable way of life.

To know more kndly write to: *shiva@thinkpaperclip.com* or call 9176612393

SINGLES

KUBO JOINS VILLARREAL ON LOAN

MADRID: Villarreal have signed Japanese playmaker Takefusa Kubo on loan from Real Madrid for 2020-2021 season. The 19-year old impressed last season in his debut campaign in the top-flight on loan at Real Mallorca although was unable to prevent the team from being relegated a year after winning promotion.

KUZNETSOVA WITHDRAWS FROM US OPEN

MOSCOW: Former US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova has joined a growing list of players who have decided not to play in this year's tournament due to concerns over the Covid-19 pandemic. The Russian world number 32 on Monday announced her decision on Instagram where she also said she would skip the Western & Southern Open which is being held in New York this year instead of Cincinnati as a lead-up to the Aug 31-Sept 13 US Open.

TSIMIKAS JOINS LIVERPOOL FROM OLYMPIAKOS

LIVERPOOL: Premier League champions Liverpool signed Greece defender Kostas Tsimikas from Olympiakos for a reported fee of £11.7 million ($15 million) on Monday. Tsimikas agreed a five-year contract with Liverpool and is expected to provide back-up for first choice left-back Andy Robertson at Anfield.

LAWRENCE EXITS BIO-SECURE BUBBLE

SOUTHAMPTON: Uncapped England batsman Dan Lawrence, who was one of the reserves in the ongoing Test series against Pakistan, has left the team's bio-secure bubble due to a family bereavement. "Lawrence, who has yet to make his Test debut, was named as one of the reserves in the *#raisethebat* Test series against Pakistan. He will not be available for selection when the second Test starts on Thursday at the Ageas Bowl," the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said in a statement.

SABALENKA ADVANCES IN TOP SEED OPEN

LEXINGTON: World No 11 Aryna Sabalenka made a winning return at the WTA's resumption in the United States as she battled past America's Madison Brengle to enter the second round at the inaugural Top Seed Open. The No 2 seeded player from Belarus defeated Brengle 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-2 after nearly two-and-a-half hours of play on Monday. But world No 15 Johanna Konta failed to enter the second round as she lost to unseeded Czech Marie Bouzkova 6-4, 6-4.

UTT POSTPONED INDEFINITELY

NEW DELHI: The fourth edition of Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT), scheduled in India from August 14 to 31, has been indefinitely postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. With sporting events yet to start in the country and the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) itself still not certain about the resumption of professional tour, the postponement was inevitable.

FSDL TEAM REACHES GOA FOR INSPECTION

PANJIM: A 9-member delegation of ISL organisers, Football Sports Development Ltd (FSDL), reached Goa on Tuesday and will be there for the next few days to take stock of the venues and training ground readiness. It is expected that a final announcement of the single-state venue, where the seventh edition of the ISL is scheduled to be played, will be made by the end of this week. The team will visit the three identified playing venues (JLN Stadium in Fatorda, Tilak Maidan in Vasco and Bambolim Stadium), about 10 training grounds and have also lined up meetings with the local authorities on their agenda.

MCA APEX COUNCIL MEETING ON AUG 14

MUMBAI: Resumption of cricketing activities in the megalopolis will top the agenda of the Mumbai Cricket Association's (MCA) Apex Council meeting to be held on August 14. Cricket in the megalopolis has come to a grinding halt since mid-March due to outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and Mumbai is one of the worst affected cities in the country. "We will discuss resumption of cricketing activity and also the Standard Operating Procedures sent by the BCCI to all the state associations in this regard," an Apex Council member said. **Agencies**

Lukaku scores in ninth consecutive Europa League game to take Inter in semis; Red Devils needed extra time to beat Copenhagen

United effect

Romelu Lukaku celebrates after scoring Inter Milan's second goal against Bayer Leverkusen during Europa League quarterfinal clash AP

AFP ■ COLOGNE

Bruno Fernandes scored a penalty in extra time as Manchester United scraped past FC Copenhagen 1-0 on Monday in the quarter-finals of the Europa League, reshaped into an eight-team straight knockout tournament in Germany due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Portugal international notched his competition-best seventh goal of the season as United set up a semi-final clash against Sevilla or Wolves, joining Inter Milan in the last four following the Italian side's 2-1 victory over Bayer Leverkusen in Dusseldorf.

"Third time this season we've been to the semis, every competition we've been in. Delighted we've gone through, we deserved to win tonight," United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer told *BT Sport*.

"Their keeper was fantastic, unbelievable. We hit the post a few times, there were a couple of VAR decisions against us. It could have been one of those nights that you end up with penalty shoot outs. They made it hard for us."

All games from the quarter-finals onwards in this season's Europa League are being played behind closed doors as one-off ties across four venues — Cologne, Duisburg, Dusseldorf and Gelsenkirchen — in a unique format following a five-month interruption.

Solskjaer recalled Fernandes, Paul Pogba, Marcus Rashford, Mason Greenwood and Anthony Martial but the 2017 competition winners struggled early, and 18-year-old Copenhagen forward Mohamed Daramy was twice involved as the Danish underdogs threatened a creaking United backline.

Bruno Fernandes scores Manchester United's first goal from a penalty kick AP

Greenwood looked to have put United ahead as he drilled in via the far post moments later only for the teenager to be ruled offside following a VAR review.

He again went close early in the second half when he slammed against the upright, with Fernandes promptly smacking the opposite post with a dipping 20-yard drive.

The Portugal international, who scored five times in the group stage with Sporting, stung the palms of Johnsson with another hit from distance — shortly after Aaron Wan-Bissaka made a desperation block to thwart Bryan Oviedo after a mesmerising dribble from Rasmus Falk.

OUTSTANDING JOHNSSON

Appearing in their first European quarter-final, and the first Danish club to reach this stage since 1997, Copenhagen continued to frustrate United as they sought a repeat of their 1-0 win when the clubs last met in the Champions League group stage in 2006.

Martial nearly won the game in normal time but again a sprawling Johnsson tipped away his curling attempt that appeared destined for the top corner.

The France striker was once more repelled by Johnsson at the start of extra time, but Martial won a penalty as United kept the attack alive and the striker was upended by Andreas Bjelland.

Fernandes blasted home from the spot on 95 minutes but Solskjaer's team were left to sweat until the end as Johnsson pulled off sensational stops from the Portuguese and substitute Juan Mata, with Victor Lindelof the third United player to strike the post.

United though ultimately ensured their 2019-20 campaign will extend into a second year, having started the season 365 days ago with a 4-0 Premier League win over Chelsea. Awaiting them on Sunday will be Sevilla — who have won the Europa League and its precursor, the UEFA Cup, a record five times — or domestic rivals Wolves.

Former United striker Romelu Lukaku grabbed the decisive goal for Antonio Conte's Inter against Leverkusen as the Serie A runners-up moved a step closer to adding to their titles from 1991, 1994 and 1998.

Inter struck first as Nicolo Barella guided in from the edge of the area on 15 minutes, with Lukaku bundling in a second six minutes later.

Kai Havertz reduced the deficit in possibly his final game for Leverkusen on 25 minutes after exchanging passes with fellow Germany international Kevin Volland, but Inter held on to seal their place against Shakhtar Donetsk or Basel in next week's semi-final.

"The defence did a tremendous job again tonight. We are growing but we have to learn to kill games off when we have the chances to do it, and we didn't tonight," said Lukaku.

"Now we have time to recover physically and prepare for another great game. We will have to be ready."

Sarfaraz should retire from Tests: Ramiz

PTI ■ KARACHI

Former Pakistan captain Ramiz Raja believes wicket-keeper-batsman Sarfaraz Ahmed should retire from Tests and focus on white ball cricket.

Sarafaraz, a former captain, was seen performing the duties of 12th man in the series opener between England and Pakistan in Manchester.

"In my book I am clear once you have been captain and remained on a pedestal then it is very difficult to come down and be on the bench," Raja said on the Youtube channel, *Cricket Baaz*.

"I would advise Sarfaraz to think about it and retire from Test cricket and just focus on white ball cricket, a format in which he is very good and known for his aggression," he added.

Raja, who featured in 57 Tests, said a former captain and senior player of Sarfaraz's stature carrying drinks, although not rare in cricket, is frowned upon in Pakistan.

"There is nothing wrong with that because even James Anderson carried drinks when he didn't play in the second Test against West Indies. But in our cricket culture these things are not looked upon nicely and if they involve a former captain," Raja said. "I don't see him getting a chance in the Test format soon so he should focus on white ball cricket where he will play and be respected as well," he added.

Raja feels the presence of Sarfaraz in the squad also adds pressure on Muhammad Rizwan, who kept the wickets for Pakistan in the first Test.

"He being in the Test squad also adds pressure on Muhammad Rizwan who knows there is a former captain keeper breathing down his neck and that is not good for him. I think Sarfaraz should not be on the bench. He should call it a day from Test cricket."

Inaugural Lanka Premier League postponed

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has postponed the inaugural edition of the Lanka Premier League (LPL) due to unavailability of top foreign players who would have had to undergo 14-day compulsory quarantine owing to rising cases of Covid-19 in the island nation.

The T20 League was scheduled to start on August 28, subject to approval from the Government and Ministry of health but the 14-day compulsory quarantine period turned out to be an issue with regards to foreign players

"We had a discussion with the health authorities and the 14 day quarantine period for anyone entering the country is compulsory. So it's difficult to play the tournament at the end of August," SLC President Shammi Silva told *NewsWire*.

"We will play the tournament in mid November after IPL," Silva's information indicated that they are looking at roping in the best T20 freelancers.

A total of 23 matches were scheduled in LPL which was supposed to end on September 20.

According to reports, a total of 93 international cricketers, including England's World Cup-winning pacer Liam Plunkett and New Zealand seamer Tim Southee, were also listed for the tournament.

IPL teams to carry exclusive net bowlers to UAE

NEW DELHI: The Indian Premier League shifting its base to the United Arab Emirates for the 2020 edition may prove to be a blessing in disguise for at least 50 unheralded cricketers, who are set to travel with the eight teams as "exclusive" net bowlers.

At least three franchises, Chennai Super Kings, Kolkata Knight Riders and Delhi Capitals confirmed that they are preparing a roster of net bowlers.

The list comprises mostly first-class, U-19 and U-23 state level cricketers who will get to bowl to the likes of MS Dhoni, Suresh Raina, Rishabh Pant for close to a month.

The convention all these years has been using local bowlers for nets apart from the junior fringe players but the strict bio-security measures for the tournament means that all franchise will have to arrange for quality bowlers during practice sessions.

While BCCI has capped the squad strength (players) to 24, the franchises have not been specified contingent volume which will vary from team to team but it could be safely assumed that most of the eight sides will not avail any local net bowlers.

"If all goes well, we are planning to take around 10 bowlers exclusively to UAE for the practice sessions. They will be accompanying the team and will remain till the tournament starts," Chennai Super Kings CEO Kashi Vishwanathan said on Tuesday.

The Kolkata Knight Riders also confirmed that they will also have 10 net bowlers in their roster, likely to be hand-picked by former Mumbai captain and their academy coach Abhishek Nayar.

"It will be a blend of players of who have played Ranji Trophy while some of have played U-23 and U-19 natational level tournaments," someone who is privy to developments in the KKR camp informed.

The Delhi Capitals are also taking around six net bowlers who will be a part of the team's "bio bubble".

"They will be staying with the squad and will travel with the team for the net sessions," a franchise source said.

The Rajasthan Royals are also on course to finalise the number of net bowlers they will carry. Royals as well as Royal Challengers Bangalore can fly out bowlers from their own respective academies.

It is expected that there will be a healthy number of spinners in overall net bowlers' list.

"On slow Dubai tracks, it will be important that teams stack up their line-up with more spinners especially for humid conditions. You will see a lot of left-arm spinners and wrist spinners who have played a decent level cricket being included apart from the pacers," the talent scout said. **PTI**

Nieva seeks 7 more boxers at national camp

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Resumption is done and expansion can now follow, said Indian boxing's High Performance Director Santiago Nieva, revealing that addition of seven more boxers has been proposed at the ongoing national training camp for the Olympic-bound in Patiala.

Nine male boxers and a few of their women counterparts are training at the National Institute of Sports (NIS) in Patiala, taking the first step towards a restart amid the Covid-19 pandemic. These include world Silver-medallist and top Olympic medal hope Amit Panghal.

"We are looking to add seven more boxers, two coaches and a support staff member to this list in the next few weeks. Approval has been sought (from SAI). We are assessing things one month at a time," Nieva said.

"The boxers who are here are training under the strict health safety protocol given to us and things have been smooth. I can't give you names but the ones we want included next are second in rankings of their respective categories," he said.

The camp started in the first week of this month after boxers, willing to take the trip to Patiala were quarantined, tested and then allowed to enter the NIS.

In between, a controversy flared up when the Olympic-bound duo of Vikas Krishan and Satish Kumar "unknowingly" broke the quarantine protocol.

The two have since made Bengaluru's Inspire Institute of Sports (IIS) their training base and won't be coming back, despite getting a SAI go ahead, due to the travelling involved.

"We are currently able to do 70 per cent of the things that we used to do," Nieva said of the training regimen in Patiala.

"As per the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure), we cannot enter the ring or do sparring or pad work. But we can do running, strength training, and lot of (punching) bags. That's enough for now," he added.

A boxer not able to access the ring, does it feel weird?

"Not as of now. May be another three-four weeks and it will begin to feel weird but what to do. We have to be patient. Like the rest of the world, we have to adjust and adapt," Nieva said.

With all international competition halted for the time being and Olympics postponed to next year, Nieva said the boxers can afford to take it a bit slow.

"We have enough time to get back top form. It's still one year for the Olympics, I am fine with the pace of training at this point. But it remains an evolving situation and we are all adjusting," Nieva said.

Kiwis to host Windies, Pak, Aus & B'desh in summer

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

New Zealand Cricket CEO David White on Tuesday said Pakistan, Australia, Bangladesh and the West Indies have confirmed they will tour the country during the summer.

White said New Zealand Cricket (NZC) is working to implement bio-secure bubble, similar to the one the ECB is using in their ongoing season.

"We are making tremendous progress. I was just on the phone to the West Indies, they're confirmed, Pakistan is confirmed, Australia and Bangladesh... So 37 days of international cricket," White was quoted as saying by *ESPNcricinfo*.

White added that women's team will tour Trans-Tasman rivals Australia in September with the reverse fixture slated for February.

"The White Ferns will tour Australia in September and then the Australia Women's team will tour New Zealand in February. We are just working through the content but probably five ODIs and three T20Is," White said.

According to the current Future Tours programme (FTP), New Zealand are slated to host West Indies and Pakistan for a Test and T20 series each. The red-ball series being a part of the World Test Championship.

Bangladesh are scheduled for ODIs and T20Is followed by Australia for T20 series.

Kohli, Paine best Test captains right now: Faiz

NEW DELHI: Domestic veteran and Ranji Trophy-winning skipper with Vidarbha, Faiz Fazal believes India's Virat Kohli and Australia's Tim Paine are two of the best captains in the world at the moment.

In a recent interaction on *Sports Tiger's* show *Off the Field*, on being asked who the best captain in the world, Faiz answered, "I am a fan of Tim Paine, he is very good as a Test captain. Virat is also very good in Tests."

On being asked about him not getting a call to the national team after scoring a half-century in his debut match, Faiz said, "The competition in Team India is very tight, I feel very fortunate that I played for India because that was the aim, to play for the country. Nothing can be compared with that. But I still aim to play for the Test team. But, yes, I feel disappointed that I could not continue my place in the Indian team." **PNS**

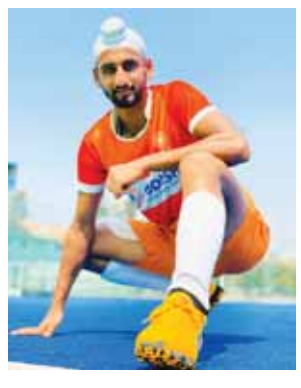
Men's hockey camp uncertain after 6 positive cases

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The upcoming training camp for India's male hockey players in Bengaluru looks uncertain after half a dozen of them tested positive for Covid-19 but the women can resume practice after all of them tested negative for the dreaded virus.

Six Indian men's team players — skipper Manpreet Singh, striker Mandeep Singh, defenders Surender Kumar, Jaskaran Singh, drag-flicker Varun Kumar and goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak — have tested positive after reaching Bengaluru for the national camp, scheduled to start on August 20.

Of these, Mandeep has been hospitalised after his blood oxygen levels dropped on Monday.



"The men's camp is in doubt after six positive results, more reports are still awaited from the state Government," a SAI source said.

"But the women's camp is still on course after all the players tested negative. They are currently under 14-day quarantine period and the light intensity camp will begin once its over," the source added.

Currently, 33 male and 24 female players are in Bengaluru for the camp.

The six Covid positive men — mostly from Punjab — were part of a 10-member group that travelled together from New Delhi.

According to sources close to the developments, the number could rise as all the test reports of the men's team have not yet to come.

The light intensity national camp was supposed to start in the last week of August after a month-long break and was expected to continue till September 30.

Mandeep shifted to hospital

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Indian hockey team forward Mandeep Singh, who tested positive for Covid-19, has been admitted to a hospital in Bengaluru after his blood oxygen level dropped but his condition is stable, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Tuesday.

"During night monitoring of vitals on August 10 (Monday) it was found that Mandeep Singh's blood oxygen level was dropping below normal which indicated that he is moving from mild to moderate severity of Covid," the SAI said in a statement.

"SAI authorities on campus took an immediate decision to shift him to SS Sparsh multispeciality hospital as a precautionary measure. His condition is currently stable," added the statement.

The 25-year-old has played 129 games for India and scored 60 goals so far. He was a part of the Gold-winning team at the 2018 Asian Champions Trophy.

Ikee to return to pool

TOKYO: Japanese swimming star Rikako Ikee has registered for a competition in Tokyo this month, her first since her shock diagnosis with leukaemia last year, local media reported on Tuesday.

The 20-year-old was a strong favourite for 100-metre butterfly Gold at her home Olympic Games before revealing last year that she had been diagnosed with leukaemia.

She was discharged from hospital in December after being hospitalised for about 10 months and resumed training in March.

Public broadcaster *NHK* and *Kyodo News* said on Tuesday that Ikee has registered for a 50-metre freestyle race organised by the Tokyo Swimming Association on August 29.

Ikee was also considered a contender for the Tokyo 2020 200m freestyle, but her diagnosis forced her to switch her focus to competing in the 2024 Olympics. She has not said if she plans to rethink and compete in Tokyo next year, following the postponement of the Games. **AFP**

Halep makes second round of Prague Open

PRAGUE: Top-seeded Simona Halep had to fight hard to advance to the second round of the Prague Open in beating unseeded Polana Hercog 6-1, 1-6, 7-6 (3) on Tuesday.

It was the first competitive match for Halep since she won the Dubai Championships in February. The Romanian will face next Czech wild card Barbora Krejcikova.

Second-seeded Petra Martic, who reached Palermo semis last week, overcame Varvara Gracheva 7-6 (2), 6-3 to face Kristyna Pliskova in the second round. Third-seeded Elise Mertens recovered from a second set scare to beat Jasmine Paolini 7-5, 4-6, 6-3. **AP**