

OPINION 6 NEW NORMAL WITH CHINA

WORLD 8 CHINA SANCTIONS TOP US OFFICIALS, POLITICIANS

SPORT 12 SEVILLA ALMOST BOOK TOP 4 SPOT

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SHILPA SHETTY GIVES YOGA TIPS TO FANS 11 VIVACITY

Gehlot passes muster, wins round 1

CLP backs CM, but crisis not over, another meeting today morning to win over 16-17 MLAs loyal to Pilot; Priyanka likely to mediate

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

The round one of the Rajasthan political crisis went to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday after he mobilised nearly 106-7 MLAs, including those from Independents, but the threat to his Government remained real with no sign of any climb down by Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot.

The party has called another round of meeting of legislators on Tuesday in its last effort, hoping that some of the supporters of Pilot would this time attend the CLP meeting. As of now, all the Gehlot supporters MLAs are residing at a resort at the outskirts of Jaipur where they were taken soon after the CLP meeting.

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi is likely to reach Jaipur to solve the dispute between Gehlot and Pilot.

Pilot has been camping in Delhi with 16-17 MLAs and is reported to be also in touch with BJP leaders, though the saffron party has denied such speculation. Congress leaders have claimed that party chief Sonia Gandhi, senior leader Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, Ahmed Patel, and P Chidambaram have spoken to Pilot several times over the last 48 hours, but so far he has not given any indication of a thaw.



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot (C), with senior Congress leaders Randeep Surjewala, Avinash Pandey, Ajay Maken and KC Venugopal, flashes a victory sign during a meeting with the party MLAs at his residence in Jaipur on Monday. PTI

Congress chief spokesperson and AICC nominee Randeep Surjewala said 109 MLAs of the Congress led Government in Rajasthan under Gehlot have given their letter of support.

However, sources said smaller parties and a couple of Independents who have supported the Gehlot Government so far may abstain in case there is a floor test. Surjewala in a late night media briefing at Jaipur said

MLAs gave their support letter and thus they have failed BJP's attempts to topple the Congress Government.

He said another Congress Legislative Party (CLP) meet will be at 10 am on Tuesday to discuss the political situation and that party had again requested Pilot and all MLAs with him camping in Delhi to attend the meeting at Jaipur.

"They (MLAs) are requested to come and discuss how to strengthen Rajasthan and serve

the eight crore people together. If there are some differences with someone, then they should say that with an open mind. Sonia and Rahul are ready to listen to everyone and find solution," Surjewala said.

Rajya Sabha member and a close aide of Rahul, Rajeev Satav, has also been deputed to initiate talks between the two factions even as Ajay Maken and Surjewala are already making attempts.

Cong has failed to keep its house in order: BJP

Says blaming others for the instability of its Government not good

DIPAK UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Adopting a "wait & watch" approach towards the Rajasthan political crisis triggered by rebellion by Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, the BJP on Monday said the Congress has completely failed to set its house in order in the State and blaming others for the instability of its Government would not do any good to it.

The BJP has demanded that the Gehlot Government prove its majority in the Assembly at the earliest.

Pilot, who has not been able to muster enough support of MLAs to count on the BJP Government, has maintained that he will not be joining the saffron party in a fashion done by Jyotiraditya Scindia, who facilitated ouster of the Congress Government in Madhya Pradesh in March and crossed over to the BJP.

According to sources, BJP leaders are in touch with Pilot but awaiting the full unfolding of the numbers game. Union Minister

Dharmendra Pradhan has held consultations with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the Rajasthan crisis a day before Pilot moved to Delhi making public his opposition to the State Chief Minister.

Sources, however, denied that Pilot met BJP Central leaders saying "rumours were spread by the Gehlot camp" to discredit the Deputy CM.

Asked about the BJP's move on the developing situation in the State, sources said, "Situation is not ripe for the BJP to step in directly." As about Pilot doing a Scindia, they said, "In Rajasthan rebel numbers need to swell up to 50 or more before opposition party takes the challenge of forming an alternative."

The BJP is hopeful that sooner or later it can replicate its MP template in Rajasthan too, given the "unbridgeable differences" within the Congress and trusts that a "bigger split" in the Congress is expected any day soon.

Responding to the charges that the BJP was engaged in the toppling game, BJP's Rajya Sabha MP and senior leader from Rajasthan Om Prakash Mathur said, "Congress should look within as what it has done with the mandate given by the people."

I-T raids on Gehlot's 2 aides amid tussle

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the crisis in Rajasthan over power tussle between Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his deputy Sachin Pilot, two of the CM's aides were raided on Monday morning by the Income Tax Department in a signature measure of the Central agencies alleged meddling in such political turbulence.

Similar moves by the Central probe agencies were initiated during the recent crisis in Manipur and in the run up to the toppling of the Congress Government in Madhya Pradesh. The probe agencies were similarly active in Karnataka before the political crisis that led to the fall of Congress (D)S alliance Government last year.

"The BJP has three front agencies and two of them, Income Tax and ED, have swung into action and it's a matter of time when the third one, the CBI, will also come into play. It's nothing but murder of democracy," said senior Congress leader Randeep Surjewala.

Rajasthan Government chief whip Mahesh Joshi condemned the Income Tax raids on premises linked to two Congress leaders. Joshi was speaking to reporters outside the residence of the Chief Minister where a meeting of the Congress Legislature Party has been convened. He condemned this. The raids are uncalculated and intended at threatening but we are not going to be distracted or scared by this," he said. "Entire country is watching this," Joshi added.

The IT Department raided Rajiv Arora, vice president of the party's Rajasthan unit, and Dharmendra Rathore and the searches yielded cash, jewellery, property documents and lockers. The searches were also extended to Bhillwara and Jhalawad besides Delhi.

In Delhi, the searches were conducted on the premises of Kulkarni brothers who were allegedly awarded a mega irrigation project in Rajasthan and faced complaints of irregularities in the dam construction. The searches were also conducted on premises of Om Metals, Infra Projects Ltd in Saket and Sainik Farms area here.

The ED teams carried out searches at Hotel Fairmount in Jaipur promoted by Ratan Kant, close to Gehlot's son Vaibhav.

Big B, Bachchan junior better, stable in hospital

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The condition of Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan and his actor-son Abhishek Bachchan, who were admitted to Nanavati Super Speciality Hospital at Vile Parle in north-west Mumbai on Saturday night after they tested positive for Covid-19, is "better" and "stable".

Quoting the doctors attending on the father-son duo, informed sources at the hospital said that the two actors did not need any "aggressive treatment" for now. "Both Amitabh and Abhishek are better and clinically stable. They do not need any aggressive treatment," the sources said.

"Get well soon" message continued to flood various social media platforms from the Bachchan fans and well-wishers for the third consecutive day on Monday.

Earlier in the day, an overwhelmed Amitabh tweeted: "It shall not be possible for me to acknowledge and respond to all the prayers and wishes



expressed by them that have shown concern towards Abhishek," Aishwarya, Aaradhya and me... I put my hands together and say "Thank you for your eternal love and affection."

Later in the evening, Big B put out one more tweet, this time in Hindi, thanking his fans and well-wishers for their messages wishing him, his son Abhishek, daughter-in-law Aishwarya and granddaughter Aaradhya.

While Amitabh and Abhishek were admitted to the Nanavati Hospital on Saturday, Aishwarya and Aaradhya, who tested positive for coronavirus on Sunday, are under quaran-



antine at their home.

Confirming that his wife and daughter had tested positive for Covid-19, Abhishek had tweeted on Sunday evening: "Aishwarya and Aaradhya have also tested Covid-19 positive. They will be self-quarantining at home. The BMC has been updated of their situation and are doing the needful. The rest of the family, including my mother, have tested negative. Thank you all for your wishes and prayers."

"My father and I remain in hospital till the doctors decide otherwise. Everyone please remain cautious and safe. Please follow all rules!" Abhishek had said in another tweet.

Brahmapur borders sealed from today

DM mourns Anganwadi Supervisor's demise

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The Berahampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) on Monday announced sealing of all borders of the city from Tuesday morning till further orders as a measure to prevent the spread of coronavirus further.

Addressing a Press meet, BeMC Commissioner Chakravarty Singh Rathor and SP Pinak Mishra said any person intending to go outside has to take permission from police by dialing 100. People who have booked train and flight tickets will be allowed to move to their destinations.

Drug stores and medical services would be excluded from the restrictions. Shops selling emergency items like grocery, meet and egg would remain open from 5 am to 5 pm. All police officers along with 11 platoons of police would guard the city. The DIG and the SP would directly watch movement of vehicles.

In the meantime, the Ganjam district administration declared Kukuladhandi as a red zone for coronavirus.

Dr Tapti Panda, who works as a surgeon in New York, donated an ambulance worth Rs 15 lakh for collection of swab samples.

Meanwhile, district Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange expressed deep condolences on the death of Sanakhemundi block Anganwadi Supervisor Ananta Patra due to Covid infection.

"She lost her life while discharging duty in the fight of COVID-19 for the mankind. The dedication and devotion shown by her is an example for others. I extend our deepest sympathies to the bereaved family members," said the Collector.

Google to invest ₹75,000 cr to boost India's digital economy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Google will invest ₹75,000 crore (\$10 billion) in India to boost the digital economy over the next five to seven years. The investment will be done through a mix of equity investments, partnerships, and operational, infrastructure and ecosystem investments.

The development comes after a virtual meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Google CEO Sundar Pichai on Monday. According to Google, this investment will help realise PM's vision of a Digital India.

"Today at #GoogleForIndia we announced a new \$10B digitalization fund to help accelerate India's digital economy." We're proud to support PM @narendramodi's vision for Digital India — many thanks to Minister @rsprasad & Minister @DRPNishank for joining us," Pichai, the 48-year-old Indian American Google CEO, wrote in a tweet.

Calling India's digital journey far from complete, Google



focus on four areas important to India's digitalization," Google said in a statement.

"First, enabling affordable access and information for every Indian in their own language, whether it's Hindi, Tamil, Punjabi or any other. Second, building new products and services that are deeply relevant to India's unique needs. Third, empowering businesses as they continue or embark on their digital transformation. Fourth, leveraging technology and AI for social good, in areas like health, education, and agriculture," it said.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that he had an "extremely fruitful interaction" with Google CEO Sundar Pichai. "We spoke on a wide range of subjects, particularly leveraging the power of technology to transform the lives of India's farmers and entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs," the Prime Minister wrote on Twitter. The Prime Minister also shared pictures of the virtual interaction.

Urban asymptomatic cases allowed home isolation

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Changing its strategy in the fight against Covid-19, the State Government on Monday allowed asymptomatic cases or persons with mild symptoms in the urban areas to keep themselves in home isolation in the first phase.

If any persons in the 114 urban local bodies (ULBs), district headquarters towns and block headquarters towns test positive and want to stay in home isolation, the Government would allow them for it with some conditions, said Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy.

The home isolation would be helpful for asymptomatic persons. Besides, there would be a lesser chance for them to

get secondary infection. Family members of the infected asymptomatic persons would make them to follow the Covid-19 guidelines, he said.

The decision was taken after the Government requests from several quarters for such home isolation. Tripathy said.

The Municipal Corporations, the Bhubaneswar and Jharsuguda airports, seaports, PSU units, Central Armed Police Force, Odisha Police, Fire Services, deemed universities, religious committees, resident welfare associations and NGOs are allowed to create isolation facilities if any of their members tests positive, he informed.

Daily diet allowance for docs on Covid duty

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Monday decided to provide daily diet allowance to doctors and paramedical staff engaged in the Government-run Covid Care Centres, Covid Health Centres and Covid Hospitals.

Health Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra said daily diet allowance of Rs 240 would be given to each doctor and paramedical staff. The directive should be implemented with immediate effect, he told the concerned officials in a letter.

The allowance would be provided in form of food and not as financial incentive. Funds for it would be met from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

6 more die of Covid; State toll rises to 70

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Six more persons died of SCoVid-19 on Monday, increasing the total death toll to 70 in the State. While four deaths were reported from Ganjam district, the other two were reported from Bhubaneswar and Cuttack district.

The deceased included a 45-year-old man, a 63-year-old man, a 72-year-old man and a 49-year-old man of Ganjam. The other two deaths were of a 67-year-old man of Bhubaneswar and a 40-year-old man of Cuttack district, the Health and Family Welfare Department said.

Meanwhile, 616 new positive cases were reported in the State on the day, following which the total cases reached 13,737. Out of them, 415 were reported from quarantine cen-

ters and 201 were local contacts.

Ganjam district again reported the day's highest 283 cases, followed by Koraput with 50, Nabarangpur 40, Bargarh 31, Khordha 29, Baleswar 27, Cuttack and Keonjhar 23, Jagatsinghpur 18, Jajpur 17, Malkangiri 14, Mayurbhanj 13, Jharsuguda 11, Angul seven, Kandhamal six, Sundargarh and Nuapada five each, Bhadrak and Balangir two each, Kendrapada, Gajapati and Puri one each. However, 505 patients recovered from the infection on Monday. With this, the total number of recoveries cases in the State increased to 9,255.

14 new Covid cases in Bhubaneswar; total 718

B H U B A N E S W A R : Bhubaneswar on Monday registered 14 new Covid-19 cases, taking the total number of positive cases to 718 in the capital city.

Out of the fresh cases, 10 were local contacts and four detected from quarantine centres, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said.

The local cases included a 75-year-old woman of Kanan Vihar Phase II, a 40-year-old man of Bomikhil Jayadurga Nagar, a 30-year-old man of Nayapalli near Mahima Dhaba, a 58-year-old man of IRC Village, who is a Government hospital employee, a 44-year-old woman of Ganganagar, who is a service provider of a Government hospital, a 60-year-old man of Sundarpada, a one-year-old girl of Unit-6 Radhakrishna Jala Basti with a travel history of a hotspot district, a 32-year-old man of Unit-9 near Road No. 8 and a 24-

Patients include 1-yr-old girl, 29 recoverer, 16 infected in Cuttack city

year-old woman employee of a private hospital. The quarantine cases included a 28-year-old woman employee of a private hospital, a 44-year-old man of Unit-8 and two cases of Unit-5 Kesharinaray Basti linked with an earlier positive case.

However, 29 more patients recovered from the disease in the city on Monday. On the day, Cuttack city registered 16 new cases, following which its total tally increased to 264. Of these cases, six were detected from institutional quarantine, two from home quarantine and eight were local contact cases. With this, the total active cases in the city rose to 128.

State Govt seeks relief from Discoms

Minister seeks relief from Centre due to Covid crisis

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government has sought concrete steps to the Centre to help the power supply and distribution companies (Discoms) in the State which have been severely hit by the Covid-19 crisis.

ities, commerce and industries. "In Odisha, there is a reduction in power demand as many of the industrial and commercial units have been shut down or are partially operating. Though lifting of lockdown has led to some uptick in economic activity, the demand from the commercial and industrial consumers continues to be low," he has stated. Saying that the economic activities would remain subdued during the whole 2020-21 financial year, Mishra has stated, "Such prolonged reduction in power demand will continue to worsen the financial condition of the Discoms." To help the Discoms, he has made a number of sugges-

tions such as special rebate by the Centre in power purchase and reform measures and extension of loans from Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) for liquidity infusion at a reduced rate of interest. The applicable rate of interest of 9.5% which would become a burden on consumers, Mishra has argued. Suggesting that loans be extended at a rate compared to the rates charged by the banks, he has suggested that the REC/PFC extend loan to the Gridco at a reduced rate of 6% per annum as this largest Discom's estimated cash deficit for 2020-21 is about Rs 3,600 crore.

Matric exam results likely by July 31

BHUBANESWAR: Results of High School Certificate (Matriculation) examinations, conducted by the Board of Secondary Education in February-March 2020, are likely to be published before July 31. School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash hinted about this on Monday. "Evaluation of Matric answer sheets has been completed, while tabulation work is now going on. Date of results will be announced very soon," said the Minister. Notably, over 5.5 lakh stu-

dents have appeared for the HSC examinations this year. While Matric results are usually published in May, this year it has been delayed due to Covid pandemic. Regarding Plus Two results, the Minister said the evaluation of work is being delayed as evaluators are not turning up to evaluation centres in fear of Covid. Dash said he would soon write to the Chief Secretary who in turn would write to district Collectors for speeding up the evaluation process so that results can be as early as possible. PNS

Interview of the week

Returnees became virus spreaders in Jajpur



Sugyan Choudhury

A multifaceted personality, **Ranjan Kumar Das**, District Magistrate & Collector, Jajpur, has hundreds of iron in the fire to credit for many of them are hot indeed! A versatile writer, a zestful chronicler of life through his travelogues, he goes on unceasingly relating his creations to the admiration of his readers. Workless by temperament, he rises in the wee hour of day and works till it is dark for the toiling people of the district by visiting them even at their doorsteps as and when needed. He tries to check the Covid-19 pandemic with surveillance round the clock. After completing his postgraduation in Political Science, he joined the Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) in 1984 and was elevated to the IAS in 2017. After his joining as the Jajpur Collector, he has undertaken a series of developmental activities by bringing catalytic changes in the district. The Nagada situation has improved unexpectedly owing to his untiring efforts, for which appreciations come from all quarters. His Odia books have been translated into Hindi and Bengali and received wide acclaim. He has mastered the Russian language and rendered a Russian poetry collection into Odia. There are seemingly unending awards and accolades come cascading down upon him as a writer. He writes columns for major local newspapers. He is also a founder-member of Sambar Srujan Samiti, Odisha's largest online portal to Odia authors.com. His lovely lyrics have been made into blockbuster albums echoing with lilting music. Some of his writings have become so popular that they have been made into Odia films like 'Rakhi Deigala Akhira Luba', 'Saheed Raghu Sardar', 'Tu Mu Laila', etc. In an interview to **The Pioneer**, Das spoke to **Sugyan Choudhury** on the problems due to the pandemic in the highly populated district of Jajpur.

Testing in the dist higher than State, national averages

around one lakh migrants stranded in different States like West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Gujarat, Delhi and a few other States which were hotspots. So far, around 23,000 people have returned. Some of them entered into the district surreptitiously bypassing the border checkpoints and later on became spreaders of the virus before they could be detected and brought to TMCCs.

How far is the public distribution system maintained during the pandemic? Some beneficiaries have raised allegations that their quotas have been cut short by their dealers. What are the packages for the needy people during this period as allotted by both the State and the Central Governments?

The public distribution system (PDS) in our district is running efficaciously. PDS dealers and Civil Supplies officials were told from the beginning to be empathetic towards the people. Still, in a few cases where the dealers played mischief, strong action was taken against them which acted as a deterrent for others. So far, regular entitlement of rice/wheat @ Rs 1 per kg has been supplied to all card holders under the National Food Security Act and the State Food Security Act. Under PMKVKY, rice @ 5 kg per person and dal @ 1 kg per household have been distributed to the card holders free of cost for three months up to June. Distribution is going on for the month of July.



Ranjan Kumar Das

How far has the district administration been successful in isolating the Nizamuddin-linked people? Nizamuddin-linked people were the first to enter the district and were few in number. We could identify their habits and contacts through active surveillance and line listing and did containment as well as enforcement effectively to isolate them.

In most of the blocks of the district, Covid test has not yet been conducted. It is apprehended that their numbers may rise phenomenally after tests. What steps are taken to solve the problem? Jajpur is one of the districts which have done extensive testing. Even our position is higher than the State and national averages. Whereas testing per lakh population is 673 in the country and 675 in the State, our testing per lakh population is 822.

It is reported that inmates of quarantine centres are allowed to go scot free after a brief half of five days to seven days of testing. Is this targeted period? These people, also again being victims of Covid-19, are spreading the disease. What's your response? No. Inmates in rural areas are made to undergo 14 days of compulsory institutional quarantining, after which they become eligible to get an incentive of Rs 2,000 per person. We are following all Government instructions issued in this regard strictly.

What are the plans on your agenda for accelerating the drive against the pandemic? We undertook lots of awareness and enforcement activities in last few months to keep our people free from viral contamination. Our officers and PRIs are doing excellent work for regulating social distancing and ensuring use of masks, etc. We are putting in our best to ensure that there is no further spread and death due to Covid-19.

Your video in acting against the pandemic and creating awareness in the society has gone viral. Could you please share your delightful experience in this regard with us? I have long years of exposure to the creative world. During initial days of Covid-19 when awareness spreading was the need of the hour, it struck me one day to try something unique to spread awareness. I along with some of my colleagues did a video documentary to teach people about the 'do's & don'ts' during those days. It was a pleasant experience being on the video film to make an appeal to people. The experiment was also appreciated by people at large.

BBSR region posts 91.46 per cent CBSE +2 results

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Bhubaneswar region of the CBSE registered a 91.46 per cent of pass in the Class-XII Examinations 2020, results of which were announced on Monday. The board didn't come up with a merit list in view of the coronavirus pandemic. The pass percentage at the all-India level was recorded at 88.78, which is an increase of 5.38 per cent over the previous year's results. The Trivandrum region recorded the highest pass percentage at 97.67 whereas the lowest pass percentage was recorded at 74.57 in the Patna region.

Sex slur: OAS officer gets bail



Bibhu Prasad Sarangi

The Court of Additional District & Sessions Judge here on Monday granted bail to Bibhu Prasad Sarangi, an OAS officer and Director of National Ayush Mission, who was arrested on July 9 in a sexual harassment case. The bail was granted against two sureties of Rs 10,000 each. The Mahila Police had arrested Sarangi on the charge of sexually harassing a woman colleague, who had alleged that Sarangi sent her obscene messages and videos on WhatsApp. However, Sarangi has refuted the allegation and filed a counter-FIR against the complainant. PNS

Old Rauspatna declared containment zone

CUTTACK: The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) on Monday declared Old Rauspatna in the city as a containment zone following detection of five Covid-19 cases in the area. The decision was taken for active contact tracing and containment of the virus spread. People have been restricted from entering into and going out of the containment zone. "CMC would ensure the supply of essentials for all the citizens in this zone." Milk, vegetables and groceries to be supplied for the public by the dealers notified by CMC. The civic body said in a tweet. The CMC has urged the inhabitants within the containment zone to stay at their homes and abide by the guidelines. "This decision has been taken in the larger public interest to contain the further spread of Covid-19," the CMC added. PNS

2 more Covid care centres in Khordha soon

BHUBANESWAR: In a major move to combat the coronavirus pandemic, two more Covid care centres would be set up in Khordha district. An MoU between the Khordha district administration and the IMS & SUM Hospital was signed in this regard on Monday. While a 500-bed Covid care centre would become operational at Januhari, a 300-bed centre would be functional at Jatni. The two facilities would be used for treatment of mild and asymptomatic Covid-19 patients. Currently, there is one Covid care centre in the district at the Mahatma Gandhi Academy of Prisons and Correctional Services, Chhatahar, Bhubaneswar with a capacity of 200 beds. This apart, the district has two Covid hospitals, KIMS Hospital and SUM Hospital, in Bhubaneswar. PNS

RGH OPD closed



Interior of the Outpatient Department (OPD) at Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH)

The Outpatient Department (OPD) of the Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH) would be closed from Monday till July 15 following the detection of some Covid-19 cases. However, services for trauma, delivery and emergency cases would continue. Notably, on Saturday, the Bonai Sub-Divisional Hospital in this Sundargarh district also closed its OPD for an indefinite period after a staffer tested positive for Covid-19.

VSSUT invents ultraviolet device for sanitisation

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

The Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Burla has come up with a robot-assisted device that uses short-wave ultraviolet ray for sanitisation. The contactless device, Ultra Violet Robot-Assisted Sanitiser (UVRAS), can be an effective tool in the war against Covid-19, a VSSUT official said on Sunday. Developed by the Robotics Club of the VSSUT, the ultraviolet disinfectant can be useful in maintaining hygiene, according to Prakash Chandra Swain, VSSUT Professor-in-Charge of Public Relations. With the help of a robot, the device can sterilise surfaces by using the short-wave ultraviolet light. The UVRAS emits ultraviolet light to disinfect enclosed areas like hospital rooms, doctors' chambers, operation theatres, guest rooms, restaurants and meeting spaces. The device has a camera which gives a real-time video of the area where it will be deployed for sanitisation. The tool provides a perfect solution to our problem. The ultraviolet light targets pathogens and is effective for disinfecting the air. It prevents certain infectious diseases from spreading. Claiming the device as the first of its kind in the world, Prof Swain said talks are on with different industrial organisations for its commercial production. VSSUT students have also prepared an automatic hand sanitiser dispenser, which is also contactless and a low-cost tool. In the near future, the university has planned to go in for mass production of it to supply to people and organisations.

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E-waste awareness drive launched in city

BHUBANESWAR: E-waste management company Hulladek Recycling announced to launch a campaign called #SakhoBataoEwasteGhatao in the city. The campaign aims to create awareness about electronic waste, disposing e-waste and the importance of recycling. The campaign was launched in cities like Bhubaneswar, Shillong, Guwahati, Jamshedpur, Dimapur, Kohima and Agartala along with Kolkata. With this campaign, Hulladek Recycling aims to provide proper and organized e-waste management solutions across these cities. Chief Executive Officer, Hulladek Recycling, Nandan Mall said, "We have been conducting online awareness programmes and webinars for students, professionals and homemakers. The participants of these online programmes and webinars include children from the age of 10 years to adults up to the age of 60+ from all walks of life such as students, MNC employees, housewives, small entrepreneurs, corporate houses and NGOs." PNS



Social worker's suicide note sent to SFL

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Government Railway Police (GRP) on Monday sent the suicide note of a social worker and motivational speaker Aditya Dash to the Handwriting Bureau to check its authenticity. A team of handwriting experts will conduct the verification process at the State Forensic Laboratory of Rasulgurh here. Aditya was found dead under mysterious circumstances on the railway track near the Lingaraj Temple Road station last week. The preliminary investigation by police suggested it could be a case of suicide. Later, police also recovered a diary, which was claimed as his suicide note. In the suicide note, Aditya had reportedly held no one responsible for his death. However, Aditya's wife claimed that the suicide note is not written by him and someone else has written it to give the incident a suicidal angle. The GRP has filed a murder case following the demands of his family members and associates. The postmortem report has revealed that he died due to severe head injuries.



Aditya Dash

Kalinga Hosp revives mishap victim's lost arm

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Doctors at the Kalinga Hospital have now successfully conducted a rare surgery on a road accident victim to revive his lost forearm after it was amputated by a passing truck. A team of doctors conducted the surgery on 24-year-old, a lorry driver hailing from Midnapur of West Bengal who was passing from Odisha through the National Highway. It is said that the driver kept his hand outside his vehicle window and his hand was cut apart after a speeding truck hit it. Doctors said that the patient lost his golden hours (golden hours) and arrived late in the hospital. His amputated hand was also not preserved properly for re-implantation. The doctors who treated them mentioned, in such conditions the survival rates are very low as per medical records across the world. "Worldwide medical literature suggests that the success rate of surgeries done in late re-implantation and without preserved part is as low as 2-3 per cent," said Dr Akshay Rout from Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Kalinga Hospital.

Puri DM ranks 7 among 50 best performing ones

PNS ■ PURI

Puri Collector and District Magistrate Balawant Singh has been recognised as one of the best performing Collectors in the country. He has clinched the 7th rank among 50 performing IAS officers in a selection done by the Centre on the basis of report card during a year. In his reaction, Singh said, "Love and affection of people is more important than anything else." Hailed from a farmer family of Kalewa village under Barmer district of Rajasthan, the bureaucrat having a full name of 'Balwant Singh Mabecha' joined in Puri in a troubled time of May 6, 2019 when Cyclone Fani had completely ravaged the pilgrim city a week ago. He successfully handled the post-cyclone situations bringing lives to normal in a month or so. Further, he faced another challenge of evictions of mutts and lodgings within a 75-meter radius of the Jagannath Temple for a heritage corridor project. And amid the Covid-19 pandemic, he managed this year's Rath Yatra without public participation in compliance of the stringent guidelines of the Supreme Court.



Balawant Singh

DAV students excel in Class-XII exams again

CSpur, P'put, K Nagar record 90%, 89%, 84% school averages in Science

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Students of DAV Schools at Chandrasekharpur, Kalinga Nagar and Pokhariput have once again excelled in the CBSE Class XII examinations, results of which were declared on Monday.

The DAV School, Chandrasekharpur posted all-time highest school average of 90.48 in the Science stream. Stitiprajna Sahoo with 98.6% marks topped in the school followed by Swagat Kumar Nayak with 97.8% and Sai Sunil Mahakud with 97.4%, who bagged 2nd and 3rd positions, respectively.

In Commerce stream, the school average is 86.30%. Ayata

Sahoo with 97.2%, Mahaprasad Sahoo with 96.8% and Hirishita Mishra with 96% captured the first three slots in the school.

In Humanities, Prati Das with 97.6%, Ananya Nayak with 96.8% and Ayush Abhinandan Sahoo with 96.4% marks bagged three positions, respectively.

In DAV, Kalinga Nagar, the school average in Science has topped a new record with 84.15%. Suryansata Panda, Anush Pattnaik, Md Atif Khan and Ms Shrutidisha have jointly topped the list with 95.40% marks while Ayusman Mohanty, Prachorya Prayambada and Shakti Swarupa Bhanja have secured second position and Madecha Naz third position with 95.20% and 94.40% marks, respectively.

In Commerce, Subham Kamun has topped the list of meritorious students with 93.80%, while Smarak Routray

and Omkar Acharya have secured second position and Raj Aryan Dash has secured the third position with 89.40% and 88.80% marks respectively.

Once again the students of DAV Pokhariput registered 100% success in the AISCSE-2020 Examination with the school average of 89.17% in Science and 86.96% in Commerce.

Disha Gayatri Nahak with 97% marks topped in the school. Sai Prasanna Panda, Debjit Goswami and Neha Biswal with 96.6% stood second and Lopita Mohapatra with 96.4% got third position. In Commerce, Ajay Kumar Debata topped in the school with 97.6%, while Kritika Pattnaik with 96.6% became second and Subhasish Swain with 96% got third position.

DAV Chairman, Principals and teachers have congratulated the students for their scintillating performances.

Swabs of 4 N'garh cops sent for test

PNS ■ BHAPUR (NAYAGARH)

Swab samples of three police personnel of the Fategarh police station and a cop of the Bhapur Beat House in Nayagarh district were sent for Covid test on Sunday.

1 -ve detected in Bhapur

According to reports, a doctor, who had conducted postmortem on an accident victim, tested positive for Covid. Those who came in contact with the doctor were advised to stay in home quarantine and these four police personnel were sent for test.

Meanwhile, a Covid positive case was detected from the Bhagabanpu TMC under Bhapur block on Saturday. While swab samples of 150 persons had been sent for Covid test, 49 reported as negative and a report of a 10-year-old boy came positive.

Rising Covid cases: 8 CCCs, CCS for Ganjam

KRUSHNA CHANDRA PANDA ■ BRAHMAMUR

Keeping the spiralling number of Covid-19 cases in Ganjam district, the State Government is contemplating to open eight more Covid Care Centres (CCCs) and Covid Health Centres (CHC) to contain the disease at a faster pace.

Both Government and private buildings and existing healthcare centers/hospitals will be used on priority basis to check the pandemic from its further spread, sources said.

The proposed eight new Covid-19 health centers, in addition to providing treatment/healthcare services to Corona affected patients, will also have the provision of isolation centers with required number of doctors and other supporting healthcare personnel.

Out of the proposed eight

new health centers, 5 new Covid Care Centers and the remaining 3 will be Covid Health Center which together will have a provision for 1,150 beds.

The institutions which reportedly have been identified to provide health care facilities to Covid-19 patients include the IPD of Brahmampur BPH College and Hospital for CCC (50 beds); Amit Hospital located in Gate Bazar for DCHC (100 beds); Aska Sub Divisional Hospital-DCHC (100 beds); Leporsy Hospital Building-CCC (150 beds) Patrapur and Sanakhemundi OBAAV-CCC (100 beds); Boys and Girls Hostel building of Saraswati Sishu Mandir at Neelakanthanaagar CCC with 500 beds respectively.

For effective management of these new 8 CCC and DCHC, the Ganjam Collector has reportedly appointed nodal officers and nodal administrators.

INBRIEF

300 KG PRECIOUS STONES SEIZED IN KALAHANDI



Bhawanipatna: Precious stones weighing more than 300 kg have been seized by the STF at Palash village under the Junagarh police limits in Kalahandi district, police sources said on Monday. A person, identified as Sujit Kumar Meher of the village, has been arrested for illegal possession and sale of the stones. During the house search, four gunny bags containing precious stones (ruby and panna) were seized from his possession. A case under Sections 379 and 411 of IPC and Section 12 of Odisha Mineral Prevention of Theft, Smuggling and other Unlawful Activities Act has been registered.

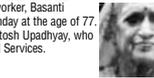
MAYURBHANJ RAJAMATA PASSES AWAY

Baharaj: Mayurbhanj Rajmata Bharati Rajya Laxmi Devi passed away at the Belgadga Palace here on Sunday. She was 94. Daughter of Nepal Naresht Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah, she had married Mayurbhanj Maharaja Prasad Chandra Bhanji Das in 1952. Bhanji Das had passed away in 2000. "She was an avid art and culture enthusiast with a passion for sports. She was a philanthropist and strong advocate for women's education and empowerment. She will be remembered for her grace, dignity, and compassion and especially for being a guiding light for everyone she knew and spent time with," a tweet from the Belgadga Palace said.



PRISONS DG UPADHYAY BEREAVED

Baleswar: Well-known social worker, Basanti Upadhyay passed away on Monday at the age of 77. She is survived by her son Santosh Upadhyay, who is DG, Prisons and Correctional Services.



YOUTH DIES AS BIKE HITS TREE IN NAYAGARH

Bhapur(Nayagarh): In a tragic mishap, a 20-year-old youth, Chintu Pradhan, of Fategarh was killed as his motorcycle hit a roadside tree on Shahapada chik on Monday. He was returning home from Khandapada to Fategarh when he lost control over the vehicle. He succumbed to the injuries on the way to a hospital in Khordha.

₹1.5-cr ganja from Odisha seized in UP

4 Malkangiri natives held; bus seized

BHUBANESWAR: A huge consignment of ganja sourced from Odisha was seized by police in Bhadolhi of Uttar Pradesh from a private bus on Sunday.

Police also arrested four persons including the driver of the bus in connection and seized the vehicle which is registered in Andhra Pradesh.

Those arrested were identified as bus driver Shyam Sundar Manohar Sona, Sadhu Kumar and Divakar Behera. All of them are natives of Malkangiri in Odisha. Sources said based on

inputs from the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), the Bhadolhi police and the Crime Branch intercepted the bus and during search found 14 quintals of ganja packed in 47 bags. The contraband's estimate market value is worth Rs 1.5 crore, said a senior police official.

The contraband was to be delivered to the neighbouring Azamgarh district. But the accused don't know the identity of the person it was supposed to be delivered.

During interrogation, the bus driver revealed that one K Raju of Malkangiri is the kingpin of the racket and they worked for him. Besides, he also owned the bus.

Shutdown clamped in Jaleswar

BALESWAR: Total shutdown has been imposed in the Jaleswar Municipality of Baleswar district from 5 pm of Monday (July 13) to 5 am of July 17.

The decision was taken by the district collector for containing the spread of Covid-19 cases, active surveillance and contact tracing. All wards of the municipality would be sanitised during the shutdown period.

Emergency services such as fire, ambulance, medicine shops, milk booths, petrol stations, water supply and media have been excluded from the ambit of the shutdown.

SU, VSSUT closure extended till July 20

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

In view of Covid cases rising in Sambalpur district, the Sambalpur University authorities on Monday decided to close the institution further for a week from Tuesday. As per the office order, the university administration office and all PG Departments will remain closed from July 14 to 20.

However, all the employees of the varsity have been asked to keep their mobile phones switched on and be available on urgent notice or call and to stay in headquarters. They have also been

Doc Covid+; R Udayagiri hosp sealed

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

The Gajapati district administration on Sunday sealed the R Udayagiri hospital for two days after a doctor and a health worker tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday.

While six Covid positives were detected in R Udayagiri block on Saturday, two were from the hospital and one was a police driver. The hospital has been completely sanitised.

Besides, Sarala Saha, Gouda CHSE, Tenuki Saha has been declared as containment zones. People have been asked to stay home.

Nabarangpur to have high-tech nursery soon

MONOHAR MOHANTY ■ NABARANGAPUR

Nabarangpur district will soon have its first high-tech nursery high yielding quality planting material of horticultural crops developed by the ICAR-IIHR.

The high tech nursery is being developed at Govindalaya's Centre of Empowerment, Soruguda village under Dangarbhaja Panchayat in Nandahandi Block through a unique initiative "Farm based S and T Interventions for Socio-economic Development in the Aspirational District of Nabarangpur, Odisha" for creating new horticulture based avenues for socio-economic development of the tribal-dominated Nabarangpur district.

The Rashtriya Kisan Vikas Yojana fund project implemented by 12 national level science and technology institutions, under the guidance of the district administration, aims at creating farm based economic avenues for enhancement of income of locals, while

engaging farm women within their Panchayat for generating supplementary income. Recently, the district administration was awarded with the prestigious National Scotch Platinum Award for the project in the implementation of the project.

Bhumi Pujan for the High-Tech nursery was solemnized recently in the presence of DDA Brijkishore Lenka, DDH Pratyosh, Kuma Panda, Principal Scientist (ICAR-IIHR), CHES (ICAR-IIHR), Dr Petikam Srinivas and Chairman of Govindalaya Shanmuga Patro along with the office bearers and members of the Maa Mahima Self Help Group which will operate the nursery.

During the occasion Dr P Srinivas informed that the nursery will serve as production-cum-distribution-cum-sale centre of quality planting material of high yielding fruits,



vegetables and flower crops developed by the ICAR-IIHR through Centre for Horticulture Experiment Station (CHES), a regional centre of ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (ICAR-IIHR), Bangalore, for the benefit of the farmers of Nabarangpur and adjoining districts.

DDA Brijkishore Lenka expressed his best wishes for the initiative and hoped that it would be able to cater to the need of planting material of horticultural crops of the region leading to prosperity in tribal dominated aspirational district of Nabarangpur. DDH Pratyosh Kumar Panda appre-

ciated the efforts being taken to increase the diversity of horticultural crops in the region through the hi-tech nursery and assured his personal support and guidance to the SHG in technical aspects of nursery management.

Chairman of Govindalaya Shanmuga Patro, who spared space in his Centre of Empowerment for the project or for the benefit of the local farmers, assured his full patronage and guidance in ensuring the commercial viability of the venture which will in turn earn additional income for the SHG and other participating farmers. Other dignitaries present on the occasion also conveyed their best wishes for the initiative.

On July 7, the team led by Principal Scientist Dr P Srinivas imparted training to the SHG members, in three batches, on necessary skills for propagation of planting material of mango, guava, pine apple, jackfruit, ivy gourd, teal gourd, marigold, tuberose, etc., CHES, Bhubaneswar supplied the material planting materials.

NHRC asks CS to act on health benefit denial in Angul

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the State Chief Secretary on a complaint petition filed by chairperson of Human Rights Front (HRF) Manoj Jena on the deprivation of delivering health benefits under the State Red Cross. One day Idisu Yojana and Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana to 20 lakh beneficiaries of Banarpal community health centre in Angul district.

Banarpal community health centre (CHC) has reportedly failed the card holders of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana, who are entitled to get medicines up to Rs 30,000.

Similarly, under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana, the

beneficiaries are entitled to get free health services at a government hospital. People who have this facility in hospitals in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

But the beneficiaries of Banarpal block have been deprived of the service since December 2018.

While there are about 30,000 BPL beneficiaries in the block, 20,000 of them have cards and are eligible to get free health services. But the beneficiaries visiting the CHC allege that they are not getting any benefits even though they have cards.

The apex human rights body ordered to the Chief Secretary to take appropriate action within eight weeks associating the complainant and victims.

Blood Donors' and Motivators' Assn foundation day

Odisha yet to reach 100% blood collection target



DILLIP DASHSHARMA

The Supreme Court banned buying and selling of blood with effect from January 1, 1998. On public interest litigation, the Supreme Court after appointing two expert committees and hearing the advocates of all the parties at full length delivered a historic judgment on January 4, 1996. On this judgment, the Court had

given many directions to the Union Government regarding intervening in all the programmes and meetings, establishing national and State level blood councils, licensing of all blood banks, launching campaign for voluntary blood donation, 100 per cent voluntary blood collection, banning collections from professional blood donors, training of blood bank personnel, donors and motivators and many more.

After the SC judgment, the National Blood Transfusion Council started in our country and the State Blood Transfusion Councils (SBTC) started in all States. In Odisha, the State Blood Transfusion Council was established on July 15, 1996. It is a registered society having registration under the Societies Act 1860. The office previously ran in the

Red Cross building. As a life member of Indian Red Cross Society, I participated in almost all the programmes and meetings of Red Cross State Branch. At that time I had observed Dr LN Hati, the then SBTC director, collecting the telephone numbers and addresses of all the active life members and communicating with them making them aware about the ongoing activities. After some days, the SBTC called a meeting to form an association and to promote voluntary blood donation. But the main aim of State Blood Transfusion Council, Odisha was not fulfilled.

In May 8, 2002 on the eve of World Red Cross Day, a blood donation camp was organised by the Indian Red Cross Society, Odisha State Branch at Red Cross Bhawan, Capital Hospital Red Cross Blood Bank Office, Dr Debasish Mishra and his team were col-

lecting blood and I was facilitating as a volunteer. At the end of the camp, Dr Mishra and I also invited me to his blood bank. Within two to three days I went to the Blood Bank and meantime, Capital Hospital Red Cross Blood Bank received a letter from the SBTC to send the name of a motivator for the training and Dr Mishra after discussing with me sent my name for the motivators' training.

In June 2002 first week, the training of motivators held in Red Cross Bhawan and like me many other motivators of our State were also present in the training camp. I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity. On June 8, 2002, after the training, we the trainees at together and agreed to form a blood donors and motivators association in our State. In the meeting it was decided to hold the first meeting on July

14, 2002 and I was nominated as the convener.

As the convener, to call a meeting and to gather all the participants from all over the State was an extremely difficult task for me, as the main problem lied with the funding. At that time, Rabiratra Das was the honorary secretary of the State Red Cross. One day I discussed with him about this and conveyed him about the arrangement of conference hall, lunch and tea for about 100 participants.

Then Rabiratra Das allowed the usage of Red Cross Conference Hall and told the Director, SBTC Dr Hati to provide lunch and tea. On July 14, 2002 the first meeting of Odisha Voluntary Blood Donor's and Motivator's Association was held under my presidency.

The name, logo and by-law of the association were approved in the meeting and

the office bearers were also elected. In this meeting along with the blood donors and motivators, the dignitaries like State Red Cross secretary Rabiratra Das, Dr PK Acharya, Dr Lokanath Hati, Dr Bankanidhi Mishra, Dr Debasish Mishra, Utkal University NSS coordinator PC Acharya and CHSE NSS coordinator Rajkishor nayak were also present.

After formation of Odisha Voluntary Blood Donor's and Motivator's Association in the State level and its branches in district level were opened and the blood donation camps increased drastically as well as the percentage of voluntary blood donation of our State increased from 13 percent to 57 percent up to the year 2005.

After 2005, other NGOs and also big organisations entered into the field of voluntary blood donation, there-

Evicted Dalit family made to live under polythene sheets

RAJESH BEHERA ■ KENDRAPADA

A Dalit family was forced to lead a miserable life as the local tehsil administration evicted their ramshackle thatched house on the ground that it was built on a Government land.

The family members threatened self immolation in protest against the unjust eviction and seeking justice. Dhruva Charan Behera, a Dalit, of Oldhi village under Derabish Tehsil, is now homeless with his wife and four years old son following the Derabish tehsildar evicted him.

According to the ill fated Dhruva, he was driven out from his village by his kith and kin and the fellow villagers 7 years ago as he married a minority community girl Sanwari Begum alias Sasmita Behera.

(The writer is founder-president, Odisha Voluntary Blood Donors' and Motivators' Association. Ph-8984007600)

NIA arrests two, including journalism student, in ISKP case



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested two accused persons—Nabeel S Khatri (27), a resident of Pune and Sadiya Anwar Sheikh (22) who hails from Phulnagar, Yerwada, Pune in connection with Islamic State Khurasan Province (ISKP) Case, NIA Spokesperson said

Nabeel S Khatri runs a gym in Pune while Sadiya Sheikh is a 2nd year student of Mass Communications and Journalism at Baramati. This case was initially registered by Delhi Police Special Cell on March 8 this year after the arrest of a Kashmiri couple—Jahanzeb Sami Wani and his wife Hina Bashir Beigh from Jamia Nagar, Okhla Vihar, Delhi. "The couple was having affiliations with ISKP, which is a banned terrorist organisation and is a part of ISIS, and they were involved in subversive and anti-national activities. They were also found to be in touch with Abdullah Basith, who is already lodged in Tihar jail in another NIA case (ISIS Abu Dabhi module)," the spokesperson said.

Ram Mandir would meet 'Hagia Sophia' fate: Terrorist Azhar

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Banned Pakistani terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed's Chief Maulana Masood Azhar has in a statement welcomed conversion of Hagia Sophia museum into a mosque in Turkey and expressed hope that Ram Mandir in Ayodhya would also become a mosque at some point in time.

Ayodhya has been on the radar of the Jem for long time and Azhar had issued a video in 2018 threatening to return the then defunct mosque to the Muslims. The issue has also been exploited by the terror outfits, including Jem, to recruit a section of the Jem's young community to disturb harmony by enlisting their support for logistics and supporting their sleeper cells to carry out terror attacks.

The Jem has been responsible for major terror attacks in India beginning from the hit on the Parliament House in 2001 to



Pathankot Air Base and Army Base in Uri (2016) and Pulwama (2019) among others. Intelligence assessments here suggest the Jaish could target multiple controversial religious sites in the region, including in India, ahead of Muslim festival of Bakrid later this month. The Intelligence agencies are seized of the issue and counter-measures are being planned accordingly, sources said.

Interestingly, Azhar has also justified the hostage taking of people, including seven Chinese engineers, at Lal Masjid in 2007. China had defended Azhar against India's bid to ban him by the United Nations. Azhar is also believed to be harbouring some Uyghur groups that are waging

a struggle against Chinese oppression in the Xinjiang province. Meanwhile, the Tahreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) or the Pakistani Taliban has upped the ante against the Pakistani security forces and fatally hitting them almost on a daily basis. The outfit is also opposed against exploitation of the local resources by the Chinese through mining rights and other projects in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The Pakistan-Army and ISI have also formed fictitious Baloch groups to target Chinese interests and extract more funds from Beijing to provide security to their business interests, a counter-terrorism expert said.

The TTP operates along the Pak-Afghan border inhabited largely by the tribals and is opposed to the oppression of their lot by the Pakistani Army and other agencies. The way Azhar has forcefully mentioned Hagia Sophia, Babri Masjid and Lal Masjid in his speeches and internal communication indicates the terror group, under the patronage of the ISI, has hatched a grand conspiracy to execute some major nefarious designs. During the last six months, both Azhar and Lashkar-e-Tayyaba have praised the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan about five to six times. This could be an indication that the terror masterminds see a godfather in Erdogan.

NHAI to tie up with IITs for improving road infra ecosystem

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Monday said it will partner with institutes like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) for improving the road infrastructure ecosystem. The objective is to leverage the intellectual prowess of students and faculty towards improvement of the road infrastructure ecosystem of the country.

"In its endeavour to provide world-class National Highways (NH) network, NHAI has approached all IITs, National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and reputed engineering colleges to collaborate and adopt nearby stretches of NH, on voluntary basis, as part of Institutional Social Responsibility (ISR)," the NHAI said in a statement.

The statement said large number of IITs, NITs and engineering colleges has opted to join the scheme and NHAI officers have started mutual consultation with directors of the interested institutes. Understanding (MoUs) are being signed between the individual institutes and NHAI for institutionalization of the scheme and bring reformative improvements in the road infrastructure of the country.

PTI slapped with ₹84 cr fine for 'lease violation', asked to pay within month

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has issued a notice to news agency Press Trust of India (PTI) for allegedly violating terms of the lease which it was allotted land for its Sansad Marg office in Delhi and asked to pay a penalty of ₹84.48 crore within a month.

The notice dated July 7, issued by the ministry's Land and Development Office, warned that an additional 10 per cent interest may need to be coughed out by PTI if it fails to furnish the concerned amount within the stipulated time period.

This comes two weeks after the Prasar Bharati expressed displeasure over the news agency's recent interview with China's ambassador to India, who said India was the aggressor in the June 15 skirmish in the Galwan valley and said that it is reviewing its annual subscription with the news agency. Prasar Bharati is among PTI's biggest subscribers.

According to the ministry officials, the PTI office is built on land leased to the agency by the government. The officials said PTI had not paid ground rent since 1984. "Since 1984, PTI has not paid the ground rent. Besides, they have misused the land-allotment terms by converting the basement into an office and several unauthorised construction was undertaken. Under the lease term, the basement is to be used only for storage purposes," officials said.

The notice that sought Rs

SC asks Madras HC to decide TN's plea for OBC quota in medical admissions

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Madras High Court to decide on the plea, including one filed by Tamil Nadu Government, against the Centre's decision not to grant 50 per cent quota to OBCs in medical seats surrendered by the state in all India quota.

A bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Hemant Gupta said the high court should decide the plea of the state government and others irrespective of the pendency of another case here.

In a hearing conducted via video link, the top court said, "All the contention raised in petitions (before it) should be decided by the High Court" and requested the High Court to deal with the case.

Earlier, the State Government had moved the Supreme Court on July 2 to seek directions to execute the High Court to expeditiously decide its plea challenging the Centre's decision not to grant 50 per cent quota to OBCs in medical seats surrendered by the state in all India quota for PG and dental courses in 2020-21.

SC to hear on July 24 pleas against blacklisting of foreigners for alleged Tablighi activities

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



The Supreme Court on Monday said it would hear on July 24 the pleas filed by foreigners challenging the Centre's orders that blacklisted more than 2,700 citizens of 35 countries from travelling to India for 10 years for alleged involvement in Tablighi Jamaat activities.

The matter came up for hearing through video-conferencing before a bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, requested the bench to adjourn the matter for two weeks.

The Centre had earlier sought dismissal of the plea and informed the top court on July 2 that it has issued individual orders on a case-to-case basis for cancellation of visas and blacklisting of 2,765 foreign nationals. As per the information available till July 10, 2020, 1,906 Look Out Circulars (LOCs) were issued against foreign Tablighi Jamaat members and 227 left India before the issuance of LOCs/Black Listing.

Pvt hospitals empanelled under CGHS will charge fixed rates

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday said that private hospitals empanelled under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) will charge fixed rates prescribed by the Delhi Government for COVID-19 treatment till their States fix their own charges.

Last month, the Government had decided to reimburse the cost of pulse oximeter (per family) purchased by Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) beneficiaries in case infected by the Covid-19. An office memorandum issued by the CGHS director said the rates for treatment of COVID-19 in private-empanelled hospitals for CGHS beneficiaries shall be as per the package rate prescribed by the state government concerned.

"In case, no such rate has been prescribed by the state government in any CGHS city, the rates prescribed by the government of NCT of Delhi, shall be applicable till rates are notified by the concerned state government," the memorandum dated July 10, 2020 read.

Services for mothers, newborns, young children and adolescents crumbling: IAP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mothers, newborns, young children and adolescents are losing 20 per cent of their health and social services due to the Covid-19 pandemic across the world, according to the UN Secretary-General's Independent Accountability Panel (IAP).

"Health systems in both rich and poor nations are massively struggling and the services for mothers, newborns, young children and adolescents are crumbling," said Elizabeth Mason, co-chair of the UN Secretary-General's Independent Accountability Panel (IAP). "Health systems in both rich and poor nations are massively struggling and the services for mothers, newborns, young children and adolescents are crumbling," said Elizabeth Mason, co-chair of the UN Secretary-General's Independent Accountability Panel (IAP).

"Especially worrisome are declines in access to life-saving vaccines for children and maternal health services due to closures and movement restrictions. Immunisation campaigns are being halted and health workers are being diverted from maternity to COVID-19 units," Dr Mason added.

Covid brings lots of extra-pulmonary manifestations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Becoming infected with SARS-CoV-2 or Covid-19 not only triggers substantial respiratory pathology, but also results into plethora of extra-pulmonary manifestations such as thrombotic complications, myocardial dysfunction, acute coronary syndromes, acute kidney injury, gastrointestinal symptoms, hyperglycemia and ketosis, neurological illnesses, ocular symptoms, and dermatologic complications among others.

According to researchers, SARS-CoV-2 seems to employ mechanisms for receptor recognition similar to those used by prior virulent coronaviruses such as SARS-CoV, causing the SARS epidemic of 2003.

The COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted steady progress and has led to increased poverty and unemployment. Early data finds women experience not only loss of various categories of support and safety nets, but also an inability to access increased support, compared to men.

"In addition, the efficiency with which the virus binds to ACE2 is a key determinant of transmissibility, as shown in studies of SARS-CoV-2. Gastrointestinal symptoms may be associated with a longer duration of illness but have not been associated with increased mortality, as per a review article published in the journal Nature (Medicine). The researchers reviewed a recent meta-analysis of 29 studies (of which the majority are from China), the pooled prevalence of individual symptoms was reported, including that of anorexia (21 per cent), nausea and/or vomiting (7 per cent), diarrhoea (9 per cent), and abdominal pain (3 per cent). In a study from the USA, a higher prevalence of these symptoms was reported (anorexia, 34.8 per cent; diarrhoea, 33.7 per cent; and nausea, 26.4 per cent).

SARS-CoV-2 may also directly damage the biliary ducts by binding to ACE2 on cholangiocytes. There is growing evidence of neurologic complications of COVID-19. Neurologic and ophthalmologic manifestations of Covid-19, said the researchers.

BABRI MOSQUE DEMOLITION CASE

I am innocent, says Kalyan after hearing

Lucknow: Senior BJP leader and former UP Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh on Monday accused the then Congress Government at the Centre of levelling "false and baseless allegations" against him in the Babri mosque demolition case and said he was "innocent".

"I was falsely implicated, I am innocent," he asserted as he left the court premises. The CBI court is currently recording statements of 32 accused under the CrPC Section 313, a stage in the trial that follows the examination of accused.

Another accused, including former deputy prime minister LK Advani and senior BJP leader M J Joshi, are yet to be examined at this stage. Their lawyers have indicated to the CBI court that they prefer to appear through video conferencing.

2 terrorists killed in Anantnag encounter

Jammu: In another successful operation, the joint teams of security forces on Monday gunned down two more terrorists of Pakistan based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JEM) terror outfit in Srigufwara area of Anantnag district.

"During the search operation when the first contact was established with the hiding terrorists they were given the opportunity to surrender, however they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter", police spokesman said.

Police spokesman said, the operation was launched in the area on the basis of a specific report generated by Anantnag Police regarding presence of terrorists in Srigufwara area of Anantnag.

Army chief visits forward areas in Jammu-Pathankot

Mohit Kandhari ■ JAMMU Amid rising incidents of cross border firing especially in the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Bipin Rawat on Monday reviewed the current security situation and operational readiness of the troops deployed on ground in Jammu-Pathankot region during his visit to the forward areas of the Rising Star Corps.

This route is considered the traditional route of infiltration by the handlers of infiltrators via the Hira Nagar sector. The route is considered the traditional route of infiltration by the handlers of infiltrators via the Hira Nagar sector.

Air Force station, Jammu Defence PRO, Lt Col Devender Anand in a press statement said, "After attending a briefing, the Army Chief accompanied by the Tiger Division reviewed operational preparedness in forward areas. He interacted with the field formation Commanders and troops on ground during the forward area tour.

KERALA GOLD SMUGGLING CASE

Swapna, Sandeep sent to NIA custody for 8 days

Kumar Chellappan ■ KOCHI Swapna Suresh and Sandeep Nair, who were arrested by the National Investigation Agency on Saturday from Bangalore in connection with Gold Smuggling through Thiruvananthapuram Airport were on Monday sent to NIA Custody for eight days by a Special Court at Kochi.

Krishnakumar asked the NIA to produce the duo before the court on July 21. The agency told the court that it was in possession of all documents and evidences to prove their charges. The smuggling making use of the diplomatic route was happening since 2019, said the agency officials.

First senior Govt officer dies of virus in Bengal

Kolkata: The dreaded virus has claimed its first victim in State civil services rank with senior WBSC officer Debdata Roy succumbing to the disease on Monday. Government sources said Monday Roy was tasked with the handling of migrant workers.

No respite in Kerala's cases as 449 more +ve

Kumar Chellappan ■ KOCHI Notwithstanding the fact that 449 persons were diagnosed with Covid-19 on Monday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said that Kerala has the best coronavirus management programme in the country.

"There are attempts by some sections to portray the covid-19 management in the State in poor light. Kerala has the lowest Case Fatality Rate (CFR) in the world. The Global case fatality rate is 4.38, while that of India is 2.67, while Kerala's CFR is 0.39 per cent," said the Chief Minister in his interaction with the media.

Travancore Royal family, devotees happy over Supreme Court verdict

Kumar Chellappan ■ KOCHI The Travancore Royal Family, erstwhile rulers of Kerala, expressed their satisfaction over Monday's Supreme Court verdict that quashed the 2011 Kerala High Court verdict which had removed the family's hold over the management of the Sree Padmanabha Temple, the centuries old shrine at Thiruvananthapuram.

delivered on Monday is a victory of not only the Travancore Royal family but the Hindus in the country too. "A secular government does not have the right to meddle with the rituals associated with the temple and this verdict substantiates and underscores that tradition.

K Ramakumar, senior advocate, Kerala High Court welcomed the verdict. "The Supreme Court has upheld the rights of the Travancore Royal Family in the administration and management of the Temple. This is a victory for Hindus and all believers in the State. The Kerala High Court had taken the rights of the Royal Family by its 2011 verdict, a painful chapter in Kerala's history.

As cases rising in TN, public transport banned till July 31

Kumar Chellappan ■ CHENNAI A total number of 4,328 fresh Covid-19 patients joined the list of persons afflicted with the pandemic in Tamil Nadu on Monday. The State also saw 66 persons succumbing to the disease in the last 24 hours according to the medical bulletin issued by the Tamil Nadu government.

Government banned public transport across the State till July 31. Monday also saw 3,035 persons getting discharged from hospitals across the State taking the number of recoveries till date to 92, 567. Out of the 66 deaths reported on Monday, 59 died with comorbidities.

Chennai continued to show a fall in the number of persons afflicted with Covid-19. Out of the 4,328 tested positive on Monday, 1,140 were from Chennai. Though the decrease in the number of patients in Chennai was not considerable, the capital city is showing trends that the pandemic has been contained.

No further lockdown in Mumbai: BMC

TN Raghunatha ■ MUMBAI With the doubling rate for Covid-19 cases in the country's commercial capital having increased to 50 days, Mumbai Municipal Commissioner IS Chahal on Monday made it clear that there is no plan to re-impose lockdown in the metropolis.

The coronavirus situation in Mumbai is totally under control. There is no need for re-imposing lockdown in Mumbai, Chahal said, while talking to a regional television channel.

In what has come as a big relief to the Mumbaiers is that the doubling rate for Covid-19 cases - which was three days on March 22, rose to 15 days on April 5 and increased further to 30 days on June 22 - has gone up to 50 days on July 10.

314 afflicted in J&K on Mon

PNS ■ JAMMU Ahead of the arrival of tourists in Jammu & Kashmir, via air route from July 14, the situation is turning grim especially in Kashmir valley. On Monday, 314 fresh cases of coronavirus were detected taking the total tally to 10,927. Out of these, 4,545 are active positive cases in the region.

As most parts of Srinagar witnessed complete lockdown across 88 containment zones, 225 fresh cases of coronavirus were detected in Kashmir valley alone. Out of this, 101 cases were detected from Srinagar district while eight more deaths due to Covid-19 were reported from Kashmir division, taking the total tally to 187.

Govt's move to evict Priyanka from house reflects arrogance, misuse of power: Pawar

TN Raghunatha ■ MUMBAI Dubbing the Narendra Modi Government's recent decision to take away the official residence of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's daughter Priyanka Gandhi in the national Capital as an "uncalled for move", NCP chief Sharad Pawar said here on Monday that the decision reflected both "arrogance" and "misuse" of power on the part of the Modi dispensation.

In the third and final part of a three-part interview published in the Shiv Sena's official mouth-piece "Saamant", Pawar disapproved strongly of the Modi government's decision to take away official residence given to Priyanka and said, "One should exercise power with all humility. Once arrogance of

power goes to the head of the rulers, this kind of thing happens". "Jawaharlal Nehru made an immense contribution to India's freedom. Subsequently, he contributed to taking the country on the path of democracy. His daughter Indira Gandhi and grandson Rajiv Gandhi sacrificed their lives for the country. Here is the family that sacrificed two of their members for the country and its earlier members had contributed their entire life to the country, Priyanka Gandhi comes from this family."

approach is unwise. You are taking away the official residence of the daughter of a late Prime Minister and she has been forced to shift her residence to Lucknow. I do not think this is a cultured way of dealing with things," Pawar said.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that this person Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 35 Years Approx, Sex: Male, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Full sleeves blue colour white dotted shirt and grey colour pant was found dead near in front of house no. 2126/2N10, Gali No. 4, Prem Nagar, Patel Nagar, Delhi on 10.07.2020.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR. Gist of e-tender NIT No: MHCHD/TS/2020-21/33/e-tendering Dated 07-07-2020

Piloting a revolt

Gehlot has numbers but Sachin Pilot has the perception and goodwill. Congress will suffer a body blow if he leaves



That ego wars have killed the Congress is old news. What's new is that it considers its factionalism as a championship round in an arena between suitable claimants to leadership and reveals in the challengers it produces as an asset rather than a weakness. Challengers mean a second round is ready and the top leadership can be held in check. And both can be used against each other. To the point that even when it is on the brink of disaster, now beginning to lose its State Governments despite a verdict in its favour, it refuses to acknowledge chal-

lengers who become the new winners and turns them into rebels. This is exactly what has happened in Madhya Pradesh and now in Rajasthan. This feudalistic pursuit, of course, flows from its dynastic leadership that wants to be feted as the only hope of a party of warring chieftains. The old warriors, who have unquestioningly accepted the primacy of Gandhis in deciding what's good for the party, humoured them even, have sought satrap status to rule over their home turfs on their terms in return for delivering election results. This mutual prosperity flourished till the political landscape itself changed to reward a more ground-up, fresh-faced and performance-driven parties and leaders. The Congress didn't even bother to broadcast its own structure by way of holding organisational polls, leave aside transforming itself. Even when Rahul Gandhi assumed leadership with his peers like Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sachin Pilot to usher in a new wave, it was merely cosmetic. Scindia and Pilot though chose to live down their dynastic entitlements and in their mid-40s, desperately wanted to create their own political legacy. To that extent, both gave up their comfort zones in Delhi and worked the ground in their States, resurrecting Congress fortunes in the process. But both were never given what they wanted, the chief ministership of their States despite delivering a winning verdict. The Gandhis were more scared of a senior revolt that would be difficult to quell than handling disappointed Young Turks, who being Rahul's friends and confidants, could, they thought, be won over. The Gandhi scion ultimately kowtowed to his mother Sonia Gandhi's propensity to go with old loyalists rather than risk them holding the party hostage by threatening breakaway units and worse, undercutting it. Rahul would never rebel because even the old hawks would endorse him so long as they continued their free run and left him to face the critique and responsibility of Congress fortunes. So there's no fight left for Rahul, who by the way has a soft corner for Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, too. The likes of Pilot, Scindia and Milind Deora resented being castaways who would have to wait perennially for their time to come as the old guard maintained status quo. And invested in politics as a career, they are now leaving the grand old party, one that has left thinking seniors like Kapil Sibal and Shashi Tharoor wondering if the party stables would be empty after "the horses had bolted."

Sachin Pilot has been deeply invested in Rajasthan, getting the verdict for the Assembly polls in 2018, when even Gehlot wasn't good enough to manage the scoreline, and ensuring favourable returns in the panchayat polls that came soon after the mammoth May 2019 verdict for Modi. Yet Gehlot got the chief ministership, partly because of his history with Indira Gandhi who always trusted his organisational skills and partly because of his hold on a sizeable number of party cadres with whom he could break away. This ability to rustle numbers is also the reason why he was able to parade about 100-odd MLAs in a show of strength compared to Pilot's claim of having about 30 MLAs, enough to dislodge the Government. Pilot's strength, the high command thought, has been incremental and he was, therefore, convinced to be his deputy. But Gehlot has never been one to share power or yield some degree of autonomy, hemming in Pilot's administrative powers by appointing crony bureaucrats in his ministries. Still Pilot held on, while disenchanting his own supporters who had bargained for some stake in the new dispensation. Matters came to a head when despite the Congress win in the Rajya Sabha elections, Gehlot accused him of toppling the Government and sent police summons to him for conspiracy. Pilot is a reluctant leaver and the Congress cannot afford to lose him so soon after Scindia flocked to the BJP. In fact, given the testimonials, the public perception and emotion are with Pilot even though he may not parade numbers. What will Pilot do? Joining the BJP won't help much, considering he won't be made Chief Minister either with aspirant Vasundhara Raje not expected to lie low. He could float a regional outfit but would still have to make a hard choice of supporting the BJP, which is keeping a hawk's eye on proceedings. Negotiating within the Congress is unlikely to give him much of legroom. But yes, by quitting, he could give the Congress a body blow and become a trigger for younger leaders like him to make copycat moves. The Congress needs him more. Censuring him won't stop the drift in the party.

Book a cycle

Like cab aggregators, micro-mobility apps have mushroomed in a post-pandemic world



As the country limps back to normal from a post-COVID lockdown, there has been a major change in consumer behaviour with apps and e-commerce ruling the roost. Doorstep deliveries are the new normal, from essential items like food and groceries to electronics and lifestyle goods. But one could not have expected even the future of our mobility, namely bicycles, to land at our doorstep. Micro-mobility service providers like Yulu and Smart Bikes are shifting their existing battery-operated two-wheeler network from non-functional zones, such as metro stations, to residential complexes where people are using them to run errands or do the short commute rather than take the auto or cab. With public transport systems yet not fully functional and given the sense of insecurity among the people to use them in these testing times, e-vehicles have emerged as a reliable, safe, cheap and personal mode of travel, especially for those who feel vulnerable. Besides, there are health benefits; you can foster an active lifestyle. And you can ride towards a fossil fuel-free future, notching up green miles.

Cycling for everyday transport has not been a part of the Indian scheme of things unlike say, New York, which introduced 40 miles of new NMT lanes for cyclists in the wake of the pandemic or Italy, which got 22 new miles of cycling lanes. The transition towards a non-motorised form of transport has been long overdue in our country. A survey by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy had estimated that the use of bicycles in major cities around the world would increase by 50-60 per cent. While the current plan is being run on a pilot basis in Delhi at a select few residential complexes, to achieve the long-term goal, we need to expand our infrastructure and develop more cycling tracks and sidewalks. To ensure that people, too, inculcate behavioural changes and make the shift to safer modes of transport, schemes such as car-free days and cycle-to-work programmes can be launched. What better time to start than now? The pandemic also has a big lesson for urban planning.

New normal with China

Now that India has sent a strong message to China and the rest of the world that it will not put up with any kind of bullying, we must Galwanise ourselves to deal with a hostile neighbour



A SURYA PRAKASH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strong message to Beijing from Ladakh some days ago and the global support he has garnered for calling out China's belligerence marks a much-awaited change in India's approach to the coercive tactics of this troublesome neighbour. China's attempt to redraw the boundaries in the Galwan Valley last month is only the latest in a long list of such incursions it has resorted to. While the brave soldiers of the Indian Army challenged the People's Liberation Army (PLA) men at the site, one has not seen similar assertiveness among Indian politicians, especially in the past.

This is something that is going on from the days of former Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru when he espoused a totally impractical and unrealistic notion of friendship with China. Strangely, he believed that ties with our neighbour would improve with the passage of time and, therefore, he went out of the way to build bridges with that nation. This included his eagerness to see China as a member of the United Nations Security Council.

However, China has never really reciprocated. It has shown no inclination to resolve border-related issues so that there be any finality to the demarcation of territories. It has preferred a Line of Actual Control (LAC) to a regular border as the vagueness of the description of a line separating the two nations enables it to nibble away at land on our side. It has kept the pot boiling for over seven decades. Apart from this, China has, over the years, befriended Pakistan, supplied it with arms and aided its nuclear weapons programme. It has also turned a blind eye to the terror factories that are run by Pakistan to wage a proxy war against India.

What does all this amount to? The truth is that China is an enemy nation and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is an enemy organisation, as noted lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani has opined recently. Prime Minister Modi's ringing message from Ladakh, his Government's firm resolve to ban Chinese apps and scrap many big projects, which were being awarded to Chinese companies, must have come as a shocker for our eastern neighbour. Never before had an Indian leader spoken and acted with such sternness. Modi's declaration that "the era of expansionism is over" is a sharp message to China that it must change its ways. It is also a message to the rest of the world that India will not put up with this kind of bullying any more.

The world has to realise that China and the world that expansionist policies tend to destroy humanity and pose a grave threat to world peace. History has also shown us that such powers, which believed in or attempted hegemonic policies, have been destroyed or forced to mend their ways.

Modi's reference to "expansionism"



and its deleterious effects on world peace brought back the dreadful memories of World War II. Modi was telling the world, without naming China, that that country, too, was behaving in a crazy way, with confrontationalist policies towards many nations.

Hitler's expansionist policy made the Germans believe that they were invincible, that they could gobble up all the neighbouring nations; and destroy the UK, Russia and the allies led by America. Hitler began his hegemonic misadventure with the invasion of Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Then came Norway, Denmark and Belgium, Yugoslavia and Greece followed by Luxembourg and the Netherlands. When he invaded France and later, Russia, he had bitten more than he could chew.

Looking back, one can say that was an act of extreme arrogance by a nation which was convinced about its invincibility. China's attempt to provoke India along the LAC comes alongside its attempts to challenge the maritime and sovereign rights of Japan, Australia, Vietnam, South Korea, Singapore and many other nations. The latest count says China has disputes with 23 nations, apart from going back on the promises made vis-a-vis

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THE CHINESE ARMY GOT A SHOCK WHEN INDIAN SOLDIERS STOOD UP TO THEIR BULLYING TACTICS AT GALWAN AND GAVE THEM A BLOODY NOSE. TILL TODAY, CHINA HAS NOT HAD THE COURAGE TO TELL THE WORLD THE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES IT SUFFERED AT GALWAN. THIS SPEAKS A LOT ABOUT THE INNER STRENGTH OF THAT NATION
 ”

Hong Kong and Taiwan. This is a reminder to the world of the reckless and irresponsible behaviour of the Nazis 80 years ago. Many nations, including the US, Australia, Japan, France and several members of the ASEAN, have been highly critical of China after India blew the whistle.

The Prime Minister also sent across two other very important messages from Ladakh — that only strength begets peace and that India has stepped up and will continue to step up development of infrastructure along the LAC. These are very significant messages indeed and are meant for the domestic audience, which has been made to believe that neighbours will reciprocate decency and cordiality for decades. This myth needs to be busted once and for all.

China's response to the Prime Minister's speech is laughable. After having set itself on a confrontation course for many months, the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement, saying this was not the time to ratchet up tensions along the border. It said India should avoid a "strategic miscalculation" with regard to China. This is strange because the way the dice has rolled out, it is China which has made a "strategic miscalculation" on India.

The Chinese Army got a shock when Indian soldiers stood up to their bullying tactics at Galwan and gave them a bloody nose. Till today, China has not had the courage to tell the world the number of casualties it suffered at Galwan. This speaks a lot about the inner strength of that nation.

There comes a time in the life of every nation when it must say "enough is enough." India must now get "Galwanised" to deal with a hostile China. It is going to be a long haul but what is a decade or two in the life of a nation? We are a nation of 1,350 million and in a couple of decades, we will be the most populous nation in the world. The time has come for the world at large and the Chinese in particular to absorb this fact. As the sociologists say "demography is destiny".

While the talks are to disengage at the border and the Chinese Ambassador has issued a placatory statement appealing to Indians not to view China as a "war-like" country, we should not lower our guard. As the Prime Minister has said more than once, we need not put up with those who cast an evil eye on us. Also, pusillanimity does not bring peace. Strength does. (The writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

The present pandemic demonstrates that the marginalised need to be assured of a minimum form of social security and effective dispersal of public entitlements.

Supreme Court judge
—BY Chandrachud



Maybe break isn't a good word but you're allowed to bend instead of standing. People shutting down their small enterprises are committed to everything you're feeling. Give yourself time.

Actor
—Ileana D'Cruz



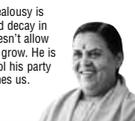
I believe that our country needs a genuinely liberal party headed by centrist professionals committed to inclusive politics and respectful of India's pluralism.

Congress leader
—Shashi Tharoor



Rahul Gandhi's jealousy is the reason behind decay in Congress. He doesn't allow young leaders to rise. He is not able to control his party and then he blames us.

Union Minister
—Uma Bharti



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Worldwide impact

Sir — It is ironic that the US, the nation with the highest COVID-19 tally, has decided to withdraw from the WHO. US President Donald Trump has been functioning at the behest of China, the country which he believes is responsible for the spread of the virus. China promptly defended the WHO with vehement criticism of the US stand.

As it is, the US has a tradition of withdrawing from groups and contracts. Ever since Trump assumed office, this has become the new norm. There is no denying the fact that the WHO's association with China in the wake of the calamity has not been above suspicion. The WHO has avoided direct criticism of China. And the latter has only good words to describe the world health body and it has, thus, often reciprocated China's goodwill.

Nevertheless, the US' move to withdraw from the WHO is a perfect example of the country pursuing unilateralism. The move also illustrates the foreign policy followed by Trump. At a time when nations are fighting a health

Replicate the Dharavi model pan-India

His refers to the editorial, "The Dharavi project" (July 13). With a population density of 2.27 lakh people per square km against the national average of 382, Dharavi had the lethality to pose an existential threat to the rest of Mumbai. That public-private partnership, spruced up with community participation, chased away the COVID-19 in Dharavi is a classic example of team effort to ward off a crisis. People shutting down their small enterprises and daily wagers quitting their jobs helped the agencies achieve the impossible. That Dharavi constitutes just 2.6 per cent of Mumbai's cases with recovery at 83 per cent against Mumbai's 63 per cent is a glorious testimony of team spirit. An area where there is just one toilet per 500 people, maintaining hygiene and sanitation was a challenge. But the municipal corporation of Greater Mumbai did a fabulous job. Door-to-door screening, containment and mitigation strategies were rigorously implemented by the State Government and private health professionals. Private hospitals, fever centres, well-equipped quarantine centres, community kitchens together constituted Dharavi's best-in-class health infrastructure. There was no dearth of either critical medicines or medical gear like PPE kits, thermal scanners and pulse oximeters. Masks, gloves and sanitiser were



liberally donated by Bollywood. Private sponsorship of free food was also in abundance. Since the World Health Organisation (WHO) has also complimented it, Dharavi may well emerge as the global benchmark on how to win the coronavirus. Now when Dharavi has become a treasure-trove of knowledge, the Maharashtra Government must tap into it and replicate its best practices across the State to repeat the success. In fact, these practices should be replicated pan-India.

SK Prabhakar
Gungam

not only barbaric but also unconstitutional. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the police-criminal-politician nexus works to settle personal scores. Such encounters are used routinely by the police to eliminate the criminals on the whims and fancies of those in power. This needs to change. The judiciary must intervene.

Rati Singh
Via email

Face the truth

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Encounter the truth" (July 11). With the death of the dreaded gangster, Vikas Dubey, many questions will remain unanswered and unexplained. Nobody has any sympathy for the gangster but the incident gives a sad message where the police has acted as prosecutor, judge and executioner. No civil society can digest such a scenario. We need to focus on the politico-criminal nexus. Time for a change now.

AF Nadwi
Mumbai

Change the system

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Encounter the truth" (July 11). Without any doubt, gangster Vikas Dubey deserved severe

punishment — death penalty or life sentence — but this should have been done after all judicial processes were observed. Police brutality is unwarranted. That the police took the law into its own hands to deliver instant justice is

Send your feedback to:
 letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Why let criminals rule the roost?

If no action is taken by the rulers of the country, this disease will grip the whole nation and India will lose its charm as the world's biggest democracy



VK **BAHUGUNA**

The recent events in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP), in which eight police personnel were ambushed by the notorious gangster Vikas Dubey, have exposed deep chinks in our democratic governance and rule of law. The brazen and inhuman manner in which the eight police personnel were killed by Dubey and his accomplices shows that hardened criminals have seeped deep into our administrative and law and order machinery. Circle Officer Mishra, who wrote about the nexus between the gangster and the in-charge of the Chauhanpur Police Station to his superiors, was shot in the head and his legs were cut off. The criminals had also stored kerosene to burn the bodies of the cops and dispose the remains in a well in order to bury all evidence of the massacre. However, they were forced to flee before they could execute their sinister plan. It is another matter that the UP Police liquidated the don soon after he was handed over to them by the Madhya Pradesh Police. After Dubey's encounter, there was a hue and cry over the killing but no one is discussing the true nature of this disease engulfing the country.

The daring attack on policemen in Kanpur has clearly shown that the "don of Shivli" had deep links with the police and political parties of all hues. He was a land-grabber and a strongman who was instrumental in mustering votes for politicians. Despite numerous murder cases against him, he was roaming about like a respectable citizen, attending meetings with big politicians and was very cosy with police personnel. Even then, how did he think that he would get away with the murder of eight policemen? The answer is easy to find. He was a criminal against whom 60 cases were lodged with the police. He reportedly killed many people in cold blood.

In one daring attempt he killed a Minister-rank politician inside the police station in 2001 and 19 police personnel were witness to this killing. But none of the police personnel deposed before the court despite the fact that two cops, too, were killed in that incident. As people say, justice is blind and in the end Dubey was acquitted of the crime. After this he became the uncrowned ruler of his area of influence, subjugating all Government officials and controlling and bulldozing all who opposed him.

This incident raises many questions. First, why did the UP Government not take any action against those 19 police personnel whose deliberate action was responsible for Dubey's acquittal? Why did the police not appear to higher courts and assess why the prosecution did not make a foolproof case as the murder was committed inside the police station? This is a big shame for the police, politicians and the Government. It also brings out the chinks in the judiciary which decided such cases in a clerical style. Why did the court not ask the prosecution about the attitude of the 19 police personnel? This reflects badly on the tottering criminal justice delivery system. The Indian judiciary needs to change its Victorian mindset in order to meet the challenges of modern society.

Though the general public has welcomed the elimination of this notorious criminal, it has been ruling the fact that the encounter ends all possibility of exposing the growing criminal-police-political nexus which is turning our country into a banana republic. This clearly shows that governance has been gradually slipping out of the hands of lawfully-empowered officials and into the hands of local mafia and politicians in the hinterland. This abdication has been accepted by the whole apparatus of legally-elected governments.

The second question is why this happens and allows small-time goons to become Frankenstein's monster? The answer lies in the fact that rural areas are still divided on caste or some other lines and most of the fights are related to land grabbing and developmental issues. Gram Pradhans control lot of funds and create their own groups. The local administration virtually becomes extinct and allows these gangsters to take over the reins and slowly a monopoly of criminals and their supporters comes into shape. All in the ugly chain become rich and powerful and rule the masses. Those who oppose are punished heavily or eliminated.

For instance, the principal of Dubey's school who taught him when he was a youngster, was killed for opposing the grabbing of his school land by the don, in a most inhuman way, while the village and revenue officials looked the other way. The culmination of such an environment is complete when politicians take the help of criminals during the elections. It is no wonder then that out of 403 MLAs in UP Assembly, 143 have a criminal background, says a report of the Association for Democratic Reforms. Dubey, too, was tying with the idea of joining the BJP Democracy is thus gasping for air in the country.

The Dubey saga must prick the conscience of our politicians and also of the citizens who elect them and, of course, of the civil servants and police who are actually responsible for governing the nation. If no action is taken by the rulers of the country this disease will grip the whole nation soon and India will lose its charm and beauty as the biggest democracy of the world.

(The writer is a former civil servant)

IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE PARTY CONVINCES SACHIN PILOT TO STOP. THOUGH THE PARTY DOES NOT END WITH THE DEPARTURE OF ANY ONE LEADER.

—CONGRESS LEADER
SANJAY NIRUPAM

POINT COUNTERPOINT



I WILL MAKE MY INTENT CLEAR SOON. I HAVE THE SUPPORT. YOU CANNOT KEEP MLAs AGAINST THEIR WILL FOR A LONG TIME. IT'S A LONG HAUL.

—RAJASTHAN DEPUTY CM
SACHIN PILOT

Fix accountability

The only way to prevent and eliminate custodial deaths is to make the senior police officers directly accountable whenever such incidents occur in police stations under their jurisdiction



GOVIND **BHATTACHARJEE**

On June 26, three days after the father-son duo, P Jayaraj and Bennix, died after being brutally tortured in police custody in Sathankulam in Tamil Nadu (TN), a non-governmental organisation (NGO), the National Campaign Against Torture (NCAT), brought out its annual report for 2019. It revealed that a total of 1,731 people had died in custody in India during 2019, which is a whopping five deaths every day. A majority of these deaths, 1,606, happened in judicial custody and 125 in police custody, like the present ones.

The methods of torture used, like driving nails in the body or rods through the private parts, burning or other atrocious methods of torment would put even the medieval Inquisition to shame. It also highlighted that 75 per cent of the victims belonged to poor and marginalised communities or minorities, who have practically no access to legal remedies.

Investigations into these cases almost always lead to closure without any culpability being established and instances when someone is actually punished for the deaths are extremely rare. The deaths are attributed to either "natural causes" like prior illnesses and "injuries sustained prior to police custody" or "unnatural causes" like suicides. As per the statistics provided in the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)'s latest report on *Crimes in India, 2018*, in cases of 70 deaths in police custody, not even a single arrest was made, let alone conviction.

As per the Constitution of the country, policemen are public servants and a police station is considered a public property. Therefore, the duty and the behaviour of a policeman must conform to the country's law, respect basic human freedom and obey as well as maintain law and order. However, the ground reality is far from this and time and again, policemen are involved in custodial violence and deaths.

To prevent custodial violence, elaborate guidelines to be followed in all cases of arrest or detention were prescribed by the Supreme Court in its 1996 verdict in the DK Basu vs State of West Bengal case, and subsequent judgments made in 2001 and 2015. These guidelines are observed only in their breach. Any inquiry by a human rights group through the Right to Information (RTI) Act or otherwise almost always draws a blank, with the information sought being "unavailable".

In 2015, Section 176 (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) was amended by replacing the earlier provision of inquiry by an Executive Magistrate with that by a Judicial Magistrate. This is also rarely conducted or conducted mechanically, only to satisfy the formalities. Only after the nationwide outrage after the Sathankulam incident, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court ordered a Judicial Magistrate's inquiry into the incident and the five policemen were arrested in the case and transferred to the Madurai Central Jail from Tuticorin. Now, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is probing the case.

In 2006, the apex court also directed that every State should have a Police Complaints Authority where anyone can lodge a complaint against policemen. Only a few States such as Kerala, Jharkhand, Haryana, Punjab and Gujarat have set up the authority. But that has not prevented custodial deaths — Punjab,

INVESTIGATIONS INTO THESE CASES ALMOST ALWAYS LEAD TO CLOSURE WITHOUT ANY CULPABILITY BEING ESTABLISHED AND INSTANCES WHEN SOMEONE IS ACTUALLY PUNISHED FOR THE DEATHS ARE EXTREMELY RARE. THE DEATHS ARE ATTRIBUTED TO EITHER 'NATURAL CAUSES' LIKE PRIOR ILLNESSES AND 'INJURIES SUSTAINED PRIOR TO POLICE CUSTODY' OR 'UNNATURAL CAUSES' LIKE SUICIDES. AS PER THE STATISTICS PROVIDED IN THE NATIONAL CRIME RECORDS BUREAU'S LATEST REPORT ON *CRIMES IN INDIA, 2018*, IN CASES OF 70 DEATHS IN POLICE CUSTODY, NOT EVEN A SINGLE ARREST WAS MADE, LET ALONE CONVICTION



along with Uttar Pradesh (UP) and TN, recorded the highest number of deaths in police custody in 2019.

In 1994, in its 152nd report, the Law Commission had remarked that despite all legal and constitutional safeguards, "The growing incidence of custodial torture and deaths has become a disturbing factor in society and the gory tales of dehumanising torture, assault and deaths in the custody of police are being reported almost in every morning newspaper". It observed that inquiries are conducted as a mere formality. Even more than 25 years later, things have not changed one bit on the ground. At best a monetary compensation is offered by the State. In the TN case, the State Government announced a compensation of ₹20 lakh and the DMK's Theothukudi MP Kanimozhi declared a compensation of ₹25 lakh for the bereaved family. However, this is not enough to make up for the loss of the main bread-winners of the family, which is not lacking off and is seeking justice for the two men.

But in other cases, money usually silences the victims' families, who mostly come from poor and marginalised backgrounds. In a rarest of the rare instances of its kind, for torturing a man to death in custody in 2006, a Delhi Sessions Court sentenced five UP policemen to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment in 2019. They had manipulated records to erase all evidence of custodial death before closing the case as a suicide.

The judge very aptly remarked on that occasion, "One of the reasons for custodial death is that the police feel that they have the power to manipulate evidence as the investigation is their prerogative. And with such manipulated evidence, they can bury the truth. They are confident that they will not be held accountable even if the victim dies in custody and even if the truth is

revealed." The fact remains that the inter-departmental solidarity will always tend to shield the perpetrators and give them protection in such cases. This gives them a sense of invincibility and gives them a licence to kill with impunity. The failure of the judicial system to bring the culprits to book follows as a natural corollary to the failure to fix accountability.

Indeed custodial torture should have no place in a civilised society but in our criminal justice system, it has been institutionalised. Torture and extra-judicial killings deem even to have acquired some legitimacy in the eyes of the public, as shown in the Hyderabad killing of four gang-rape accused by the policemen last December.

Whitewashing and covering up are the norms. After the Sathankulam incident, the top police brass was busy trying to cover up the case, citing essential procedures. The Judicial Magistrate inquiring into the murders was intimidated by three police officers, the crucial CCTV footage in the police station was erased and the woman constable, who courageously deposed against her colleagues and whose testimony finally nailed the murderers, was under constant threats and intimidation.

It was only the widespread public anger that forced the TN Government to arrest the five culprits, transfer the probe to the CBI and take the extraordinary step of transferring the Sathankulam Superintendent of Police to keep him under "compulsory wait" at the DGF office, probably the first ever. This, however, is no punishment, and once the public anger subsides, it will be business as usual.

In the US, the 46-year-old George Floyd had struggled for nine minutes under the knee of the white Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, beseeching and begging for his life — "I can't breathe". Actually the chokehold has

been suffocating the US justice delivery system for the Blacks for a long time but the incident triggered the pent-up anger and resentment, leading to protests and violence that spread like wildfire across the globe.

The 'Black Lives Matter' movement upset many Indians, too, who voiced their anger on the social media. But no protests against police atrocities have erupted across our cities after the deaths of P Jayaraj and Bennix. Either we are too scared or we just don't care if cops go on a rampage. In the US, it has led to calls for police reforms and defunding the police. Use of chokeholds has been banned and it has also forced US President Donald Trump to issue an executive order for establishing a database to track police officers with a history of "excessive use-of-force complaints" in their records. Derek Chauvin had a history of using excessive force; such persons in future would carry it in their service records. This will likely serve as an effective deterrent.

The 18th Century French political philosopher Montesquieu wrote in his magnum opus, *The Spirit of Laws*, "There is no greater tyranny than that which is perpetrated under the shield of the law and in the name of justice". If we aspire to have some semblance of a civilised society, we must eradicate such tyranny. The only way to prevent and eliminate custodial deaths is to make the senior police officers directly accountable whenever such incidents occur in police stations under their jurisdictions. A death should be reflected in their service records and should carry a negative weightage in their promotions and postings. Senior police officers alone can prevent this, and only when they are made directly accountable will this course stop.

(The writer is a former Director General at the Office of the CAG of India and an academic.)

China cannot be sued for Coronavirus

The Govt is protected by ambient sovereign immunity and misconduct, even if proved, will not be able to cater to sufficient grounds for its waiver



SONAM **CHANDWANI**

The wilful, negligent and unmindful attitude of the Chinese authorities has led to the catastrophe of COVID-19. While some consider the inaction and lackadaisical behaviour of China coupled with suppression of information as "treason against humanity", the possibility of maintaining a successful lawsuit against our neighbour has to be explored rigorously.

There have been a couple of instances where the Chinese authorities have caused humongous damage to human life and

economies across the globe. There have been charges alleging creation and release, accidental or otherwise, of the Novel Coronavirus and of unleashing biological warfare. In all probability, positive outcomes of such legal challenges are highly sceptical. Chinese authorities have deliberately chosen denial, have behaved irresponsibly throughout the saga and deserve the condemnation of the entire world. The regime of transferring patently false information all this while has made things unnecessarily worse as we stand today. Legal liability, however, is a disparate phenomenon. Here we need to realise, that the Government of China is protected by the ambient sovereign immunity, and misconduct, even if proved, will not be able to cater to sufficient grounds for a waiver of that immunity.

Sovereign immunity is not just a judicial favour for foreign regimes. International treaties of shared under-

standing and reciprocity not allowing people to sue the country primarily guide it. The difficulty at this stage arises as the act of China, despite being in the nature of criminal negligence, fails to fall in the bracket of exception laid down by the international law to the immunity enjoyed by the States, and rather, there is a specific bar upon the exercise or performance or the failure to exercise discretionary powers regardless of whether the discretion is being abused. Possibly, the reckless behaviour of the Chinese Government is basked into the very idea of sovereign immunity.

The next leg of the argument revolves around the proposition that China did very little to stop the spread of the virus. Unfortunately, the thrust of the argument on legal principles is tremendously weak. Sovereign immunity does not work on benevolence but reciprocity, China has been rejecting all such allegations and is certain to junk every summons it receives, ultimately making the entire exercise a futile thing. The World Health Organisation's (WHO's) International Health Regulations, 2005 is being referred to in order to assert that China violated its international obligations. Articles six and seven of the WHO regulations make timely notification and information-sharing obligatory on the country where an outbreak takes place. Consequently, China has been denying all such allegations, which in turn nullifies the violation as the legal liability could only be fixed if the country consents to it. There is a very minor and primarily a technical gateway to drag China to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over the Coronavirus pandemic provided in the WHO's Constitution. This provision does not require the consent of the defendant country. A member country will have to establish or create a doubt that China deliberately withheld information from the WHO and the international community at large. Article 63

of the WHO's Constitution provides the legal basis for this route. Tort law generally rests on the proposition that people will take reasonable care if they know there is an inherent danger that could cause harm to others. Under sovereign immunity, the cost of misbehaviour of the Government tend to lie where they fall. The concept of international law and henceforth laws to tackle it were conceptualised a few years back. However, the absence of robust legislations possibly will not entail any punishment for another country's recklessness and the motive is opposite to be political.

Nevertheless, for the massive economic fallout, China cannot be allowed to go scot-free. Perhaps, world leaders have to work in mutiny to diplomatically pressurise China for causing the pandemic and the present situation. On the contrary, China has called the allegations xenophobic, which invalidates all possible actions undertaken

as of now. Further, the most difficult part of the regime is to prove the deliberate intention of China in causing all the trouble the world is in at present. In a nutshell, China has a strong position to rescind all legal allegations brought against it by world players, and the Government of India has a very bleak proposition to contemplate that China will eventually compensate for the major fallout and global recession caused by its laxity and disregard for the state of affairs. However, the legal remedy of filing lawsuits seems to be futile and superfluous without much possibility of any fruitful upshot and conclusion. Nevertheless, how good the sequel stands will be eventually proven, as and when the lawsuits already instituted, are heard by the judiciary, while the wise option would be to avoid any bulging aspiration to be accrued from the judicial reaction to the legal battle.

(The writer is Managing Partner at KS Legal)



FOREIGN EYE

COVID-19 ON THE MARCH GLOBALLY

Poorer nations will need support to deal with both the pandemic and its broader impact. Hunger and poverty are surging and could kill more people than COVID-19. Leadership can't come from the US, as it withdraws from the WHO and finding agreement within the EU is proving hard. But for everyone's sake, we must recognise and honour our ties. (The Guardian editorial)

Retail inflation at 6.09 per cent in June



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation rose by 6.09 per cent in June, mainly on account of higher prices of food items, the Government data showed on Monday.

Food inflation in June increased by 7.87 per cent, according to Consumer Price Index (CPI) data.

The inflation figures are based on data collected from limited markets in view of the restrictions imposed on account of coronavirus pan-

demia, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation said in a release. The data collected, however, did not meet the adequacy criteria for generating robust estimates of CPIs at the state-level, it added.

The retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index was 3.18 per cent in June 2019.

The Government had released truncated CPI data for April and May in the backdrop of the lockdown to contain COVID-19 pandemic.

CAIT aims to dent China's ₹4,000 cr biz during Rakhi

TO SEND 5,000 RAKHIS FOR SOLDIERS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Traders' body CAIT, which has called for the boycott of Chinese products, on Monday said it has resolved for a "Hindustani rakhi" next month and dent China's estimated Rs 4,000 crore of trade during the festival. The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) would also hand over more than 5,000 rakhis to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to be further sent to soldiers guarding the country's borders.

The CAIT, which has 40,000 trade associations and seven crore members across India as its members, has announced for a "purely Hindustani Rakhi festival" on August 3 and dent China's estimated Rs 4,000 crore trade during the festival, it said in a statement.

"This time any rakhi made by China or any rakhi-related product from China will not be used! In order to encourage the brave soldiers who are guarding the borders of the country, the women's wing of the CAIT will give 5,000 rakhis to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for the soldiers," the traders' body said.

The CAIT said that according to an estimate a trade of Rs 6,000 crore takes place every year in India on Raksha Bandhan in which China alone contributes about Rs 4,000 crore.

"Not only is finished rakhi imported from China but also rakhi-making products like foam, paper foil, rakhi thread, pearls, drops, decorative items for rakhi are also imported. Due to CAIT's campaign to boycott Chinese goods, no Chinese goods will be used in rakhi this year and we are confident that China is set to lose about Rs 4,000 crores of business," Sushil Kumar Jain, the Delhi-NCR unit convener of the CAIT, said. He said the CAIT has sent a message to all

its state chapters and other major associations working in all the states that Chinese rakhi or related products should not be sold.

"CAIT has also urged various state chapters to get people working in raw settlements in the cities, self-help groups of women, women working in anganwadis, small artisans and others to make rakhis and sell them in markets which will also be a great help to people of these classes," Jain said.

At the same time, CAIT has also urged small scale industries to make Rakhis using Indian goods, he added.

The trade body said that its women wing would also give rakhis to soldiers posted at military hospitals in each city of the country.

The women wing of CAIT in every city of the country, will also tie rakhi to police personnel engaged in safety and security tasks, thereby giving a message that every person of the country stands firmly with the Army and the police force of the country, the statement said.

₹ settles flat at 75.19 against US \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee settled on a flat note at 75.19 against the US dollar on Monday amid high volatility in the domestic equity market.

The ₹ traded in a narrow range as investors awaited retail inflation data for further cues, forex dealers said.

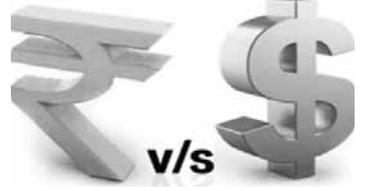
During the four-hour trading session, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 75.08 and a low of 75.21 against the US \$.

The rupee closed at 75.19 against the US dollar, up by just 1 paise over its previous close. It had settled at 75.20 against the greenback on Friday.

"While weak US currency supported the local unit, foreign fund outflows and concerns over rising COVID-19 cases weighed on investor sentiment, traders said.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the dollar's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.03 per cent to 96.62.

Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty came off the day's



highs due to losses in financial stocks. The BSE Sensex settled 99.36 points, or 0.27 per cent, higher at 36,693.69 - giving up about gains of 330 points from its intra-day peak.

The NSE Nifty closed 34.65 points, or 1.15 per cent, up at 10,802.70.

Foreign institutional investors were net sellers in the capital market as they sold shares worth ₹1,031 crore on Friday, according to provisional exchange data. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, fell 1.25 per cent to USD 42.70 per barrel.

Meanwhile, the number of cases around the world linked

to the disease has crossed 1.29 crore and the death toll has topped 5.69 lakh.

In India, the death toll due to COVID-19 rose to 23,174 and the number of infections spiked to 8,78,254, according to the Health Ministry.

"Rupee consolidated in a narrow range ahead of the important inflation number that will be released today evening.

Expectation is that it could grow 45.30 per cent in June compared to growth of 5.84 per cent in the previous month," said Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

DPIT to soon approach Cabinet for 74 pc FDI through auto route in Defence :Sources

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The DPIT would soon approach the Union Cabinet to seek approval for relaxing norms to allow up to 74 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in defence manufacturing under the automatic route, with a view to attract overseas players in the sector, sources said.

"They said the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has discussed the matter with the Defence Ministry.

The decision to permit up to 74 per cent FDI in the defence manufacturing through the automatic route was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May while announcing the fourth tranche of the ₹20 lakh crore stimulus package for the coronavirus-hit economy.

As per the current FDI policy, 100 per cent overseas

- ◆ The move was aimed at boosting domestic industry as India imports about 70 per cent of its military hardware
- ◆ India's defence industry has received FDI equity inflows of USD 9.52 million (\$56.88 crore) during April 2000 and March 2020

investments are permitted in the defence industry - 49 per cent under the automatic route, while beyond that the government approval is required.

In July 2018, the Government had relaxed foreign direct investment norms in the defence sector by bringing up to 49 per cent FDI under the automatic route.

The move was aimed at boosting domestic industry as India imports about 70 per cent of its military hardware. According to the DPIT data,

India's defence industry has received FDI equity inflows of USD 9.52 million (\$56.88 crore) during April 2000 and March 2020.

Under the Government route, foreign investors have to take prior approval of the respective Ministry/department, while in the automatic route, the investor just has to inform the RBI after the investment is made.

Total FDI into India increased by 181 per cent to USD 73.45 billion in 2019-20.

RBI turns net purchaser of US \$ in May, buys USD 4.363 bn



PTI ■ MUMBAI

After being net seller of the US currency in the first month of this fiscal, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) turned net purchaser in May as it bought USD 4.363 billion of the greenback on net basis, according to RBI data.

During the month, the RBI bought USD 4.663 billion from the spot market while sold USD 300 million. In April, the central bank had sold USD 1.142 billion US dollar on a net basis. The central bank in May

2019 had bought USD 2.538 billion of the greenback on a net basis. It had purchased USD 5.118 billion and sold USD 2.580 billion in the spot market in May 2019. In FY20, the central bank was net purchaser of the US dollar at USD 45,097 billion. It had bought USD 72,205 billion while sold USD 27,108 billion in the spot market. In the forward dollar market, the outstanding net sales at the end of May stood at USD 1,958 billion, compared to a sale of USD 1,739 billion in April, the data showed.

Non-financial services sector may take 25% hit in revenue amid COVID-19 disruptions: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Non-financial services sector may witness up to 25 per cent fall in revenue and business disruptions of up to 12 months, according to a survey by the Protiviti India's Business Resilience Barometer survey.

The survey, however, noted strong revival initiatives amidst fall in revenue and business disruptions.

"Investments have been prioritised and planned out in augmenting the revival," said Nirmalya Gupta, Managing Director, Protiviti Member Firm for India. Gupta further said "industries would go for cost optimisation around

their current/conventional ways of operating in some of the key business areas and certainly in the non-key areas and use the resources and cash available in more intelligent and efficient initiatives under the "new normal environment".

As per the survey report, human capital, support functions and infrastructure costs are likely to witness major cost reduction. The survey reveals there have been "strong revival initiatives amidst fall in revenue of up to 25% and business disruptions of up to 6 months for financial services organisations".

Around 55% of organisations expect layoffs due to the lockdown ends and do not expect hiring to revive before at least 60 days, the survey said adding that real estate and construction industry is expected to see the most layoffs.

Gold rises ₹120, silver zooms ₹858

Gold prices continued upside on Monday

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices jumped ₹120 to ₹49,960 per 10 gram in the national capital on Monday following gains in global prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at ₹49,840 per 10 gram. Silver also rose by ₹858 to ₹53,320 per kg from ₹52,462 per kg in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was trading with gains at USD 1,805 per ounce, while silver was quoting at USD 19.03 per ounce. "Gold prices continued upside on Monday on concerns over surge in COVID-19 cases in the world," HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said.

COVID-19 Vedanta launches phase 2 of 'meal for all' programme

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mining giant Vedanta Ltd on Monday said it has launched the second phase of its 'meal for all' programme under which it would provide meals to 38,000 daily wage earners and their families across Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

The programme will be a week-long initiative with a target of reaching 38,000 daily wage earners and their families in the three cities, the company said in a statement.

The daily wage earners are being provided with ration kits consisting of daily essentials such as rice, pulses, refined oil and spices along with a pair of slippers. More than 11.08 lakh meals were provided to daily wage earners in the first phase of the programme.

Sitharaman reviews working of health workers' insurance scheme

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday chaired a meeting to review the implementation of the insurance scheme for health workers fighting Covid-19, as announced under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGK). The meeting, through video conferencing, was attended by senior officials from Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the New India Assurance Company Ltd. A presentation was made by the Chairman & Managing Director of New India Assurance providing details about the highlight of the scheme and its status of implementation as on date.

Officials from Ministry of Health & Family Welfare provided an overview of the mechanism being followed with states' nodal authorities to expedite the claims, also highlighting the issues being faced while reaching out to the family of deceased as well as obtaining the legal heir certificate.

Of the 147 intimations received till date, claim documents have been submitted for 87, out of which 15 have been paid, four approved for payment while 13 are under examination. Further, a total of 55 claims have been found ineligible out of which 35 claims fall outside the scope of the cover like police personnel, municipal workers not related to hospitals, people from Education, Revenue Departments, etc. while another 20 claims submitted have the cause of death other than Covid-19 like cardiac arrest, etc.

Tech Mahindra brings 210 employees home

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/HYDERABAD

Tech Mahindra has facilitated return of over 210 of its employees and their dependents stranded in the United States due to COVID-19 induced lockdown.

A special chartered flight carrying them took off on Monday from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and will land on Tuesday.

The firm in a statement said it has ensured the well-being and safety of our entire employee, customer and partner ecosystem which is critical in the collective fight against this global pandemic.

"Bringing our US-based associates and their dependents back home conveys our commitment towards our core values of ensuring employees safety first, and reiterates Tech Mahindra's ability to be adaptable and agile in keeping mission-critical systems on for global clients from anywhere in the world, even during times of crisis," Tech Mahindra Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer CP Gurnani said.

Telangana announces initiative to help 100 startups

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Innovation Cell (TSIC) along with some leading incubators and enablers here have announced a programme to support over 100 startups scale up.

Reijg HydStartups is a large-scale mentoring programme for startups to reijg strategy to pivot towards customers and increased revenue post-Covid-19.

As startups have been struggling due to economic slowdown caused by Covid-19, the TSIC along with incubators, like T-Hub, CIE-IIITH, IKP, RICH and TIE, has designed the initiative. The initiative will support the ecosystem and help with startups.

A programme for strategy reijg, followed by pitch preparation for equity funding, debt or corporate market access will be provided, according to a release.

AUTOMATION TO DEAL WITH COVID-19 CHALLENGES PNB to focus on self-service: Rao

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Punjab National Bank proposes to accelerate self-service and focus on automation with a view to optimise the employee cost at the workplace and deal with the challenges following the outbreak of coronavirus, the lender said in a message to shareholders.

"The current crisis will steer the banking industry to remote working which is likely to shape the cost structure in the days ahead," PNB's MD and CEO S S Mallikarjuna Rao said in a letter to shareholders.

He noted that MSME, agriculture, agri-based industries, healthcare, among others, present ample opportunities for growth and lending.

"The bank will accelerate self-service and automation initiatives through greater focus on technology to foster optimisation of processes, employee and workplace," he said.

Rao said 2019-20 started with an overarching goal towards 'Year of Profitability

and Creating Value', leaving the adversities of the previous financial year behind.

In the last financial year, PNB's operating profit increased year-on-year by 13.4 per cent to ₹14,739 crore. After a gap of two years, the bank registered a net profit of ₹ 336 crore for 2019-20.

On amalgamation of two public sector banks - Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India - into PNB with effect from April 1, 2020, Rao said the amalgamation process provides significant benefits to PNB and its customers besides providing scale and growth.

"The amalgamation has propelled the bank to the position of the second largest public sector bank in the country and will enable us to realise operational, revenue and cost synergies," he told shareholders. On way forward for PNB, he said the bank's prime goal will be to strengthen the balance sheet, which will create a foundation for sustainable profitability

going ahead.

The bank will continue its focus on asset quality management and capital improvement in the post-pandemic environment, apart from continuing the accelerated momentum in recovery, product leadership, technology, efficiency, and small ticket lending," Rao said.

Going forward, he said PNB's endeavour will be to enhance value through multi-pronged digital transformation strategy and greater focus on better underwriting prudence and risk controls.

He said the bank is considerably strengthened with the amalgamation. "As a bigger entity, we have revamped our products and delivery channels. It is our mission to build a global size, future-ready institution which will substantially contribute to the country's growth," Rao said.

He exuded confidence that in its new avatar, PNB 2.0 will scale still greater heights and continue its growth trajectory.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unknown dead body of male, name and address unknown. Age: about 40 years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: shallow, Built: Medium. Face: Oval, hair black wearing dark grey colour T-shirt and pant found dead at near Shanti Dev Mandir Chhaparwala Chowk, DBG Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi on 04.07.2020.

UNKNOWN

In this regard a DD No. 41-A Dt. 04.07.2020 has been lodged at PS DBG Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this deceased may kindly inform to the following. S.H.O., PS DBG Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi Ph.: 011-23613252, 23537374

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unknown dead body of male, name and address unknown. Age: about 35 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: wheatish, Built: thin, Face: oval wearing half sleeves blue T-shirt and black shorts and bare footed was found dead at near Britania Chowk, Lawrence Road, Opp. Shakurpur Shamshah Ghat, Delhi on 01.07.2020.

UNKNOWN

In this regard a DD No. 24-A Dt. 01.07.2020 has been lodged at PS Keshav Puram, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this deceased may kindly inform to the following. S.H.O., PS Keshav Puram, Delhi Ph.: 011-27195810, 875087223

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON

General public is hereby informed that one person namely Mohd. Parvez S/o Mohd. Miraz, R/o house no. H-368 J.J. Colony Bawana, Delhi. Age: 37 Yrs., Height: 5'1", Wheatish Complexion, Face: long, Built thin wearing green colour T-shirt black colour lower and green colour rubber chappal in feet is missing since 26.06.2020 from his house. In this regard DD No. 117-A Dt. 28.06.2020 has been lodged at PS Narela Industrial Area, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing person, but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the following. E-mail: dc@cbi.gov.in Fax: 011-23011334 Ph.: 011-23014046 011-23015218

S.H.O., PS Narela Industrial Area, Delhi Ph.: 011-27787592, 27787593

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED FEMALE

General Public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo) namely Khushboo D/o Mani Prasad R/o H.No.391, Sec-10, Punerwas Colony, Narela, Delhi Aged-20 Years has been reported missing/kidnapped since 18.06.2020 at about 11:00 AM from her residence vide DD No.86 A Dated 21.06.2020 registered at Police Station Narela, Delhi. Her physical description is as under-

Complexion: Fair, Height: 4'9", Face: Long, Hair: Long Black, Clothing: Yellow coloured Suit, Salwar and Sandal in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped female, may inform SHO, Narela, Delhi at E-mail: eic@cbi.gov.in or website: http://cbi.nic.in

Sd/- SHO, Narela, Delhi Fax No.: 011-24368638 or 24368641 Tel.: 011-27280435, 27282350 DP/320/ON/2020 Mob.: 7065036323



HEALTH

LoseCarbs
Carbohydrates are often blamed for weight gain, but a right proportion and a good choice can help to lose and maintain a healthy weight. Good carbohydrates consist of fibres which gives a longer satiety value and are often low in calories. Low carbohydrate diets as a way to rapid weight loss, are however gaining more of attention today

DOCYARD
DR INDU BANSAL

Director, Radiation Oncology

NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL, GURUGRAM



Keep count of your drinks

Different types of beer, wine, or malt liquor can have very different amounts of alcohol content. It's important to know how much alcohol your drink contains. In the US, one standard drink (or one alcoholic drink equivalent) contains roughly 14 grams of pure alcohol, which is found in: 4.2% alcohol content; some light beers, 12 ounces of regular beer, which is usually about 5% alcohol; 5 ounces of wine, which is typically about 12% alcohol; 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits, which is about 40% alcohol.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism (NIAAA) defines moderate drinking as up to four alcoholic drinks for men and three for women in any single day and a maximum of 14 drinks for men and seven drinks for women per week.

There are various health problems associated with alcohol intake as depression, dementia, mental health problems, alcoholic hepatitis, anemia, arrhythmias, cirrhosis, fatty liver, gout, high blood pressure, nerve damage, seizures, stroke, chronic disease of the heart muscle, known as cardiomyopathy, some types of cancer. All types of alcoholic drinks, including red and white wine, beer, cocktails, and liquor, are linked with cancer. The more you drink, the higher your cancer risk.

There is consistent evidence that alcohol is a carcinogen. 3.5% of all cancer-related deaths were because of alcohol consumption. 5.5% of all new cancer occurrences and 5.8% of all cancer deaths worldwide were attributable to drinking alcohol. But in spite of this only 13% of people understand that cancer is one of the health risks associated with alcohol consumption. The more you have of it, the less you can see its effect on you.

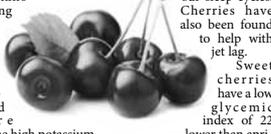
There is evidence that alcohol consumption increases the risk of seven different types of cancers — that of the mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, bowel, liver and breast. Whereas smoking is linked to at least 15 types of cancers, the most common being lung cancer. It may also increase the risk of cancers of the skin, pancreas and prostate. Even low levels of drinking (up to two drinks a day) were associated with an 8 to 23% higher risk of prostate cancer when compared to no drinking. Alcohol is thought to be the cause of between 5% to 11% of all breast cancer cases.

A recent BMC Public Health study suggests that the cigarette equivalent of a bottle of wine is five cigarettes for men and ten for women. The authors estimate that in non-smoking men, the absolute lifetime risk of cancer—that is, the risk of developing cancer during one's lifetime—associated with drinking one bottle of wine per week is 1.0%. For women, it is 1.4%. Thus, if 1,000 men and 1,000 women each drank one bottle of wine per week, around 10 extra men and 14 extra women may develop cancer at some point in their life. In men, this risk appears to be associated primarily with cancers of the gastrointestinal tract, whereas in women, 55% of cases appear to be associated with breast cancer. The authors also found that drinking three bottles of wine per week — a level known to increase the risks of a wide range of different health problems — was associated with an increase of absolute lifetime cancer risk to 1.9% in men and 3.6% in women. This is equivalent to smoking roughly eight cigarettes per week for men and 23 cigarettes per week for women.

We all know drunkenness is nothing but voluntary madness. Drunk never looks good. So, please take a pause and think. Less drinking more thinking. Try a big cup of sobriety — now that's a good stuff. Wake up with no hangover.

SUMMER COOLERS

CHERRY: A cherry is a stone fruit. These tiny fruits are loaded with vitamins and antioxidants that help in reducing skin signs of aging and making it look fresh and glowing. It also helps in regulating blood pressure because of the high potassium content. The phytochemicals in cherries help reduce bad cholesterol levels. They work wonders as sleep stimulants. If you want to have a good night's sleep then grab a cup of cherry juice before going to bed and after waking up in the morning. Cherries are a good source of melatonin, which helps regulate our sleep cycles. Cherries have also been found to help with jet lag. Sweet cherries help in regulating blood pressure — lower than apricots, grapes and peaches. This makes them a better snack than many other fruits, especially for diabetics. Furthermore, these small berries are good enough to keep you hydrated and energetic throughout the day.



COVID-19 is not only a respiratory illness, but it can trigger several neurological disorders as well, says DR RAJNISH KUMAR

If you feel COVID-19 is a respiratory disease then you need to think again. As a day passes, it has been emerging as the biggest threat to trigger a huge range of neurological disorders. Stroke, anxiety, confusion and fatigue are the few names from the long list. There are many instances when people have complaint of challenges in staying focused, problems with the memory and extreme tiredness after the mild illness. Neurological experts suggest that earlier nobody realised that the virus does cause problem in the brain and after much analysis they realised that there could be many factors including lack of oxygen flow to the brain, blood-clotting and a hyper-inflammatory response of the immune system that a patient might be going through. However, it is still not clear whether the novel virus itself is affecting the brain too. Though the recovery rate from the coronavirus infection has gone up, many believe that getting back home from the ICU is the beginning of much neurological disorder that a patient never had before. There have been evidences from the past that how a massive lockdown had affected the brains of the people. During the end of World War I, a mysterious neurological syndrome known as encephalitis lethargica appeared and went on to affect more than a million people worldwide. There is limited evidence of its causes, and whether the trigger was influenza or a post-infectious autoimmune disorder is still unknown. Some patients had movement disorders that looked like Parkinson's disease,

which affected them for the rest of their lives. What researchers say? Neurologists are working hard to have a better understanding of how coronavirus infection is affecting their patients when various researches have estimated that the deadly virus is causing neurological impact. A recent researchers at the University College London (UCL) have studied the brain of 43 patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infections who developed neurological symptoms, like inflammation, psychosis and delirium. The scientists identified 10 cases of temporary brain dysfunction with delirium, 12 cases of brain inflammation, eight cases of strokes and eight patients with nerve damage. Most of those with inflammation were diagnosed with acute disseminated encephalomyelitis (ADEM), a rare disease that the researchers said has increased in prevalence during the pandemic. Whereas, when the research was conducted in aged patients, with an age group of 60 and above, it has been seen that they didn't develop any respiratory problem but with the neurological disorder instead becoming the first and main symptom of COVID-19. Even a study in China, has found out finds that the strokes, altered consciousness and other neurological issues are relatively common in more serious cases of COVID-19. They studied the 214 cases of severe coronavirus illness treated in Wuhan city during the early phase of the global pandemic, doctors reported that 36.4 per cent of patients displayed neurologi-

COVID-19 can evoke an extremely strong immune response, which is called a cytokine storm. During a cytokine storm, the body overproduces immune cells and proteins to the point where they can attack tissues, leading to blood clots and organ failure in some cases

ical symptoms including disorientation or confusion, headaches or even seizure. Some even had impairments in taste or smell. As the disease has been around for a matter of months, we might not yet know what long-term damage COVID-19 can cause. Doctors need to be aware of possible neurological effects, as early diagnosis can improve patient outcome. We've already seen evidence that COVID-19 can evoke an extremely strong immune response, which is called a cytokine storm. During a cytokine storm, the body overproduces immune cells and proteins to the point where they can attack tissues, leading to blood clots and organ failure in some cases. At this point, there's so little data on these patients that these explanations are only ideas. We now need detailed studies to understand the possible biological mechanisms ... so we can explore potential treatments. A prospective, observational study with a larger number of patients that includes more specific neuroimaging and other diagnostic tests is warranted for more conclusive evidence. Research should focus on if responses like the cytokine storm can actually explain these neurological symptoms. Similar to the UK, which has a surveillance programme called CoroNerve, India should also have such program on an urgent basis so that the physicians can report neurologically symptoms of COVID-19 with the hope of better understanding the effect of the coronavirus on the brain.

The writer is Head of Department Neurology, Paras Hospitals, Gurugram

DadiKa Kehna

Rains bring along a plethora of diseases like dengue and malaria. The adage 'prevention is better than cure' can't be truer when it comes to these two illnesses. ROSHAN DEVI shares tips that can help keep the pesky pest away



Monsoon is a welcome change after the scorching hot summer days. Unfortunately, it brings with it a woe of problems not to mention diseases like Dengue and Malaria. Prevention is better than cure. Here is what people need to do to ensure that their surroundings and homes are free from mosquitoes. The most important thing to keep in mind is to get rid of all the water that has been standing in tubs and planters. Fill in fresh water. If you use a cooler, drain out all the water. Let it dry before you fill fresh water. Did you know that Tulsi keeps the mosquitoes away? Just keep tulsi in the planter at the entrance door and windows to keep the mosquitoes at bay. Camphor is another home remedy that will help in getting rid of mosquitoes. Close all the doors and then light a camphor. After about 30 minutes, there won't be any mosquitoes. Believe it or not garlic is a great way to get rid of the peskies. Crush a few cloves and boil them in water. Pour the solution in a spray bottle and spray it around. The solution kills mosquitoes instantly. Don't worry, the house will not reek of garlic.

Planting health

Plant-based diets offer all the essential protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals for optimal health, says ROHIT SHAH

There are many arguments regarding the best diet. Nevertheless, health and wellness communities admit that diets highlighting fresh, whole ingredients and minimising processed foods are excellent for overall wellness of the body. The whole-foods, plant-based diet does just that. Dropping the phrase 'plant-based diet' is in a buzz when talking about nutrition these days. But why is it so hot right now? Because it focuses on minimally processed foods, specifically plants, and can improve your health, boost energy levels, and prevent chronic diseases. Plant-based diets also offer all the essential protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals for optimal health, and are also higher in fiber and phytonutrients. Plant-based VS vegan: The vegan doesn't consume any animal products, including meat, eggs, milk, dairy, and honey. Yet, a vegan diet is not always as nutritionally virtuous as a plant-based lifestyle. The focus of vegan is usually set to avoid animal products, but the priority is not set on unprocessed whole



UNMASK YOUR SKIN PROBLEMS

Wearing face masks for long durations can cause flare-up of acne problems.

DR AJAY RANA shares simple tips that can help



At this time, the world is facing the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis that has never been seen before. Today, wearing a mask is one of the most effective ways to combat the spread of the virus. No matter wherever you go, the Government has now mandated customers and visitors to cover their mouth and nose with a mask or any piece of clothing. Masks keep us safe from touching our face constantly. Which is the most common habit to spread this deadly virus. Also, if someone is coughing or sneezing, it provides a guard against spreading droplets to get contact with other individuals. But wearing the mask for prolonged periods can cause a lot of skin problems for many people. Wearing face masks for a long duration can cause flare up of acne problems. Sweat, oil and makeup are present on the skin and when we cover them with a mask, it becomes occluded. And when we breathe into the mask, the humidity develops in the mask, increasing the chances of acne.

There has been an increase in cases of perioral dermatitis. Moisture and vapour, as well as any secretions such as saliva or mucus, are trapped inside the mask. It acts as an irritant dermatitis to the skin and upset the natural balance of the skin layer around the mouth. This results in rashes, redness, irritation and scaling around the nose and mouth. Sometimes tiny pimples or pustules appear in clusters around the skin of the lips. Humidity due to wearing masks for longer duration makes the skin layer too moist, trapping all this moisture inside the mask. It is almost like diaper dermatitis. But when the skin is in that moist environment and then we take the mask off and let the air out, then sometimes it can become too dry also and cause dryness of the skin with itching and redness. There are many simple things we can do to protect our face from the side effects of wearing masks. Sometimes, it also depends on the type of mask we are wearing. If it's a cloth mask, you need to wash it on a regular interval. If you are at home where not many people are present, then avoid wearing masks for extended periods of time. If your skin seems too much on the dry side, use a gentle, hypoallergenic moisturiser. Don't use something such as witch hazel or rubbing alcohol that will be even more irritating to the skin layer. Use a neutral cleanser, a mild soap or good face wash to clean your skin. If you're using disposable masks then after using it, hang it up in a sunny place to dry for a day or two before using it again. Consult a dermatologist if you do not know how to manage your condition, without waiting for it to aggravate.

The writer is Dermatologist, Aesthetic Physician and Founder-Director of ILAMED

lifestyle is more of a flexible and broad way of thinking about nutrition and ingredient quality. Moreover, with a plant-based diet, the focus is on simple, nutritious and whole foods. So if you're probably thinking about moving to a plant-based diet sounds like a great idea, but you don't know where to start. Don't worry, we've got you covered. Eat ample vegetables. At lunch or dinner, fill half your plate with vegetables at lunch and dinner. Try to include plenty of colours when picking your vegetables. Enjoy vegetables as a snack with salsa, hummus or guacamole. Include whole grains for breakfast. Start with quinoa, oatmeal, buckwheat, or barley. You can also add some nuts or seeds along with fresh fruit. Go for greens: Try a variety of green leafy vegetables such as kale, collards, spinach, and other greens at lunch, Steam, grill, braise, or stir-fry to preserve their nutrients and flavour. Besides all these, the most effective and nutritious plant based food is Hemp and hemp seeds. It's because they are one of those few superfoods which are incredibly healthy. The writer is Co-founder & CEO, Hemp Horizons Pvt Ltd

Trend
Slazer

Shilpa gives yoga tips

Months of being confined at home and the inability to go for a walk or hit the gym has led to stiffening of muscles and back-ache among many. Actor and fitness enthusiast **SHILPA SHETTY** has a few simple yoga tips.

Recently, Shilpa shared a video on her Instagram where she can be seen performing *Vyaghrasana*, *Marjariasana*, and *Utthana Vyaghrasana* among other asanas that help enhance flexibility of the body.

"Our bodies are getting rusty without the same movement, agility, and exercise we were accustomed to; before this pandemic hit us. Daily travels have drastically reduced for a majority of us, leaving us with very little physical activity," says she.



'The main reason I've joined YouTube is to broaden my horizons. My aim for this channel is to introduce everyone to the real Daisy, to show who I am. This is basically my way of connecting with my fans on very real terms. I'm super excited to start my journey. I know I'll get as much love as I do on my other platforms.'



—Daisy Shah

It is flashback day for actor **KAJOL** as she went down memory lane to recall the time when she sported wavy and voluminous hair.



Taking to her Instagram account, Kajol posted a picture in which she is seen flaunting wavy and curly locks.

"What... I swear this hairstyle was in trend... once upon a time," she captioned the image, which seems to be from the 1990s. She added, "#InStyle #UnnaturalPerm #MeWhen!"

Reacting to the throwback image, fans showered her with a lot of funny comments.

'Honoured to work for a cause'

Oscar-winning actor **REGINA KING** says it is always an honour to be part of a piece of work that is entertaining and socially relevant.

She cites that as the reason for being part of the television series *Watchmen*. "It's definitely an honour to be able to have been a part of a piece of work that was entertaining but also socially relevant," Regina said.

"Prior to *Watchmen* I had done *Seven Seconds* and *American Crime*, and both of those shows had commentary rooted in them, around the things that are going on in our country right now," she added.



The fight against COVID-19 continues to take place all over the world. With most of us homebound owing to the home-sheltering and social restrictions, we have been able to spend quality time with the family.

For those with young children, managing work from home as well as keeping the little ones occupied has been challenging. Children are often bored at home and wish to go out, play and meet their friends, however, that's best restricted right now. Thankfully, children do not seem to have suffered serious illnesses owing to this pandemic, but its best to equip them with information about the right way of safeguarding themselves against diseases.

Parents have a major role to play while teaching and inculcating these good habits. To make optimum utilisation of the lockdown, Dr Gurudutt Bhat,

NEW GOLDEN RULES

Here are a few habits that you need to teach your child in a COVID-19 world



Consultant Pediatrician, Fortis Hospital Kalyan and Dr Jeshal Sheth, Sr. Consultant, Pediatrician and Neonatal Intensivist, Fortis Hospital Mulund, suggest some habits that you could gradually inculcate in your child:

- ◆ Hand-washing properly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the cornerstone of our efforts to avoid all illnesses not just COVID-19.
- ◆ Follow this with sanitisation of hands multiple times a day.
- ◆ Follow social distancing while visiting public places. This habit will have to be practised for a long time to come.

◆ Always maintain a distance of two metres or six feet between yourself and the other individual when you go out or even see your friends.

◆ Always follow cough etiquettes, which means that you cough or sneeze in your elbow sleeves.

◆ The virus enters the body if we touch our nose, mouth and eyes. So always wear a face mask that covers the nose and mouth while outdoors and do not touch your face. Do not remove your mask or touch it till you reach home.

◆ Take bath if possible when you come home, if not, wash your hands thoroughly.

◆ Eat healthy, home cooked immunity boosting food, including vegetables, fruits and legumes.

◆ Continue to be in touch with their peers and family members, not physically but by digital means.

◆ Inculcate a habit of physical activity comprising fun indoor exercises.

◆ Proper use of the internet and online tools with appropriate use of child-safe tools must be taught.

◆ Instill in them the habit of reading, writing or following a hobby of their choice.

◆ This is the best time to get to know your kids. Understand the challenges that they might be facing. It is recommended to talk about the importance of mental health, especially during these challenging times.

◆ Proper use of all service workers that are helping COVID-19 patients.

◆ While you are at home, make the most of your time and teach your children life lessons by setting an example by things you regularly do. It could be spiritual, reading to them or even as basic as dinner table discussions.

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Thank you, next

Author **ZIYA US SALAM's** new release,

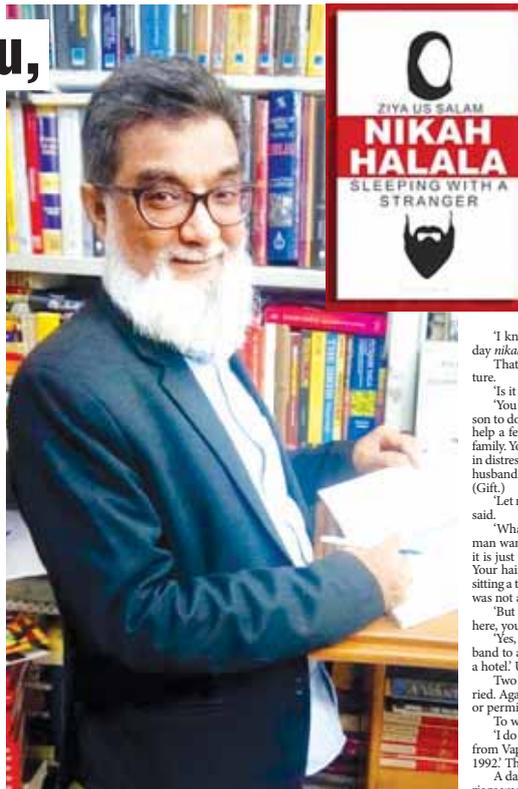
Nikah Halala: Sleeping With a Stranger, exposes the sordid reality of instant triple *talaq* and fake marriages in Islam, a tradition unique to the Indian subcontinent that ends up mocking faith and punishing women for the crimes of men.

An extract:

Muslim society in India remains in a state of denial when it comes to *nikah halala*. The Quran allows divorce twice. After that the spouses either live together happily or divorce gracefully. Nowhere does it allow marriage with a pre-arranged date of divorce to a new man only to go back to the former husband.

Nikah Halala: Sleeping with a Stranger by Ziya Us Salam is a probing exercise that exposes the cycle of instant triple *talaq* followed by a fake marriage, which too ends with another instant triple *talaq* that allows the woman to marry the former husband. While the holy book does not mention instant triple *talaq*, this tradition is unique to the Indian subcontinent that claims to bring squabbling couples together but ends up making a mockery of the faith and punishes women for the crimes of men.

The first-ever book to talk of the subject, *Nikah Halala* presents the sordid reality of mock marriages against the background of Quranic injunction on the sub-



ject and exposes the departure in practice from the teachings of the holy book that gives divorced women complete freedom to follow their path.

An extract:

Islamuddin was not one to rest on his laurels. Through one member of his growing

circle of friends, he heard of a possible vacancy at a mosque in Bombay. It was at Dharavi. The friend put in a good word and Islamuddin started for Bombay. But before that, he packed off his wife and children to Sasaram. He was now single in the big, bad city. He got the job all right but found himself lost and overawed by the

pace of life. It was then that an uncle of his friend, through whom he got the job, put his hand over his head. He told him about what to expect from worshippers, how people often prayed out at the end of the prayer without waiting for a collective *dua* to begin. One day, he came up with a proposal that was to change how Islamuddin looked at his wife, his children, indeed, Islam itself. The uncle, clearly in the late 50s, and manifestly prosperous, suggested he marry a girl. Startled, Islamuddin reminded him, *'Aapko toh pata hai hum bivi-bachhe wale hain.'* (You know, I am married with a wife and kids.)

'I know. I am only suggesting a one-day *nikah*.

That is all,' the uncle cleared the picture.

'Is it not *haram*?'

'You are like a son to me. Will I ask my son to do anything *haram*? This is only to help a fellow Muslim brother to save his family. You will be helping a fellow Muslim in distress,' the uncle insisted, adding, 'Her husband might give you some *nazrana*.' (Gift.)

'Let me speak to my wife,' Islamuddin said.

'What for? How will she know? If a man wants, he can keep four wives. And it is just for a day. You are a young man. Your hair has not gone grey. Your wife is sitting a thousand kilometres away...' Uncle was not about to give up.

'But I have no place to bring a wife here, you know that.'

'Yes, I know. I will ask her former husband to arrange a room in the vicinity of a hotel.' Uncle solved another problem.

Two days later, Islamuddin got married. Again. Without his wife's knowledge or permission.

To whom?

'I do not remember her name. She was from Vapi, I think. It was in 1991 or early 1992.' That is all he can recall in 2019.

A day later, he divorced her. The marriage was consummated. Divorce effected faithfully.

It was to be the first *nikah halala* of his life. Neither before nor afterwards was he sure of the religious validity of the act.

A couple of years later, in 1994, he married another woman. She was from Surat. Her husband was well-educated. He used to teach in a college in Jaipur, I remember. He came with the proposal, Islamuddin

recalls. 'To you directly?'

'No, to the uncle. Nobody ever came to me directly. It was always through that uncle.'

Did uncle solemnise the *nikah halala* himself?

'Who else would do it? Something like this is like charity. One hand should not know what the other has given.'

Sometime in mid-1998, Islamuddin was joined by his wife and children, effectively putting an end or at least a comma to his career as a *halala*, indeed, Islam itself. 'Do not say that. It was always to help out, to protect families. Otherwise, is there a dearth of women for sex in a place like Mumbai? I left my family more than 40 years ago but never touched a girl out of wedlock.' Fake wedlock, he might clarify. Islamuddin, as we said, always looked for avenues for growth. He learnt from another friend in Mumbai that Dubai offers much more money for the same job.

'But for better chances to find an opening, you will have to shift to Delhi. The agents first come to Delhi. It is only if they do not get qualified people there that they go elsewhere,' he was told.

Once again, Islamuddin packed off his wife to Sasaram; his daughter and elder son were anyway married and settled in Sasaram and Patna respectively.

Once in Delhi, he found a job first in Nizamuddin, then a little later at a small mosque in central Delhi. He was paid better, given accommodation too. Even as he waited for a Dubai opening, a *halala* opportunity arose.

In July 2019, a man working in the fashion industry had divorced his wife through instant triple *talaq*. Some three months later, he wanted her back. Once again, through word of mouth, Islamuddin was approached. This time he readily agreed.

'Will you not ask your wife?'

'No, no, it is not needed.'

'Will you charge anything for it? How much will be the *mehar*?'

'I've done whatever her husband wishes.'

'We cannot stay here, I am old now. So the *nikah* will have to be solemnised some distance away. And they will have to book a room in a hotel and bear the expenses. But what about the *mehar*?'

'*Woh bhi humein hi dena hoga?*' (I will have to give that too?)

'Yes, Sir. In Islam, marriage cannot be solemnised without *mehr*'.

'Yes, I know. Make it ₹500. But make it fast. I might have to go to Dubai any day. I want to finish your job before going.'

Islamuddin was a seasoned *halala* husband.

NOW A HOME AFFAIR

In keeping with ITC Hotels' commitment towards enhancing gourmet experiences, the chain has announced its partnership with a food delivery platform to offer customers responsible dining in the comfort of their homes



protocol. The latter showcases an array of authentic global culinary delights and also celebrates indigenous flavours of the region

with the chain's culinary initiative — 'Local Love'. Thus, diners can enjoy the subtle flavours of different cuisines, authentic to a

region and culinary style. Anil Chadha, COO of ITC Hotels, said, "We have always showcased the finest culinary



traditions through our globally acclaimed signature brands. However, in a world where change is the order of the day, it has been our endeavour to ensure our patrons continue to enjoy their favourite cuisines through an outreach dining experience in the comfort and safety of their homes. As part of ITC Hotels, Responsible Luxury initiative, the 'WeAssure' programme follows a stringent hygiene and safety protocol for pan-India home delivery of food to their valued guests. The collaboration with Zomato will further assist us in responsibly delivering our unique culinary experiences using their advanced distribution network across the country. "ITC Hotels are known not just for their luxurious hospitality but also for their culinary delights. We are glad to partner with them. With the growing trend of celebrations at home, we believe that ITC's exclusive gourmet and indigenous food offerings powered by our wide on-ground delivery network will offer great food delivery options for consumers celebrating small or large occasions. Zomato will ensure that its safety measures are well implemented in every delivery," added Mohit Sardana, COO, Food Delivery, Zomato. Zomato has implemented eight Max Safety measures to ensure utmost safety of food. These measures include — restaurants follow WHO practices; contactless delivery; both restaurant staff and delivery partners wear masks; temperature checks and sanitisation stations for both kitchen staff and delivery partners and mandatory use of Aarogya Setu app.

Man City free to play Champions League

CAS lifts club's two-year ban from European competition, cuts fine to \$16m

AFP ■ LONDON

Manchester City's two-year UEFA ban from European football has been overturned by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), the Lausanne-based court said on Monday.

The CAS ruled that the English Premier League runners-up did not breach financial fair play (FFP) rules by disguising equity funding as sponsorship, and also imposed a lower \$10 million (\$15.7 million) fine for failing to co-operate with the continental football governing body.

The club welcomes the implications of today's ruling as a validation of the club's position and the body of evidence that it was able to present," City said in a statement.

The decision means Pep Guardiola's team will compete in next season's Champions League, for which they have qualified by finishing second to Liverpool in the Premier League. The club also leads Real Madrid 2-1 in this season's round of 16 after the away leg.

City was accused of deliberately inflating the value of income from sponsors with links to the Abu Dhabi United Group, also owned by City owner Sheikh Mansour, to avoid falling out of FFP regulations between 2012 and 2016.

The case against City was reopened when German magazine Der Spiegel published a series of leaked e-mails in 2018.

"Most of the alleged breaches reported by the (UEFA) adjudicatory chamber of the club financial control body were either not established or time-barred," CAS said in a statement. UEFA had ruled in February that



TOP-4 RACE INTENSIFIES

LONDON: Manchester City's success in overturning its Champions League ban on Monday has huge ramifications on the Premier League and the remaining two teams that will qualify for Europe's top club competition. Chelsea, Manchester United and Leicester — and maybe Wolverhampton Wanderers and Sheffield United, too — are now fighting for two qualifying spots instead of three with two weeks of the season remaining.

The most concerned team is likely to be Leicester. In the top four since September — and, in December, even looking like the most realistic title challenger to Liverpool — Leicester has imploded, collecting only two wins from its last 11 league games stretching back to the end of January.

After losing to relegation-threatened Bournemouth 4-1 on Sunday, Leicester will find itself in fifth place if Man United beats Southampton on Monday. United appears much more likely to secure a top-four finish and return to the Champions League after a season's absence.

City had committed serious breaches of FFP regulations and failed to cooperate with its investigation, handing them a ban and a \$30 million fine.

City denied any wrongdoing and their appeal was heard over three days by the CAS last month.

Without Champions League football, the side could miss out on at least £100 million (\$175.3 million) in prize money and broadcast revenue, as well as match day and other income.

The FFP regulations are designed to stop clubs running up big losses through spending on players. They also ensure sponsorship deals are based on their real market value and are genuine commercial agreements — and not ways for owners to pump cash into a club to get around the rules.

City cheered the decision that will have huge ramifications on the club's finances and potentially the future of Spanish manager Pep Guardiola and star players such as Kevin de Bruyne and Raheem Sterling.

While Manchester City and its legal advisers are yet to review the full ruling by the Court of Arbitration for Sport, the club welcomes the implications of today's ruling as a validation of the club's position and the body of evidence that it was able to present," City said in a statement.

Since Sheikh Mansour's takeover 12 years ago, City's fortunes have been transformed from perennially living in the shadow of local rivals Manchester United to winning four Premier League titles in the past eight years among 11 major trophies.



Foxes collapse at Vitality

AP ■ BOURNEMOUTH

Dominic Solanke scored twice as Bournemouth's bid for Premier League survival was boosted by a 4-1 victory over Champions League-chasing Leicester, which was reduced to 10 men.

They were the striker's first goals since joining from Liverpool in January 2019 after failing to score in his 38 previous league appearances.

But Bournemouth turned the game on Sunday in its favor during a two-minute spell which saw Leicester lose a player.

In the 66th minute, Leicester keeper Kasper Schmeichel boot a goal-kick into Wilfried Ndidi's back, forcing his teammate to trip Callum Wilson.

Junior Stanislas stepped up to score the resulting penalty and 101 seconds later Dominic Solanke's weak shot trickled under Schmeichel's wolfout attempt to save.

Leicester defender Caglar Soyuncu sent off for kicking Wilson as he attempted to retrieve the ball from the net after Solanke's goal.

Bournemouth's first win in 10 games, a drought stretching back to February 1, moved them to within three points of 17th placed Watford, with three goals left for all the teams in the relegation fight.

Fourth-placed Leicester will drop to fifth if Manchester United beat Southampton on Monday, leaving their hopes of Champions League qualification in danger.

"I didn't see that coming but we are not good enough to get too comfortable. We will finish where we deserve to," Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers said.



PSG welcome fans with 9-0 win

AFP ■ PARIS

Paris Saint-Germain routed second division Le Havre in a friendly on Sunday remarkable not for the 9-0 score, but because it drew the biggest crowd for a match in one of Europe's Big Five football nations since early March.

The French Government relaxed the health protocols before the weekend to allow for a total attendance of 5,000, including players, journalists and staff, at games and while the match at Le Havre was not the first to be played, the others involved only lower-division clubs.

For the game at Le Havre, the tickets, priced between 30 euros (\$34) and 60 euros, sold out in six minutes.

"It is a victory for French football, sport in general," said outgoing Sports Minister Roxana Marcineanu who was at the match.

"I am delighted that football in France can resume in a popular way, with more people in the stadiums. It is the only country in western Europe to be able to do this," Unlike Germany, England,

Sevilla almost book top 4 spot

AFP ■ SEVILLE

Sevilla all-but secured Champions League qualification by beating relegation battlers Real Mallorca 2-0 on Sunday in La Liga.

Lucas Ocampos scored a first-half penalty before Youssef En-Nesyri added a second late on to move Sevilla nine points clear of fifth-placed Villarreal.

With three games left and the superior head-to-head, Villarreal are not mathematically out of contention but they would have to take maximum points and see Sevilla lose both of their remaining matches.

"Champions League qualification was our objective," said Sevilla's Fernando Reges. "We are very close and now we just have some small steps left to make it."

Finishing in the top four would be an impressive achievement for Sevilla and their coach Julen Lopetegui, who took over last year following his nightmares in charge of Spain and Real Madrid.

They could even yet finish third, though they sit level on points with Atletico Madrid.

Defeat damages Real Madrid's hopes of avoiding relegation.

They remain three points behind Atletico, who have a superior record head-to-head and a game in hand against Getafe on Monday.

Milan keep European hopes alive

NAPLES: AC Milan kept their hopes of European football alive on Sunday with a 2-2 draw at Napoli that leaves them with a strong chance of reaching the Europa League.

Franck Kessie's penalty 17 minutes from time gave Milan a battling point in Naples after Giovanni Di Lorenzo and Dries Mertens had put the hosts deservedly ahead with an hour gone.

The draw leaves Napoli in sixth place and the final Europa League spot, but as Genaro Gattuso's side have already qualified for the competition's group stage by

Pellegrini wants Betis fighting in Europe

MADRID: Manuel Pellegrini's main goal in his new coaching job with Real Betis is to make the Spanish club a regular in European competitions.

Pellegrini was officially introduced to Betis' new coach on Monday after signing a three-year deal that will begin next season.

"This is a team that has to be fighting for European competitions," the Chilean coach said. "It needs it as an institution and it will be my main objective to help the club take that leap and achieve better results on the field."

Pellegrini helped Villarreal thrive in Europe more than a decade ago, making it to the Champions League semifinals in 2006 and quarterfinals in 2009. He also led the club to runners-up finish in the Spanish league in 2008.

"If they told me before arriving at Villarreal that we would play in the semifinals and quarterfinals of the Champions League, or that we would finish second in La Liga,



winning the Italian Cup, seventh place currently offers a place into the qualifying rounds. Milan, who are two points and one place behind Napoli, are favourites to take the third spot in the Europa.

U-17 WWC will be held behind closed doors in worst-case scenario: AIFF

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup will be held behind closed doors only in the worst-case scenario, All India Football Federation general secretary Kushal Das said on Monday amid a continued rise in the country's Covid-19 case count.

Already postponed once, the tourney is to be held from February 17 to March 7 next year as per the revised schedule.

"In the worst case scenario, we will have to do it behind closed doors and that will be a pity (especially after the grand success of the

I-LEAGUE MUST GO ON

NEW DELHI: The All India Football Federation plans to go ahead with the 2020-21 I-League season even if the clubs' star foreign recruits are unable to make it due to the coronavirus-forced travel restrictions.

International flights remain suspended since March

men's U-17 World Cup in 2017), but human lives are of course most important," Das said.

The pandemic has so far claimed more than 22K lives with the number of positive cases crossing 8.5 lakh.

England's batting still their nemesis: Hussain

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

England's batting continues to remain their 'nemesis' despite the focus being on stand-in captain Ben Stokes' questionable decisions in the opening Test against the West Indies, feels former skipper Nasser Hussain.

Questions were raised even before the match began as senior pacer Stuart Broad was dropped from the crucial encounter. Stokes then handed the visitors the ball after winning the toss under grey skies, resulting in England being bowled out from 204 in the first innings.

"Let's not get lost with the Broad issue or the toss issue. England having batted first were bowled out for 204 — that is still their nemesis," Hussain was quoted as saying by Sky Sports.

"They did well in South Africa, but in England, against the Dukes ball, they often find themselves 20-3, 30-3, and without

Root in the side this week that was a nightmare. That is still the issue for England," he added.

The two teams head to Manchester to play the second Test of the three-match series, starting on Thursday, and Hussain feels England need to replicate the series-winning batting performance they put up earlier this year against South Africa.

"They are going to a good surface at Old Trafford. Root is back and they have to bat like they did in South Africa this winter and at points in New Zealand. Not by being 204 all out."

Hussain said maybe England underestimated West Indies, citing that had it been the Ashes, Broad would have been a definite starter.

"All I would say about Broad is that if this had been the first Test of an Ashes series, would he have been playing, I would say, yes, 100 per cent? So why wasn't he playing against the West Indies?"



NZ cricketers start squad training

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's top cricketers returned to squad training on Monday at the country's High Performance Centre in Lincoln after a prolonged break caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In a statement issued on Monday, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) announced that six national camps will be conducted till September.

"New Zealand's top male and female cricketers will return to squad training at the NZC High Performance Centre in Lincoln this week, while a larger second camp for players further North will commence at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui from July 19," it added.

The South Island and Wellington based BLACKCAPS and WHITE

Nicholls, Matt Henry and Daryl Mitchell. Skipper Kane Williamson will be part of the batch that will start training next week in Mount Maunganui.

New Zealand's first camp in Lincoln will get over on July 16. It will be followed by training camps in August (10 to 13) and September (dates not yet decided). PTI

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