

OPINION 6 SAVE THE COMMON SPIRIT

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GANDHIS PILOT SACHIN HOME

As Sachin insists he is still Cong man, high command orders Gehlot not to criticise Pilot, much to CM's chagrin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After rebel leader Sachin Pilot asserted he was still a Congressman and had no intention to join the BJP, the Congress top leadership stepped in to bring him back to the "family" even as Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot seemed totally opposed to his "homecoming".

In his separate media interaction, Pilot laid emphasis on attempt to malign him before the Gandhis by alleging that he hobnobbed with the BJP. If his emphasis on "Gandhis" was his way to reach out to them, then it didn't go unanswered. For the first time during the entire crisis, Sonia Gandhi reportedly asked Ashok Gehlot not to criticise the former Deputy CM and make way for his return.

Sources said soon after Gehlot slammed Pilot before the media, he received a call from the party chief who advised him to take steps to defuse the situation and not do anything to belittle Pilot.

This followed a press conference by Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala in Jaipur who appealed to Pilot to return "home" (Congress) and give up the BJP's hospitality at Manesar under the Haryana Government.

Later, Gehlot, who had been foul-mouthed Sachin Pilot also came with a tweet that he "loved" the new generation of leaders and tomorrow belongs to them. This was an apparent reference to his former Deputy CM.

Sources said that Rahul Gandhi, who has not been

involved in Gehlot-Pilot face-off all these days, directed senior Congress leaders to get in touch with Pilot and pave the way for ensure his return.

But buoyed by the fact that several Pilot supporter MLAs were sending feelers to come back to Jaipur, Gehlot unleashed a scathing attack on Pilot in the afternoon, accusing Pilot of indulging in horse trading to topple the Congress Government in Rajasthan. Taking a jibe at Pilot Gehlot said that only English fluency and being handsome is not everything.

Claiming that the Pilot camp was also hand-in-glove with the BJP's attempts at horse-trading in the recent Rajya Sabha elections, Gehlot said, "Horse trading was being done in Jaipur, we have the proof. We had to keep people at a hotel for 10 days, if we had not done that, the same thing that is happening in Manesar now would have happened back then."

In the morning, reflecting Gehlot's hard stand, Rajasthan Speaker issued notices to Pilot and 18 other rebel Congress MLAs after the party sought their disqualification from the State Assembly. Sacked Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot and the other MLAs were asked to respond to the notices by Friday. The notices were issued on Tuesday.

The MLAs had defied a whip and did not attend its legislature party meetings held on Monday and Tuesday.

"Notices have been issued to 19 rebel MLAs, including Sachin Pilot, yesterday,"



Speaker CP Joshi said.

Sources said the notices were sent after the chief whip of the Congress in Rajasthan Assembly, Mahesh Joshi, wrote to the Speaker, seeking proceedings against the rebel MLAs in accordance with the 10th Schedule of the Constitution.

The Congress also cited past Supreme Court rulings to seek their disqualification. Notices have been sent to all rebels through e-mail and WhatsApp. Physical copies have also been delivered to the official Jaipur addresses and constituency addresses of the rebel MLAs.

Among those sent notices are Vishvendra Singh and Ramesh Meena, who were sacked along with Pilot from the State Cabinet after their rebellion against Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Earlier, in separate statements to media channels Sachin said that there was no truth in the rumours of him joining the BJP. He said that he had worked very hard to defeat the saffron party in the Assembly elections that saw Congress return to power.

He said that he is yet to take a decision on his future course of action.



Hobson's choice for Pilot: Homecoming

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rebel Congress leader Sachin Pilot is now left with few options but to climb down after several MLAs close to him opposed any truck with the BJP and risk their membership of the Assembly after they were served disqualification notice by the Rajasthan Speaker.

Making this difficult for Pilot is Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, who is opposed to the efforts mooted by the Central leadership to bring back pilot once again in the "Congress family". Sources said Gehlot wants Pilot to be expelled from the party contending that Pilot could remain a "threat forever" to the stability of the State Government.

After his unceremonious exit as Rajasthan Deputy CM and State PCC president, it will

be interesting to see whether Pilot turns this rebellion into a turning point in his political career. One of the options before him is to accept a compromise formula to be back as PCC chief.

And there he can also have a major say in the next panchayat elections in State politics. It's unlikely that Pilot will like to be back in the Government and work under Gehlot any more as Deputy Chief Minister.

Another option for Pilot is to form a regional outfit with his loyalists, challenging both the Congress and the BJP in the next elections in Rajasthan, a State, which traditionally has, for at least the last two decades, witnessed the consecutive rule of the BJP and the Congress.

Pilot has a stronghold on the Meena-Gujjar community and both communities have 8

per cent vote shares each in the State. In eastern Rajasthan, the Congress won several seats in the 2018 Assembly elections because of the support of both these two communities.

Another possibility, which though Pilot has denied, is to get in touch with the BJP and break a sizeable number of MLAs to head a BJP-led Government. But this option is not likely to be a cakewalk for Pilot. The likes of former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, veteran leader Gulabchand Kataria, State party president Satish Poonia are unlikely to agree on Pilot as one of the CM candidates.

Raje will be an important factor for the BJP before it considers including Pilot in the party. Despite the electoral losses, Vasundhara continues to command Rajasthan BJP with a stronghold.

Trump's U-turn on visa policy, Indians relieved

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The Trump administration has agreed to rescind its July 6 rule, which temporarily barred international students from staying in the United States unless they attend at least one in-person course, a federal district court judge said on Tuesday.

The U-turn by the Trump administration comes following a nationwide outrage against its July 6 order and a series of lawsuits filed by a large number of educational institutions, led by the prestigious Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), seeking a permanent injunctive relief to bar the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from enforcing the federal guidelines barring international students attending colleges and universities offering only online courses from staying in the country.

As many as 17 US states and the District of Columbia, along with top American IT companies such as Google, Facebook and Microsoft, joined MIT and Harvard in the US District Court in Massachusetts against the DHS and the ICE in seeking an injunction to stop the entire rule from going into effect.

"I have been informed by the parties that they have come to a resolution. They will return



to the status quo," Judge Allison Burroughs, the federal district judge in Boston, said in a surprise statement at the top of the hearing on the lawsuit.

The announcement comes as a big relief to international students, including from India.

In the 2018-2019 academic year, there were over 10 lakh international students in the US. According to a recent report of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), 1,94,556 Indian students were enrolled in various academic institutions in the US in January.

Judge Burroughs said the policy would apply nationwide. "Both the policy directive and the frequently asked questions would not be enforced anywhere," she said, referring to the agreement between the US government and MIT and Harvard.

Congressman Brad Schneider said this is a great win for international students, colleges and common sense.

"The Administration needs to give us a plan to tackle our public health crisis — it can't be recklessly creating rules one day and rescinding them the next," he said in a tweet.

CBSE Class X results: Anjali Jain of St Joseph's Convent school tops in Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Anjali Jain of St Joseph's Convent School grabbed the position on city topper in the CBSE Class X Board exams in city. She secured 99.2% in the board exams. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) declared the Class X board results on Wednesday. The results were declared at 1:55 pm making the students and parents happy and relaxed.

Notably, Sareen Chhabra of Delhi Public School (DPS) secured second position with 98.8% and Siddhi Gothi of Sagar Public School Saket Nagar secured the third position with 98.6%.

It is to be noted that the CBSE Board declared the results of class XII on Monday and on Wednesday the results of class X were declared. The passing percentage in Bhopal zone is 92.86%.

Around 18 lakh 60 thousand students appeared for the



Yogita Dhakad, a student of Class 10 from Anand Vihar school greeted by her younger sister after CBSE announced high school results in Bhopal on Wednesday. She secured 94.8% and topped in her school. Pioneer photo

X board examinations this year from across the country. In Madhya Pradesh, about 1.5 lakh students registered for X board exams from 1308 schools.

It is to be noted that the board examinations of class X and XII were cancelled due to the outbreak of Covid-19. The results were prepared on the basis of students performances in their internal examinations.

The results were announced on the official website of CBSE www.cbse.nic.in. Besides, the results are also available on DIGILocker App.

Anjali Jain while sharing her contentment said, "I prepared really hard and was expecting the result. I would like to give all credit of my success to my parents and teachers." Sharing her future plans, she said, "I want to get into Indian Economic Services."

Respect peace protocols at borders: India to China

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After ensuring that troops have withdrawn from the stand-off sites at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, India and China mutually agreed on modalities to implement the next phase of disengagement. In the 15-hour marathon talks, India also made it clear that all protocols for border management for maintaining peace have to be followed.

This was the fourth round of talks between the Corps Commanders Lt General Harinder Singh and Major General Liu Lin on Tuesday in Chushul, Ladakh, in the last one and a half months with the Indian side also insisting in the latest round that onus is on China to pull back speedily, sources said here on Wednesday.

Given the sensitive nature of talks, Army Chief General M M Naravane held at least two sessions of talks in New Delhi on Wednesday to analyse the par-



leys. He later briefed the top political leadership while senior commanders also apprised the China Study Group.

This high-powered group comprises senior officials of Home, Defence and External Affairs Ministries.

In a related development, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will make an on the spot review of the situation on the LAC during a two-day visit

starting July 17. The Army Chief will accompany the Minister who is likely to visit some forward posts in Ladakh. Rajnath was earlier scheduled to visit Leh on July 3. It was postponed as Prime Minister Narendra Modi toured the forward areas there on July 3.

Reacting to the latest round, China on Wednesday said the parleys held to reduce tension at the border had made

progress in disengaging troops in the western section of the disputed boundary.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said it hoped New Delhi would work with Beijing to safeguard peace and tranquility in the border areas.

Responding to a query on the talks, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said: "As I know on July 14, border troops of China and India held the fourth round of commander-level talks building on the consensus of the previous three rounds and the implementation of relevant work have reached progress on promoting further disengagement between troops at the western section of the boundary and de-escalating tensions."

"We hope India can work with China to implement our consensus with real actions and jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the border areas," she said in her short response without sharing details or elaborating on the exact agenda of the talks.

6 of family hacked to death in Mandla

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In a sensational incident in Mandla district on Wednesday, two persons assaulted members of the rival family with sharp edged weapons killing six persons on the spot. One of the attackers was killed after allegedly being beaten up by the locals while the second one was apprehended by police after the assault.

A property dispute is said to be behind the incident. Those killed in the incident were massacred in gruesome manner, said locals. The matter took place in village Maniya under the limits of Bijandandi police station on the border of Jabalpur and Mandla district on Wednesday evening. Continued on Page 3

6,700 personnel of CRPF, BSF Covid +ve, 36 die

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Over 6,700 personnel of the Central paramilitary forces, like CRPF and BSF, have contracted Covid-19 till so far. Of them 3,093 are still active cases while 36 patients have died. The CRPF tops the list with 2,290 cases out of which 1,117 are active. As many as 1,160 patients have recovered and 13 died.

Closely following the CRPF, the Border Security Force (BSF) has recorded 2,093 cases out of which 1,024 are active and 1,060 patients have been cured.

The force has suffered nine casualties due to Covid-19. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) that secures vital installations airports, seaports and land ports besides other Government buildings and transport infrastructure has reported 1,306 coronavirus cases. Of the 1,306 cases, 417 are active and 880 have recovered and nine personnel have succumbed to the deadly viral infection.



The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the lead agency for the Line of Actual Control with China, has reported 707 cases of infection including 356 active cases and 348 cured patients besides three casualties.

The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), the designated border guarding force for the frontiers with Nepal and Bhutan has also reported 329 cases of Covid-19 with 179 active cases and 148 recovered besides at least two casualties. The number of coronavirus infection cases in the SSB ranks has doubled in the last 10 days and the number of active cases has spiralled up six fold during the period.

The paramilitary forces have added 2,000 new cases of Covid-19 during the last 10 days and the number of active patients jumped from about 2,000 to 3,000. The ITBP was the first paramilitary to set up a quarantine centre here to isolate evacuees from Wuhan China in February and beyond. The ITBP is also managing the biggest Covid care centre in the country with 10,000 beds at Chattarpur here.

IIT-D develops cheapest Covid test kit at ₹650

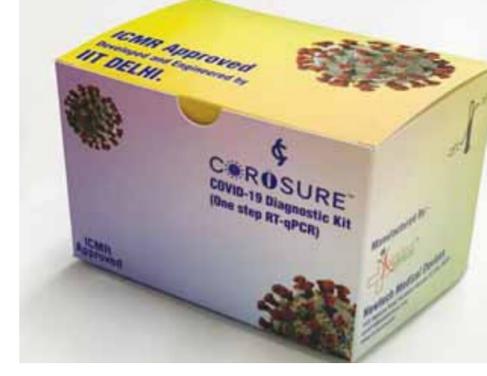
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday launched the IIT-Delhi developed low-cost coronavirus testing kit worth ₹650 approximately. The test kit, Corosure, has been touted as the most affordable probe-free RT-PCR diagnostic kit available whose test results would be available in three hours and the sensitivity of the tests are comparable to kits that are currently available and has been approved by the ICMR.

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and HRD Minister of State Sanjay Dhotre took to twitter to launch the affordable testing kit.

Newtech Medical will produce the affordable coronavirus testing kit which is cheaper than the usual RT-PCR kits because it does not require the "probe" components that are imported.

On the occasion, Dhotre said amid the coronavirus crisis, when widespread testing is most needed, this very low-cost diagnostic kit is a great feat that



the IIT-Delhi has achieved in such a short period.

"Innovation and entrepreneurship are complimentary to each other, and are also crucial for an Atmanirbhar Bharat. IITs have very robustly nurtured these two. Even in schools across the country, climate for innovation and new technology is being created very actively," Dhotre said. He also said the country's

youth have a lot of passion and potential for innovation and entrepreneurship. They only need to be provided right climate, resources and motivation. IITs have done a great job in this sphere, Dhotre said.

"This IIT Delhi technology should change the paradigm of Covid testing in the country, both in terms of scale and cost. This product, approved by the ICMR and the DCGL, is being



launched tomorrow. Two million tests at an unbeatable price," said IIT Delhi Director Ramgopal Rao on Tuesday. "The sensitivity of this in-house assay is comparable to that of commercially available kits," said Professor Vivekanandan Perumal, lead member of the team.

No plan to impose total lockdown in Bhopal: DC

Ibrahimganj under total lockdown because of surge in Covid-19 cases

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Amidst rampant speculations that the State capital could be put into total lockdown for some days, district collector Avinash Lavania here on Wednesday clarified that administration has no plans of doing so, at least in near future.

"For the time being, we will persist with Sunday lockdown when all commercial establishments will remain closed barring those supplying essential commodities. And locals would not be allowed to step out of their homes on Sundays," he said.

Rumours of lockdown in Bhopal and Madhya Pradesh were making rounds in full vigour on social media as Covid-19 fresh cases are on the rise since the unlock was implemented in the State.

"We have no proposal under consideration for impos-



District Collector Avinash Lavania with officials reviews a meeting to curb coronavirus in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

ing lockdown in Bhopal, said the collector adding those areas where infection is spreading rapidly will be put under stringent measures," he added.

Recently total lockdown was imposed in Ibrahimganj area in old Bhopal after fresh cases of infections were reported from there in herds.

Bhopal's situation has not worsened so much that is why absolute lockdown isn't required and meeting of District Crisis Management Committee isn't being organised, added the collector.

He however accepted that

locals are not abiding by social distancing norms in shops and offices adding that such people are subjected to penal action by local authorities.

A similar decision has also been taken in Indore recently which has reported spike in fresh cases of infection. Meanwhile Gwalior is put under total lockdown for a week, starting from Tuesday.

Shivraj Government's publicity department too tweeted a message on Wednesday clarifying that there are no plans to impose total lockdown in Madhya Pradesh from Thursday.

Will not leave any stone unturned in development of Agar Malwa: Shivraj

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan dedicated 15 development works costing ₹4147.95 lakh and laid foundation stone of 15 development works worth ₹2523.81 lakh in Agar Malwa.

Chouhan said that he had not left any stone unturned in the past and will not leave any stone unturned in future as well in the development of the district. The State Government is of the people and farmers. The State Government is committed for the development of people. On this occasion, the Chief Minister also distributed the benefits of various public welfare schemes among the beneficiaries.

The Chief Minister was addressing the programme organized in Agar Malwa district on Tuesday. He said that the State Government is with the people of the State in this hour of Covid-19 crisis. Free ration was distributed among the poor and labourers during the lockdown. If required, ration will be given to poor families in future too.

Arrangement has been made to repatriate labourers stranded in other states during the lockdown and an amount of ₹1,000 was deposited in accounts of each migrant labourer. Now, employment is being provided to



the migrant labourers in the State itself. The Chief Minister further added that our Government has done many things in the last 100 days, which the previous Government could not do in the last 15 months. He said that the amount of interest of those farmers, who have been declared defaulters because of non waiver of loans under the crop loan waiver scheme, will be borne by the State Government.

Chouhan further mentioned that despite adverse situation, the State Government has procured 1.29 crore MT wheat at support price from the farmers and the State has achieved the first position in the country in procurement. The Sambal Yojana has been restarted by the Government to help poor. He said that immediately after the formation of the Government, about ₹2200 crore towards crop insurance has been distributed to 15 lakh farmers. An amount of

₹4 thousand crore against Kharif crop insurance will be distributed soon among the farmers. Shri Chouhan mentioned that laptops will be distributed among the students of the merit list of board examinations. He stated that Urban and Rural Street Vendors scheme has also been launched by the Government for people conducting business on the street and through shops. Under the scheme, an interest free amount of ₹10 thousand will be provided to them, he added.

The Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that the day Agar Malwa has been made district, several gifts of development have been given to the district. A large irrigation project has been constructed in the district and wherever required dams will be constructed, he added.

Addressing the programme, Rajya Sabha MP Jyotiraditya Scindia said that the present State Government is a Government for public service. During the Covid-19 lockdown, Chief Minister Chouhan took prompt decisions in public interest to save people from the pandemic. He said that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has paved a new way for the world by taking the important decision of lockdown on time to save the lives of 130 crore people during corona crisis.

MCNUJC offers media business management, e-commerce courses

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Media Management Department of Makhnallal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication has offered admissions in BBA (e-commerce) and MBA (Media Business Management), the courses designed as per the demand in the industry.

"The curriculum of Media Management has been designed after interaction and inputs from leading academia and industry professionals, keeping the future of corporate sectors in mind.

Committed to provide excellence in teaching, the department introduces students to the concepts of Development, Planning, Functioning, Media Marketing and Brand building of Media Enterprises. The core task of Media Management course is to create professionals, who can bridge the gap between theoretical disciplines of management and the specifics of Media and Corporate sectors," said its HoD Dr Avinash Bajpai.

The department is providing specializations in Advertising and Marketing Communication, Corporate Communication and Entertainment Communication and E-commerce. The alumni of this department are working in leading positions in both media industries as well as corporate sectors. The department focuses on innovative teaching pedagogy where learning is action-oriented. Regular industrial visits, guest lectures, field study and industry-institute interface are the key features of the department.

Admissions will be given on the basis of marks of a previous degree/course. Admission for BBA (e-commerce) will be given on the basis of Higher Secondary Certificate examination in any subject on 30 seats. Admission for MBA (MBM) will be given on the basis of graduation marks on 60 seats. Fifty percent minimum marks are required for general category and 45 percent for reserved category for admission in MBA. Last date to apply online is July 31, 2020.



Former Minister and senior Congress leader Lakhan Singh Yadav addresses Madhya Pradesh Congress Farmers' cell meeting at PCC headquarters in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

St Mary's excels in Class X exams



Sparsh Agarwal

After the outstanding performance in class XII, St Mary's Convent Sr Sec school has yet another victory in class X examination. The school produced 100% result once



Devansh Gupta

again with 22 students scoring above 90. The topper Sparsh Agarwal secured 96%. Both Harleen Kaur and Devansh Gupta secured 95.8% and Ratna Solanki scored 95.4%. Sparsh Agarwal and Monalisa Rout



Harleen Kaur

scored 100 marks in Sanskrit. 100 marks are scored in Social studies by Harleen Kaur, Ayushi Mittal and Shubhi Sen. The principal Sr Mary CD, congratulated the students for their brilliant performance.

IN BRIEF

MOU SIGNED BETWEEN CRISP AND QLS ACADEMY
Bhopal: An MoU has been signed between CRISP and QLS Academy for imparting technical training of CRISP through QLS online training platform. Artificial Intelligence technology has been used in QLS online training platform so that trainees can get better technical knowledge and appropriate guidance by experts. Facility of evaluation and certification will also be available, post training. It is a pure Indian training platform which is more advanced and secure than any other platform. CRISP has developed a system to provide online technical training to the trainees through 'Blended Learning', 'Instructor Led Learning' and Self Learning Modes. In this online training platform, Artificial Intelligence establishes better coordination between instructor and trainee by observing various parameters. CRISP and QLS will present solutions to meet the needs of present and future, especially keeping the theoretical and practical aspects in mind, so that the trainees can get technical skills in the shortest possible time and their ability to work in industries can be enhanced.

PRATIBHA SYNTAX LTD DISTRIBUTES 10K MASKS
Indore: In a bid to spread the message of wearing mask in rural regions, Pratibha Syntax Limited, a renowned textile conglomerate took an initiative to distribute 10000 masks in the remote villages. Recently, the Ekal Gramothan Foundation on the behalf of Pratibha Syntax distributed around 10000 masks in some villages of Burhanpur, Barwani, Kharagone, Khandwa, Ratlam districts to provide them health security amid this existential crisis. This initiative was executed under the guidance of Shivkumar Chaudhary, Chairman of Pratibha Syntax.

DGP reviews law & order in State through video conferencing

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

All Superintendents of Police of the State were instructed by Director General of Police Vivek Johri that according to the intention of the Government, identification of goons and mafias in their respective districts in a planned manner should be done and strict and effective action should be ensured, DGP was reviewing the control of crime and criminals situation in the State through video conference.

He directed the to organise 'camps' to register complaints of people cheated by chit fund companies and said that the camp should be widely publicized so that information can reach more people and they can register their complaints with ease. These proceedings should be done in a coordinated manner. In this, along with the administration and the concerned departments, ensure the attachment

of the criminal's property or other legal action to make the proceedings success. Investigate the assets acquired by illegal acts by these anti-social elements and ensure joint action as per government rules.

He emphasised to take prompt action on drug trafficking and said that the source of the drug dealers should be traced and deciphered. He instructed all the Deputy Inspector General of Police to inspect the women police stations themselves in the next two days and submit report to the State headquarters by reviewing 100 of the women deaths cases in a week.

Effective control of road accidents, effective prevention of crimes against Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes, widespread awareness in the targeted group against drug abuse, proper arrangements per protocol during the stay of VVIPs in the district were some of issues discussed.

2 liquor shops in Indore violate social distancing norm

Indore: Both, the foreign liquor shop and country made liquor shop are functioning jointly at two places in Indore that is Bijalpur shop besides Indore Rau road and Rau shop at Rau square road.

With this, heavy crowd is witnessed round the clock and in the evening and night the crowd increases many folds. Due to the location of both the shops in one premises the customers of both the foreign liquor and country made liquor shop are coming all together.

As the Government has banned the sitting and drinking facility of ahata and shop bar in the country made and foreign liquor shops due to ongoing corona pandemic and only take away facility is available at the liquor shops but the customers coming to purchase the liquor are sitting in front of the shops in large crowd and they are not following the guidelines as they are not wearing mask and no social distance is also maintained by the customers and interestingly the salesman of the shops are also not wearing mask.

Instead of stopping the customers for public drinking the shopkeepers are providing facility for drinking in front of the shop by giving the customers plastic glasses and water pouches from the window of the ahata and shop bar which are closed. Both these shops are along the Indore Mhow highway and public drinking surprises people passing on the road.

ADEO in charge Balkrishna Verma told *The Pioneer* that he has ordered the shopkeepers to follow the mask and social distance and take away and for this every shopkeeper has to appoint the private security guards who should check the customers. If the customers are not wearing mask not following social distancing and drinking in front of the shops we will take action on the shopkeeper. PNS

RT varsity organises online 'Poet Meet'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Online Poets' Meet was organized on Wednesday. Observing the unique literary ritual Kavita-Desh, the event was organised. It was organised by Rabindranath Tagore University along with Tagore World Art and Culture Center and Vannali Shriyan Peeth, Bhopal.

Senior and renowned poets of Hindi literature were present during the poets meet. Poets including Nalini Pathak (Netherlands), Alka Sharma (Chicago), Atmaram Sharma, India (Guest), Sushra Hemvats (Netherlands), Rohit Kumar Happy (New Zealand), Harshita Bajpai (Netherlands), Bhavna Kunwar (Australia), Pragit Kunwar (Australia), Rama Joshi (UK), Raki Garg (India), Sheetal Jain (Singapore), Vishwas Dubey (Netherlands), Hemant Deshmukh (Australia), Sanjeev Dixit (U.A.E.), Shardul Naugeja (Singapore), Harihar Jha (Australia), Rakesh Khandelwal (USA) were participating poets in the Vishwa Rang programme of Pravasi Kavita.

The series of Kavita Desh was inaugurated under the chairmanship of Santosh Choubey, Senior Poet, Director and Chancellor of Vishwa Rang, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal. The unforgettable event of Kavita Desh program was organized under the guidance of Mukesh Verma, the well-known senior narrator of the country.

Santosh Choubey, said that a good poem is one that penetrates deep into your memories. Santosh Choubey further said that today we are going through very difficult times. Poetry and meaningful compositions in the coronation of the corona period give us a new energy. The participation of people from all over the country is also a good sign in this programme.

At the programme, the transparency of literature was appreciated by the audience. The literature lovers of the city appreciated the creations of some of the poets for their tremendous contribution in mounting up the literature among people.

Miscreants burgle manager of Kalyan Jeweller's house, steal jewellery worth ₹8L

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Miscreants targeted house of Zonal Manager of Kalyan Jewellers and escaped with 200 gm of gold from his Amar Vihar colony resident when the family was asleep in the house. Police said that the victim, Harish Nayar was asleep in the night and when he and his family woke up in the morning on Tuesday and found belongings were found lying over the floor and valuables were found stolen.

The victim used to keep keys of almrah below his pillow which was used by the burglars to open the almrah and his two pet dogs remained silent during the incident said police.

The circumstantial evidences suggest that the miscreants were insider who have com-

mitted the crime.

The victim works with the Kalyan jewellers. A complaint was lodged with the police by the victim in which the victim stated that family went to sleep after having food in the night and in the early morning hours they found that the valuables were burgled. The victim claimed that gold jewellery was worth over ₹8 lakh. Police said that the victim has the habit of keeping the keys below his pillow while sleeping and without disturbing him and controlling the dogs to remain silent could be done by someone acquainted which is under investigation.

Domestic help and security guards would be questioned in the further investigation. Police suspect the role of security guards in the burglary.

Police nab sex racket case accused on the run

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Abducting 68-year-old accused Pyare Miyan involved in sexual exploitation of minor girls in Ratibad has been nabbed by Bhopal police in coordination with Shrinaragar police on Wednesday, said SP North SK Thota.

SP Thota said that the Bhopal police took transit remand of the accused Pyare Miyan and would be brought to the State capital by tomorrow. Police took stern action after the matter surfaced of the sexual assault, exploitation and molestation of the accused and his luxurious lifestyle which he maintained.

During the investigation, his illegally constructed buildings and marriage halls were razed and several of his properties in different parts of the state and country and in foreign countries was revealed by the SIT formed to investigate the accused.

With the development of investigation new information of illegal acts by the accused have been found.

He used to have parties with his friends in his properties which are yet to be found correct and till date the flats and mansions which have been tracked were witness of his luxury life. At his flats in Bhopal it was found that the minor

DURING THE INVESTIGATION, HIS ILLEGALLY CONSTRUCTED BUILDINGS AND MARRIAGE HALLS WERE RAZED AND SEVERAL OF HIS PROPERTIES IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE STATE AND COUNTRY AND IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES WAS REVEALED BY THE SIT FORMED TO INVESTIGATE THE ACCUSED

girls were forced to watch porn and were sexually exploited by accused and his aides during parties.

Police registered a case under sections 376, 376(2)N, 365(A), 120(B) of the IPC and section 5 and 6 of the POCOA Act after minor girls were found near his flat late in the

night on July 11.

It was also found that he had strong influence in contractors of fisheries at dams in the state and used to facilitate contractors for his close aides.

Earlier on Tuesday SIT was formed to investigate the case and which comprised SP

South SK Thota who would lead SIT, Supervision would be done by ASP Rajat Saklecha, Chief Investigating Officer DSP Himani Soni while CSP TT Nagar, SHO TT Nagar, TI Mahila Thana, SHO Ratibad, SHO Koh-e-Fiza and SHO Shymala Hills would be other members of team.

46-yr-old woman dies after falling off house terrace

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 46-year-old woman who fell from terrace of his house in Indrapur July 6 died while undergoing treatment on Wednesday. Piplani police have started investigation. The deceased identified as Raju Ahirwar was rushed to a nearby hospital after he fell from terrace while he had gone for some work.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and a case under section 174 of the CrPC was registered. The police have started further investigation.



In the initial investigation police found that the deceased used to work with a hotel and used to live with other employees. On the day of incident he fell from terrace. Initially it was found that he was in an inebriated state but it has to be ascertained Police said that if it is found that death was caused due to negligence a case would

be registered. Meanwhile, a 24-year-old youth committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at Kokta under Bilkhar police station area on Tuesday.

Police said that the deceased identified as Mukesh Bhilal was found hanging and when he was taken to hospital he was declared dead. After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and a case under section 174 of the CrPC was registered. The police have started further investigation. Police have started to investigate the reason of death.

Action should be taken to contain corona: CM

State recovery rate 70% with 13,908 cases fully recovered

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that good efforts have been made in the State to control Covid-19. Positive cases are emerging due to reasons such as organizing marriage ceremonies and parties at social level, hence action should be taken to control it at both Government and social level with alertness. Social distancing, use of masks and precautions must be continued.

The causes behind emergence of positive cases must be eliminated. Chief Minister

Chouhan gave these instructions during the review of Covid-19 situation in the State today. He also conducted a separate review of Khandwa and Datia district.

Home Minister Narottam Mishra, Health Minister Prabhuram Choudhary, Medical Education, Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vishwas Sarang, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Director General of Police Vivek Johri were present at the meeting.

Chouhan said that the positive cases of Corona in Gwalior, Chambal region of the State have emerged due to contact with other neighbouring states including Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Symptoms of the disease were also noticed in citizens in the door-to-door survey during the Kill Corona campaign. All arrangements

to take samples of patients, their treatment and keeping them in isolation should be ensured to help them recover.

Additional Chief Secretary Health Shri Mohammad Suleman informed that improvements in contact tracing and other systems have led to better control. A total of 13,908 cases have recovered.

The State's recovery rate is currently 70.8 percent, higher than 63.2 percent of the country. Among the big States, only Rajasthan's recovery rate is higher than Madhya Pradesh.

Till Tuesday, 11 thousand 703 survey teams have conducted health survey of 75 percent population of the State in the Kill Corona campaign.

About 93 thousand samples have been taken, out of which 1611 were positive, which is 1.72 percent of the total samples taken.

'We will make Atma-Nirbhar Madhya Pradesh'

Says CM Shivraj Chouhan while lauding PM's Atma Nirbhar Bharat

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is a Visionary Leader and Man of Ideas. He has converted Covid challenge into an opportunity and has taken a resolution for New Atma-Nirbhar Bharat. To cherish this resolution, we will make Atma-Nirbhar Madhya Pradesh.

There is a need for maximum development in farming, farmers and villages in this regard. Special works have been undertaken in Madhya Pradesh for expansion in the irrigation capacities. In previous years, we have expanded our irrigation capacities from

7.5 lakh hectare to 42 lakh hectare and NABARD has contributed significantly in achieving this objective. In the coming times, we will make effective efforts to supply water to every inch of farmers' land.

Chouhan mentioned that it is a matter of joy that approval has been given on Wednesday by the NABARD for 'Lift Irrigation' project costing Rs 1425 crore of Madhya Pradesh. In addition, it has also sanctioned loan of Rs. 4 thousand crore for other projects. For this, 'I express my gratitude to the entire team of NABARD', he added.

The Chief Minister was addressing the Women Self-Help Groups, representatives of Farmer Producer Organisations and Progressive Farmers of various districts on the occasion of the 39th Foundation Day of NABARD through video conferencing at Mantralaya today. The Minister for Farmer Welfare and Agriculture Development Shri Kamal Patel, Minister for

The Chief Minister was addressing the Women Self-Help Groups

Cooperatives, Public Service Management Shri Arvind Singh Bhadoriya, General Manager NABARD D.S. Chouhan, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary Manoj Shrivastava, Additional Chief Secretary Manoj Govil and other were present on the occasion.

Chouhan asserted that Madhya Pradesh has achieved Agriculture Growth Rate of up to 24 percent. The main reason for this is special efforts in the field of irrigation. There has been special contribution of NABARD in achieving this growth rate. A significant role has been played by NABARD in development of agriculture, rural areas and agriculture infrastructure.

Chouhan said that con-

structive works are being done in the state to strengthen self-help groups. Now, the government will make available the loan on 4 percent interest rate for enhancing economic activities. The E-Shakti Yojana of NABARD will be fully implemented. The women self-help groups will play an important role in converting local into vocal.

The Chief Minister held talks with Women Self-Help Groups, Office Bearers of Farmer Producer Organisations and Progressive Farmers through video conferencing. Chhapli Bai of Ganga Self-Help Group of Ratlam district informed that her group is involved in business of block printing and manufacturing of Punjabi suits and bangles. On this, Chouhan said that he heard a lot about the bed covers and 'I would like to see it'. Expressing happiness over the comment of Chouhan, Chhapli Bai showed him a bed cover made by using block printing.

'Kachra Rakshas' screened at online theatre festival

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

To make people realize about the importance of cleanliness, a play 'Kachra Rakshas' was presented in the Online Theatre Festival on Wednesday.

The play was directed by Ayaz Khan and was written by Alok Sharma. The play was presented by the artists of Parivartan Rangsamoo, Gwalior. This musical play was based on the theme 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'.

Earth is distraught with the burden of waste. The public does not care about it. They are in the grip of all diseases, but are not trying to improve. Everyone is keeping their house clean and spreading dirt out. To make the earth free from dirt, Mahatma Gandhi again has to come to the earth to give people the right direction.

Gandhi's life is considered an exemplary life. He vowed to walk on the path of truth throughout his life, followed the path of lifelong truth. Mahatma Gandhi had the idea of truth in his mind which becomes the inspiration for people. Mahatma Gandhi continued to speak his thoughts freely without fear and his speech inspired everyone and later he gave freedom to the country.

He talked about cleanliness and his dream of swachh bharat. In the play, the blood-seeds are given the shape of garbage. Garbage is completely polluting the environment. In the musical drama, the people remain ignorant of everything that is happening around. The play gives out a message of how can people contribute in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. The play really explained the importance of cleanliness to the audience.

Let's take education to next level, says Delhi Edu Min Manish Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aiming to transform the education landscape of Delhi, Deputy Chief and Education Minister Manish Sisodia said 98 per cent result is not enough and all have to education to next level.

Citing Delhi's education model, Sisodia said, "Last five years showed us what we can achieve within the existing education system. Now our aim is to redefine the education system to prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century world."

After the announcements

of Class X and XII of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Sisodia convened the first joint meeting of Delhi's Curriculum Reform and Delhi Education Board Committee for the designing of new Curriculum and Board for Delhi Schools.

Lauding the efforts of government teachers, the education minister encouraged his staff and said, Delhi schools have achieved success on existing educational parameters.

Sisodia announced the constitution of two committees - DEC and a committee for curriculum reforms which he

promised during the announcement of annual budget 2020-21 in Delhi Legislative Assembly.

Starting the discussion with the exemplary performance of Delhi Govt schools in Class 12 Board examinations, Sisodia said that the Team Education should start thinking of taking education to the next level, "Our Delhi Govt schools have showcased exemplary performance in class 12 board exam results. This is a reflection of the work that has been done in the last 5 years. But 98% result is not enough, we have to work together to

take education to the next level," he said.

Sharing his vision for the next five years is to transform the education system of Delhi, Sisodia said the newly constituted committees will guide and tell us how we can achieve our aim.

The Committee for the creation of the framework for the Delhi State Education Board will study global best practices in learning assessment, reimagine current assessment practices and provide a roadmap for an innovative, student-friendly scheme of assessment to be followed by

the new Education Board of Delhi.

Members of this committee include Professor Ankur Sarin (faculty member, IIM Ahmedabad), Dr. Wilima Wadhwa (Director of ASER Centre), Ashok Pandey (Director of Ahlcon Group of Schools) amongst others.

The Committee for the creation of the new curriculum for children upto the age of 14 years will study globally renowned best practices in curriculum and reforms and recommend what is best suited for Delhi. The Committee is mandated to re-imagine cur-

rent curriculum, pedagogical practices and provide a roadmap for an innovative, student-friendly curriculum for the pre-primary, primary and upper primary stages in the schools of Delhi.

Members of this committee include Abha Adams (Advisor Education, Step by Step School); Ameeta Wattal (Principal, Springdales School), Dr Rukmini Banerji (CEO, Pratham Education Foundation); Vinod Karate (Social Entrepreneur and CEO, The Teacher App) amongst others.

The Education Minister of

Delhi stated that he convened a joint meeting of these committees, as curriculum and assessment are inextricably linked to each other.

Delhi government under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has shown what can be done within the existing education system in the past five years, by bringing about massive transformation in the quality of education.

"The team should think about redesigning the education system in a way that will suit the demand and challenges of the 21st century world," said Sisodia.

Two panels to prepare framework for education board, curriculum reforms

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has announced the constitution of two committees to prepare the scheme and framework for formation of Delhi education board and curriculum reforms.

The announcement was made in a meeting convened on Wednesday. In the annual budget 2020-21, the government had announced its plans for curriculum reforms and creating a new board of education for Delhi.

Starting the discussion with the exemplary performance of Delhi government schools in Class 12 Board examinations, Sisodia said that the team education should start thinking of taking education to the next level.

"Our Delhi government schools have showcased exemplary performance in class 12 board exam results. This is a reflection of the work that has been done in the last 5 years. But 98 per cent result is not enough, we have to work together to take education to the next level," he said.

Our vision for the next five

years is to transform the education system of Delhi and these two committees constituted for the purpose.

"The committee for the creation of the framework for the Delhi State Education Board will study global best practices in learning assessment, re-imagine current assessment practices and provide a roadmap for an innovative, student-friendly scheme of assessment to be followed by the new education board of Delhi," the government said in a statement.

Members of this committee include Professor Ankur Sarin (faculty member, IIM Ahmedabad), Dr Wilima Wadhwa (Director of ASER Centre), Ashok Pandey (Director of Ahlcon Group of Schools) amongst others.

The committee for the creation of the new curriculum for children up to the age of 14 years will study globally renowned best practices in curriculum and reforms and recommend what is best suited for Delhi. The Committee is mandated to re-imagine current curriculum, pedagogical practices and provide a

roadmap for an innovative, student-friendly curriculum for the pre-primary, primary and upper primary stages in the schools of Delhi. Members of this committee include Abha Adams, Ameeta Wattal (Principal, Springdales School), Dr Rukmini Banerji (CEO, Pratham Education Foundation); Vinod Karate (Social Entrepreneur and CEO, The Teacher App) amongst others.

The education minister also stated that he convened a joint meeting of these committees, as curriculum and assessment are inextricably linked to each other.

Speaking at the joint meeting, the minister said that the government under the leadership of CM Arvind Kejriwal has shown what can be done within the existing education system in the past five years, by bringing about massive transformation in the quality of education.

"But now the team should think about redesigning the education system in a way that will suit the demand and challenges of the 21st century world," he said.

Current Covid-19 situation better than what it was in June: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said that the current Covid-19 situation is better than what it was in June, but the war against the disease has not been won yet. In a digital conference, Kejriwal said there are three key principles behind Delhi's model of fighting Corona. Our three principles include teamwork and collectivity, correcting the lapses when pointed out, and not losing hope," adding, "Delhi has recorded 1.15 lakh cases against 2.25 lakh estimated in Delhi by July."

Citing a report of State (Delhi) health department, he said there are only 1.15 lakh total cases and 18600 active cases in the

"One and a half month back, around June 1 when the number of Corona cases was rising, we had presented the projected number of cases of Corona as of June 30, July 15, and July 31 in front of the people. This projection was done as per the central govt's formula of identifying the number of cases in the future according to

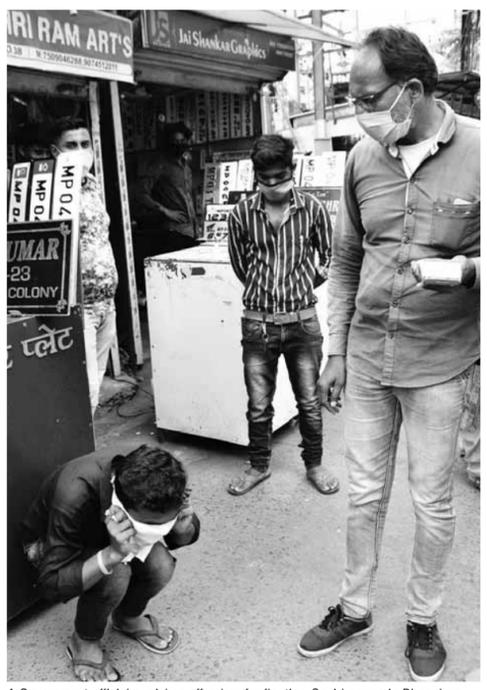
the trend at that time," Kejriwal said that as per the Centre's formula, there was a prediction of 2.25 lakh cases by July 15 according to the surge in the number of cases in the first week of June. Out of the 2.25 lakh cases, around 1.34 lakh active cases would have been active, for which 34,000 beds would have been needed in Delhi. He said, "But due to the collective efforts of all the governments, including Delhi government, central government, and the 2 crore people of Delhi, the actual number of cases is half from what we had projected till July 15. There are 1,15,000 Corona cases in Delhi, out of which only 18,600 cases are active against our projection of 1,34,000 active cases. Only 4000 beds, as against our projection that 34,000 beds would be needed. We have arranged for 15,500 beds for the treatment of Corona patients, out of which only 4000 beds are occupied and the rest remain vacant."

"The situation is under control, but as I say, we should not be complacent. The number of cases can surge at any moment. I want to thank all of

the people who put in the effort and worked hard to control the Corona situation in Delhi, especially the 2 crore people of Delhi. I believe that it is neither because of me nor because of the cabinet of ministers in Delhi, that the situation has been brought under control. It has happened because of the people, doctors, nurses, Corona warriors, who have worked day and night to control the situation without caring for their lives," he added.

Point out the death rate in the city, he said that in June, there were days when the number of deaths had climbed to more than 100, it has now come down to 30-35. He said, "We have to reduce the deaths further. We did extensive planning to ascertain the causes of deaths." The first reason was testing. Because testing was not being done on time, the symptoms increased and got severe, which resulted in the patient's death. We have increased the number of tests and people are not facing any trouble now."

He also said that more beds were subsequently arranged in the hospitals and other facilities in Delhi.



A Government official punishes offenders for flouting Covid norms in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

6 of family hacked...

From Page 1

The attackers, two in numbers, had killed the family members of Rajjan Soni, who is said to be associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Initial reports suggested that Soni's family had an enmity with neighbours. At around 4pm on Wednesday, Santosh and Harish of the rival family assaulted Soni and his family with sharp edged weapons. Santosh also was killed in the assault, reportedly by locals who caught hold of the attackers and gave them sound bashing after the attack.

The condition of Harish, second attacker, was said to be critical. Senior police officials including the SSP had rushed to the spot after receiving the report of this gruesome massacre. Heavy police force was deployed in the area after the massacre.

Those killed in the incident included Rajjan Soni aka Rajendra Soni, Vinod Soni, Om Soni, Priyesh Soni, Shreyansh Soni and Dinesh Soni, the police said adding Santosh Soni of another family was killed in the assault.

678 fresh cases, 7 deaths reported in Haryana, tally crosses 23K mark

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The total number of Covid-19 positive cases crossed 23000-mark in Haryana on Wednesday with the state reporting 678 fresh cases. The total number of positive cases in the state stood at 23306 which include 5320 active cases.

Only a day before, the state had witnessed its biggest single-day spike with 699 positive cases. In the past few days, Haryana continued to witness spike in Covid-19 positive cases with 658 reported on July 12 and 689 cases on July 13.

Seven deaths have also been reported in the last 24 hours taking the total toll to 319 in the state.

"Out of 678 fresh cases, 216 were reported from Faridabad, 82 from Gurugram, 66 from Sonapat, 36 from Rohtak, 19 from Karnal, 34 from Hisar, 33 in Ambala, 25 in Rewari among other cases," stated Haryana Health Department's evening bulletin.

Of the seven deaths, three



from Faridabad, one each from Gurugram, Bhiwani, Panipat and Nuh have been reported in the last 24 hours in the state, the bulletin stated.

With 319 deaths so far, the fatality rate is recorded at 1.37 percent in Haryana. The case-doubling rate in Haryana stood at 21 days, Covid positive rate at 5.91 per cent, recovery rate recorded at 75.80 percent, according to the health bulletin.

Till date, 17667 patients including 577 in the last 24 hours have recovered and have been discharged from hospitals in the state. There are a total of 5320 active cases in Haryana. Among critical Covid-19 patients, 64 patients are on oxygen support while 11 are on ventilator in the state, the bul-

letin added.

Meanwhile, the cases continued to surge in the worst-affected districts of Gurugram, Faridabad and Sonapat in the state.

The total number of cases in the worst-affected Gurugram district were 7208 and 110 fatalities have been reported till Wednesday. Faridabad has recorded 58881 cases and 104 deaths while Sonapat with 2170 cases has recorded 24 deaths.

As many as four lakh samples have been tested till date in Haryana. The report of 5499 samples is awaited, it added.

Notably, the Home Minister Anil Viji had a day before hinted at imposing strict restrictions in the worst affected districts to stem the spread of Covid-19 in the state. Commenting on the surge of cases in four districts namely Gurugram, Faridabad, Sonapat and Jhajjar which are in close proximity of Delhi, he had said that we are considering imposition of curfew in these four districts.

104 new patients of Covid-19 reported in Uttarakhand

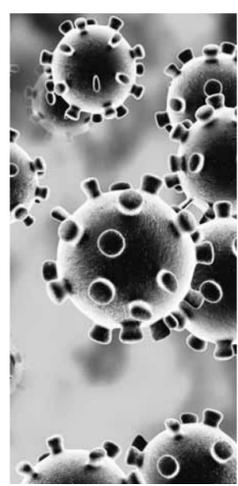
Tally surges to 3,785 in State

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The number of novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) patients witnessed a big jump on Wednesday with the state health department reporting 104 new patients of the disease.

The state now has 3785 patients of the disease. On the day the authorities discharged 81 patients from different hospitals of the state after their complete recovery from the disease. A total of 2948 patients have so far recovered from the disease. The recovery rate which was in excess of 80 percent till a few days ago has now dropped to 77.86 per cent. The doubling rate of the disease is 32.86 percent.

The health department reported 52 patients of the disease from Dehradun district on Wednesday. Similarly 24



patients were reported from Nainital district.

In Uttarkashi eight patients were reported while seven patients surfaced in Pithoragarh and six from Udham Singh Nagar district. In

Haridwar five patients surfaced while Champawat reported one patient of the disease on the day.

On a positive note 32 patients were discharged in Dehradun district, 21 from Udham Singh Nagar, 11 from Uttarkashi, six from Pauri, four from Almora, two from Champawat and one from Haridwar district. The state now has 754 active patients of the disease admitted in different hospitals. Udham Singh Nagar is at top of table in the list of Covid-19 active cases with 239 active cases of the disease. Dehradun with 188 active cases are at second position and Nainital with 149 active cases is at third spot.

Haridwar has 90, Uttarkashi 18, Pauri 17, Champawat and Tehri 16 each, Pithoragarh 12 and Almora four active cases of Covid-19. Bageshwar and Chamoli have two active cases each while Rudrapur has one active case each of the disease.

VIPPY SPINPRO LTD.
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NOTICE

Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Saturday, 18th July, 2020 at 3.00 p.m., at the works office of the company at 14-A, Industrial Area, A.B. Road, Dewas-455001 (MP), *inter-alia*, to consider and approve the Un-audited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter Ended June 30, 2020.

Further, the trading Window of the Company, as per Company's Code of Conduct for Prevention of Insider Trading read with SEBI (Prohibition of Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015 is already closed from July 1, 2020 and it shall remain closed till 48 hours after the declaration of the Un-audited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter Ended June 30, 2020.

Further the intimation is also available on the website of the company www.vippyspinpro.com and also on the website of BSE Ltd., www.bseindia.com

For Vippy Spinpro Ltd.
Sd/-
Isha Sahu
Company Secretary

Place : Dewas
Date : 15.07.2020

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Forces can buy ₹300 cr weapons without nod

Defence Ministry grants emergency acquisition powers for exigencies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Given the tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Defence Ministry on Wednesday, in a significant move, granted emergency powers to the armed forces to procure weapons without delay.



lines and ensure placement of orders within six months and commencement of deliveries within one year," the Ministry said.

Incidentally, similar emergency powers were given after the Balakot air strikes in February 2019. The armed forces have separate financial powers given to Vice Chiefs under the revenue route to procure ammunition and spares.

The latest order comes even as the Army has initiated the process to buy more than 74,000 Sig Sauer assault rifles from the US on fast track basis. These rifles will considerably enhance the firepower capabilities of the infantry soldiers guarding the 4,000 km long LAC facing China and

750-km long Line of Control (LOC) with Pakistan besides combating terrorism and infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir and the north-east.

It has also placed an order for Israeli-made light machine guns (LMG) besides 250 missiles of Spike Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) from Israel. In addition, the Army is also looking to procure additional Heron Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and man portable air defence systems among others.

The latest DAC decision comes days after Rajnath recently cleared acquisitions worth over ₹39,000 crore including acquisition of 33 frontline fighter jets besides missiles and ammunition.

Covid can take heavy toll on doctors: IMA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All is not well with the health of the doctors taking care of Covid-19 patients, for as many as 99 doctors have succumbed to the disease while 1,302 others have been infected in the country.



surgeons. "Covid-19 death amongst doctors is of great concern. Medical profession remains the beacon of hope for the nation to lead the exit from the pandemic. IMA strongly advocates the leadership of doctors in adopting all scientific best practices. Wide dissemination of such knowledge is happening through an avalanche of webinars helping doctors to face the challenge," said IMA president Dr Rajan Sharma and honorary secretary general Dr RV Asokan in a joint release on Wednesday.

Issuing a red alert, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Wednesday called for tempering the working hours for doctors' safety and monitoring on daily basis the provision of PPEs, physical distancing and sanitisers.

Operation theaters, labour rooms, laboratories and casualties require special care. ICUs and Critical Care units deserve close scrutiny for adherence to best practices and protocols, the IMA said which represent the medical professionals in the country.

The IMA pointed out that database of the National Covid Registry shows that in all 99 doctors died. Of them, 73 doctors were above 50 years of age, accounting for 75 per cent of the total deaths among doctors.

While 19 doctors were in the age group of 35-50 years, accounting for 19 per cent of the deaths and seven doctors were in the age group of below 35 years, accounting for 6 per cent of the doctor deaths.

In all, 1,401 doctors were exposed to the virus. Among the 1,302 doctors infected, 586 are practicing doctors, 566 resident doctors, and 150 house

They stressed on the need for a feedback system from the doctors, employees and public needs to be in place besides adhering to cleaning and sanitisation protocols. "Administrative gaps are being addressed. Clinics and nursing homes have opened.

Coronavirus may attack patients' nervous system, cause anxiety, depression: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Depressed mood or anxiety exhibited in Covid-19 patients may possibly be an indication that the virus has affected the central nervous system (CNS), according to a study published in the journal The Laryngoscope.

The study said that these two psychological symptoms were most closely associated with a loss of smell and taste rather than the more severe indicators of the novel coronavirus such as shortness of breath, cough or fever.

"The unexpected results that the potentially least worrisome symptoms of Covid-19 may be causing the greatest degree of psychological distress could potentially tell us something about the disease," said study researcher Ahmad Sedaghat from the University of Cincinnati in the US.

For the study, the research team conducted a prospective, cross-sectional telephone questionnaire study which exam-

ined characteristics and symptoms of 114 patients who were diagnosed with Covid-19 over a six-week period at Kantonsspital Aarau in Aarau, Switzerland.

The severity of the loss of smell or taste, nasal obstruction, excessive mucus production, fever, cough and shortness of breath during COVID-19 were assessed.

At the time of enrollment in the study, when participants were experiencing Covid-19, 47.4 per cent of participants reported at least several days of depressed mood per week while 21.1 per cent reported depressed mood nearly every day.

In terms of severity, 44.7 per cent of participants reported expressing mild anxiety while 10.5 per cent reported severe anxiety.

"We think our findings suggest the possibility that psychological distress in the form of depressed mood or anxiety may reflect the penetration of SARS-CoV-2, the

virus that causes COVID-19, into the central nervous system."

Sedaghat said researchers have long thought that the olfactory tract may be the primary way that coronaviruses enter the central nervous system.

Studies using mouse models of that virus have shown that the olfactory tract, or the pathway for communication of odours from the nose to the brain, was a gateway into the central nervous system and infection of the brain.

"These symptoms of psychological distress, such as depressed mood and anxiety are central nervous system symptoms if they are associated only with how diminished is your sense of smell," Sedaghat said.

"This may indicate that the virus is infecting olfactory neurons, decreasing the sense of smell, and then using the olfactory tract to enter the central nervous system," he noted.

Hospitals are functioning to capacity. Protocols and procedures are in place. Doctors need to take charge of the sit-

uation and ensure the safety of themselves, their families, their colleagues and staff," they said calling upon the senior doctors

who are decision makers for the institutions to take more responsibility to take care of their flock.

Modi urges youth to upskill to tap enhanced opportunities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged the youth to learn more skills to enhance opportunities in the changed world order due to the pandemic crisis. And he laid out the mantra for them: Skill, re-skill and upskill.

He was addressing a web conference on the occasion of the fifth year of the Skill Mevopment Mission. Referring to the portal launched recently for mapping the skilled employees and employers, Modi said this would help the skilled workers, including the migrant workers who have returned to their homes, to access jobs easily and the employers to contact skilled employees.

"The biggest strength of the millennials is their ability to get skilled. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has changed the work culture and started the concept of work from home; for this the youth are acquiring new

skills keeping in mind the new work culture and mind nature of job" said Modi.

"People ask me business and markets are changing too fast, it's hard to remain relevant. In times of corona, this is even more relevant. My answer to that is to skill, re-skill and upskill. To keep learning new skills is to re-skill and continuing to scale it up is to upskill," he added.

The Prime Minister stated that the Skill India Mission launched five years back has led to creation of a vast infrastructure for skilling, reskilling and upskilling and enhancing opportunities to access employment both locally and globally. It has led to hundreds of PM Kaushal Kendras being set up across the country and an increase in the capacity of the ITI ecosystem. Due to these concerted efforts, more than five crore youth have been skilled in the last five years, said Modi.

He described skills as a gift

which we can give to ourselves and added that skills are timeless, unique, a treasure trove and a means by which one can not only become employable but also help in leading a satisfying life. He said that a natural attraction to acquire new skills provides new energy and encouragement in one's life. Skills are not only a means to a livelihood but also a reason to feel lively and energetic in our daily routine. The Prime Minister also brought out the distinction between 'knowledge' and 'skills' in his address. He illustrated this with an example - that knowing how a cycle runs is 'knowledge' while actually being able to ride a cycle was a 'skill'. It is important for the youth to realise the difference between the two and their different contexts and implications.

With an example from carpentry, he explained the nuances between skilling, reskilling and upskilling.

Universal testing may reduce virus spread: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the incidence of novel Coronavirus infection goes up globally, universal testing besides implementing precautions like handwashing and wearing mask, according to a study by John Hopkin's University, may also help in slowing down the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for causing the deadly disease.

"More testing resources are urgently needed to identify the true burden of Covid-19 in long-term care facilities so that we can be more successful in curbing infection and mortality in one of the disease's major hot spots," said study senior author Morgan Katz from the JHU.

Researchers performed universal testing among all 893 men and women, at 11 long-term care centres in Maryland, USA. Initially, only people who showed symptoms were being

tested by the local health departments. It is found that among 893 people, 354 people tested Covid-19 positive, while only 153 were found positive when tested based on their symptoms. Almost 40 per cent of the total people tested positive during universal testing.

Universal screening, therefore, led to arise in Covid-19 cases among residents in the United state's long-term care facilities by 231 per cent. Of those who tested positive, about 281 people were asymptomatic.

"These results underscore the importance of universal testing, as symptom-based approaches may miss a substantial number of cases in long-term care facilities," said study lead author Benjamin Bigelow.

"Unrecognised asymptomatic cases among residents can severely hinder preventive strategies and increase the risk of the virus dangerously spreading," Bigelow added.

Recovery rate climbs to 63.24 per cent

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday said that with the number of Covid-19 patients recovering to 5,92,031, the recovery rate has climbed up to 63.24 per cent.

The actual case load of Covid-19 is only 3,19,840 active cases. "They are all under medical supervision. The norms and standards for Home Isolation along with use of oxymeters have helped to keep a check on the asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients without putting pressure on the hospital infrastructure," said a statement from the Union Health Ministry here.

The surge in recovered cases is driven by aggressive testing, timely diagnosis and effective management of the patients either through supervised home isolation or under active medical attention in the hospitals.

The gap between recovered and active cases has been consistently growing. It stands at 2,72,191 today.

The number of recovered cases outweighs the active cases by a factor of 1.85.

Medical infrastructure in India to treat COVID-19 patients includes 1,378 Dedicated Covid Hospitals (DCH), 3,077 Dedicated Covid Health Centres (DCHC), and 10,351 Covid Care Centres (CCC). They have a total of 21,738 ventilators, 46,487 ICU beds, and 1,65,361 Oxygen beds to treat Covid-19 patients.

The Central Government has distributed 230.98 lakhs N95 masks, 123.56 lakhs PPEs and 11,660 ventilators to States/UTs/Central institutions to ensure effective clinical management of Covid-19.

EC Ashok Lavasa gets new assignment at ADB

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa has been appointed as vice president for Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships at the Asian Development Bank. The ADB statement said he will succeed Diwakar Gupta, whose term will end on August 31. ADB appoints a vice-president for a term of three years, which can be extended by another two years.

Lavasa would be only the second election commissioner to step down from the poll panel before completion of his term after chief election commissioner Nagendra Singh, who was appointed a judge in the International Court of Justice at The Hague in 1973. Lavasa, a retired 1980 batch IAS officer of Haryana cadre, was

appointed as an Election Commissioner in January 2018.

Sources said the government had recommended a few nominees to the ADB, including Lavasa's name. Since election commissioners serve for a term of six years or till they reach the age of 65, Lavasa, who was appointed to the post in January 2018 and was born in October 1957 still has over two years of his term left at the Election Commission and was on track to become the chief election commissioner next April, when the current CEC, Sunil Arora retires. As per the provisions of the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991, an EC or the CEC can tender his or her resignation addressed to the President. Lavasa had made headlines

during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections when he gave a dissenting note to the Election Commission of India (ECI) giving a clean chit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former BJP president Amit Shah on charges of violating the Model Code of Conduct.

Soon after the elections, three members of the Lavasa family including his wife came under the scanner of the Income Tax Department for alleged non-declaration of income and disproportionate assets.

In September 2019, a notice was sent to Lavasa's wife Novel S Lavasa for alleged discrepancies in income tax filings. In November, the Enforcement Directorate started an investigation against a company in which Lavasa's son Abir was a director, for alleged violation of foreign exchange laws. The Lavasa family members have, however,

denied the allegations.

The ADB on Wednesday, said that Lavasa has a long and distinguished career in the Indian civil service.

"Lavasa led the Indian delegation in the climate change negotiations for the Paris Agreement and was instrumental in finalizing India's nationally determined contributions, which included a major role of the private sector. At both policy and project levels, he made significant contributions to the inclusion of the private sector in many development programs in India for different sectors such as energy, agriculture, finance, and infrastructure. As Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, he worked closely with many ADB projects that had private sector components," the ADB said.

Check black marketing of Covid medicines: Parl Panel

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A parliamentary panel on Wednesday suggested top government officials to check black marketing of coronavirus medicines, consider capping their prices and promote locally made and easily available cheaper medicines, sources said.

Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, Joint Secretary in Health Ministry Lav Agarwal and other officials briefed the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs chaired by Congress leader Anand Sharma on the management of the Covid-19 pandemic and phased unlocking and resumption of economic activities.

During the meeting, the committee members expressed concern about black marketing of drugs such as Remdesivir

and Tocilizumab, the sources said, adding that they also suggested capping the price of these drugs.

Cutting across party lines, the MPs advocated for promoting locally made and easily available medicines, saying the pharmaceutical lobby was trying to suppress the cheaper drugs by pushing for expensive options, the sources said. The members were also briefed by officials on lockdown and its effectiveness in checking the spread of the virus in the country. Sources said Home Secretary Bhalla made a presentation on the overall handling of the situation by the government.

The MPs suggested a national database of migrant labour be created as it will help in improving their social security and they should be given direct cash benefit and rations.



Suggestions were also given for schools to prescribe a fixed time for online classes and ensure counselling of students in these tough times, the sources said.

Appreciating the handling of COVID-19 crisis in the

national capital by the Centre, some members were of the opinion that similar efforts are required in other big metro cities such as Mumbai and Chennai. There was also a suggestion for a new law to deal with infectious disease.

61 dead, over 45L people affected in Assam floods

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 45.40 lakh people and 33.96 lakh animals (big and small) including poultry in 26 of the 33 districts in Assam are affected by the devastating floods. The flood situation continues to deteriorate with the number of deaths going up to 61. Over 95 per cent of the Kaziranga National Park, a world heritage site, has been inundated and 66 wild animals including two rhinos have died and 170 animals were rescued. This is the third rhino death in the park - the largest habitat of one-horned rhinos in the world - this monsoon. Most of the rivers in the state are in spate. According to the India Meteorological

Department, Assam has received 22 percent excess rainfall so far. The state has received 796 mm rainfall as against the normal of 652 mm so far.

Many roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructure have been damaged in floods and landslides across the state. The worst hit districts in the state are Hojai, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Sonitpur, Udalgori, Darrang, Baksa, Nalbari, Barpeta, Chirang, Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Goalpara, Kamrup, Nagaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Majuli, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Karbi Anglong.



lages are under flood waters and standing crops in 1.28 lakh hectares have been ruined.

More than 44,000 have been moved to state relief camps. As per daily situation report of ASDMA, over 45.40 lakh people, 33.96 lakh animals in 26 of the 33 districts in Assam are

affected by the devastating floods. The death tolls has reached to 61. The State Government has set up 426 relief camps in which more than 1.18 lakh people have taken shelter so far.

In a widely-shared video tweeted by BJP MLA Mrinal Saikia from Khumtai, is seen wading through waist-deep water to help rescue people and livestock marooned because of floods.

P Sivakumar, Director, Kaziranga National Park said that as many as, 66 animals have died with 23 deaths (two rhinos, five wild boars, a swamp deer, 14 hog deer, and a porcupine) due to drowning and 12 (all hog deer) after they were hit by speeding vehicles

and 170 animals were rescued. A total of 45 animals (all hog deer) have been injured - 44 due to floods and one due to a vehicle hit. Over 80 per cent Kaziranga Park has been inundated and 153 of the total 223 forest camps inside are inundated, of which 14 of which have been vacated. Water from the swollen Brahmaputra river and its tributaries has entered the Kaziranga Park, which has forced tigers and other animals to flee to human habitats and highlands for survival.

There were reports of more tigers being sighted when they were trying to escape floodwaters. One of the tigers was spotted in Karbi Anglong district and while another was seen near the National

Highway 37.

Each year, the monsoon floods inundate the National Park, located on the edge of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspots of Golaghat and Nagaon district, forcing a large number of the wild animals to leave the park and head towards the nearby hills in Karbi Anglong district by crossing National Highway-37 that passes near the park's boundary.

According to a paper published by the Assam government in 2015, soil erosion has claimed over 3,800 sq km of farmland since 1954 - around half the size of Sikkim. Approximately 8,000 hectares of land was being eroded every year.

623 more test +ve in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the second day in succession, more than 600 persons in Kerala were diagnosed with Covid-19. "On Wednesday 623 persons were tested positive for Covid-19. Out of this, 432 persons infected the coronavirus through social contacts. Expatriates accounted for 96 cases while 76 were those from other parts of the country," said Pinarayi Vijayan, chief minister of Kerala in his daily press briefing. Vijayan disclosed that 602 persons afflicted with Covid-19 were hospitalised on Wednesday. "As on Wednesday, there are 4,880 persons undergoing treatment in various hospitals. The State has till now diagnosed 9, 513 persons with

Covid," said the Chief Minister.

As the situation has turned grave and dangerous in Kerala, the Government has changed the catchword against coronavirus from the present "Break The Chain" to "Caution as Precious as Life", according to Vijayan.

The CM said 1.86 lakh persons were under observation in the State while 2.6 lakh samples have been tested. "The Government is actively considering the possibility of increasing the number of testing facilities and setting up First Line Covid Treatment Centres across the State," said Vijayan.

Thiruvananthapuram topped the list of districts with the highest number of patients-157. Situation in other parts of the State were not different.

Kerala Catholic priest wants to marry his rape victim

Kochi: Kerala Catholic priest

Robin Vadakkumchery, 52, sentenced to 20 years in jail in three different cases of rape and abuse of a minor, has moved the Kerala High Court seeking to marry the victim and take care of the child born to her.

Expressing similar wish, the victim has filed an affidavit in the court.

However, the prosecution expressed doubts over it and said it could be a ploy to get relaxation. The court has sought a police report and posted the case for July 24.

Vadakkumchery, dismissed from priesthood by the Vatican, was serving as a parish vicar near Kannur and was the manager of the Church-backed school, where the victim, a Class 11 student, was studying. **IANS**

Gold smuggling scam turns murky as Minister Jaleel's claims proved wrong

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

It lookS the noose is tightening around the Kerala Government led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan as the gold smuggling scam busted by Customs officials is assuming alarming size and spilling out new details.

While M Sivsankar, the former principal secretary to the Chief Minister who was summoned by the Customs officials on Tuesday evening was questioned for a marathon nine hours and let off by Wednesday morning informing him that he may have to present himself at the Kochi office of the Department if need arises, the day also saw Customs officials raiding the offices of Kerala State IT Infrastructure Ltd at the capital city where Swapna Suresh was employed as liaison officer by the IT Department headed by Sivsankar.

At the same time, the façade of denials by Higher Education Minister K T Jaleel about his telephonic conversation with Swapna Suresh, one of the kingpins of the gold smuggling racket was demolished by a section of

the media on Wednesday.

Though the minister, a former leader of the banned SIMI had claimed on Tuesday that he spoke to Swapna on May 27 at the instance of the UAE Consul General, details of call records aired by Janam News prove that he was having telephonic contacts with the controversial woman as early as April.

Though the Customs Department is yet to make any official statement about the arrests, seizure and questioning of the suspects, information trickling out of the Thiruvananthapuram office of the department confirm that Sivsankar had told the officials that he had close relationship with Swapna Suresh and he might have intervened once or twice to help her personally.

He was allowed to go home on the condition that he should make available himself for further grilling as and when needed. The Customs officials also got enough information that substantiates the close proximity Sivsankar had with Swapna, Sarith and Sandeep.

TN shows slight fall in number of active patients

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The Covid-19 situation in Tamil Nadu is a mixture of hope and despair as on Wednesday. While a total of 4,496 persons were diagnosed with Covid-19 on Wednesday (less than Tuesday's 4,526), the number of active cases in the State too came down on Wednesday. The medical bulletin issued by Tamil Nadu Government said there were 47, 340 active covid patients in the State on Wednesday. This is less than Tuesday's numbers-47,912.

The day also saw 5,000 persons coming out of hospitals, fully cured of the pandemic. This took the total number of persons in the State who were cured of the disease to 1.02 lakh.

The death toll continued to be in the higher side as 68 persons succumbed to the coronavirus on Wednesday. Out of this, 64 persons had pre-existing morbidity (chronic diseases). The total number of persons tested positive for covid-19 till date in the State reached 1.51 lakh by Wednesday.

Coming to the negative news, Chennai reported an increase in the number of persons tested positive on Wednesday.

MLA's 'murder': Mamata writes to Prez against BJP narrative

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after a BJP delegation met President Ram Nath Kovind seeking his attention to what they called a TMC-sponsored "cold blooded murder" of Debendranath Roy, a saffron MLA from Hemtabad in North Bengal, CM Mamata Banerjee wrote a letter to the first citizen blaming the BJP for "distorting" a "suspected suicide" for "political gains".

The letter handed over to the President by senior TMC MP Derek O' Brien also dropped hints of a possible bank scam with the unnatural death of the BJP Legislator.

Banerjee wrote, "...This is in the context of your meeting with a delegation of BJP who might have appraised you with some distorted fact." The letter further said that the dead MLA's body was "found on a hanging condition from a tin shed/verandah in front of a mobile shop which he used to visit to meet the local people. On receipt of post mortem and on primary investigation, West Bengal Police has reported that it is a case of suspected suicide and could be related to some local money transfer activities."

The note found in the pocket of the deceased leader referred to two names --- out of whom one had been arrested --- who were "allegedly found to be related to such money transfer activities in the locality," Banerjee wrote adding "I am sorry to say that it does not appear to be a political case being projected by BJP".

Roy died an unnatural death reportedly in the wee hours of Monday by hanging from a bar outside a shop about a mile away from his house. The BJP instantly picked up the issue calling it a cold-blooded murder and called a North Bengal bandh on Tuesday.

O'Brien who met the President for 25 minutes on Wednesday later said our Chief Minister has explained the entire in details to the President telling how the BJP is trying to politicize the issue."

Palghar 'sadhus' lynching: No bail for 25 accused

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Dahanu court on Wednesday rejected the bail applications of 25 accused in the much-discussed Palghar lynching incident in which two Sadhus and one driver were killed by a mob of villagers on April 16.

Accepting the contention of the Prosecution in the case that there were "multiple evidences" in the case against the accused, Additional Sessions Judge at the Dahanu Sessions Court in Palghar district D. H. Keluskar rejected the bail applications of the 25 accused on technical grounds.

Earlier, opposing the bail plea, Special Public Prosecutor Satish Maneshinde had told the court that the Prosecution had gathered "multiple evidences" against the accused. The evidence, he said, included: mobile Call Data Records and other technical evidence.

Among other things, the SPP had told the court that the examination of mobile phones of the accused revealed that they were present at the crime spot when the incident took place.

It may be recalled that on the night of April 16, three persons were lynched by a 200-strong mob of villagers near Kasa town in Maharashtra's Palghar district on suspicion that they were thieves.

The villagers first hurled stones at the van, prompting the driver to stop the vehicle. Later, they pulled three persons out of the vehicle and beat them to death in Gadchinchale village on Dabhadi-Khanwel road, with sticks and rods.

The deceased --identified as Chikne Maharaj Kalpavrukshagiri (70), Sushilgiri Maharaj (35) and dripte Nileshtelgade (30) were travelling to Surat. Of them one was the driver, while two are residents of Kandivli in north Mumbai. The place

where the incident took place is approximately 120 km from Mumbai.

After the incident, the Kasa police had registered three FIRs in connection with the lynching and assault on policemen. All the accused had been arrested a day after the ghastly crime.

In the first FIR, the police had charged 110 accused with murder under IPC Section 302. In the second FIR, the 110 accused were booked under IPC Section 307 (attempt to murder) and 353 (detering government servant from performing his duty) for assaulting cops and damaging their vehicle.

Subsequently, the Crime Investigation Department (CID) sleuths of the Maharashtra police, who took over the investigations into the case, arrested 25 more persons taking the total number of the accused in the case to 135.

Maha CM seeks realignment of Akola-Khandwa Rail route

Proposed route will impact tiger habitat: State Govt

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Concerned by the fact the proposed Railway gauge conversion of the Akola-Khandwa line would have an "irreversible impact" on the endangered species and their habitat, the Maharashtra Government has urged the Railway Ministry to withdraw the proposal and consider alternate alignment outside the Melghat Tiger.

In a letter shot off to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray expressed serious reservations about the proposal involving the gauge conversion of the Akola-Khandwa line proposed by the South-Central Railway which passes through the

"core critical Tiger Habitat of Melghat Tiger Reserve" in Maharashtra.

The proposal involves construction of tunnels by cutting and blasting rocks using heavy machinery and explosives. It also involves realignment away from the existing track to ease sharp curves on 23.48 km out of a total length of 38 km "passing through the core area of the Tiger Reserve". "This amounts to realignment and not just the gauge conversion along the existing railway track," he said.

"Considering that the long-term irreversible impacts of the gauge conversion on endangered species like the Tiger and their habitat, it would be appropriate to focus

on alternative alignments which would not only ensure much required space for the wild life but also bring railway connectivity and greater economic development to hitherto unconnected villages located in Jalgaon-Jamed and Sangrampur talukas and benefiting almost 100 villages in the vicinity of the alternative alignment," the chief minister wrote in his letter.

The chief minister went on to urge the minister to "withdraw" the proposal and consider alternative alignment of the railway line outside the Melghat Tiger Reserve "in the interest of wildlife conservation in general and protection of the tiger habitat in particular". In this context Uddhav said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had himself said that the "the conservation of tigers is not a choice but an imperative".

IT Development Agency (I.T.D.A.)
(Department of Information Technology)
Government of Uttarakhanda
Tender Notice No. 07/16-ITDA-PR/02P/1/2020-Project dated 02/07/2020
Corrigendum
Selection of Service Provider for Procurement of Smart Phone & Tablet
A corrigendum has been uploaded on procurement portal <https://www.uktenders.gov.in> regarding changes in tender dates.
Other terms and conditions of tender document will remain same.
DIRECTOR

PUBLIC NOTICE
We, Mrs Anita Singhal W/o Sh I.C Singhal and Mr I.C. Singhal S/o Late Sh. R.N. Rai both R/o D-306, Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024, holders of 100 shares of Rs.10 each of Shree Cement Ltd, hereby give notice that the original share certificate numbers 51098 & 51099 distinctive numbers 14088554 to 653, Folio No. SCL008535 have been lost & we have applied to the company for the issue of duplicate shares in lieu thereof. Any person who is in possession of said shares certificates or has any objection to the issue of duplicate share certificate, is requested to contact Shree Cement Ltd, Bangur Nagar P.B. No. 33, Beawar 305901 Dist. Ajmer Rajasthan within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which Shree cement Ltd will proceed to issue duplicate share certificates New Delhi Dated 16 July 2020
Mrs Anita Singhal & Mr I.C Singhal

Will act against those cheating Covid-19 patients with fake plasma samples: Maha Govt

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Taking serious cognisance of complaints about some miscreants cheating the needy Covid-19 patients after plasma, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said on Wednesday that the State Government would initiate stern action against those fleecing the people by making false claims of having tested positive for Covid-19 and promising donation of plasma samples for treatment.

Talking to media persons here, Deshmukh said: "Many infected people are getting cured by the plasma donated by the cured patients. ...It being the case that only the cured patients can donate plasma, some people are taking advantage of the situation to make false claims through affidavits that they

had tested positive Covid-19 to make plasma donations".

"Though no one has come forward to complain formally about lakhs of rupees collected from them by making false claims of having tested positive for Coronavirus and promising plasma samples, I have heard such things are happening. If the affected people come forward and lodge complaints with the police, we will take serious cognisance of the complaints and act sternly against the miscreants. We will allow miscreants cheating the Covid-19 patients who genuinely need plasma samples from the cured patients," the Minister said.

"I request the affected Covid-19 patients to either lodge a complaint at the police station or make a complaint on www.cybercrime.gov.in," Deshmukh said.

7,975 afflicted, 233 die in Maharashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The total number of Covid-19 infections crossed 7,000 mark in Maharashtra on Wednesday, as the State recorded 7,975 new positive cases while 233 more people succumbed to the pandemic.

With 7,975 fresh infections and 233 fatalities, the total number of positive cases in the cases jumped to 2,75,640, while the total number of deaths inched closer to 11,000 as the figure touched 10,928.

Of the total deaths reported to Wednesday, Mumbai alone accounted for 62 deaths, which took the total number of deaths in the metropolis from 5,405 to 5,467, while the total number of Covid-19 cases rose by 1,374 to touch 96,474.

In addition to 62 deaths recorded in Mumbai, there were 49 deaths in Thane, 48 deaths in Pune, 14 in Jalgaon, 13 in Nashik, 10 in Solapur, 6 in Palghar, 5 each in Raigad, Kolhapur and Aurangabad, 4 in

Latur, 3 each in Dhule and Jalna, 2 in Sangli, 1 each in Satara, Ratnagiri, Nanded and Amravati.

With 67360 infected cases and 1818 deaths, Thane continued to be the second worst hit district in Maharashtra. Pune, which has emerged as the third worst affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 44202 infections and 1,200 deaths till now.

In a related development, the total number of patients discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year touched 1,52,613. The recovery rate in the state stood at 55.37 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 3.96 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the state at 1,11,801.

Out of 14,08,901 samples sent to laboratories, 2,75,640 have tested positive (19.56 per cent) for Covid-19 until Wednesday.

Abducted BJP leader safely rescued by J&K Police

Jammu: Mehraj Din Malla, an

abducted Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Vice-President of Watergarm Municipal Committee, Baramulla was safely rescued by the Jammu and Kashmir Police late Wednesday evening.

He was abducted by 'unidentified' terrorists from Rafiabad area of Baramulla. Inspector General of Police, Kashmir ranger Vijay Kumar late evening confirmed, "Mehraj Din Malla, BJP leader & vice-president of Watergarm Municipal Committee in Baramulla who was abducted earlier today has been rescued by Police".

After the killing of a young BJP leader Sheikh Wasim Bari, former district President Bhandipora, the abduction of another BJP leader had kept senior police officers on their tenterhooks throughout the day.

Several teams of Jammu and Kashmir police were working on ground zero since morning to track down the footprints

of his abductors. Mehraj Din Malla's family members including his daughter had made passionate appeals to those unidentified abductors to release their loved one.

Unconfirmed reports indicated, after identifying the abductors, local police teams had called family members of a Lashkar-e- Tayyeba commander to one of the police stations to ensure safe release of a BJP leader. It is learnt, a local LeT commander identified as Sajjad had issued threats to BJP leaders and family members of policemen of dire consequences. **PNS**

PARADIP PORT TRUST
CORRIGENDUM-1
dtd.13.07.2020 TO
e-TCN No.TD/TM/GEN-235 (Vol-IV)/201717 dtd.24.06.2020 for
Allocation of 08 (Eight) nos. of Mechanical Iron Ore/Iron Ore Pellet plots at IOHP. Last Date of Bid Submission: 20.07.2020, 1500 Hrs. Bid Opening Date: 21.07.2020, 1200 Hrs. Refer our website for details of Corrigendum-1 published at: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/>. **Traffic Manager PPT/PR/128/20-21, Dt:14.07.2020**

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL



General public is here by informed that one girl **Namely: Gudiya, D/o Virender, R/o Khasra No. 322/268, Gali No. 1, Ishu Vihar, Mukundpur Part 2, Delhi. Age: 20 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Round Built: Medium, Wearing: Yellow colour suit, salwar and velly in feet has been missing/kidnapped since 08.06.2020 at about 6.00 PM from her house the area of PS. Bhalswa Diary, Delhi.**

In this regard a DD No. 48A dated 09.06.2020 has been registered at P.S. Bhalswa Diary, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Ph: 011-24368639
SHO P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi Ph. 011-27811933, 27811934 DP/329/0N/2020

RAJASTHAN STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Head Office, Parivahan Marg, Jaipur
NIT for Supply, Deployment and Maintenance of FASTags on RSRTC Buses
Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC), Jaipur invite bids from eligible bidders who have necessary qualifications and experience to carry out the work for Supply, Deployment and Maintenance of FASTags on RSRTC Buses in a time bound manner. Details of this tender notifications and eligibility criteria can be seen in the NIT exhibited on website <https://eproc.raajasthan.gov.in> <https://rsrtc.raajasthan.gov.in> and <https://sppp.raajasthan.gov.in> from 09th July 2020 onward.
UBN No. RTC2021WSOB00078
Advt. No. 35/2020-21
Raj.Samwad/C/20/2258
Executive Director (Traffic)

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
(A Statutory Institute governed by the NIFT Act 2006) (Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)
NIFT Campus, Hauz Khas, Near Gulmohar Park, New Delhi-110016
TENDER NOTICE
Tender No. NIFT-DEL/BLDG/706/2020
NIFT invites Sealed Tenders for electrical points work at NIFT Campus, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-16 from reputed & eligible manufacturers/agencies. Detailed tender document can be downloaded from NIFT's website E-portal - <https://nift.eproc.in>
Earnest Money Deposit - ₹ 25000/-
Last Date of submission of tender - 27.07.2020 at 03:00 PM
Scheduled date of opening of tender - 27.07.2020 at 03:30 PM
Estate Engineer (Bldg)

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Mrs. Renu Narayanan wife of Shri Anantha Narayanan and Shri Anantha Narayanan son of Shri V.K. Mahalingam are the registered owners of Freehold Dwelling Unit on Ground Floor area measuring 784.22 Sq.Ft, built on Plot No. 410, land measuring 160 Sq.Yards, in Ashoka Enclave, Extn-III, Faridabad, Haryana having purchased from Smt. Deepthi Sharma wife of Late Aseem B.Sharma by virtue of registered Sale Deed dated 10.11.2019. If any person including banks, financial institutions or any other person, relative, organization, company, firm or government authority having any claim, right, title or any interest of any nature whatsoever into the referred property, is hereby called upon to make the same known, in writing with documentary evidence by registered AD Post to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 15 (Fifteen Days) days of publication of this notice, failing which the same shall be deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned.
Karnail Singh, Advocate Ch. No.153, Saket Court Complex, New Delhi-110014.

SEARCH FOR MISSING
General Public is hereby informed that one lady **Namely: Shalu, D/o: Ombril Pal, R/o: H.No. 22, Shiv Mandir Mohalla, Badli Village, Delhi, Age: 25 Years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Normal, Wearing: Black Colour Suit and Salwar & Hawai Chappal in feet has been missing since 16.06.2020 from her house. In this regard DD No. 77A, Dated 20.06.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Samaipur Badli, Delhi.**
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing lady but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing lady please inform the undersigned.
Web-site: <http://cbi.nic.in> E-Mail ID: cic@cbi.gov.in SHO P.S. Samaipur Badli, Delhi Ph: 011-24368639 DP/317/ON/2020

DELHI JAL BOARD
GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (NORTH WEST)-I
H-BLOCK UDYOG NAGAR INDL. AREA
PEERA GARHI CHOWK NEW DELHI-41
NIT NO-17/EE(NW)1/(2020-21)
PRESS NOTICE TENDER

| S. No. | Name of Work | Amount Put to tender (Rs.) | E/M (Rs.) & Processing Fees | Date of release of tender in procurement solution/I.D. No. | Last date/ time of receipt of tender through procurement solution |
|--------|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 1. | Engagement of 20 No. Beldars on hire basis for day to day maintenance of water lines in Kiran (AC-09) under ZEE/EE(NW)1. (Re-nw/le) | Item Rate | 70,000/- 500/- | 14/07/2020/ 2020_DJB_192661_1 | 24-07-2020 at 3:00 PM. |

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 102/2020-21
Sd/ (Himanshu Agarwal) EX. ENGINEER (NW)-I

PAPER WITH PASSION

Digital reliance

Raising funds in the midst of a pandemic is no joke. Mukesh Ambani should be applauded but is his nervousness justified?



On the day Reliance Industries held its first virtual annual general meeting, India's largest and most valuable private enterprise announced that search giant Google has invested \$4.5 billion into Reliance's Jio platforms, the conglomerate's digital arm. This raises the amount that India's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, has raised for Reliance Jio to close to \$20 billion, an impressive feat in the best of times. But given that the world is suffering a healthcare meltdown, thanks to the Coronavirus pandemic, this is an extraordinary feat. In all, Google plans to pump \$10 billion over the next five to seven years in the Indian market to help accelerate the adoption of digital technologies. A flurry of deals made in recent times has given the much-needed financial backing to Ambani's ambition to morph Reliance from an energy company to an e-commerce giant. Almost all the funds have been raised by American technology firms and financial institutions. Both Google and Facebook are part of the firm, much like its parent Reliance Industries. Jio is trying to become completely vertically integrated. It is doing it all — from creating 5G infrastructure at home to manufacturing smartphones for users, the creation of software services like Jio Meet as well as expanding Reliance's huge media play by owning a host of entertainment and news channels. The biggest single positive here is that Mukesh Ambani, like his father Dhirubhai Ambani before him, is a believer in India and the capabilities of this nation. He plans to build capacity within the country rather than import it. This was something made vitally important to every single Indian after the fire-breathing Chinese Dragon singed us last month. We can argue *ad nauseam* about how China might have lost the Indian market for a couple of generations but nothing speaks like action. While he might not look like it, Mukesh Ambani is a man of action. And for all this, he must be applauded.

However, and there's always a however, the way Reliance has garnered its funds and the fact that it is on the verge of becoming a monopolistic venture in telecommunications and technology services with only a couple of rivals — one of which is almost bankrupt — it does raise some concern. It remains to be seen how Ambani will deploy the funds raised in the Indian market. Will he buy out rivals in the e-commerce and groceries space? Or will every Indian have to move from one Reliance store to the next, albeit in the guise of other brands, thanks to Reliance retail owning the rights of several multinational brands in India? Or is there another way of looking at it? Should India nurture and raise national champions like Reliance Industries? The old guard of Indian companies could not scale enough or be scaled in different areas. As for Reliance, the pivot towards Jio and telecom has been a long time coming. The family feud meant that Mukesh Ambani had to wait for a decade and for his brother to mess up to get back into this space. He is not wasting any time now and his ambitions have scaled up from the time he launched Reliance Infocomm. With a clear roadmap for the future, his execution capabilities and striking a string of deals, Mukesh Ambani has proved just how an extremely competitive industry like telecom can yield striking returns. He is also securing the future for the Ambani clan for another half a century and possibly doing more to secure India's digital future away from the Chinese than any other individual.

Trouble in Chabahar

Iran drops India from Chabahar port rail project as China seals a new economic and security deal worth \$400 billion



India's traditional relationship with Iran is finally being stretched by our strategic closeness to the US and is pushing that nation directly into the arms of China. And this might cost us a project that we had heavily invested in, the Chabahar port. For now, the Iranian Government has decided to drop India as a partner for the construction of a rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border with Afghanistan, and go on its own. It will use its own engineers and not consult Indian expertise either. This, it claims, is because of India's

tardy initiative and not moving any funds although an agreement was signed four years ago. India has been stalling under the shadow of US sanctions, which seek to penalise countries doing business with Iran. According to reports, Iran, which wants to complete the line by March 2022, will use \$400 million from the Iranian National Development Fund. And despite a pandemic-hit economy, it is going in for massive spends simply because China has signed a 25-year economic and security partnership with it worth \$400 billion. This entails Chinese entry in banking, telecommunications, ports, railways and other infrastructure projects. It fulfils China's neo-imperialist desires, colonising another economy in the process, and keeps its domestic industries running with cheaper Iranian oil for the next 25 years. India, by comparison, has stopped importing Iranian crude oil under US pressure. The agreement also proposes military cooperation, which could make China a key player in regional geopolitics and counter the US.

India has been completely caught off guard by this deal even as it tried various rounds of negotiations with the US to spare it from sanctions for conducting certain businesses with Iran. Though India got exemption for the Chabahar port and the rail link, equipment suppliers feared a hitback and slowed down progress. Besides, Iran was upset by India's decision to completely stop energy imports, quite a big basket of its earnings. Now China has assured it of its oil market, picking up supplies for 25 long years, taking away Iran's worries. Bilateral ties with Iran nosedived further with the naked display of majoritarian politics during the Delhi riots in February with its Foreign Minister Javad Zarif strongly condemning them. Now there is talk of a greater Chinese stake, the deal merely an access card to Chabahar's duty free zone, an oil refinery and the port itself. In fact, though Iran has denied it, there is speculation that it could lease out the entire port to its new benefactor. That would be a big blow to India, which had hoped to build an alternate trade route from Chabahar to Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan. But now with the Chinese reclaiming the vacuum, it will strengthen the China-Pakistan axis around the coast. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Gwadar port will strengthen that conduit. Iran says it has not abandoned India, but clearly it has decided to go with the biggest Asian power and the US' arch enemy on a need-based formula. We may think that we forced China's hand by retaliating in Galwan but all it did was ensure strategic calm when world opinion would have isolated it further had it escalated its aggression. As the only country whose growth projections are not negative post-pandemic, it can afford to buy out vulnerable nations. It has already invested in banks in Brazil. India may be its economic bulwark but China is quickly encircling it by winning over our old allies and neighbours. It is no less beligerent, just that it has now launched an economic warfare with India.

Save the common spirit

The Gurkhas cannot and should not be sacrificed at the altar of partisan politics or the smallness of spirit that besets present times because of Indo-Nepalese differences



BHOPINDER SINGH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had invoked a "special relationship", based on shared culture, language and religion, with Nepal during his first official visit to Kathmandu in 2014. He had said, "This is the land of Sita and Janak, Nepal-India relations are as old as the Himalayas and the Ganga." Given his proclivity for abbreviations, Modi had coined HIT (Highways, I-Ways and Transways) as the transformational formula to strengthen age-old ties between the two nations. Much water has flown down the rivers Kosi, Gandaki and Karnali (the three big rivers that flow from Nepal to India) and Nepal has instead vested its trust in the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to usher in the much-needed transformation.

Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's speech in New Delhi in 2018 was less flowery and presciently loaded. Repeatedly, he stressed on a "balanced outlook" in external relations, an unmistakable euphemism to "correct" the pro-India tilt. Nepal had just emerged from the perceived wounds of India's braggadocio during the 2015 earthquake relief operations and the supposed interferences in the framing of a new Constitution. Agitation over this issue had led to a crippling "blockade." In an age of social media, the hurt felt by a proud nation, which has never been ruled by outsiders, was palpable. Murmurs of India's "big brotherly" attitude being unacceptable gained credence in the streets of Nepal.

Oli had alluded to that overarching trust deficit and sinking sentiment. "Good neighbourliness demands harmonious co-existence forever. And trust is the key cementing factor. It derives its strength from the observance of such fundamental principles as equality, justice, mutual respect and benefit as well as non-interference," said Oli. He added that for impact, "it is natural to expect similar assurance from India." Clearly, the healing process never kicked off and today, ties between India and Nepal have reached an unprecedented low due to border violence, cartographical disputes and trust eroding measures like Nepal's decision to ban the Indian media.

Undoubtedly, there are layered complexities of missteps that were taken by both sides in equal measure. Both nations were driven by their own domestic political considerations, short-termism and geo-political churns that widened the faultlines, which always existed but never flared up to this extent. The crests and troughs of bilateral relations were always handled politically, without any unnecessary attribution to the societal-ethnicity of the people involved. Today, that venerated "Gurkha" stands to be dangerously demonised as collateral damage. The delinking of "politics" and "people" has not been the strength of the current dispensation. Deliberate contextualisation and binarisation of circumstances



may still yield electoral gratification but this will come at the cost of alienating almost all neighbouring countries, well beyond Pakistan and China.

The intermingling and intermeshing of the Indo-Nepalese people are not just historical, cultural, spiritual, religious or even transactional; it is unparalleled in terms of the faith, trust and reverence that is afforded on the "Gurkha" in the Indian consciousness. Nearly 40 dedicated Gurkha Regiment battalions with approximately 40,000 Indian and Nepali Gurkha soldiers defend India's sovereignty. Another one lakh veterans reside in Nepal and the annals of Indian Army's valour testify to the raw gallantry of the likes of Lt Col Dhan Singh Thapa, Param Vir Chakra (PVC), among others, who ironically fought the Chinese in the same area around the Pangong Lake.

His citation read, "Major Thapa got out of his trench and killed several enemies in hand-to-hand fighting before he was finally overpowered by Chinese soldiers." The proud Gurkha had stared death in the eye and returned. Indeed, he was born in Dharamshala as many other Gurkhas in the region of Darjeeling Hills or Dehradun but he was as synonymously a Gurkha and an Indian as Mahavir Chakra (MVC) awardees like Tika Bahadur

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THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP HAS TO MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT NO UNTOWARD OR OVER-EXCITABLE TAIN IS IMPLIED ON THE LOYALTY, FIDELITY AND CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE OF NEPAL. GOVERNMENTAL OR IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES HAVE TO BE HANDLED SEPARATELY
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Thapa, Pati Ram Gurung or a Prem Bahadur Gurung.

This unparalleled tradition and saga of sacrifice for India is reciprocated in a similar spirit by all those who chose to identify themselves as Gurkhas. In a deeply moving sight, a 11-year-old girl shouted the Gurkha war-cry on her father's cremation "Tiger 9 GR Ko! Ho Ki Hoina?" (Col MN Rai, the Tiger of 9 Gurkha Regiment, he was or wasn't he?) and it was responded by a resounding "Ho Ho Ho" (he was, he was, he was). The daughter and the nation mourned his loss and yet another name got etched to the list of the illustrious Gurkha glories. The inexplicable bond of the Indo-Nepalese reality underwrote that sacred spirit.

The "Gurkha" cannot and should not be sacrificed at the altar of partisan politics or the smallness of spirit that besets the times that be. Sadly, the over simplistic narrative of the day can easily affix the slant of "anti-national" on anyone owing to their ethnicities or religion as the basest instincts are easily aroused, tolerated and stoked by the powers-that-be.

Equally, the Nepalese dispensation cannot forget history and independent India's contributions or the essential implications that are imminent in choosing a China over India as its "bargaining tool." The people-to-people connect with

some other neighbouring countries has already been ruptured and irreversibly damaged with the context of politico-religiosity. This has done an extreme disservice to some of our own, who axiomatically got associated as "anti-nationals" owing to their co-religiosity. Ironically, such an ethnic pejoration onto the identity of the "Gurkha" would be a unique failure. This despite the supposed commonalities of the two realms.

Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw identified himself as a proud Gurkha as does the current Chief of Defence Staff or the Chief of Indian Army Staff prior to him. In a reciprocal dignity, the chiefs of both armies also bestow Honorary "Generalship" of their Armies, mutually. The national leadership has to make a concerted effort to ensure that no untoward or over-excitabile taint is implied on the loyalty, fidelity and character of the people of Nepal. Governmental or ideological differences have to be handled separately without galvanising societal emotions as it did with other neighbouring countries. India must always protect its sovereign interests firmly. It must also recognise the dignity of the "other", especially one who has bled for India unflinchingly.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands)

SOUNDBITE

India's global strategy is in tatters. We are losing power and respect everywhere and the Government of India has no idea what to do.

Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi



Covid is not going away anytime soon, so it's imperative that we adjust our expectations of what's considered 'normal' to include these basic but crucial precautions.

Actor —Anil Kapoor



I'm not interested right now in talking to China. We made a great trade deal. But as soon as the deal was done, the ink wasn't even dry and they hit us with the plague.

US President —Donald Trump



My favourite batting partner is Mahi bhai (MS Dhoni) but it's rare that I get a chance to bat with him. If he's (Dhoni) out there batting with you, things remain sorted.

Cricketer —Rishabh Pant



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rediscover agri economy

Sir — It should not have taken a pandemic for this nation to rediscover that we are essentially an agrarian economy. Decades of *ad hoc* and knee-jerk policies on agro production, storage capacity, distribution and exports were translating into excess grain reserves since 1995. The pity of it all, grains were wasted in shoddy warehouse facilities. Further, an unimaginative distribution and pricing set-up denied their reach to the deserving poor.

On April 1, 2020, stocks in the central pool stood at 73.85 MT, the highest ever, against a reserve requirement of just 21.04 MT. This should help feed the common man for months now. Pulled up by COVID-19, we are sure to sustain a new-found respect for this foundational sector of our economy. Reserve levels will be scaled up. More modern and efficient storage capacities and attendant infrastructure and employment-centric initiatives will be on the cards. Significantly, procurement during this harvest season was prompt and harvesting was imaginatively done by States despite the non-availability of labour. Bureaucracy

Pilot's revolt should pave way for Congress 2.0

This refers to the editorial, "Pilot sacked" (July 15). The revolt of Sachin Pilot, who was dismissed from every office he held in Rajasthan, is a golden opportunity for the rejuvenation of a secular front against the ruling BJP. This should include immediate holding of long overdue internal elections for a new Congress president outside the Gandhi fold, followed by a radical overhaul of the party. Alternatively, he could float a regional party, which along with other breakaway factions of the Congress, namely, the Trinamool Congress, the Nationalist Congress Party and YRS Congress could merge into a Congress 2.0. This grouping, covering a third of the country's electorate, would embolden more capable Congressmen to join the ranks and render the Gandhi-led Congress 1.0 version obsolete.

Thankfully, Pilot has chosen not to follow the footsteps of Jyotiraditya Scindia to join the BJP. Had this been the case, it would have earned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi more sympathy and would have come to boost his image as a champion of the secular ideology



that he certainly does not deserve. Moreover, even from Pilot's personal standpoint, the grass is not greener on the other side. Rajasthan is a BJP bastion and he must have realised that there are a host of well-entrenched leaders already ahead of him in the queue.

SB Bhalerao Mumbai

must ensure that this singular efficiency in decision-making and in owning up to a problem becomes the new norm to give a fillip to rural stakeholders.

Once the thrust reverts to the agro sector, the economy must shift to the rural epicentre, buttressed by auxiliary industries such as food processing. Post the pandemic, reverse migration of a

huge number of non-resident Indians is imminent and an expanded rural economy alone can accommodate the surge. The pandemic has given us a sharp cue for the dispersal of wealth and consumption into rural heartlands as an enduring policy of inclusive development.

R Narayanan Navi Mumbai

Absurd claim

Sir — Nepal Prime Minister KP Oli has thrown yet another bouncer by claiming that "real Ayodhya" is in Nepal and not in India. He also claimed that India had created a "fake Ayodhya." Of late, Oli has been in the news for all the wrong reasons.

He issued a "new" map of Nepal, claiming Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura as its territory. Oli's communist Government in Nepal is also playing into the hands of China, which has reportedly taken away 33 hectares of land from it. But all of this has not bothered Oli, who is also facing growing discontent back home for "junking India" and "joining China." One just hopes that temporary developments and flash-points do not hamper the unique relations both nations share.

KV Seetharamaiah Hassan

Mutual benefit

Sir — The Google initiative to pump ₹75,000 crore for digital India initiative will benefit India in the long-term. For Google, too, this is an effort to tap the huge opportunity in a country whose mass market has only just begun to go online. This step will also fill the void created by the banning of Chinese applications.

Sudhir Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Balance ecology and economy

The rapid clearances of projects in order to promote industries are proving to be a death knell for the environment



KOTA SRIRAJ

The Coronavirus pandemic has not only killed lakhs of people worldwide, it has sickened the global economy, too, as nations have been forced to shut down their industries and businesses in order to stem the spread of the contagion. India, with its 9,39,192 Coronavirus cases and 24,327 casualties is no exception to this need to hunker down. And the country, which had begun to open up in a phased manner after an extended, hard lockdown, is being forced to impose brief shutdowns again. Naturally, this COVID-19 chokehold over the economy has put developmental projects, industry, trade and business in a coma and impacted thousands of lives and livelihoods.

The worst affected of the lot have been the migrant workers of the nation, who are rightly considered the silent contributors to development. The labour community, who at the best of times is neither appreciated enough nor remunerated fairly, continued to suffer even more badly during the COVID-19 lockdown. This was tragically epitomised by the horrid accident in Aurangabad where unemployed, exhausted and broke labourers walking back home were mowed down by a train after they went off to sleep on the tracks. The incident had sparked off a nationwide outrage and sense of grief for the sufferings of the workers in the informal economy.

Now, with the country slowly opening up, despite the Coronavirus cases skyrocketing, the very same labourers are being coaxed to come back from their villages and get the wheels of the economy moving again. That brings us to the fact that no matter what happens, even during a pandemic, an economy cannot be stopped in its tracks, it has to keep ticking. The economy is given precedence over everything, and this includes the environment, which is the proverbial poor cousin.

But in this bid to restart the economy, India is probably committing the same mistake all over again by making trade, business and industry a priority and putting the environment and ecological concerns on the back-burner. Unfortunately, this lopsided agenda of promoting economic development at the cost of the environment has heightened the risk of more pandemics such as the COVID-19 occurring frequently in future. In a stark but positive contrast, this aspect has been understood by the western world whose nations are quickly scrambling to cover their ecological deficiencies and environmental weak spots by ensuring that their economic development projects have a robust environmental compassion built in.

So, given these circumstances, it is natural to expect the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to get into an overdrive and release a slew of measures that would herald the safeguarding of the environment in the current, COVID-19-stressed conditions. But this is not the case. Curiously, the Minister in charge for MoEFCC also happens to be in charge of the portfolio for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises. In any other environmentally-conscious nation, this would have been perceived as a conflict of interest. But not in India. This anomaly notwithstanding, the MoEFCC recently went on a project clearance spree in 11 States.

These rapid clearances of projects in order to promote industries are proving to be a death knell for the environment. The MoEFCC, for instance, cleared a railway line in Telangana that cuts through 168 hectares of a prime forest, which also happens to be a tiger reserve. In this case, the Government could have considered an elevated track to spare the trees but this was obviously not done. The Etalin Hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh's Dibang Valley is yet another example of sheer indifference towards the environment. The project entails the diversion of 1,150 hectares of forest land that will cause the felling of a whopping 2,70,000 trees.

This kind of ruin of nature cannot be justified at all, no matter what the gains are. Numerous representations from environmental activists and scientists have been able to stall the final approval of the project, but it is surprising how the project was conceived in the first place, given the scale of environmental destruction. In the midst of baffling examples such as these is yet another instance of environmental neglect. This is the proposed hydel project in Uttarakhand that involves compromising 768 acres of forest land.

The Government must realise that the environment cannot be pawned off for industrial gains. Repeated announcements of projects that threaten the environment will keep inviting representations from the environmental and scientific community to roll back these projects. Parallely, the nation will slowly but surely understand the apathy of the Government towards the environment and this will be the end of the trust people have in the Government. This kind of knee-jerk conception and approval of projects with utter disregard for the environment is detrimental to national interests and cannot be allowed to proliferate.

As a first step to stem this, the Government must ensure that the environment and heavy industries ministries are not represented by the same person. This will ensure that there is no conflict of interest and decisions taken in one Ministry will not result in collateral damage for the other. The current trying times are a great opportunity for India to reaffirm its commitment towards the environment and this must be shown through actions rather than words. This can be done only by effectively balancing the ecology with the economy.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

TILL NOW WE HAVE REMAINED UNDER THE BELIEF THAT RAM, THE MAN SITA MARRIED, WAS AN INDIAN... HE WAS NOT, HE WAS A NEPALI.
—NEPAL PRIME MINISTER
KP SHARMA OLI



EVEN IN INDIA LEFT PARTIES PLAYED WITH PEOPLE'S FAITH. THE COMMUNISTS IN NEPAL WILL BE REJECTED BY THE MASSES LIKE THEY HAVE BEEN HERE.
—BJP NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON
BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI

Beware of an injured Xi

If Jinping is able to overcome the domestic challenges he faces now, he would emerge a dictator. India, therefore, has to be prepared for a probability of re-occurrence of aggression on its borders



ANIL GUPTA

President Xi Jinping's ambition to make China an undisputed global superpower has changed the entire geo-political dynamics. The phenomenal rise of Xi has made China more aggressive. He has emerged as the most powerful leader of China after Mao Zedong. Born in a politically-influential family in 1953, he witnessed the Mao era closely and saw the ruthless face of Zedong when his father was purged and jailed during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. Though his father was rehabilitated after the death of Mao, these events left a long-lasting impression on his mind which got further hardened during Xi's initial struggle within the Communist Party which he joined in 1974. He spent decades working his way up the party and Government ranks but his consolidation of power since becoming General Secretary, the head of the party, in 2012 has been unprecedented. In 2013, he also became the President of the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC), thus assuming charge of all the three most-coveted posts in the party and Government. He represents the new generation of Chinese because he is the first General Secretary born after the establishment of the PRC. Xi today is the President of PRC without term limits. Incidentally, he now has 12 posts that give him control and oversight over most areas of Government, the economy and military. Xi, therefore, is the most authoritarian world leader today, who is ruthless with any form of opposition to him at home and visualises himself as a potential supreme leader of the world.

It goes to the credit of Xi that during his tenure China has grown economically and militarily. China surpassed Japan to become the second-largest economy in the world and global manufacturing hub. He effected a large-scale purge in the military brass to end corruption in the People's Liberation Army (PLA). This was followed by structural reforms to make PLA a lean and modern fighting force with emphasis on mastering the three domains of cyber world, space and information.

Xi proved to be a leader who can rise to challenges. But his bitter experience during the Cultural Revolution has made him an authoritarian man who does not trust anyone. He abhors challenge to his authority or to his "Chinese Dream" of national rejuvenation. Thus, he has crushed dissent in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet. In pursuance of his Middle Kingdom ambition, he has refused to accept international laws and treaties and persisted with expansionist designs in the South China Sea (SCS), East China Sea (ECS) while continuing with salami-slicing in the neighbourhood to include India, Nepal and Bhutan. His ambition to be a global leader has led to a no holds barred conflict with the sole superpower, the US. Xi is convinced that the main rival of China is the US and all others are mere pushovers and that has determined his behaviour and actions as far as the disputes in the SCS, the Sino-India border and disputes with South Korea, Japan and Taiwan are concerned.

All was going well for Xi till the outbreak of the Coronavirus. The ongoing trade war with the US was also tilted in his favour till the pandemic spread across the world with its roots in China. All of a sudden Xi was being attacked globally as well as domestically. The strong Chinese economy began to show signs of crumbling. The demand for closing factories in China and relocating them grew louder by the day. India was being considered a probable alternative. The US seized the opportunity and led the global offensive against China, accusing Xi of deliberately delaying the information regarding the outbreak. The global economy was in the doldrums with nations resorting to prolonged lockdowns and most countries blaming China for the contagion.

Xi's dream of the 21st century belonging to China began to crumble gradually. His plan of end-

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ECONOMIC STRANGULATION OF CHINA SHOULD CONTINUE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENCOURAGING FRIENDLY NATIONS TO DO THE SAME. ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT, APART FROM CONSOLIDATING CHINESE ISOLATION DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, INDIA SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER DENOUNCING BEIJING'S ONE NATION POLICY AND LEVERAGE NUMEROUS FAULT LINES IN CHINA BY EXPOSING ITS HIGH-HANDEDNESS IN GRABBING THE TERRITORIES IN ITS PERIPHERY. FREE TIBET MOVEMENT SHOULD BE GIVEN AN IMPETUS IN INDIA. THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS IN HONG KONG AND TAIWAN NEED STRONGER INDIAN SUPPORT
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ing poverty in China by 2020 suffered the biggest setback and it emerged as his toughest year. Xi's unchallenged status at home came under threat and in order to divert attention he began to pursue an aggressive policy to portray Chinese supremacy. He let loose his "wolf warrior" diplomats to counter the global diplomatic and political onslaught. Simultaneously, he began to flex muscles in the SCS and ECS. He started the process of gaining complete control over Hong Kong, denouncing the "One Nation Two Systems" promise. The regime change in Taiwan, too, annoyed Xi. He began to behave like a medieval king eager to extend frontiers and win glory.

Challenging India in the trans-Himalayan icy battlefield was meant to teach New Delhi a lesson for challenging the Chinese ownership of Aksai Chin. China was convinced that New Delhi would not challenge its occupation of Aksai Chin till the Indian Home Minister roared in the Parliament that his reference to Ladakh included Gilgit-Baltistan and Aksai Chin. It rattled Beijing more than Pakistan because it could afford to lose neither of the two.

Despite China's denial, the world community noted with concern the sinking of Vietnamese fishing boats in the SCS, the unilateral decision to name new Chinese districts in the area, sanctions against Australia, browbeating of Japan in the ECS, unilateral actions in Hong Kong, Ladakh incursions, manipulation of Nepal, claims on the Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary in Eastern Bhutan and on the Siberian town of Vladivostok.

Buoyed by the passive response of other nations, Xi ventured to provoke India at Galwan Heights expecting meek submission. But the brawl at those icy heights on the night of June 15 not only took the Chinese by surprise but also put the fear of God in its soldiers about the fighting prowess of Indian soldiers. The Chinese plan to teach India a lesson not only backfired but the Galwan face-off proved to be a turning point, which may well turn out to be a reason for renewed vengeance. The global community acknowledged India standing up to the bully and paying him back in the same coin. India followed it up with an econom-

ic offensive as well. The changed scenario had a ripple effect. China's victims realised that the dragon could be held off.

ASEAN nations for the first time spoke in unison, asking China to follow international laws on maritime boundaries. Japan reacted offensively by deploying near the disputed islands, Bhutan vehemently asserted its claim over Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary and refused to be cowed down, Russia agreed to fast track arms supplies to India, the US moved three aircraft carriers in the SCS, Australia refused to take Chinese students and broke trade ties with it.

The Chinese economy, too, suffered a big blow, putting greater pressure on Xi. Following the Indian ban of 59 Chinese apps, cancellation of contracts signed with Chinese companies in the telecom, construction and MSME sectors and the growing demand for boycott of Chinese goods, other nations, too, began to ban Chinese technology firms. Chinese giant Huawei has been the biggest sufferer. Similarly, the dream project of Xi, the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), has come under severe strain with many countries either abandoning various projects or demanding a review of their loan agreements.

The list of Xi's woes is growing by the day. China had become an economic superpower by the time Xi took power but his critics now blame him for leading the country to ruin due to his aggressive, expansionist policies and ambition.

After aggressive posturing following the Galwan face-off, China has now agreed to a negotiated settlement on the border so that he doesn't lose the war against the international community as well. India and China agreed that differences should not become disputes after a telephonic discussion between the Indian National Security Advisor and the Chinese Foreign Minister.

Though China has agreed to a phased disengagement and de-escalation, there is a big trust deficit between the two armies now. The overwhelming opinion in India is that disengagement is not enough in order to end tensions on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). They advocate no de-escalation until full return of status quo. While Xi would fight his own battle for survival, we have to ensure that it is not yet another

er Chinese trap.

History tells us that China is untrustworthy. Be it 1962, Sumdromg Chu, Depsang or Doklam. This time, too, we are not yet sure if the Chinese move is a tactical retreat in order to achieve its bigger strategic aim. Hence, India should not be lulled into complacency. History tells us that our political leadership has failed to understand the insurance provided to a nation's growth economically and diplomatically by strong security forces. Hence, payment of annual premium to ensure that the insurance does not lapse is mandatory. The nation has to be prepared to ward off physical threats to its borders and also those in the cyber world, space and the information highways.

India must not let its guard down on the borders along the Line of Control (LoC) and the LAC. At the same time all actions taken to supplement the armoury of the three services should not be halted but put on fast track to ensure that if the dragon dares to threaten us again, it is taught a lesson forever. If needed, we should be prepared to stay put even during the harsh winters, for which logistics and catering preparations have to begin forthwith.

Economic strangulation of China should continue while at the same time encouraging friendly nations to do the same. On the diplomatic front, apart from consolidating Chinese isolation due to the pandemic, India should also consider denouncing Beijing's One Nation Policy and leverage numerous fault lines in China by exposing its high-handedness in grabbing the territories in its periphery. Free Tibet movement should be given an impetus in India. The democratic movements in Hong Kong and Taiwan need stronger Indian support.

If Xi is able to overcome the domestic challenges he faces now, he would emerge a dictator. India, therefore, has to be prepared for a probability of re-occurrence of Chinese aggression on its borders. We have to emerge as China's equal. Beijing will try its level best to lull us into complacency, it would be suicidal if we fall into China's trap again.

(The author is a Jammu-based veteran, political commentator and security analyst)

Minimally invasive surgery best in Corona era

Such procedures improve short-term outcomes in heart patients and are associated with a faster recovery in comparison with the traditional approach



KM CHERMAN

The nation has been in lockdown mode for more than four months now and has only just started opening up. Hospitals, research and development (R&D) institutions are trying their best to bring out a vaccine for the Coronavirus. In fact, human trials for the vaccine have begun in India. We have seen many reports that have said that there has been a decline in the number of people opting for surgeries, especially low

and medium-risk patients. A lot of patients, who had surgeries scheduled, have postponed them and are avoiding hospital visits for routine checkups as they fear being exposed to the Coronavirus. There have been reports of people losing their lives due to a heart attack or stroke. Even though they had prior symptoms of heart disease, they did not venture out due to the fear of COVID-19.

It is extremely important for cardiac patients and people with heart conditions to take care of their health in such testing times, especially as there are a lot of restrictions on access to various facilities.

Exercising, maintaining a proper diet and taking the prescribed cardiac medication or anti-diabetes medicine are all very important for

patients, since these are the co-morbid conditions which make the COVID-19 infection serious as the cardiac/diabetes patients are already immuno-compromised. With that said, it is also impossible for high-risk patients with severe heart conditions to not opt for surgeries. When it is absolutely essential depending on the conditions, patients might have to undergo surgery.

The need to safeguard themselves and their patients has prompted most surgeons to develop their own protocols to tide over the pandemic situation. The decision for surgical care should be based on the doctor's own surgical and clinical judgment and assessment of resource availability. Patients should get the surgical care based on practice of evidence-based medicine. A non-operative line of

management is advised when it is clinically appropriate for patients, specially looking at risk and benefits of surgery.

Heart surgeries are arduous and long procedures that take a toll on patients physically and mentally. Open-heart surgeries are back breakingly expensive and procedures last for days. Since the surgical team has to be careful not to get infection, all the precautionary measures that are being practised are also the most rigorous for the surgical team. Apart from that, in the COVID-19 era, there is a dire need for minimum contact which is only possible through minimally-invasive surgical techniques. Minimally invasive surgery improves short-term outcomes in patients and it is associated with a faster recovery in comparison with the traditional

approach. If a patient needs valve replacement, then a trans catheter aortic valve replacement is an alternative, but the long-lasting results of these valves are still questionable. There is a certain amount of industry drive to make these procedures popular without really knowing the long-term results. I am sure that there are cardiologists who will object to this contention. But this remark is only because of the fact that I am one of the few surgeons in this country who has been replacing valves (single, double or treble since 1975) and hence I have experienced the long-term results of conventional valve replacement.

Currently these valves are highly expensive in India, going up to ₹22.5 lakh, owing to which this technology is not available for common Indians. Even the cost of convention-

al valve replacement, that is between ₹2.5 to ₹3 lakh, is not affordable for the common man. The solution for this dilemma is indigenisation. Some hospitals in the country have been in the forefront of bringing about indigenisation in Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) along with the National Aeronautical Laboratory and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, using Nitinol stents. The valve material used is bovine jugular veins which is after all a waste. This could be a classic example of "waste to wealth, but unfortunately, there has been no support from any Central Government agencies such as the Department of Biotechnology, the Department of Science and Technology or any regulatory bodies.

Children with congenital heart

disease or structural heart disease undergo multiple heart surgeries in their lifetime. Of course, closing a hole in the heart through the Transcatheter route is available. Most of these patients who have these "corrections" can go home within 24 hours.

This reduces their risk of catching infection, which is vital in the COVID-19 era. This also means more beds will be available for elective patients who need such therapy, which does not need long-term hospitalisation. It is not the technology alone but the logistics, the patient's comfort and affordability of the procedure that are also important.

(The writer is a Padma Sri awardee and cardiothoracic surgeon credited with India's first bypass. He is Chairman and CEO of Frontier Lifeline Hospital)

No plans to speak to Xi, says Trump

Washington: US President Donald Trump has indicated that he has no plan to speak with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, amid a war of words between the two countries on a range of issues and tit-for-tat sanctions on lawmakers and senior officials.

"No, I haven't spoken to him," Trump said in response to a reporter's question at a White House press conference on Tuesday.

"I have no plan to speak to him," the president said while expressing his anger over China's inability to prevent the spread of the coronavirus out of the country, from where it originated.

"Make no mistake, we hold China fully responsible for concealing the virus and unleashing it upon the world.

(They) could have stopped it, they should have stopped," Trump said as he also lashed out at WHO for siding with China on this issue.

"They were really a puppet of China," he said. Trump spoke to reporters after ending special privileges and economic treatment for Hong Kong and rescinding the territory's exception to bans on the importing of sensitive technologies.

He also signed into law bipartisan legislation that allows the US government to sanction individuals and entities known to be involved in interfering in Hong Kong's freedom. Beijing has condemned Washington's recent bid to reject its claims in the South China Sea as illegal and has retaliated against US visa restrictions on Chinese officials

in Xinjiang by founding senior senators and representatives.

At his presser, Trump also slammed former vice president Joe Biden, who is his Democratic Party challenger for being "soft" on China.

The China issue has become a leading election year topic as Trump and Biden each attempt to paint the other as weak in the face of aggressive moves from Beijing.

"By contrast, my administration acted very early to ban travel from China, from Europe, saving all of these lives. I want every citizen to know that we are using the full power of the federal government to fight that China virus and keep our people safe. Through Operation Warp Speed, we will deliver a vaccine in record-breaking time," he said. **PTI**

Will definitely hit back with sanctions if Trump implements new Hong Kong Act: China

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Wednesday warned the US that it will "definitely hit back" with sanctions if Washington goes ahead with the implementation of President Donald Trump's 'Hong Kong Autonomy Act' to end the preferential treatment to the former British colony.

President Trump has signed an executive order to end the preferential economic treatment for Hong Kong after China introduced a controversial national security law in the Asian trading hub to curb autonomy and democratic freedoms.

Reacting to Trump's announcement of signing the 'Hong Kong Autonomy Act', Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said the US should not implement it.

"We urge the US side to correct its mistake, not to implement the so-called 'Hong Kong Autonomy Act' and immediately stop meddling in Hong Kong affairs and China's internal affairs in any way," she told a media briefing here.

"This act smears our law on safeguarding national security in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). If the US insists on going on the wrong path, China will definitely hit back," she said.

The US attempt to obstruct China's national security legislation as part of easing coronavirus restrictions.

Starting Wednesday, both Russian and international travelers will have to either provide coronavirus test results at the border or take a test within three days of arrival in Russia.

Self-quarantine will remain mandatory for those who test positive for the virus or whose health deteriorates upon arrival. It's one of several steps in an effort to reopen the country after health officials started reporting a slowdown in infections. Last month, authorities allowed travel abroad for the purpose of work, studying, medical treatment or taking care of relatives. They also let foreigners with work permits or those seeking medical treatment or taking care of family members into the country.

China's aggressive actions against India give insight into how CPC thinking these days: US NSA

Washington: China's "very aggressive" actions against India, including the brutal attack on Indian soldiers in eastern Ladakh, and its moves in the South China Sea and Hong Kong give a "good insight" into how the ruling Communist Party of China is thinking these days, US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien has said.

The Indian and Chinese Armies were locked in a standoff in multiple locations in eastern Ladakh since May 5. The tension escalated in the Galwan Valley on June 15 in which 20 Indian Army personnel were killed during a violent face-off with Chinese soldiers.

"The Chinese have been very aggressive with India," O'Brien said on Tuesday alleging that during the recent clash they beat some of the Indians so badly they were disfigured and could not be identified.

"This is a dispute between India and China, but China has shown itself for what it was. Chinese troops ambushed the Indians. They beat 20 Indians to death. They beat them so badly with clubs with nails in them and wrapped with concertina -- barbed wire," O'Brien told Fox News Radio in an interview. He was responding to a question on the

recent Chinese aggressive behaviour against India in eastern Ladakh.

Responding to a question on US-India bilateral relations, he said, India is a democracy and is a great friend of the United States.

Prime Minister Narendra "Modi and President (Donald) Trump have a super relationship," O'Brien said.

"In fact, it was the last foreign trip that I took with the president before the COVID crisis hit, was to India, and we had a great reception of the Indian people there. We have a lot in common with them, we speak English, we're democracies. We've got a growing, very strong relationship with India," O'Brien said.

"But China's action towards India, just like its actions in the South China Sea, just like what it's doing in Hong Kong, just like the bullying intimidation of Taiwan, really gives you a good insight into how the Communist Party of China is thinking these days," he said.

China claims almost all of the 1.3 million square mile South China Sea as its sovereign territory. China has been building military bases on artificial islands in the region also claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. **PTI**

Trump ends preferential economic treatment for HK

Washington: US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to end the preferential economic treatment for Hong Kong after China imposed a controversial national security law in the Asian trading hub to curb autonomy and democratic freedoms.

The Trump administration has been openly critical of Beijing's sweeping national security law aimed at limiting Hong Kong's autonomy and curb political dissent against the ruling Chinese Communist Party.

Trump said he also signed legislation to sanction Chinese officials responsible for cracking down on political dissent in Hong Kong. "Today, I signed legislation and an executive order to hold China accountable for its oppressive actions against the people of Hong Kong,"

Trump said at a White House press conference on Tuesday.

The president also said he signed an executive order ending US preferential treatment for Hong Kong, a former British territory handed over to China in 1997. "Hong Kong will now be treated the same as mainland China. No special privileges, no special economic treatment and no export of sensitive technologies. In addition to that, as you know, we are placing massive tariffs and have placed very large tariffs on China.

"First time this has ever happened to China, billions of dollars have been paid to the US, of which I have given quite a bit to the farmers and ranchers of our country because they were targeted, and that has been going on for three years," he said. **PTI**

Banning TikTok takes big espionage tool away from China: US NSA

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China will lose "a big tool" of espionage and surveillance if America and some western European countries ban Chinese apps like TikTok as done by India, US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien has said.

India last month banned 59 Chinese apps, including TikTok and UC Browser, saying they were prejudicial to the sovereignty, integrity and security of the country.

O'Brien told Fox News Radio in an interview that the Trump administration was "very seriously taking a look" at TikTok, WeChat and some other apps coming out of China.

8-year-old Pak girl dies after being gangraped

PTI ■ LAHORE

An eight-year-old Pakistani girl died in a hospital on Wednesday after she was gangraped by two men in a village in Punjab province, sparking outrage among the locals who demanded public hanging of the rapists.

According to police, the girl, the daughter of a rickshaw driver, was playing outside her house on Monday at Buttar Dograan-Chawinda village in Sialkot district, some 130 kms from Lahore when two suspects gave her some intoxicant in juice and took her to a deserted place.

They gang-raped her and tortured her. The suspects fled when some locals reached there after hearing the child's screams. The girl was shifted to a hospital in Sialkot in a critical condition where she died on Wednesday due to excessive bleeding, police said.

Russia lifts mandatory quarantine for arrivals

Moscow: Russian authorities have lifted mandatory two-week self-quarantine for those arriving as part of easing coronavirus restrictions.

Starting Wednesday, both Russian and international travelers will have to either provide coronavirus test results at the border or take a test within three days of arrival in Russia.

Self-quarantine will remain mandatory for those who test positive for the virus or whose health deteriorates upon arrival. It's one of several steps in an effort to reopen the country after health officials started reporting a slowdown in infections. Last month, authorities allowed travel abroad for the purpose of work, studying, medical treatment or taking care of relatives. They also let foreigners with work permits or those seeking medical treatment or taking care of family members into the country.

Last week, Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova said Russia may resume international flights starting Wednesday, adding that the final decision would depend on the outcome of negotiations with other countries.

Biden announces \$2 trillion climate plan, vows to rejoin Paris deal

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden has unveiled a USD 2 trillion proposal to boost investment in clean energy and combat the global warming as he pledged to rejoin the historic Paris agreement on climate change if elected in the November elections.

US President Donald Trump in 2017 withdrew the United States, the world's No 2 emitter of greenhouse gases behind China, from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement that brought countries together to mitigate global warming, saying it was too costly.

Biden has said he will return the US to a leadership role on climate change, assertively re-entering the United States in future climate negotiations to advance the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

"We're going to reverse Trump's rollbacks of 100 public health and environmental rules -- and then forge a path to greater ambition. We're going to get back into the Paris Agreement -- and back into the business of leading the world," Biden said in a major policy address on climate change, which he said poses a serious threat to the mankind.

TOURISM BOOST WITH DISNEYLAND REOPENING

Paris: The French tourist industry received a further boost on Wednesday with the partial reopening of Disneyland Paris and the opening up of the top floor of the Eiffel Tower. Disneyland Paris, Europe's most frequented theme park resort, is partially re-opening to the public, four months after it closed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

SINGAPORE REPORTS 249 NEW VIRUS CASES, Singapore: Singapore on Wednesday recorded 249 new coronavirus infections, including 16 community and five imported cases, taking the total tally to 46,878, the Health Ministry said.

JOHN REPORTS \$5.2 MN HAUL IN SENATE BID Denver: Former Colorado Gov John Hickenlooper's Senate campaign reports a \$5.2 million fundraising haul over the past three months, calling it a record for any Senate candidate in state history.

FLASH FLOOD KILLS 16 IN INDONESIA, 23 MISSING Jakarta: A flash flood in Indonesia's South Sulawesi province left at least 16 people dead and 23 are still missing, an official said on Wednesday. "The latest update from National Search and Rescue Agency 16 people dead and we are looking for 23 people," National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Raditya Jati said.

2020 will mark 'inflection point' in India-UK healthcare collaboration: Indian diplomat

London: The year 2020 will witness an "inflection point" in the UK-India healthcare collaboration as the Covid-19 pandemic has brought collaboration in medicine to the centrestage, outgoing Consul General of India in Birmingham Dr Aman Puri has said.

In an interview to PTI on the eve of his departure from the West Midlands region of England, Puri reflected on the recently-launched West Midlands India Partnership

(WMIP) to boost India-UK investment flows and flagged the healthcare sector as a particular focus of bilateral ties amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"My sense is that 2020 will witness an inflection point in the UK-India healthcare collaboration. Covid-19 has brought healthcare centerstage, and the need for collaborations has been realised by all stakeholders more than ever before," said Puri. **PTI**

Coronavirus resurgence forces countries to reimpose restrictions

Promachonas (Greece): Countries around the world are reimposing lockdowns and implementing new health checks at their borders in an effort to curb a resurgence of the coronavirus before it spins even further out of control.

Starting Wednesday, all travellers arriving in Greece from a land border with Bulgaria were required to carry negative coronavirus test results issued in the previous 72 hours and translated into English. The new rules, which follow an increase in tourism-related Covid-19 cases, triggered an immediate drop in arrivals compared to recent days. Residents of Australia's second-largest city, Melbourne, were warned on Wednesday to comply with lockdown regulations or face tougher restrictions.

Melbourne's 5 million people and part of the city's semi-rural surroundings are a week into a new, six-week lockdown to contain a new outbreak there. "The time for warnings, the time for cutting people slack, is over," Victoria state Premier Daniel Andrews said. "Where we are is in a very serious and deadly position."

The developments come with more than 13 million cases of coronavirus cases confirmed worldwide, and with over 578,000 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. **AP**

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| REGENT ENTERPRISES LIMITED | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| REGD. OFFICE : E-205 (LGF), Greater Kailash II, New Delhi-110 048 CIN: L15590DL1994PLC153183 ; Email: straderstd@gmail.com Telephone no. 011-29213191 ; Website: www.regententerprises.in Extract of Standalone Audited Financial Results for the Quarter Ended on 31st March, 2020 | | | | |
| PARTICULARS | Quarter Ended | Year Ended | Year Ended | Corresponding Quarter Ended |
| | 31.03.2020 Audited | 31.03.2020 Audited | 31.03.2019 Audited | 31.03.2019 Audited |
| Total Income from Operations | 14273.18 | 58474.59 | 113596.04 | 15468.78 |
| Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items) | (117.67) | 34.44 | 116.40 | (47.29) |
| Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items) | (126.26) | 43.03 | 142.49 | (21.20) |
| Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items) | (109.534) | 25.98 | 107.44 | (0.56) |
| Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) other comprehensive income (after tax)] | (202.83) | (67.32) | 39.68 | (68.32) |
| Equity Share Capital Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the Previous Year | 3345.63 | 3345.63 | 3345.63 | 3345.63 |
| Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operation) | | | | |
| Basic Diluted | (0.33) (0.33) | 0.08 0.08 | 0.32 0.32 | (0.00) (0.00) |

NOTE:

- The above Financial Results were reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 14.07.2020 at 3.00 P.M. and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on 14.07.2020 at 4.00 P.M.
- No Complaint received from the shareholders during the quarter. Hence, at present no complaint pending against the Company.
- Previous Year's figures regrouped and rearranged, wherever necessary.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Audited Financial Results for the quarter and year ended 31st March, 2020, filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the aforesaid Financial Results are available on the websites of the Stock Exchange <https://www.bseindia.com> and on Company's website <http://regententerprises.in>

Regent Enterprises Limited
Sd/-
Vikas Kumar
Director
DIN:05308192

Place: New Delhi
Date: 15/07/2020

सार्वजनिक सूचना

यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत M/s Gaursons Reatech Pvt. Ltd. (बिल्डर) के भूखण्ड संख्या-गौड यमुना सिटी (प्लॉट-3) मिर्जापुर साईट (एल. एक. डी -3), सेक्टर-19 YEIDA, ग्रेटर नोएडा (उ० प्र०) पर दिनांक 10/04/18 एवं 07/02/19 को 'गौड यमुना सिटी' परियोजना को यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण द्वारा ले-आउट मानचित्रों की स्वीकृति प्रदान की गयी थी। बिल्डर द्वारा उक्त परियोजना के लिए पुनरीक्षित ले-आउट मानचित्रों की स्वीकृति (Excluding 2nd Parkview, 3rd Parkview, 6th Parkview, 16th Parkview, 32nd Parkview, C-15 convt. Shops and Gaur Runway Suites Projects) हेतु दिनांक 05/06/20 एवं 17/06/20 को आवेदन किये गये। जिसमें पूर्व स्वीकृत ले-आउट के डिजाइन में पुनरीक्षित प्रस्तावित जनसंख्या के आधार पर नियमानुसार कतिपय संशोधन किये जा रहे हैं। इस संबंध में बिल्डर द्वारा वर्तमान में प्रस्तुत मानचित्रों का परीक्षण किसी भी कार्य दिवस में सुबह 09:30 से सांय 06:00 बजे के मध्य नियोजन विभाग के बाहर लगे नोटिस बोर्ड पर किया जा सकता है। इस सार्वजनिक सूचना जारी करने के साथ 15 दिन के अन्दर यदि किसी को कोई आपत्ति / सुझाव हो तो आमंत्रित है।

महाप्रबंधक (नियो/वास्तु)
यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण

यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण
प्रथम तल, कॉमर्शियल कॉम्प्लेक्स, पी-2, सेक्टर ओमेगा-1
ग्रेटर नोएडा-201308, गौतम बुद्ध नगर (उ० प्र०)

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTICE

Applications on prescribed Performa are invited from Retail Shops/Authorized Stockiest located within 5 Km of Northern Railway Divisional Hospital, Shyama Parsad Mukherjee Marg, Delhi-110006 to register them for the Panel of Retail Shops/Authorized Stockiest for supply of Medicines, Surgical Items & Laboratory Items and other medical store items on day to day basis under Retail Local Purchase for a period of two years from the date of award of work on monthly payment basis in Northern Railway Divisional Hospital, Delhi.

The application form along with copy of terms and conditions can be obtained from and deposited in Room No. 10, between 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM on payment of Rs. 500/- to be deposited in cash with Divisional Cashier Cash & Pay Office, Old Delhi Railway Station Building, Delhi or by way of Bank Draft in favour of Sr. DFM/Northern Railway. The last date for receiving the application form is 17.08.2020 at 11:00 A.M. The application will be deposited in Room No. 10 on all working days between 10:00 am to 05:00 pm.

Chief Medical Supdt.
N.Rly Divisional Hospital
Delhi

1553/2020
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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
(A Statutory Institute governed by the NIFT Act 2006)
(Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)
NIFT Campus, Hauz Khas, Near Gulmohar Park, New Delhi-110016

TENDER NOTICE

Tender No. NIFT-DEL/BLDG/663/2020

NIFT invites Sealed Tenders for comprehensive amc and operation of RO plant at NIFT Campus, Hauz Khas, New Delhi -16 from reputed & eligible manufacturers/agencies. Detailed tender document can be downloaded from NIFT's website E-portal - <https://nift.eproc.in>

Earnest Money Deposit - ₹ 15000/-

Last Date of submission of tender - 27.07.2020 at 03:00 PM

Scheduled date of opening of tender - 27.07.2020 at 03:30 PM

Estate Engineer (Bldg)

BARAK VALLEY CEMENTS LIMITED
CIN: L01403AS1999PLC005741
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Corp. Office: 281, Deepali Pilampura, New Delhi-110034
Tel No.: 03843-269258/861, Fax: +91-3843-268965
Website: www.barakcement.com; E-Mail Id: cs@barakcement.com

EXTRACT OF AUDITED STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2020.

(Rs. in Lakhs)

| PARTICULARS | STANDALONE | | | | CONSOLIDATED | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Quarter Ended | | Year Ended | | Quarter Ended | | Year Ended | |
| | 31.03.2020 (Audited) | 31.03.2019 (Audited) |
| Total income from operations (net) | 4,146.64 | 4,190.28 | 15,633.13 | 14,346.24 | 4,388.50 | 4,234.08 | 16,340.14 | 15,258.26 |
| Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax, exceptional and extraordinary items) | 106.98 | 80.05 | 437.79 | 360.99 | (38.95) | (4.70) | 140.30 | 98.83 |
| Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional and extraordinary items) | 106.98 | 80.05 | 437.79 | 360.99 | 93.15 | (4.70) | 627.62 | 98.83 |
| Net Profit for the period after Tax (After exceptional and extraordinary items) | 182.87 | 124.96 | 422.31 | 302.72 | 164.64 | 33.66 | 607.74 | 33.60 |
| Total Comprehensive Income for the period | 169.60 | 123.34 | 409.04 | 301.10 | 151.37 | 32.04 | 594.47 | 31.98 |
| Paid Up Equity Share Capital (face value of Rs. 10/- per share) | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 | 2,216.00 |
| Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (not annualised) | | | | | | | | |
| Basic : Diluted: | 0.83 0.83 | 0.56 0.56 | 1.91 1.91 | 1.37 1.37 | 0.74 0.74 | 0.15 0.15 | 2.74 2.74 | 0.15 0.15 |

NOTES:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Yearly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Yearly Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites. (URL of the filings)
- The above Annual Financial Results were reviewed by the Audit Committee and have been approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 14th July, 2020. The same have been audited by the Statutory Auditor of the Company.
- Figures of the previous period/year have been regrouped / rearranged to confirm to the classification of current period, wherever necessary.

For and on behalf of Board
BARAK VALLEY CEMENTS LIMITED
Sd/-
Kamakhya Chamaria
Vice Chairman & Managing Director

Place : New Delhi
Date : 14th July, 2020

Google to buy 7.7% stake in Jio; to make affordable smartphones

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Google has agreed to invest ₹33,737 crore for a 7.7 per cent stake in Reliance Industries' technology venture and to cooperate on technology initiatives, including development of affordable smartphones, billionaire Mukesh Ambani said on Wednesday.

Addressing RIL's first-ever online annual general meeting, which had an unprecedented 3.2 lakh shareholders attending from 550 cities in 48 countries through the newly-minted JioMeet platform, he said Reliance Jio has developed an indigenous 5G solution which can be exported globally.

Also, the group's petrochemical and retail business has received strong interest from financial and strategic investors on lines of the massive ₹1.52 lakh crore that the technology venture Jio Platforms amassed in less than three months from the likes of Facebook and Google.

The only disappointment for investors was on the company's talks for a sale of a 20 per cent stake in oil-to-chemical (O2C) business to Saudi Aramco for an asking of USD 15 billion, with Ambani saying talks have "not progressed as per the original timeline". He, however, hastened to add that the company has raised enough money from stake sale in Jio Platforms and fuel retailing



business as well as a rights issue to achieve the net-debt free target nine months ahead of schedule. Achieving net-debt free status was one of the objectives behind Asia's richest man announcing stake sale talks on O2C business to Aramco in the company's last annual general meeting in August 2019.

On Wednesday, he neither said if the talks with Aramco were on track nor did he give a new deadline.

All he said was that RIL, operator of the world's largest refining complex, will replace transportation auto fuels with clean electricity and hydrogen as it set a target to become net carbon-zero by 2035.

"We are delighted to welcome Google as a strategic investor in Jio Platforms. We have signed a binding partnership and an investment agreement under which Google will invest ₹

33,737 crores for a 7.7 per cent stake in Jio Platforms," Ambani, 63, said.

California-based Alphabet Inc joins Facebook Inc, which opened the investment cycle in Jio Platforms by picking 9.99 per cent stake for ₹43,573.62 crore, as well as chipmaker Intel Corp and Qualcomm Inc.

With Google coming on board, Reliance has completed its target of capital raising for Jio Platforms, he said.

With this deal, Reliance has sold 32.84 per cent stake in Jio Platforms Ltd - the unit that houses India's youngest but largest telecom firm Jio Infocomm and apps, to 13 marquee firms for a total of ₹1,52,055.45 crore.

Proceeds from the stake sales in Jio Platforms, along with the ₹53,124 crore raised in a rights issue in June and sale of a 49 per cent stake in its fuel retail network to BP last sum-

mer for Rs 7,629 crore will help the company become net debt-free, Ambani said.

The cumulative fund raising by Reliance in less than three months is now ₹2,12,809 crore as compared to net debt of ₹1,61,035 crore as on March 31, 2020.

Ambani, who has catapulted his way to become the sixth richest man in the world with USD 72.4 billion, surpassing Tesla's Elon Musk and Alphabet co-founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page, said his group can "design entry-level 4G or even 5G smartphone for a fraction of its current cost".

"Google and Jio are partnering to build an Android-based smartphone operating system," he said. "Through this partnership, we are confident that we can accelerate the national mission of putting a smart device in the hands of every Indian."

As many as 350 million Indians still use a 2G feature phone. "Our mission with Android has always been to bring the power of computing to everyone, and we've been humbled by the way Indians have embraced Android over recent years," said Google chief executive Sundar Pichai.

"The time is right to increase our commitment to India significantly, in collaboration with local companies, and partnership with Jio is the

first step."

Google and Jio are partnering to build an Operating System that could power affordable 4G/5G smartphone. Also, JioMart, online shopping portal, and WhatsApp will be working closely to enable customers seamlessly transact with mom-and-pop stores.

He also announced broadband for enterprises and small businesses and Narrowband Internet-of-Things (NB-IoT). Jio Platforms - which is also amassing a wide range of services from music streaming to online retail and payments - is expected to use its 388 million mobile phone subscribers as the cornerstone of an e-commerce and digital services busi-

ness to rival Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart.

Jio, which is at the centre of Ambani's ambition to create a homegrown technology behemoth akin to China's Alibaba, has become Reliance's growth engine, combining with the company's fast-growing retail arm to help in offsetting the decline in oil and petrochemicals.

The oil-telecom-to-retail conglomerate also announced acceleration in the rollout of JioMart - its e-commerce venture.

"We have received strong interest from strategic and financial investors in Reliance Retail. We will induct global partners and investors in Reliance Retail in the next few quarters," he said.

Time for global digital product, services company to emerge from India: Ambani

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani on Wednesday said time has come for a global digital product and services company to emerge from India, as he nudged Jio Platforms to pursue global opportunities and create revenue source from domestic and international markets.

Addressing Reliance Industries 43rd AGM, Ambani said over the years, Reliance has built deep domain knowledge in most of the industry verticals that are key to the Indian economy, and Jio Platforms can combine this domain knowledge with its technology strengths

to create multiple innovative ecosystem solutions and managed services for India. "Each of these solutions, once proven in India, has the potential to be a global solution... That can be used to serve the rest of the world.

I am setting a goal for Jio Platforms to pursue this global opportunity and to create a significant source of revenue from both the domestic and global markets."

Ambani said at the annual general meeting (AGM).



JioMart-WhatsApp to power small merchants' growth: Mukesh Ambani

IANS ■ MUMBAI

Reliance Jio's new commerce platform JioMart and Whatsapp will be working closely to create growth opportunities for millions of Indian small merchants and kirana shops, Reliance Industries (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani said on Wednesday.

Facebook-owned instant messaging platform WhatsApp, which is immensely popular in India, has been testing a payments platform in

India for quite some time now.

"Over 400 million WhatsApp users in India bring unique value to our partnership," Ambani said at the company's first annual general meeting.

In India, there are more than 15 million monthly WhatsApp Business app users.

"Both Facebook and Jio share a strong vision for digitally empowering consumers as well as small businesses and entrepreneurs across India," the RIL Chairman said. In April, Facebook had announced a \$5.7 billion, or ₹43,574 crore, investment in Jio Platforms.

Markets eke out gains in volatile trade; RIL selloff weighs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

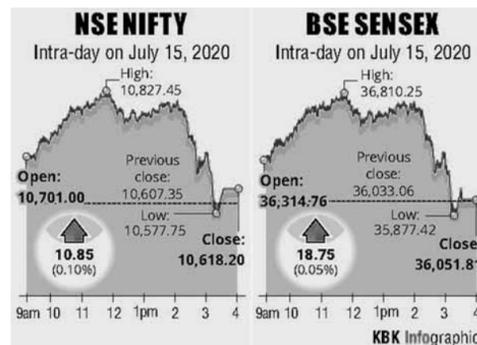
The Sensex and Nifty surrendered most of the day's gains to end marginally higher on Wednesday, pressured by a lag-end selloff in heavy-weight Reliance Industries.

During the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 777 points, driven by positive sentiment across global markets on hopes of a COVID-19 vaccine.

The index, however, made a U-turn in the last hour of trade and settled just 18.75 points, or 0.05 per cent, higher at 36,051.81.

On similar lines, the NSE Nifty closed 10.85 points, or 0.10 per cent, up at 10,618.20, after soaring 220 points during the session.

Reliance Industries was the biggest drag on the Sensex, skidding 3.71 per cent after scaling its life-time high of ₹1,978.50 (intra-day) as investors rushed to book profits amid a slew of announcements at its annual general meeting. RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani said Google will invest ₹33,737 crore to buy 7.7 per cent stake in Jio Platforms, completing RIL's capital-raising target for the digital arm. Ambani also announced Jio is developing a homegrown 5G telecom solution, but added that his group's



phase of human trials.

However, the flag-end selloff in RIL halted the rally, they said. "The stock price of Reliance has witnessed a decline towards the end of the AGM since most of the news was already priced in and there were not many surprises," said Nirali Shah, Senior Research Analyst, Samco Securities.

Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd, added, "We're seeing a tussle between the bulls and bears for the last couple of sessions and we feel it would be healthy if the market witnesses some correction after the recent surge. However, the resilience of global markets would help the index to limit the downside."

Sanitisers soaps, not medicaments; will attract higher 18% GST

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing debate over goods and services tax (GST) rate on hand sanitisers, the government on Wednesday clarified alcohol-based hand sanitisers will continue to be levied at the standard rate of 18 per cent as the product is a disinfectant like soaps and not a medicament.

With the Consumer Affairs Ministry having classified hand sanitisers as essential commodities in wake of Covid-19 pandemic, there had been a demand from certain sections of the industry, particularly liquor and sugar sectors, to classify sanitisers in the medicament category attracting lower 12 per cent duty.

"It is stated that hand sanitisers attract GST at the rate of 18 per cent.

Sanitisers are disinfectants like soaps, anti-bacterial liquids, Dettol etc, all of which attract duty at the standard rate of 18 per cent under the GST regime," a Finance Ministry statement said.

"It is further clarified that inputs for manufacture of hand

sanitisers are chemicals, packing material, input services, which also attracts a GST rate of 18 per cent. Reducing the GST rate on sanitisers and other similar items would lead to an inverted duty structure and put the domestic manufacturers at disadvantage vis-a-vis importers," the statement added.

Earlier, the Goa bench of the GST Authority for Advance Ruling (AAR) also held that the alcohol-based hygiene products will attract 18 per cent GST. It added that its classification as an essential commodity cannot be a criteria for exemption from GST.

The order came on a petition from Springfields (India) Distilleries over classification of the hand sanitiser and the applicable rate of GST.

The clarity has also come in wave of reports of large-scale tax evasion reported by the Central Economic Intelligence Bureau with certain new manufacturers of sanitisers paying 12 per cent GST due to the wrong classification instead of the actual 18 per cent.

Honda Cars India launches fifth-generation City

New iteration will be sold alongside the previous generation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Photo Caption: Mr. Gaku Nakanishi, President & CEO, Honda Cars India and Mr. Rajesh Goel, Sr. Vice President & Director, Marketing & Sales, Honda Cars India Ltd, on the launch of All-New 5th Generation Honda City

The Japanese carmaker Honda today launched the newest version of their best-selling sedan the Honda City. The fifth generation of the popular sedan had seen its launch delayed by over three months thanks to the Coronavirus lockdown but with production resuming at Honda's factory at Surajpur near Greater Noida, Honda has gone ahead with the launch. The new iteration of the car features several improvements, and is significantly longer and wider than the previous model, however the previous model will continue to be sold in the Indian market for the time being.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Gaku Nakanishi, President and CEO, Honda Cars India said that this was because the carmaker felt

that the new car was 'step above' the earlier model as well as the rest of the competition. The fifth generation Honda City will be available in both Diesel and Petrol engines with the latter featuring a CVT automatic transmission option as well. Prices for the new car range from Rs 10.89 lakh to Rs 14.64 lakh and are available in three trim levels.

However with the negative sentiment in the Indian economy after the virulent spread of the Coronavirus, Nakanishi did not expect sales to fully recover until the first quarter of 2021, "Only in January to March, 2021 will we actually

Railways increase focus on freight business through BDU initiatives

New Delhi: At the behest of Railway Board each zonal Railway has set up Business Development Units to focus on increasing the share of Freight traffic through Railways.

In this regard Divisional Railway Managers, Firozpur and Moradabad and their team of officers held separate meetings via video conferencing with Freight customers dealing with commodities like food-grain, fertilizer, cement, sugar, food processing, yarn & textiles, paper and FMCG supply chain. Most of these industries are located in the Northern region of the country and are serviced by Firozpur and Moradabad Divisions of Northern Railway.

Sumit Kumar takes over as new chief public relations officer of western railway

New Delhi: Sumit Thakur (IRSE) took charge of Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway at his office at W.Rly's HQs at Churchgate station building on 13th July, 2020. Shri Thakur is an officer of the Indian Railways Service of Engineering of 2010 batch and has worked in various important assignments pertaining to track maintenance & smooth operation of Mumbai's suburban trains, especially during monsoon season, as Senior Divisional Engineer (South) of Mumbai Central Division of Western Railway. His role as Sr.DEN (South) of Mumbai Central division, particularly holds distinction for ensuring suitable identification of vul-



nerable flooding spots over WR's Mumbai suburban section and fixing them with best customized solutions during the years 2018 & 2019, which was highly appreciated by administration at different levels.

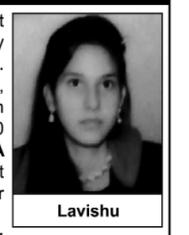
RSDC to Skill & Reskill Migrant Workers for the Rubber Sector

New Delhi: With workforce having migrated from States with large rubber clusters, RSDC is gearing up to train local populace in required job roles so that the rubber manufacturing plants could run smoothly. "The Southern states like Kerala, Tamilnadu,

Andhra, Telangana and also states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab & Haryana have witnessed the large exodus of the workforce. Incidentally, these states are also those that house large clusters of Rubber manufacturing units and are facing the heat in view of man-

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL

General Public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo) namely Lavishu D/o Parmod Kumar R/o H. No.17, Pocket-5, 2nd Floor, Sec-24, Rohini, Delhi Aged- 21 Years has been reported missing since 07.07.2020 from her house vide DD No. 77A Dated 08.07.2020 has been lodged at Police Station Begumpur, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-
Complexion: Fair, Height: 5'7", Hair: Black Long, Face: Long, Wearing: Unknown coloured t-shirt an jeans pant.
Any person having any information/Clue about this missing girl, may inform SHO, Begumpur, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
Tel. No. : 011-23014046(Direct), 011-3015229 & 23015218 extn. 210 Sd/-
FAX No. : 011-230111334 SHO, Begumpur, Delhi
DP/228/RD/2020 Tel. : 011-27579030-31
Mob. : 8750870323



JASCH INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Off. : 43/5, Bahalgarh Road, Sonipat - 131021
Tele : 0130 - 2216666, Fax : 011-66173923
CIN : L24302HR1985PLC022758
Website : www.jaschindustries.com, Email : accounts@jasch.biz

| Sl No | Particulars | Standalone | | | | |
|-------|---|---------------|----------|------------|----------|----------|
| | | Quarter Ended | | Year Ended | | |
| | | 30.06.20 | 31.03.20 | 30.06.19 | 31.03.20 | 31.03.19 |
| 1 | Total Income from Operations. | 1488.66 | 3218.28 | 3480.01 | 13077.64 | 15453.23 |
| 2 | Profit before Interest, Depreciation & Taxes (EBITDA) | 181.40 | 337.54 | 386.26 | 1154.72 | 1588.19 |
| 3 | Net Profit for the Period (before Tax and Exceptional Items) | 85.37 | 212.95 | 246.38 | 620.02 | 1046.63 |
| 4 | Net Profit for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional Items) | 85.37 | 212.95 | 246.38 | 620.02 | 997.65 |
| 5 | Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items) | 63.88 | 149.65 | 184.79 | 453.72 | 785.17 |
| 6 | Total Comprehensive Income for the period [(Comprising Profit) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)] | 63.88 | 149.65 | 184.79 | 453.72 | 785.17 |
| 7 | Equity Share Capital | 1133.00 | 1133.00 | 1133.00 | 1133.00 | 1133.00 |
| 8 | Reserves | 4720.45 | 4656.57 | 4387.64 | 4656.57 | 4202.85 |
| 9 | Earnings Per Share (of ₹10/- each) Basic & Diluted: | 0.56 | 1.32 | 1.63 | 4.00 | 6.93 |

Notes:
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the website of Stock Exchange at www.bseindia.com and also on Company's website at www.jaschindustries.com.
2. The Company has prepared these results in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 (Ind AS) prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.
3. Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.

Sonipat, 11th July 2020

sd/- (J. K. GARG)
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Trend Glazer

Ranveer's views beat Selena Gomez'

Actor **RANVEER SINGH** has beaten the likes of **Selena Gomez**, currently at 961 million, to become the fastest growing world icon on GIPHY, for animated images, or GIFs.

The actor's channel has aggregated 1.1 billion views, making him join the list of global power icons like Sir Paul McCartney, Madonna, Taylor Swift and Arianna Grande.

A source said, "Ranveer is now a huge showman with eclectic fashion choices. He has a total social media reach of 56 million across platforms! In Bollywood, he is among the top three highest followed Instagram accounts. He has fan clubs of 4.5 million worldwide."



'I wish to commend Raho Safe for their efforts towards ensuring safety and wellness. I resonate with the brand's ideology of access to good hygiene and sanitation being a universal right. I'm thrilled to come on board as their brand ambassador. Hand sanitisers and face masks are important both during and after the pandemic.'

—**Jacqueline Fernandez**

Actor **VAANI KAPOOR** feels good about resuming work after a break as she starts shooting her next film, *Bell-Bottom*, opposite **Akshay Kumar**. The film will be shot in Scotland.



Vaani said, "I honestly am just happy with work resuming after a long break. One will of course have to be extra cautious and keep all preventive measures in mind but it feels exciting to embark on a new journey!"

Vaani had completed the shooting of her next *Shamshera*, in which she is paired opposite Ranbir Kapoor before the pandemic began.

My life has been a protest: Viola

Actor **VIOLA DAVIS** says all her actions in life have always been acts of protest.

In an interview, Davis shared that her protests did not begin with the surge in racial justice activism this year.

"I feel like my entire life has been a protest. My production company is my protest. Me not wearing a wig at the Oscars in 2012 was my protest. It is a part of my voice, just like introducing myself to you and saying, 'Hello, my name is Viola Davis'," she said.



With growing acceptability, popularity of microbreweries and evolving consumer preferences, the Indian beer market has all growth triggers in place for exceeding the projected rate

For alcohol, had any of us thought that there would be a falling graph, ever? The global data suggests that due to the ongoing pandemic, the beer market has seen a shift in consumer preferences towards low and non-alcoholic variants as well as craft beer. Well, who had thought this would change.

The report titled, *India Beer Market — Industry Size, Share, Drivers, Trends, Analysis and Forecasts (2019-24)*, released by Niir Project Consultancy Services, provides a comprehensive analysis on the Indian beer market.

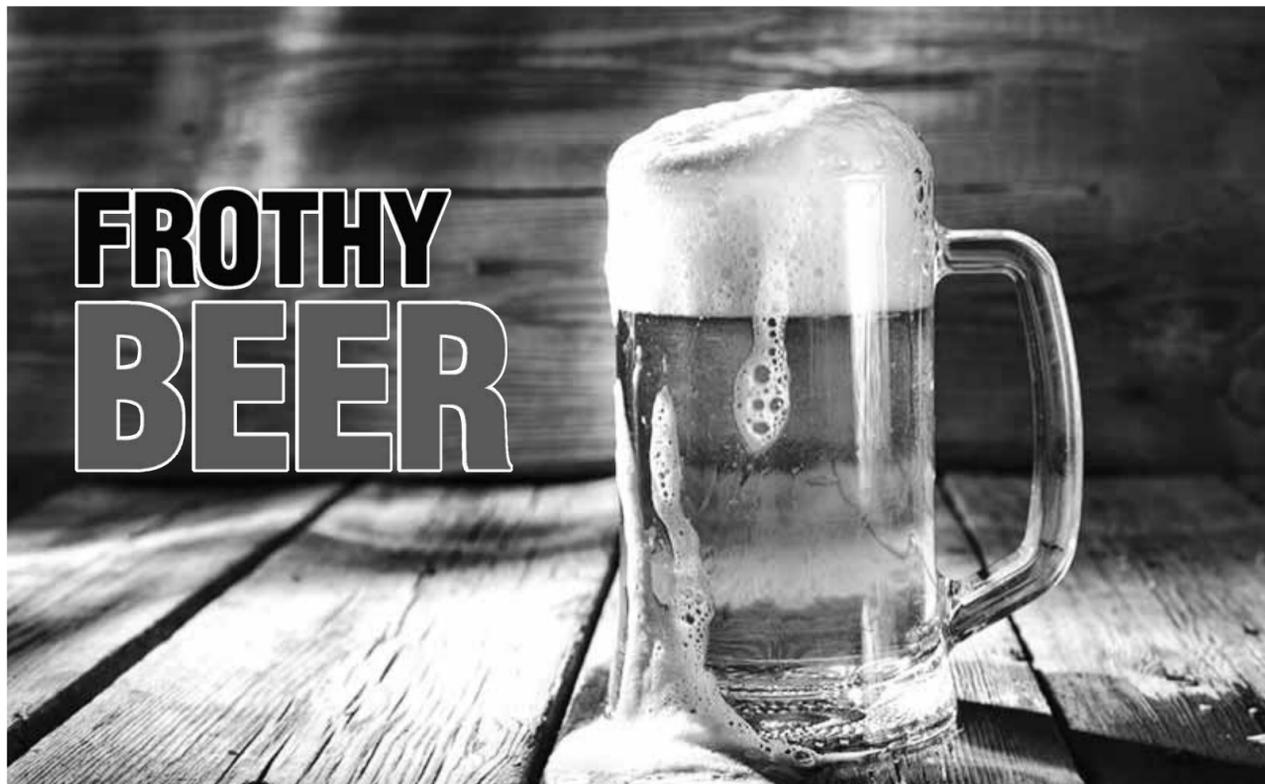
As per the data, India has one of the lowest consumption levels of beer in Asia. Currently, India consumes about two per cent of the total world volumes and has the potential to match the world leader, China, thus opening a vast pool of opportunities for the brewing companies. However, changing dynamics of Indian preferences, favourable demographics, growing awareness and acceptability of alcohol, rising per capita income and evolving cultural attitude are some of the key factors, which are likely to contribute to sales.

NO MORE HARD CHOICES

Looking at the manufacturing process of beer, from malting till the end of process at bottling, the beer segment in India is categorised either by fermentation process (ale & lager) or by alcohol's volume (mild & strong). The Indian industry is majorly dominated by strong beer but new flavourful mild beer are finding their feet on the ground. While strong beer has alcohol content of not less than five per cent, mild beer contains not more than five per cent of alcohol. Even though beer is being increasingly accepted as a social drink and the urban youth in particular favours it as the preferred alcoholic beverage, the Indian market has been highly dominated by hard liquor. However, consumers are now looking for choices away from whisky.

RISING ACCEPTABILITY & HOME DELIVERIES

It is not just the male populace that is enamoured by beer but women equal-



ly enjoy the beverage today. One of the drivers for the beer industry is the rising online alcohol-delivery. A sudden spurt of such portals not only indicates the rising acceptability of alcohol in the country but also the much evolving consumer base. The consumers, who were unable to go to a liquor store earlier, especially women, now purchase their preferred drinks and are in a sweet spot with home deliveries.

However, the industry still faces moral restrictions due to great religious influences. It is still considered to be a forbidden, taboo drink in some parts of the society, detrimental for Indian culture. Drinking alcohol is culturally not accepted in most parts of the country.

CRAFT BEER, THE NEW RAGE

The Indian beer market has also been experiencing the trend of microbreweries and exclusive beer spots. The emergence of such outlets has contributed to an increased awareness and easy availability of beer in Indian markets. Today, craft beer is a rage in the industry and is booming. The market is swamped with a number of craft beer with new and innovative flavours. Beer consumers are nowadays shifting their preferences from regular mainstream bottled beer to artisanal brews, new fresh flavours and unique local ingredients. A large number of microbreweries are also selling their bottled craft beer. The surge in craft beer sales is intended to drive the beer industry sales to the bub-



bly top!

THE ZERO BEER

One of the recent trends to hit the industry is emergence of zero per cent beer. Since the consumer profile for beer industry in India is evolving, so is the preference meter and hence the emergence of new varieties. Consumers are now increasingly opting for drinks that are low on sugar, carbs and hence, calories. In view of an increasing demand for such drinks, a lot of brewers have come

up with their versions of zero per cent beer to tap the demand from this segment. Players have been branching out into concepts such as non-alcohol brand extensions and surrogate advertising and alignment with sport.

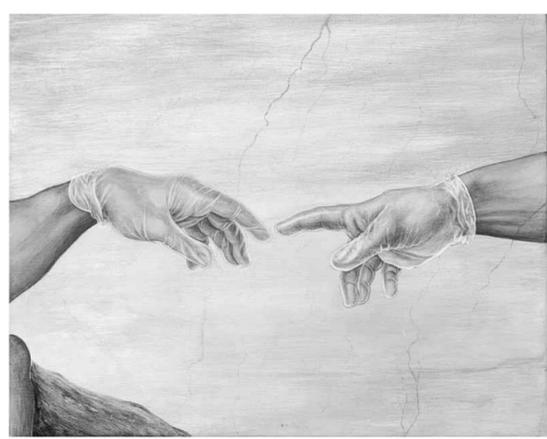
A RECESSION-PROOF BEVERAGE

The report also scrutinises the Indian beer industry with the help of SWOT Analysis, elucidating the strengths of the industry in being recession-proof in view of the fact that alco-

hol consumption generally remains unfazed by the economic downturn. Also, the growing Indian population serves as a ready customer base for the beer industry. According to the United Nations, India is poised to overtake China as the world's most populous nation around 2027. Such population growth puts the industry in a comfortable spot. Indian demographics are bound to benefit the industry in the long term with large number of people under drinkable age. With rising urbanisation, escalating disposable income and growing affluent class, there are enormous opportunities for the players to tap into. It is estimated that the urban population in India will rise to 38 per cent of the total population by 2025.

CHALLENGES IN GROWTH

However, the industry faces challenges in the form of ban on direct advertising and derisory state of market infrastructure. The industry is also highly taxed, regulated and struggles with multiplicity of taxes. With global bigwigs like Carlsberg, Anheuser-Busch and Heineken entering the country, the competitive landscape of the domestic beer market has changed considerably. However, given the above growth triggers of beer — acceptability, popularity of microbreweries and craft beer and evolving consumer preferences — the industry is expected to reach consumption levels of 3,584 million litres or 459 million cases by 2024.



COVID AS HER MUSE

Artist **GUNJAN TYAGI**'s new paintings have been inspired by the feelings of isolation, confusion, boredom and the ongoing pandemic. By **TEAM VIVA**

While the world experiences strife through isolation, boredom, panic and uncertainty, yet, for those, who pick up a paint brush or pen in response to the disease, their role as a change-maker in society becomes very important. It has been rightly said that art and creativity in the time of a pandemic is more crucial than ever! Going by the references and examples of art from the time of the great Plague, poet Richard Kenney said that the Plague had changed the imagination of the West. It changed every culture that is passed through. Well, that's what a creative piece of artwork does. For future generations, it stands as an evidence that this happened.

Marking 2020 in history, Delhi-based artist Gunjan Tyagi creates three 'paintings on COVID-19' that aim to reflect the current relationship between humans and nature, and their battle with the Coronavirus pandemic.

The first, *Prerequisite*, as she explains, finds meaning in the touch of a human — which has currently gone missing. The work is a spin on Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam*. Talking about how she made it, she earlier recalled about how she recently made New York her home and that she found the city's energy and vibrance "truly stimulating." However, after a pandemic at hand, she added, "I found myself confined to my studio. I started re-focussing my energies on painting. But, true to contemporary anxieties, we see that both god and humans are wearing hand gloves!" The painting showcases two gloved hands



not being to able to touch each other. She says, "The creation of Adam is one of the most powerful, intimate and awe-inspiring pieces of art. Touch being the most significant act here,

which is untouched. Yet, it portrays that the spark exists, even though we can't see it, just like the instant which signifies the birth of humankind. The same powerful spiritual image has another meaning in these complex times — when the human touch and smiles on faces have gone missing. We are surrounded by fear, anxiety and depression. We are living in a time when all we really want is that touch, that spark to relive, to say the unsaid things, to rejoice and to cherish the moments of what we have lost and what we have."

The second painting, titled, *Quarantined*, is inspired by perhaps what is now the 'word of the year.' The painting showcases a girl who keeps her hair braid in front of her face rather than at the back.

She explains, "This very small work was done in the beginning of the pandemic situation. This was the response of the news and information we were surrounded with. It reminded me how boredom feels and one has that empty mind which they use in useless things at such times. People swamped on social media, YouTube, TikTok (which is now banned in India) and were busy doing stupid things. Things which have little happiness, things which make others laugh and keep everyone engaged."

The third, *Gaze*, is a portrait of a friend. She says, "I am trying to create a strange gaze on her face which is on society and its system, currently," questioning and trying to come to terms with the uncertainty around.

'Want to change mindsets'

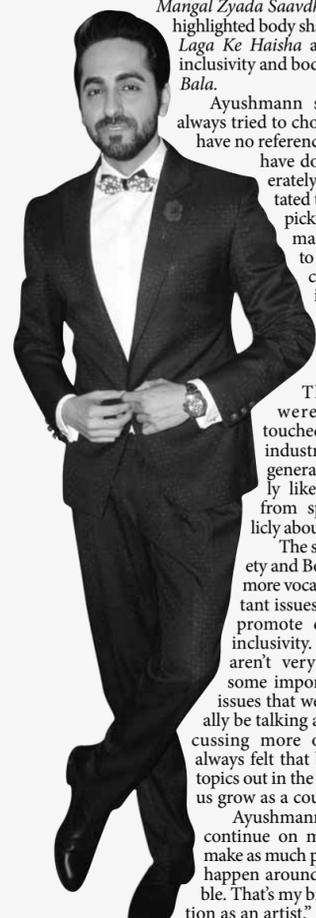
Actor **Ayushmann Khurrana** has emerged as a thought-leader with his thought-provoking scripts that are based on topics which are considered a taboo. With eight back to back hits with such scripts, the actor aims to entertain audience with message-based films that have no reference point in Bollywood.

His brand equity today stands for backing the best quirky content that is being made by the industry. He played a sperm donor in his debut film *Vicky Donor*, someone with erectile dysfunction in *Shubh Mangal Saavdhaan*, dived into India's fragmented and sensitive caste politics in *Article 15*, and a gay character in *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhaan*. He even highlighted body shaming in *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* and promoted inclusivity and body positivity in *Bala*.

Ayushmann says, "I have always tried to choose films that have no reference points and I have done this deliberately. I have gravitated towards hand-picking social dramas in my quest to give films that can hopefully impact change in mindset, communities and of course attitude. These topics were hardly touched upon by our industry because we generally, consciously like to shy away from speaking publicly about these issues."

The star wants society and Bollywood to be more vocal about important issues that can help promote diversity and inclusivity. He says, "We aren't very vocal about some important and real issues that we should actually be talking about and discussing more often. I have always felt that bringing such topics out in the open will help us grow as a country."

Ayushmann adds, "I will continue on my journey to make as much positive change happen around me as possible. That's my biggest motivation as an artist."



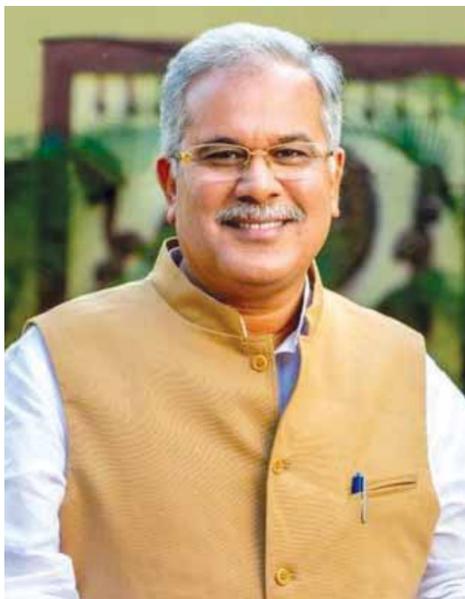
CHHATTISGARH CM APPROVES GODHAN-NYAY-YOJANA

The Chhattisgarh cabinet, which is chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, approved Godhan Nyay Yojana. It has been done to make gauthans, sanctioned under Narva, Garua, Ghurua aur Bari Yojana, more employment-oriented. The scheme will be started in the state from Hareli festival. Till date, nearly 5,300 gauthans have been sanctioned, out of which the construction of 2,408 in rural areas and 377 in urban areas has completed. And this scheme will be started from these newly-built cowsheds (gauthan).

"In these gauthans, cowdung will be procured from cow and buffalo owners through gauthan samitis and the procured cowdung will be utilised to make vermicompost and other products. This will not only promote organic farming but will also create new employment opportunities, encourage protection of cows stop open grazing and will expand the double crop area, creating source of extra income of livestock owners," read the government release.

The Cabinet Committee recommended procurement of cowdung at the rate of ₹1.50 per kg from livestock owners in villages with cowsheds (gauthan). Cabinet approved the cowdung procurement rate at ₹2 per kg, including the transport cost.

The Cabinet has also decided to merge remaining batch of teachers (panchayat



and urban body cadre) who have completed service period of two years or more, under School Education Department from November 1, 2020. This will benefit approximately 16,278 teachers.

It also decided to distribute five kg rice, one kg chickpeas per person per month from July 2020 to November 2020 on ration cards (except APL category) issued under the Chhattisgarh Food Security Act, the same way is provided

on the ration cards of the National Food Security Act. In this regard, the maximum entitlement of total food grains per person / card per month will be equal to the maximum entitlement of food grains issued under CGFS and NFSA.

The Chhattisgarh Government has decided to reimburse the equivalent amount of State Goods and Services Tax (SGST) payable for admission on the screening

of the film Chhapak. They have decided to finalise the rates for all the works related to drinking water supply facility in all the villages of the state through tender procedure, collected via invitation for Expression of Interest under Jal Jeevan Mission. Cabinet has decided to ensure implementation of the mission via select agencies.

Draft of Chhattisgarh Rent Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 has been approved for amendment in Chhattisgarh Rent Control Act 2011. Under this, State Government will appoint retired judge of High Court or retired District Judge as Chairman of Rent Control Tribunal.

The Cabinet also gave its assent to formation of Chhattisgarh Sanskriti Parishad, ensuring uniformity in all the units conducted under Culture Department. Chief Minister will be the chairman of this council and Culture Minister will be the Vice-Chairman. They permitted establishment of bio-ethanol product units in the state on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode under special incentive package of the state's Industrial Fund 2019-24.

Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (CSIDC) approved the policy of purchasing private land with mutual consent for industrial purpose.

'Development is a continuous process'

Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (RIICO) plays a role of catalyst in industrial development of the state. It facilitates investors and entrepreneurs in site selection, getting financial assistance to small, medium and large scale projects, getting government clearances and extends incentives and concessions according to the policies of the state government. Here is our interview with RIICO MD, Ashutosh AT Pednekar. Excerpts:

What is the situation of industries in Rajasthan during the pandemic?

It is a challenging time. The priority is to restore the pre-corona situation of the production level. The biggest issue is the creation of sufficient demand to start the production.

What is RIICO doing to lure investments?

There is a lot of movement in investment at the international level. RIICO, along with European Business Group Federation, had discussions with various international companies and chambers of commerce from different countries including USA, Japan etc. Besides luring international investments, we are trying to attract domestic investments in the state too. We are attracting sector specific investments. Refinery with an estimated cost of ₹ 56,000 crore is coming up at Pachadra in Barmer district. Lot of ancillary units of plastic, petrochemicals will come up here. With restrictions on import of toys and sports goods, RIICO is coming up with sports/toys zone at Khushkhara in Alwar district. There is big scope for ceramics and glass sector. Also, a zone is coming up at Soniyana in Chittaurgarh district where gas and raw material is available. Similarly, we are looking into the field of defence production as Rajasthan has army and air force base. Bharat Electricals Limited (BEL) has set up its unit in Jodhpur for defence production. There is huge scope for Maintenance, Repair and Overhauling (MRO) of defence equipment, so MRO units can be set here. Apart from these, RIICO is looking into gems and jewellery, FinTech (Financial and



Technical) services including others. To reduce the cost of investors, we have started allotting smaller plots of 250 to 750 square metres to micro, small enterprises. Earlier, the plots offered were of 1000-1500 sqmts. Along with this, entrepreneurs are offered loans facilities such as Mudra Loan etc. These small plots are being given at Raghunathpura industrial area in Jaipur district and at Uniaara in Tonk district. We are also offering Plug & Play facilities, in which there is multi-storey building where manufacturing can be done by taking space on rent. This will reduce the investment of the entrepreneur due to availability of common facilities, there will be ease of entry and exit too. All these steps were important during the COVID situation.

What is the situation of labourers...

Most of the labourers working outside the state have come back to their homes. The labour and industry departments have made a database of the skills, address and phone number of these workers. All the industry associations have been told about the availability of labourers as per their requirement. Rajasthan State Livelihood Development Corporation is also imparting training to the labourers.

It seems that industrial development is taking place in NCR, and along the Jaipur-Delhi highway. Is there similar development in process in other districts too?

Yes, industrial development has taken place in NCR and on Jaipur-Delhi highway due to the logistics. Besides this, industrial development has taken place in Udaipur, Jodhpur, Pali, Bhilwara and Kota. The Pachpadra refinery will bring in a huge industrial change. RIICO is also coming up with 20 new industrial areas in 16 districts in this financial year.

What has been the response of webinar with multinational companies?

The response has been quite encouraging. Many companies want to do MoU with us but prior to that they want to visit personally. It is getting delayed because of restrictions on operation of international flight services due to Coronavirus.

What has been industrial development during the Congress regime in last 18 months?

Industrial development is a continuous process. Last one year has been historical for RIICO, as sale of plots has increased by 325 per cent as compared to previous years.

India at a far better place: Naqvi

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said that 'Commotion of Corruption' under the 'Carpet of Clan' is crystal clear. This has become 'Chaos of the Congress'. Arrogance of merchant of corruption proves that there is something fishy. Talking to reporters, Naqvi said that those who cannot differentiate between "burger and brinjal, onion and pizza, sugarcane and jaggery, grain and betel leaf, solar plant and solar park are giving statements full of ignorance on country's economy, security and reforms. They are trying to become political pantywaist in the pandemic period."

He said that India is the only democratic country in the world which, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, provided free food to 81 crore people, one nation one ration card, free gas cylinders to eight crore families, Garib Kalyan Package worth ₹1.70 lakh crore, ₹1,500 given into bank accounts of 20 crore women, ₹19,000 crore given under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi during the challenges of the pandemic. These steps instilled a sense of development with trust among the people of the country.

"During the Corona crisis, the Government brought historic and path breaking reforms in socio-economic-educational fields, administration, trade, labour, defence, coal, civil aviation, power distribution, space, forest land, agriculture, communication, banking and investment. These bold reforms have ensured that India has converted disaster into opportunity," added Naqvi.

Farsighted decisions taken by PM Modi has resulted into India being at a far better place in fight against Coronavirus in comparison to other developed nations. He has worked on the front line which has increased the country's trust on his leadership.

India is the largest producer of Iraw jute and jute goods in the world, contributing about 60 per cent of the global production and providing livelihood to about five million people in farming and trade industry.

Although, the domestic market continues to be the mainstay for jute sector, of late, our export market share is also showing an increasing trend. India earns about ₹2200 crores per annum through jute goods export because of biodegradability and eco-friendly nature of this fibre. However, to be suitable for high valued diversified products, the quality of fibre needs further improvement. Besides the genetic background of the jute varieties, the quality of the fibre largely depends on retting process adopted by the farmers, said Dr Gouranga Kar, Director of ICAR-CRIJAF, Barrackore.

This year, initially, there was a setback in jute farming due to the outbreak of Coronavirus. Also Amphan cyclone wrecked a havoc on the crop in the third week of May. Despite COVID outbreak and the cyclone, there is a good standing crop because of the efforts of ICAR-CRIJAF and other stakeholders like National Jute Board, Jute Corporation of India, etc. Now that the harvesting and retting

Ray of hope



have started, there is a need to adopt the technology of improved retting, so that best quality fibre is obtained.

In this context, Dr Kar mentioned that recently a breakthrough in jute retting research has been achieved by scientists of ICAR-CRIJAF who have decoded the genome sequences of jute-retting bacteria by high throughput genome sequencing. The in-depth genomic analysis significantly revealed three differ-

ent species of Bacillus constitute the consortium strains. Genome sequencing also confirms that retting bacteria degrades pectin, hemicellulose and other non-cellulosic materials, non-harmful for fibre. The bacterial strains are also non-toxic and thus the retting water with microbial strains can successfully be used for irrigation purpose. The sequence data has been submitted to the National Centre for Biotechnology Information

(NCBI) database of NIH, USA.

These retting bacteria were already incorporated in the microbial consortium, called "CRIJAF Sona" developed by ICAR-CRIJAF. Owing to its popularity, in last three years alone, 1428 MT of CRIJAF Sona worth ₹ 7.85 crore was sold to 3.6 lakh farmers covering more than 50,000 ha area in different jute growing states of the country.

While congratulating the team of scientists, Dr Gouranga expressed that such breakthrough is first of its kind in jute and is confident that these findings will help the scientists improve the microbial retting formulation for better efficiency and resilience. The genes for degrading pectin, hemicellulose and other non-cellulosic materials can be altered for enhanced retting efficiency and shortening the retting duration with minimal water usage. Thus, this breakthrough will facilitate to produce high quality jute fiber by farming community which will fetch higher income in the market.

The findings of the genome sequence research is recently published in journal Scientific Reports from the Nature Publishing group. Ref Datta, S. Saha, D Chattopadhyay and Majumdar B (2020).

NTPC SINGRAULI SHOWS OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Singrauli Unit 1, the oldest unit of NTPC Ltd, the power generation company, has emerged as the top-performing unit in the country in the first quarter of the financial year as per the data released by Central Electricity Authority (CEA). The first unit of the station started generating on February 13, 1982 and continues to serve the country with exceptional performance.

NTPC Singrauli has an installed capacity of 2,000 MW with five units of 200 MW each and two units of 500 MW each. Three

units (1,4 and 5) of 200 MW have achieved PLF of 101.96 per cent, 101.85 per cent and 100.35 per cent respectively in Q1 FY 20-21 among the coal-fired units in the country.

NTPC has also won the prestigious CII-ITC Sustainability Award 2019 under Outstanding Accomplishment in Corporate Excellence category. Also, the company has received Commendation for Significant Achievement in category of CSR.

NTPC has always strived for sustainable development of its communities around the

power stations. GEM (Girl Empowerment Mission), a four-weeks residential programme has been institutionalised in the vicinity of its power stations for the benefit of school-going girls from underprivileged background to support their overall development. The power generation company has also initiated Contractors' Labour Information Management System (CLIMS) through which payment to contract labourers is paid on the last day of the month at project sites.

RETHINK, RELEARN, REDESIGN

The novel Coronavirus has badly affected people from all over the world. In February this year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic. According to WHO, pandemic is the advanced stage of disease progression. It means that a disease, after affecting the population of the country of its origin, has started spreading among other countries also. Presently, the pandemic has affected 217 countries and there is hardly any country left from this disease. America, European countries, Russia and china are the most developed countries, but none of them are out of the clasp of this deadly virus. Rather, even being most developed, these countries have tolerated the most devastating impact of the disease and could do nothing to check and control it.

Presently there is no medicine, vaccine or surgery available for COVID, only precautions and preventive measures can help. These measures have been devised by understanding the process of transmission of the virus. There are speculations that the virus has jumped from bats to humans. But then thereafter there is man to man communication only, which is easy and fast.

Anyone can catch the virus with contaminated hands. Major reason for the viral contamination of hands is direct reception of the virus laden fluid droplets from a coughing or sneezing COVID infected person. Touching the Corona contaminated surfaces, where the virus laden fluid droplets have settled down may also be the reason for contamination of hands. So, maintenance of one meter distance, wearing mask and repeated hand sanitisation is must to remain protected from the virus. The incubation period to develop the disease is two days to two weeks (average six to seven days). Only after the incubation process, a Corona positive patient will show the symptoms. During this period, a Corona positive person showing no symptoms can share the virus. proper precautions is must.

Precautionary activities such as wearing mask and hand sanitisation are simple and easily executed. But maintaining distance is difficult as it is a social activity. When you are involved in social activities, you have lesser control on the situation. Moreover, it is challenging to maintain distance in the existing system and design of the world.

Scientists from all across the globe are struggling to invent the vaccine or medicine for the virus but so far there is no breakthrough. With each day, the situation is becoming terrible, uncertain and fearful. Man has struck to a catastrophic confusion, where on one hand, if he goes out for earn-



ing, his life is on stake because of possibilities of exposure. While, on the other, if he doesn't steps out to earn, his life is in danger again. So, the challenge is to protect the human life without involving people in economic activities, because without economic activities basic needs cannot be fulfilled.

Currently, there is no treatment available, so the only option is to learn how to live with the pandemic. This situation is not new for humans, rather, man is already living with different deadly diseases caused by the viruses and other micro-organisms. But the precautionary measures of these diseases is not so complicated as in the case of COVID-19. People who are suffering from the diseases like HIV, Hepatitis and Cancer, do not need to follow the strict instructions of physical distancing.

To live with the virus, current physical and virtual environmental situations and designs are not appropriate. There is an urgent need to rethink, relearn, re-plan, redesign and rework about the personal, social, cultural, economic, educational, political, traveling, hospitality and other activities. It is important to have one meter distance among human beings, when they are at their home, workplace and public places. It is simple to suggest this but its execution and implementation will bring heavy expenditure of money, resources, effort, time and energy. World is already passing through the phase of severe economic crises and management, mobilisation and spending of such economic resources is not feasible. Creation of the desired new normal is very difficult. To address this challenge, researchers, academicians, industrialists, economists, businessmen, politicians, social-scientists and others should come forward to work together and evolve the policies, strategies, programmes and scheme.

(The writer is Prof Rishpal, Dean Humanities and Applied Sciences, Shri Vishwakarma Skill University, Haryana.)

During the New York Art competition, Inspiration From Isolation, which was organised recently, artist Renuka Sondhi Gulati, the only Indian-origin female, made her place among the top six artists of the world. Renuka said that she will always remain grateful for the support of people.

"I have lived my life near forests. I understand the value of nature. The Living Ark series is all about nature reclaiming its space. The series is an incisive and reflective exploration of the relationship between human beings and the environment," added she.

Initially, she competed and won the daily contest, then the bi-weekly contest and then she came in the top six of the competition and was awarded a one year display of her works at Agora Art gallery at Chelsea, New York. During the year, thousands of art lovers and art collectors will be able to see her paintings, sculptors and prints artworks. The 16 artworks selected for display for one year are The Living Ark (

Discovering nature

RENUKA SONDHI GULATI made her place among the top six artists of the world



four works), The Graceful Stripes (two works), Save me Save the World, In My Dreams, The Power

Play, Intimacy, Search for Eternity and Illusions at Rest. She has been keenly examining



the links between man's exploitative treatment of nature and the resulting effect of this onslaught. The series featuring a log of wood takes on the Biblical story of Noah's Ark to reflect on the world as it stands today, especially in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The series also brings to fore the question of ownership of space on earth. The images of animals making their way

into urban spaces and reclaiming their freedom of movement, during the lockdown across the world, resonate with the resplendent wildlife on the different arks of life in the paintings. The cradle of mother nature that is present for all living forms had been usurped by civilisation and the spread of human settlements. In her paintings, Renuka makes us reflect hard on the outcome of our actions that had restricted animals to the sanctuaries or the zoo.

One of the paintings in the series sees the ark of life taking prominence as it occupies the centre of the canvas with fewer figures, but the perched panther ready to sprint, the innocent deer, and a girl with her back turned ready to step onto the life log. The artist peeping on the suspended log watches the girl begin her ascent. However, the most prominent object on the Ark is the green heart, literally with its aorta and vena cava, spelling the obvious that nature is the heart of the earth.

ADVANTAGE CHELSEA

Giroud helps Frank's side edge out Norwich & inch closer to top-four finish

AFP ■ LONDON

Frank Lampard admitted Chelsea are struggling with nerves as they chase a place in the Champions League next season after Olivier Giroud scored the only goal in a 1-0 win over already relegated Norwich at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday. Victory opens up a four-point lead for third-placed Chelsea over Leicester and Manchester United, who both have a game in hand later this week.

But Lampard knows there is still plenty of work to do with a trip to champions Liverpool and sixth-placed Wolves visiting Stamford Bridge on the last day of the season to come in Chelsea's final two league games of the season.

"I want more but that can wait. Where we are at as a team and our position in the table, three points is everything," said Lampard.

"If we want to really move on then it can be better. It's not easy, there is a nervy feeling there for understandable reasons."

Lampard made five changes from the battering at Bramall



Chelsea's Olivier Giroud celebrates after scoring goal Chelsea/Twitter

Lane with Giroud among those restored to the starting line-up.

Chelsea have already significantly bolstered their frontline for next season with the signings of Timo Werner and Hakim Ziyech.

But Giroud has more than justified the decision to also extend his contract by a year during football's shutdown as Chelsea's most potent striker since the restart.

"He's a big character for us and scoring important goals," added Lampard.

Giroud saw a number of

chances come and go in the first half as an attempted lob over Tim Krul fell gently into the Dutch keeper's arms before he sliced well over the bar when unmarked inside the area.

Christian Pulisic forced Krul into his best save of the first-half with a powerful drive that was just too close to the former Newcastle stopper.

Just as Norwich looked set to hold out until the break Giroud shrugged off Timm Klose to connect with Pulisic's cross for his fifth goal in eight

"The game was OK but results are critical. We could have won by more, we could have been a bit better with our quality"

— FRANK LAMPARD

games.

"I missed some I don't miss usually," said Giroud. "I lost a bit of confidence but my desire to score was bigger, so I just tried to stay focused and on the cross of Christian I anticipated this header."

Norwich's long-awaited fate of a return to the Championship was confirmed in a 4-0 thrashing at the hands of West Ham on Saturday.

There was more defiance from the Canaries in defence, but they failed to score for the seventh time in their last eight games to slump to a ninth straight defeat.

Daniel Farke's men failed to even test Chelsea goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga or a defence that has been under the microscope for conceding 49 goals already in the league this season with a shot on target.

PL transfer window to run for 10 weeks

LONDON: Premier League clubs have agreed a 10-week summer transfer window, which will open on July 27.

Subject to the approval of football's world governing body FIFA, the window will open the day after the 2019/20 league season finishes and end on October 5, the date UEFA had recommended for the closure of registration periods across Europe.

The Premier League said that following consultation with the English Football

League, a domestic-only window will also be added from October 5 and close on October 16.

Transfers between Premier League clubs will not be able to occur during this period, but top-flight sides can trade with EFL clubs and loan or sign players permanently.

The EFL confirmed its window would open on the same day as the Premier League's but clubs would have an extra two weeks for domestic-only business. AFP



Atalanta's Mario Pasalic celebrates after scoring a goal against Brescia AP

Great entertainers

Pasalic nets hat-trick as free-scoring Atalanta thump Brescia to go second

AFP ■ BERGAMO

games to the maximum."

Mario Pasalic scored a hat-trick as Atalanta brushed aside struggling local rivals Brescia 6-2 to move second in Serie A on Tuesday.

Gian Piero Gasperini's side extended their unbeaten league run to 13 games to move six points behind leaders Juventus who visit eighth-placed Sassuolo on Wednesday.

Inter Milan and Lazio are two points behind Atalanta before they play against SPAL and Udinese respectively later this week.

Gasperini's side have scored 93 league goals so far this season — 26 more than eight-time reigning champions Juventus.

"We don't do it to humiliate the opponent, but we try to play our game," said Gasperini.

"Already last year we were the best attack in the league, this year we have surpassed our goals with many different players."

"Playing in the Champions League has helped us and made us grow," added Gasperini, whose side will play Paris Saint-Germain in the last eight next month.

"We are preparing for Paris Saint-Germain, but also want to fight to the end in Serie A."

"I think the best way to be ready for August 12 will be to play these last five league

Atalanta's top scorer Luis Muriel, with 17 league goals this season, watched from the stands but his absence was not felt with Croatian Pasalic opening the scoring within two minutes at the Gewiss Stadium connecting with a Ruslan Malinovskyi cross.

Brescia hit back minutes later with Ernesto Torregrossa pouncing on Atalanta defender Mattia Caldara's poor clearance.

But the hosts got back into their stride and were four-goals up after half an hour with Marten De Roon, Malinovskyi and a Duvan Zapata header within a five-minute spell.

The punishment continued in the second half with Malinovskyi again setting up Pasalic to beat Lorenzo Andrenacci in the Brescia goal after 55 minutes.

The Croatian added a third three minutes later sending in Ebrima Colley's cross for his ninth goal this season, five of them against Brescia, having scored a brace in the away leg last November.

"It's the best moment of my career," said Pasalic after his maiden hat-trick.

"There are still five games left and we can do even better. Nikolas Spalek pulled a goal back for Brescia who move closer to Serie B next season.



Real Madrid vs Villarreal Live from 12:30am IST FACEBOOK

Madrid get chance to clinch league title

AP ■ MADRID

The Spanish league trophy will be sitting by the field at the Alfredo Di Stefano Stadium on Thursday, with Real Madrid a win away from lifting it for the first time in three years.

Madrid will have its first chance to clinch the title when it hosts Villarreal at home following a long season that was in jeopardy because of the coronavirus pandemic.

It enters the second-to-last round with a four-point lead over Barcelona, which faces Osasuna at the Camp Nou at the same time.

Madrid needs two points from its last two matches to secure its 34th league title — and first since 2017. It can also lift the trophy with a loss if Barcelona fails to defeat Osasuna.

It would be Madrid's first league title since Cristiano Ronaldo left to join Juventus two seasons ago, and the first since coach Zinedine Zidane returned from a short break.

Barcelona won the last two league titles and was at the top this season when the coronavirus pandemic struck, but Madrid has been perfect since the break, winning nine straight. "When we returned from the confinement after being

stuck at home for almost three months, I could see that the players wanted to achieve something big," Zidane said on Wednesday.

"I could see it during the training sessions, I could see it in how they were practising."

Madrid had lost three of its last four matches before the league was halted in March.

Barcelona seemed in control but endured an up-and-down run after the break, drawing three matches and losing its advantage at the top.

Coach Quique Setien, under pressure because of the team's results and lackluster performances, knows his club faces a tough task trying to overcome Madrid's advantage.

Barcelona has won eight of the last 11 league titles, with Madrid lifting the trophy in 2017 and 2012.

Madrid will face a Villarreal team that is sitting fifth in the standings and fighting for a Europa League berth.

It had one of the best runs following the coronavirus break, winning six of its nine matches.

"It will be one of our most difficult matches," Zidane said. "It's a very tough rival, a very good team."

Barcelona's opponent, Osasuna, is in 11th place.

4 games/day confirmed for 2022 World Cup

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 2022 World Cup will have four games every day in a 12-day group stage and matches later in the tournament that go into extra time will extend past midnight in Qatar.

FIFA released the schedule for the first World Cup to be played in November and December on Wednesday, with

kickoff times at 1 pm (1000 GMT), 4 pm (1300 GMT), 7 pm (1600 GMT) and 10 pm (1900 GMT).

Host Qatar will open the Middle East's first World Cup in the 60,000-capacity Al Bayt Stadium at 1 pm on

November 21. The final start at 6 pm on December 18 at the 80,000-capacity Lusail Stadium.

Eight venues in close proximity to Doha will be used at the tournament, which will be played in 28 days rather than the 32 days used at the last World Cup in Russia to minimize the disruption

to the European season. Teams and fans will not need to fly around Qatar because stadiums are within a 30-mile radius.

Both semifinals — like some games in the previous rounds — will kick off at 10 pm and will spill over into the next day if there is extra time, or even just long injury and VAR delays in regular time.

India's home series vs Eng set to be postponed

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The national camps for Indian men's and women's hockey teams will not resume as planned on July 19 at Bengaluru SAI Centre with the rising Covid-19 case count forcing the city into a complete seven-day lockdown.

The grave situation in the southern metropolis has left the Sports Authority of India (SAI) with no choice but to defer its plans.

Enjoying a break at their respective native places after being confined to their rooms at the SAI Centre for two months due to the nationwide lockdown, the players

had been expected to return to base by July 19.

A SAI source in Bengaluru, however, confirmed to PTI that there is no way the national camps can resume on the earlier earmarked date under the current circumstances.

"We didn't get any such instruction till now about resumption of hockey camps. On June 18, we were just being asked to allow the players to leave for their homes but no intimation has been given to us on resumption of camps," the source said.

"Frankly speaking, it is impossible to resume camps now because

No July 19 resumption of hockey camps as Bengaluru goes into lockdown

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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Big Bash to start amid India tour

MELBOURNE: The 10th season of the Big Bash League (BBL) will coincide with the much-anticipated India's tour of Australia, the host board announced on Wednesday unveiling a 61-match schedule for the country's premier T20 event.

According to the schedule released by Cricket Australia (CA), the BBL will begin on December 3 with a clash between Strikers and Renegades at the Adelaide Oval, shortly after the end of day one of the opening Test between India and Australia in Brisbane. The final has

been set for February 6 next year. The 59-game Women's BBL will be played from October 17

until November 29. "While the Covid-19 pandemic may yet force alterations to the summer of cricket, today's announcement confirms the commitment to a full 61-game schedule, including the return of the five-team finals format," the CA said.

As per the schedule, the BBL will run for eight nights before taking a five-day break for Australia's day-night Test with India to be held from Dec 11-15 at Adelaide Oval.

PTI

Root returns for Old Trafford Test

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Fresh from becoming a father of two, Joe Root will be reinstated as England captain on Thursday with his team in very familiar territory.

With Root absent so he could be with his wife for the birth of their second child, England lost their first Test against the West Indies last week in what was the first international cricket match since the sport's shutdown.

With the series against the West Indies being only three Tests, England has to bounce back immediately and Root's return is clearly a positive.

The captain will take the place of Joe Denly, who made 18 and 29 in his two innings at the Rose Bowl and was fighting

with Zak Crawley to keep his spot for the second Test at Old Trafford.

Crawley had England's highest single score with 76 in the second innings.

There is likely to be a change in the bowling attack, too, with Stuart Broad pushing for a recall after being dropped for the first Test — and then speaking publicly about his disappointment during the match.

Root said any decision would be taken after he took a look at the Old Trafford pitch again later Wednesday.

There has been rain in Manchester and Root

described the wicket as having a "nice brownish colour."

Continuity has been key for England when it comes to selection in recent years, which may prove a blessing for Jos Buttler. The wicketkeeper-batsman — a limited-overs specialist — has a Test average of 23.22 since the start of 2019, and only one century in 75 innings, but is set to keep his place.

The West Indies are holders of the Wisden Trophy after beating England in a home series last year,

so will retain it with a draw in the first of back-to-back Tests in Manchester.

And they are looking to seal a first Test series victory in England in 32 years. Not since 1992-93 — when the likes of Brian Lara, Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose were in their pomp — have the Windies won an overseas Test series consisting of more than two matches against major opposition.

"I haven't mentioned anything about history to the guys," West Indies captain Jason Holder said.

"It's hard for us to get caught up in the peripheral stuff. "Winning the first Test match is just one piece of the puzzle. We've got two other games to play and we don't get ahead of ourselves."

Extended preparations played key part in win: Simmons

MANCHESTER: Windies coach Phil Simmons believes that the extended preparations after early arrival due to Covid-19 protocols have actually played a key part in his side's four-wicket win in the first Test.

West Indies, who arrived in England on June 9 and trained in a bio-secure environment after that, beat the home side by four wickets on the final day of the first Test.

"I think that has been the biggest influence on the performance. The fact that we've been here for that period of time, we've had quality bowling in the nets because we've had nearly 11 seamers here, you can't put a price on that," he said on the eve of the second Test.

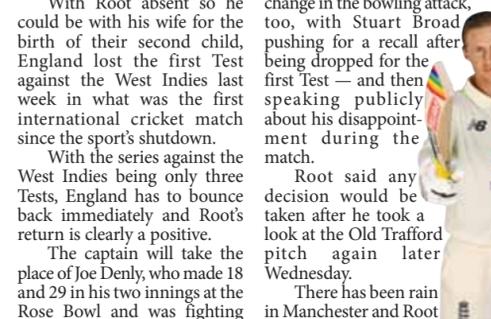
"I don't like to go back into my (playing) days, but we would come to England and play something like three or four proper warm-up games before the first Test, and we would also have

three-day or four-day games in between the Test matches. So I think that period of training goes a long way to how we performed in that first Test."

While praising the resolve of his players in the first Test, he warned the West Indies cricketers to guard against complacency.

"For me it was a great win because I think that it signified a lot of hard work being done by the players over the last four or five weeks. It was a top-class Test match, with good cricket played by both teams, and even coming down to the last hour, it could have gone either way."

"But you guard against complacency by just trying to do the same things you did before the first Test. Right now that Test match is history. We've got to be thinking about what we do from Thursday to Monday," the 57-year-old former all-rounder said. PTI



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described the wicket as having a "nice brownish colour."

Continuity has been key for England when it comes to selection in recent years, which may prove a blessing for Jos Buttler. The wicketkeeper-batsman — a limited-overs specialist — has a Test average of 23.22 since the start of 2019, and only one century in 75 innings, but is set to keep his place.

The West Indies are holders of the Wisden Trophy after beating England in a home series last year,

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SINGLES

BENFICA KEEP SLIM TITLE HOPES ALIVE

LISBON: Benfica kept their slim hopes of winning the Portuguese title alive as a first-half goal from midfielder Chiquinho and a late second from Haris Seferovic gave them a hard-fought 2-0 home win over Vitoria de Guimaraes. The victory leaves Benfica on 71 points after 32 games, five behind leaders Porto. Having beaten Benfica twice this season, Porto will secure 29th league title if they can manage at least a draw with Sporting.

MORTAZA RECOVERS FROM COVID-19

DHAKA: Former Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Mortaza has recovered from Covid-19 after treatment at home for the dreaded virus since June 20. Mortaza announced the negative result of his test on his Facebook page. His wife Sumona Haque is yet to recover from the disease. Two other players — Nafees Iqbal and Nazmul Islam — have also recovered after undergoing treatment at home.

TAMIM, MAHMUDULLAH TURN DOWN CPL OFFERS

DHAKA: Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal and T20I skipper Mahmudullah Riyad on Wednesday confirmed they have opted against taking part in this year's CPL. Citing concerns related to coronavirus pandemic, Mahmudullah turned down the offer to feature in the league. While Tamim declined the offer to remain available for Dhaka Premier League, in case it resumes in August.

AKINFENWA INVITED TO LIVERPOOL TITLE PARADE

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said he has invited Akinfenwa to their Premier League title parade shortly after sending the forward a congratulatory message for sealing promotion to the Championship. After Wanderers beat Oxford United in the League One playoff final to secure their place in the English second-tier for the first time, Akinfenwa had joked that Klopp could "hit me up on WhatsApp". The German manager had responded with a video message and said that Akinfenwa would also be part of their title celebration when it happens.

DAKAR YOUTH OLYMPICS POSTPONED TO 2026

LAUSANNE: The International Olympic Committee has postponed the 2022 Dakar Youth Olympics for four years due to the coronavirus pandemic. IOC President Thomas Bach said the delay was discussed two days ago in a telephone conversation with Senegal President Macky Sall. The Youth Summer Games would be the first Olympics organized in Africa.

6 PEOPLE RETURNED COVID-19 POSITIVE: CSA

JOHANNESBURG: Cricket South Africa (CSA) on Wednesday said six people have returned positive for the dreaded coronavirus but none of them are cricketers following approximately 50 tests conducted ahead of the 3TeamCricket match on Saturday. CSA however did not reveal who were the six positive people from among those tested for the dreaded disease.

DCB LOOK TO START DOMESTIC SEASON IN OCT

KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board is planning to start its delayed domestic cricket season from early October at select venues across the country. "The idea is to have a reduced domestic season at less venues to limit the travel and moving about off players, coaches and officials," a source said. He said a final decision on the domestic cricket schedule would be taken in early September so there is time for preparations.

HUMPY, HARIKA ADVANCE TO LAST EIGHT

CHENNAI: India's Koneru Humpy and D Harika advanced to the quarterfinals of the fourth and final leg of Women Speed Chess Championships on Wednesday. Agencies