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TAKE THE UNCONVENTIONAL ROUTE

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MESSI CAN PLAY TILL 2025, SAYS GARCIA
12 SPORT

Gehlot gains upper hand, but situation shaky

Sachin Pilot sacked as Dy CM and removed as State Cong chief, 2 Ministers who joined him in his revolt against CM also dropped

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress Government in Rajasthan is on the brink just three months after the party lost Madhya Pradesh in a similar rebellion. Rebel leader Sachin Pilot was sacked as Deputy Chief Minister and removed as State party chief after he skipped a second meeting of MLAs despite the leadership reaching out to him several times. Two Ministers who have joined him in his revolt were also dropped.

Congress said Pilot was "ensnared" by the BJP to bring down the Ashok Gehlot Government. The BJP has demanded Gehlot to face floor test and senior BJP leader Om Mathur reached Jaipur to conduct a meeting of party leaders on Wednesday at 11 am in Jaipur. Former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje Scindia will be present.

While sources indicated that Pilot may announce to launch a new political party on Wednesday, Om Mathur said he is welcome in the BJP making it first public invitation to Sachin Pilot amid the ongoing crisis in the Rajasthan Government.

The BJP leader also said that if Ashok Gehlot is claiming that he has the support of MLAs, he should go through the floor test and prove majority in the Rajasthan Assembly.



Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot makes a victory sign before the media after calling on the Governor in Jaipur on Tuesday. PTI

"Our doors are open for Sachin Pilot. Anyone who wishes to join the party and embrace its ideology, they are welcome. The BJP has become such a large party because people from different walks of life have joined us and believed in our ideology," Mathur said.

On being asked about Sachin Pilot's wishes to become the Rajasthan Chief Minister himself, Mathur said the Chief Minister is chosen by the party legislature.

He also said that the dispute between Sachin Pilot and Ashok Gehlot is an internal

matter of the Congress and went on to add that the party has not done right with a leader like Sachin Pilot.

The remarks by the top leader of Rajasthan BJP comes even as Congress decides to take disciplinary action against Sachin Pilot and his camp of MLAs who skipped the second Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting on Tuesday despite repeated calls by top leaders of the party.

Sources said Sachin Pilot has the support of 16 Congress MLAs and three independent legislators while Ashok Gehlot

has the support of 102 MLAs.

Gehlot, whose tally has slipped into the breakeven point held a Cabinet meeting late in the evening which saw the Congress left with 100 MLAs, the half-way mark in the 200-member Assembly, after three MLAs left his camp this morning.

Before Sachin Pilot's rebellion, the Congress had 107 MLAs besides the support of 13 independents and five members from smaller parties. That number has now come down to 90 Congress MLAs, seven inde-

pendent members and three to five from smaller parties.

Sachin Pilot has at least 20 MLAs on his side — 17 Congress and three independent legislators. The BJP, which has 73 MLAs, needs the support of another 35 to take power in Rajasthan.

One Congress ally, Bhartiya Tribal Party (BTP), which has two MLAs in the Rajasthan Assembly, has withdrawn support to the Congress. One of its MLAs, Rajkumar Roat, posted a video alleging that the police had stopped him from leaving Jaipur and had taken his car keys thus he felt humiliation.

AICC sources said now Gehlot is banking on Sachin Pilot and other rebels being disqualified, which will bring down the half-way mark and fortify his numbers if he has to face a test of strength.

The Congress during the last two days made several attempts to reach out to Pilot but a decision to sack him from party posts was taken after a meeting between Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi with no signs of any overture by former party chief Rahul Gandhi.

Rahul did not make any attempts to even stop Jyotiraditya Scindia from leaving the Congress who was instrumental in toppling the

Pilot camp claims support of 20 MLAs, in touch with BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Determined to topple the Ashok Gehlot Government on a day when majority of Congress MLAs backed the incumbent Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, the camp led rebel Congress leader Sachin Pilot has claimed to have support of 20 MLAs and is in touch with the BJP. Pilot will address a press conference on Wednesday.

A 10-second video has surfaced showing 16 MLAs sitting together in a circle. Pilot was not seen in the video tweeted by Rajasthan Tourism Minister Vishendra Singh with the caption "Family".

Sources close to the rebel leader say at least 20 MLAs are with him — 17 Congress and three independent legislators. Two of the Congress MLAs backing him are sacked Rajasthan Ministers. The BJP,



Sachin Pilot speaking at a press conference.

which has 73 MLAs, needs the support of another 35 to form a Government in Rajasthan.

While Pilot has been denying through his close aides that he has no plans to join the BJP, sources confirmed that he has been in touch with BJP leaders for

quite sometime now and is likely to share his future course of action on Wednesday when he will for the first time address the media after remaining incommunicado except for taking to Twitter to express his feelings on Tuesday by an one liner "truth can be disturbed but not defeated."

Pilot also tweeted, "heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all those who have come out in my support today."

In his first reaction to his sacking, he said in a tweet, "Truth can be rattled but not defeated."

Pilot dropped his designations from his Twitter bio soon after he was sacked as Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan and Congress president in the State.

SANJAY JHA SUSPENDED FROM CONG PARTY FOR 'ANTI-PARTY ACTIVITIES'

New Delhi: Congress leader and former spokesperson Sanjay Jha has been suspended for "anti-party activities and breach of discipline", Maharashtra Congress chief Balasaheb Thorat declared in a statement on Tuesday.

The entrepreneur-turned-politician's suspension from the Congress comes weeks after he wrote a newspaper article critical of the country's oldest political party. Soon after the article, he was suspended as party spokesperson.

Cuttack cancer hosp to resume treatment

PNS ■ CUTTACK

With rapid antigen tests starting at the Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre here from Tuesday, the hospital that was closed for over a week is now all set to resume patient admission from Thursday.

Hospital Director Dr Lalatendu Sarangi informed that the day-care for radiotherapy and chemotherapy would begin from Wednesday after 20 patients were enlisted on the day following their rapid antigen tests for Covid-19.

"Only the negative Covid-19 cancer patients will be admitted henceforth and each patient will be allowed to have only one attendant, who

will also undergo Covid test and will be issued with a non-transferable attendant pass," the Director said, adding that in the meantime, the entire hospital has been thoroughly sanitised and is in Covid status as per the Government guidelines.

The hospital turned into a corona hotspot over the past fortnight; and so far, 140 cancer patients, their attendants and some staffs of the hospital have tested positive. At least 20 more patients and their attendants tested positive during the past 24 hours, sources said. The hospital turned into a corona hotbed after a patient from Ganjam, who was undergoing treatment here, tested positive on June 24.

New DCPs posted in BBSR, Cuttack

6 districts SPs reshuffled

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Tuesday effected a major reshuffle at the IPS officer level which included the appointment of new DCPs in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

Dr Umashankar Dash, who was serving as Puri SP, was appointed as the Bhubaneswar DCP and Kandhamal SP Prateek Singh was named as the Cuttack DCP.

Among the other appointments, Director Intelligence Satyajit Mohanty was transferred as DG, FS, CG, HG while RK Sharma was appointed as Director, Intelligence.

Bhubaneswar DCP Anup Kumar Sahoo was posted as

DIG, Intelligence and Cuttack DCP Akhilesh Singh as SP, Puri.

Praveen Kumar was appointed as IG, Law and Order while SK Priyadarshi was transferred as ADGP, CID C.B. Soumya Mishra was appointed as the DCP, Traffic (Bhubaneswar-Cuttack) while Sagarika Nath was posted as SP, Sundargarh, replacing Sarah Sharma, who was transferred as SP, Vigilance.

M Akhaya, who has returned from Central deputation, was appointed as CMD, POH and WC. Dr Sarthak Sarangi was given the charge of SP, CID CB.

Vinit Agarwal was appointed as SP, Kandhamal; Rahul Jain as SP, Nuapada; SC Jamadar as SP, Deogarh; and Tapan Kumar Patnaik as SP, Gajapati.

Iran drops India from Chabahar rail project over funding delay

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major loss of face for New Delhi, Iran has decided to move ahead with the construction of a railway line from Chabahar port to Zahedan without any assistance from India due to a delay in funding.

India has been dropped from the strategic infrastructure project along the Iran-Afghanistan border four years after the project was finalised as part of a broader trilateral agreement.

The move comes as a major economic intelligence failure after the agencies here failed in generating inputs on biological intelligence (Tabligh Jamaat congregations in Malaysia defying Covid guidelines) besides political intelligence (lack of inputs on the introduction of six bills by European Parliament against CAA) and diplomatic intelligence negligence (introduction of a bill amending the map



and including Indian territories and subsequent passage by Nepalese Parliament).

The now aborted deal between India and Iran was inked in May 2016.

The development comes against the backdrop of China finalising a 25-year strategic partnership deal with Iran worth \$400 billion. The aggressive Chinese deal with Iran is also important as tension between New Delhi and Beijing is at an all-time time high due to border stand-off between the two countries in Eastern

Ladakh.

India has invested \$ 500 million in the Chabahar project in Iran, which will connect the country with Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan. The first phase of the strategic project was inaugurated in December 2017.

Reports said the entire railway project would be completed by March 2022 and that Iranian railways will go ahead without India's assistance. Iran will now use about \$ 400 million from the Iranian National Development Fund.

CAPSULE

DELETE FB ACCOUNT OR QUIT ARMY: HC TO LT COL

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday declined to grant any interim relief to a Lieutenant Colonel, who has challenged the Indian Army's recent policy banning armed forces personnel from using social networking platforms like Facebook and Instagram, saying he has to either abide by the mandate of the Army or put in his papers.

OPEN BOOK UG EXAMS FROM AUG 10: DU TO HC

New Delhi: Delhi University will hold final year undergraduate online Open Book Examinations (OBE) from August 10-31, the Delhi High Court was informed on Tuesday. The students left out of online exams will be given an opportunity to appear in physical examinations, to be held sometime in September.

VIKAS DUBEY ENCOUNTER: SC MAY CONSIDER PANEL

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it may consider appointing a committee headed by a former judge to enquire into the encounters of gangster Vikas Dubey and his associates as well as the killing of eight policemen in Uttar Pradesh.

Four more die; total Covid toll 74 in State

- 543 new infected cases; tally surges to 14,280
- Day's highest 188 in Ganjam again
- Record 609 recover; total recoveries 9,864

BHUBANESWAR: The coronavirus fatalities in the State rose to 74 on Tuesday following the death of four more patients. While three of the deceased were men, one was a woman.

The deceased were identified as a 71-year-old man of Cuttack district who was also suffering from oral cancer, a 71-year-old man of Bhubaneswar who was also suffering from blood cancer, an 80-year-old man of Ganjam district who was also suffering from diabetes and heart disease and a 40-year-old woman of Khordha district, the Health

and Family Welfare Department said.

The State also reported the death of a patient due to other health complications, taking the number of such toll to 22.

"Regret to inform that a one-year three months old baby of Sundargarh district who was also Covid positive, passed away due to GM 1 Gangliosidosis," the department tweeted.

Meanwhile, 543 more persons tested positive for the virus on the day, increasing the total tally to 14,280. While 354 cases were reported from quarantine centres, 184 were local contacts.

The day's maximum 188 cases were again reported in Ganjam district, followed by 87 in Khordha, 52 in Sundargarh, 39 in Cuttack, 29 in Gajapati, 24 in Rayagada, 22 each in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar, 15 in Jagatsinghpur, 11 in

Malkangiri, 10 in Kendrapada, eight in Baleswar, seven each in Boudh and Puri, six in Jharsuguda, five in Balangir, three in Bargarh, two each in Dhenkanal and Sambalpur and one each in Angul, Bhadrak, Jajpur and Nayagarh.

However, a record 609 patients recovered from the disease on Tuesday, taking the total recoveries to 9,864 in the State.

The highest 268 recoveries were reported from Ganjam, followed by 135 in Sundargarh, 37 in Khordha, 32 in Cuttack, 25 in Baleswar, 23 in Keonjhar, 18 in Mayurbhanj, 12 each in Bhadrak and Puri, eight in Sambalpur and seven each in Bargarh and Jagatsinghpur, six in Jajpur, four each in Jharsuguda and Kendrapada, three in Balangir, two each in Koraput, Nabarangpur and Rayagada and one each in Gajapati and Nayagarh. PNS

One more MLA Covid positive

PNS ■ BALESWAR

Another MLA from Baleswar district tested positive for Covid-19 on Tuesday.

Remuna BJD MLA Sudhanshu Shekhar Parida was under home quarantine after coming in contact with the district's Nilgiri BJP MLA Sukanta Kumar Nayak, who had earlier tested positive for the virus.

"I was under home quarantine after my fellow MLA tested positive for Covid-19. My swab samples were collected on July 11," said Parida. Official source said Parida would be admitted to a Covid Hospital and his contact trac-



ing has already begun along with an active surveillance.

Notably, Parida is the third legislator of the State to have contracted the virus. Earlier, Nilagiri MLA Nayak and BJD MLA of Salepur in Cuttack district Prasanta Behera have tested positive for the virus.

Covid: Plasma therapy in State from today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Government on Tuesday announced that plasma therapy would be introduced in the State from Wednesday for treatment of Covid-19 patients.

The service would begin at the SUM Hospital and the KIMS in Bhubaneswar and the Ashwini Hospital in Cuttack. The SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack would be designated as the nodal centre for treatment.

The decision was taken at a Covid-19 review meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. At the meeting, Patnaik directed the officials concerned to strengthen monitoring of the situation in five districts, Ganjam, Cuttack, Khordha, Jajpur and Sundargarh. He also advised the district observers to constantly remain in contact with corona warriors to

encourage them.

Stating that around 7,000 samples are being tested per day in the State, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said the number would be increased to 9,000 in a week. Private hospitals would also be allowed to conduct the test in coming days.

Health Department



Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra said that though there is no inadequacy in the number of ICUs and beds at the Covid Hospitals in Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Ganjam, steps have been taken to add 200 more ICUs and additional beds in these places in next seven days.

51 more Covid cases in BBSR; total 769

27 infected in Cuttack; tally rises to 291
17AHRCC patients, staffs test +ve

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR/CUTTACK

Of late, the Covid-19 cases are virtually galloping in the capital city Bhubaneswar. On Tuesday, another 51 persons tested positive for the virus in the city. With this, the city's number of positive cases rose to 769 with 397 active ones. Out of the new cases, 35 were from home quarantine and 16 local contacts. The home quarantine cases included a 10-year-old boy of Old Town, near Lingaraj Temple, a 30-year-old man of Old Town Mahaveer Nagar, a 56-year-old man of Kotatirtha Lane, six cases of Laxmi Sagar

Uppar Sahi, a 54-year-old man near Master Canteen, a 26-year-old man of Baramunda HB Colony with a travel history of Chennai, a 29-year-old man of Nuagaon Jena Sahi, a 30-year-old man and a 34-year-old man of Rasulgarh Adimata Colony, a 34-year-old man of Kharavel Nagar, a 21-year-old man and a 23-year-old man of Ganganagar, a 34-year-old woman of Shashtri Nagar, a 27-year-old man of Jharpada Jagannath Nagar, a 28-year-old woman of Nayapalli N-3 and a 29-year-old man of Nayapalli N-5. In Cuttack city, 27 persons tested positive on the day. With this, the city's total positive cases rose to 291 with 150 active ones. The new cases included 17 patients and their attendants of the Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre, who were sent on institutional quarantine after coming in contact with previous positive cases at the hospital.

The local contact cases included two employees of a Government hospital, a 39-year-old man of Laxmisagar, two cases of Chandrasekharour, two cases of Kalinga Nagar, a 21-year-old woman of Bharatpur, a 28-year-old woman of Kharavel Nagar, a 21-year-old man and a 23-year-old man of Ganganagar, a 34-year-old woman of Shashtri Nagar, a 27-year-old man of Jharpada Jagannath Nagar, a 28-year-old woman of Nayapalli N-3 and a 29-year-old man of Nayapalli N-5. In Cuttack city, 27 persons tested positive on the day. With this, the city's total positive cases rose to 291 with 150 active ones. The new cases included 17 patients and their attendants of the Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre, who were sent on institutional quarantine after coming in contact with previous positive cases at the hospital.

Use TULIP funds for corona, State told

Scheme launched by Centre on June 4

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

While a large number of internship requirements for Covid-19-related activities are required by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of the State, the Union Government has requested to utilise resources from TULIP. The Urban Learning Internship Programme (TULIP) was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 4, which allows fresh graduates to apply for internship in ULBs and Smart Cities. Any graduates who have completed BTech, B Arch, BPlan, BSc etc. can apply within 18 months from date of its graduation. Union Secretary Housing and Urban Affairs Durga Shankar Mishra has brought to the notice of the State Government in this regard,

while asking to utilize TULIP in the Covid-19 Management. TULIP would help enhance the value-to-market of India's graduates and help create a potential talent pool in diverse fields like urban planning, transport engineering, environment, municipal finance etc, thus not only catalyzing creation of prospective city managers but also talented private and non-Government sector professionals. The Smart Cities have sought interns in different areas such as health, town planning, finance, electrical, civil, information technology, water resources and environmental engineering. In order to boost and coordinate such an ambitious programme, the Union Government has requested the State administration to appoint a Nodal Officer as soon as possible. The TULIP launch is also an important stepping stone for fulfillment of MHRD and AICTE's goal of one crore successful internships by the year 2025.

VISA woes

US-based Odias unable to return from State

Stay separated from families

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ JHARSUGUDA

The temporary restriction on extending VISAs to Indians by the Trump administration has led to suffering and anguish among Odisha's NRI families. Consider 5-year-old Aryan from New Jersey who hasn't seen his mother for more than 5 months. Aryan video calls his mother every day to inquire about the date of her return to the USA but keeps getting heartbroken week after week. The child says, "Mama, when will you come here? Every day you say you would be in the states within 2-3 days, but you never arrive. Papa also keeps telling lies. If you love me, promise me you would be here soon." Aryan is son of New Jersey-based Anusuya Kanungo. Around mid-February Anusuya had learned

that her father was in death bed. Since her husband could not manage to take a leave on an urgent basis, she booked the next available flight and reached Bhubaneswar. But due to travel restrictions imposed since, Anusuya couldn't manage to return. After the lockdown was lifted in India, Anusuya had hoped to return to her country and even reached the Hyderabad consulate on March 24 to seek a VISA but by then the US administration had imposed strict travel restrictions due to which many people like Anusuya have been stuck across borders with their loved ones in the US. These restrictions have left many families worldwide shattered, consider Parul and her 3-year-old daughter, who are held up in Jharsuguda, while



her husband is in the United States. Parul says that the situation has taken a toll on the mental health of her 3 year old daughter who has been away from her father for months and is only able to video call him. In another similar case, Chicago based Priya is stuck with her 1-year-old daughter in Dhenkanal while her husband yearns to see his family but to no avail.

Disabled kids' enrolment soon

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Tuesday issued an order directing the concerned officials to begin online admission of children with disabilities to different classes of special schools with immediate effect. In a letter, the Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities asked the Social Security Officers of various districts to enrol children with disabili-

ties for the academic year 2020-21. A portal has been developed for processing admission to all the 103 special schools running under the Grant in Aid (GIA) fold of the department. "It is requested that all concerned, particularly staffs of special schools, may please be instructed to adopt the above system meticulously and facilitate the admission process," said a notification issued by the department.

SOS Villages' students excel in CBSE exams

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Pushpa Muduli and Adyasha Patra, students of SOS Children's Villages of Bhubaneswar, have done the city proud by scoring 87.2% and 84% marks, respectively, in the CBSE Class XII Commerce examinations, results of which were announced on Monday. Geeta Kumari, a student of SOS Children's Village of Rourkela, has secured 73.4% in the Commerce examinations. Congratulating Pushpa, Adyasha and Geeta for their achievements, SOS Children's Villages secretary general

Sudarshan Suchi said, "It feels really good to see our children do well. We are proud of Pushpa and Adyasha for securing more than 80% marks." Suchi also hailed tireless efforts of SOS mothers for the student's achievement. He also congratulated all the other children for their successes. Four other students of SOS Children's Villages, Bhubaneswar and tje other students from SOS Children's Villages, Rourkela have secured more than 70% and have passed class XII boards with flying colours.

Woman PEO held taking bribe

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Vigilance officers on Monday arrested Sundargarh district Bonai block's Badaguguna GP Panchayat Executive Officer (PEO) Gayatri Jayapuria on the charge of demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 6,000 from Nitish Mishra of Kantajodi village to issue 'no due certificate' in favour of his father Jatim Mishra, a former PEO of the GP. The PEO was caught red-handed while taking the bribe



amount from Mishra. A trap had been laid on the complaint of Mishra by the vigilance. The matter was still under investigation, informed an official release.

Third journalist dies of Covid-19

BHUBANESWAR: One more senior journalist in the State has succumbed to Covid-19. The deceased Simanchal Panda (63) of Ganjam district was working with a weekly Odisha magazine. Notably, his 34-year-old son Asit Panda had also died of the virus on July 8. But even after his death, swab samples of rest of the family members were not collected for the test. On July 12, Simanchal fell sick and was taken to a hospital in Buguda and later shifted to the MKCG Medical College Hospital. He along with all his family members, including his grandchildren, underwent Covid-19 test at the

hospital and all tested positive. While all of them were shifted to the Aska Covid Care Centre, the journalist died. With this, total three journalists have died of the disease in the State. Earlier on July 11, Priyadarshi Patnaik of The Samaja died while undergoing treatment at the KIMS Covid Hospital in Bhubaneswar. He was a resident of Hinjili in Ganjam district. Next day, another scribe, K CH Ratnam, from Gajapati district succumbed to the virus at a Covid hospital in Bhubaneswar. The 75-year-old journalist was working with Telugu newspaper Eenadu. PNS

State urged to give industry tag to steel scrap recycling

To create Special Recycling Zone

BHUBANESWAR: With huge scope lying in steel scrap recycling sector, the State Government has been requested to provide industry status to the nascent activities and help out the small and medium enterprises (SME). In order to facilitate the sector, the State Government has also been urged to set up special recycling zone and provide free land as one time incentive to the entrepreneurs. Ministry of Steel Secretary Binoy Kumar has approached the Odisha Government as the State is producing huge quantity of steel scrap and the entire industry is in unorganised sector. It came to the fore that the

current generation of scrap from domestic unorganised sector is 25 Million Tons per annum and around 7 Million Tons of scrap is being imported to meet domestic requirement. Odisha, being a mineral rich State and all set to be new first steel hub of the country, the Ministry of Steel has urged the State Government to accord 'Priority Sector' status to the recycling and sustainability focused industries. According to experts, use of every ton of scrap for steel making saves 1.1 ton of iron ore, 630 kg of coking coal and 55 kg of lime stone. This would result in energy saving of 16-17 percent, reduction in water consumption by 40 percent and CHG emission by 58 percent. The Ministry of Steel has

decided to work as Hub and Spoke Model of the proposed collection and dismantling centers. Kabadiwalas, aggregators and scrap dealers will act as Spokes and Collection Centers will be Hub. And these Hubs will act as feeders for scrap processing and recycling centers. In order to make India self sufficient in steel scrap, 7 Million Tons of scrap is needed to be produced domestically. It is expected that the country requires 70 Scrap Processing Centers of 1 lakh ton capacity. When India's steel production reaches 250 Million Ton(MT), the requirement of scrap will be about 70-80 MT. In order to produce 70 MT of additional scrap, the country needs 700 scrap processing and shredding centers,

which would be fed by 2,800-3,000 collection and dismantling centers. While the Ministry of Steel is looking at the scenario, a Steel Scrap Recycling Policy was formulated which has evoked positive response among the trade and industry and the automobile manufacturers who are keen to establish scarping and recycling facilities. Under the backdrop, the State Government is needed to consider the changed environment and investment sentiment to include scrap aggregation, processing and recycling as an industrial activity and accord industry status to the sector. This will ensure raw material security to steel manufacturers in SME Sector, who use scrap as raw material, said a senior official.

'Govt has failed in containing Covid in Ganjam'

BJP demands 31K-bed Covid hospitals set up soon

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP on Tuesday alleged that the State Government and the Ganjam district administration have failed in containing the spread of coronavirus in Ganjam. "Quarantine centers are unhygienic and have no drinking water facility. Inmates are being served low-quality foods. Due to mismanagement, the number of Covid cases in Ganjam district has increased alarmingly," alleged BJP State vice-president Brugu Baxipatra at a Press meet here.

He demanded that minimum 5,000 swab tests should be conducted in Ganjam district daily and three full-fledged Covid hospitals established at three subdivision headquarters, Chhatrapur, Brahmpur and Bhanjanagar. Baxipatra also demanded that the Government provide mobile healthcare facility at doorsteps as OPDs of the most of the hospitals have been closed in view of detection of Covid cases. He said PPE kits should be provided to all health workers moving households to collect date and their swab tests tested. He demanded that assistances, as announced by the Government, should be paid to the families of deceased Covid warriors forthwith. "The district administration should involve social, political and voluntary organ-



isations and disaster management experts in Covid combat and management," he said. He demanded that the Government appoint an Additional Chief Secretary level officer for Covid management in the district.

Neglected for long, healthcare needs major boost



RAJ KISHORE PANDA

Lockdown as a strategy to contain the spread of the Corona pandemic is questioned by many. More particularly looking at the high rate of transmission of the disease including rise in mortality rate since the opening of the economy (with lockdown continuing at State/regional level) for economic activities from June 1, opinion is gaining ground against the potentiality of lockdown as a measure to control

the spread of the virus. Hence focus has gradually shifted from this behavioural intervention to providing health facilities to curb the disease. However, India being a large populous country with underdeveloped public healthcare system, there is a need for strengthening the public health to meet the eventualities if there happens to be community spread of the virus. Realizing the crucial role of public health in the present context, the Prime Minister has recently announced Rs 15,000 crore towards building the health infrastructure. But as it is largely viewed, the public healthcare suffers from long policy neglect and there is a need for a structural reform to make this system contribute quality service to the people along with fighting Covid-19. On this issue let me explain how health- a basic element for a better human living, remained neglected in the development policy all through

India's policy must get reoriented in view of corona

the post-independent India. With the country getting independence, contrary to the expectation that health be treated as a basic human right, the framers of the constitution placed health under the Directive Principles of State Policy with the provision of healthcare the responsibility of the State Governments. Accordingly, the States were also made responsible for raising the level of nutrition and standard of living of their people and improvement in public health remained their primary duty. By this way health as a basic human right was compromised from the beginning.

Besides, over the planned period of development, emphasis was laid on accumulation of capital through large-scale investment in capital goods industries, infrastructure etc. Industrial growth was the key word of development. The social sectors like health and education were considered as low priority areas. The States could not mobilize adequate resources since agriculture income was exempted from taxation. This led the States to reduce expenditure and it fell largely on social sectors like health and education. All along public expenditure on health (Centre + States) continued to remain at around 1 per cent of GDP. In recent years there has been marginal increase in expenditure on healthcare at 1.3 per cent of GDP between 2008 and 2015 which has further increased to 1.4 per cent in 2016-17. However, this is less than world average of 6 per cent. The National Health Policy, 2017 has proposed to raise it to 2.5

per cent of GDP by 2025. Since the beginning of 1980s, the Indian economy witnessed a higher pace of economic development leading to better living standards of the people, particularly those residing in urban areas. As such, under the influence of middle class urban elite, the Government's policy focused on establishing hi-tech and super speciality hospitals in the country under private sector. This led to rapid growth of uncontrolled and unregulated private health sector in the country. In the 1990s with the adoption of economic reform, a major shift in Government's healthcare policy towards developing tertiary care resulting massive investment in corporate hospitals, diagnostic centres etc, was noticed. As a result whatever little control the Government had on private healthcare sector was done away with and the Government became facilitator to private health sector, rather than provider of healthcare in the

country. Taking the available data, today private healthcare caters to 70 per cent households in urban areas and 63 per cent in rural areas. A weak public health system which does not function well in a normal situation cannot suddenly generate surge capacity when challenged by a health emergency. This suggests adequate investment in creating a public health system that can withstand any kind of health emergency. Besides, as studies reveal the private healthcare sector suffers from excess capacity and this needs to be strategically used by the Government. There is robust evidence that investment in primary healthcare pays rich economic dividends. A re-thinking on the development policy of the healthcare is the need of the hour. (Dr Panda is a former Professor of Economics, PG Dept of Analytical & Applied Economics, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar)

Groom, 4 others held for Covid flout

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

As many as five persons, including a bridegroom, were arrested on Monday for organising a marriage in violation of Covid-19 norms at Jhunia village under the Ali police limits in Kendrapada district on June 25, informed IIC Salil Kumar Pradhan on Tuesday. The arrested were identified as bridegroom Harekrushna Dhal (bridegroom) Pravakar Samal, Satyajit Mallick, Ramachandra Rout and Rabintra Sahoo of Juania village of Juania village. Though Dhal had taken permission police for conducting marriage with participation of maximum of 50

people, yet the norm was violated during both wedding procession and marriage feast. Besides, he organised a meeting over assault on the local Sarpanch's husband where more than 50 villagers gathered. Videos of these incidents went viral on the social media. Following this, Pattamundi SDPO Ranjan Kumar Dey and IIC Pradhan conducted an inquiry and found the five persons responsible. Notably, Pattamundi police had nabbed four persons for organising anidol installation programme and a community feast two days back.

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Panic grips VIMSAR as ICU doc infected

30 docs, nurses quarantined

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Panic gripped the VIMSAR at Burla following a PG student on duty in the ICU tested corona positive on Monday. "For the first time a doctor of the institute has tested positive," said VIMSAR Superintendent Dr Jayashree Dora. The source of the doctor getting infected is under investigation, she added. "We are trying to ascertain if he got infected from any patient of ICU, or from any other source," Dr. Dora informed. But the patients and their family members appre-

hend an ICU outbreak since the doctors has treated them all.

The concerned doctor was suffering from cold and cough, but he was coming to duty. When his swab and blood test confirmed that he was positive, he was sent to the dedicated Covid Hospital at Sambalpur, VSSIMSAR sources said.

Following the incident, 30 doctors and nurses were quarantined as they come under high risk group, the superintendent said further.

At the same time, few other doctors and nurses were also kept in isolation earlier as they came in contact with some positive patients while treating them. But they are in good health now, Dr Dora added.

Ganjam reports 188 new Covid cases, 1 death

BRAHMAPUR: Even as the Ganjam district administration relaxed shutdown norms in all urban areas for three days from Tuesday allowing people to purchase essential items, the Covid-19 cases in the district continued to rise with 188 fresh cases being reported in the last 24 hours.

Of the 543 new cases reported in the State on Tuesday, Ganjam alone contributed 34.6% cases. The district also registered one more Covid-19 death on the day as an 80-year-old male patient, who was also suffering from diabetes and heart disease, succumbed to the deadly virus.

The fresh 188 cases included 12 corona warriors, five persons with travel history to other States and 171 persons with active contact with previous positive cases. All the new cases were shifted to Covid Hospitals, informed officials. PNS

CM hails octogenarian's Covid battle win

PNS ■ PHULBANI

An 81-year-old A man, Gopinath Dakua, of Kandhamal district has triumphed over Covid-19 after a 15-day ordeal.

Dakua, a native of Tala Indragada in Raikia block, was initially undergoing treatment at the Indragada Public Health Centre as he suffered from influenza. After he developed Covid-19 symptoms, he was shifted to the nearby Temporary Medical Centre at Raikia on June 28 and finally to the Covid Hospital at Phulbani on July 4.

His condition improved gradually and he was dis-



charged from the hospital on July 13.

"During my treatment, doctors, nurses and other staffs attended sincerely and took good care of me. Good quality food was also provided at the hospital," said the octogenarian.

On Tuesday, Chief Minister

Naveen Patnaik talked to Dakua over phone and praised him for his strong willpower in fighting the virus. Patnaik said his victory would boost others' courage to battle Covid.

Dakua thanked the CM for providing appropriate health-care to him in the Covid Hospital.

Baleswar Covid+ man goes to sorcerer

Mistaking his ailments to be evil spell of spirit

PNS ■ BALESWAR

A man of Soro who had taken help of a sorcerer to get rid of cold-related ailments was detected Covid positive.

The man of Kanarpur village working in Mumbai recently had returned to his home. After returning, when he experienced cold ailments, the family members suspecting that he was afflicted by some bad spirit took help of a sor-

cerer in their area. While the sorcerer was doing the procedure to remove the evil spirit of the man, the villagers after learning such activities protested and insisted him to go to the TMC and get his swab tested. They also informed the elected representatives of the village.

During isolation in the TMC at Soro, his swab was collected and during the test, it was found positive. The affected was sent to the Covid hospital for treatment.

What is interesting is that after detection of a virus in his client, the sorcerer in abject fear is running here and there to get him tested, informed local sources.

22 flee TMC, walk 7 km to reach home

PARALAKHEMUNDI: As many as 22 people fled from a temporary medical centre (TMC) and walked 7 km to reach their village in Gajapati district on Monday night alleging lack of basic amenities at the TMC.

According to information, after two villagers tested positive for Covid at Sara village of Khandaba gram panchayat under Kashinagar block, two pregnant woman and 22 others were sent to a quarantine centre at Ulabhadra as they were found having Covid symptoms. However, the 22 villagers refused to stay there, alleging that the centre had no basic facilities. Then, they were sent to the Alada Adarsha Vidyalay quarantine centre. They also made the same allegation here and escaped the centre. Later, Government officials convinced them and lodged them at the Khandaba quarantine centre. PNS

2 flee Covid Hosp in Ganjam

BRAHMAPUR: Two patients undergoing treatment at the Tata Covid Hospital at Sitalapali in Ganjam district have escaped from the hospital on Sunday last.

After finding them missing, the hospital authorities have lodged a police complaint on Monday morning. However, they are yet to be traced.

On July 3, Excise Intelligence officials had nabbed the two from the New Bus Stand here while they were smuggling ganja and later sent them to jail, where their swab samples were collected for Covid-19 test. After their reports came positive, they were shifted to the Covid Hospital on July 10.

Two days after being admitted to the hospital, the duo fled on July 12. They are residents of Bhubaneswar, said sources. PNS

37 Covid fighters test +ve in Sundargarh

Doc, DSP, Inspector among infected

PNS ■ SUNDARGARH

In a matter of great concern, frontline workers like doctors, paramedics and police-men involved in the war against coronavirus are increasingly getting infected.

On Tuesday, out of the 52 new positive cases registered in Sundargarh district, 36 are police personnel and one is a doctor. There is a DSP and an

inspector among the infected personnel.

The remaining new cases include six returnees, seven contacts of previous positive cases and 2 local contact cases.

All the infected persons were shifted to the Rourkela Covid Hospital Rourkela, Covid Health Centre, NTPC Hospital, Sundargarh or home quarantined as per the new guidelines of the Government, said Sundargarh Collector Nikhil Pawan Kalyan in a tweet.

"Out of the 37 home quarantined Covid warriors, 15 will be shifted to Covid health centre based on their health condition," Kalyan added.

Athagarh declared Containment Zone

PNS ■ ATHAGARH

In view of the increasing Covid-19 cases in Athagarh subdivision District Collector of Cuttack, Bhabani Shankar Chayani has declared the entire area as a Containment Zone from Monday.

Inflow of persons from other districts or States to the subdivision comprising Athagarh, Tigiriga, Badamba and Narasingapur blocks has been restricted.

Any person coming from outside shall not be allowed to enter subdivision without prior permission of the concerned Tehsildars and PS IICs at the

NAKA point.

"Those carrying essential commodities and medicines may be allowed to enter the subdivision. The health condition of the persons coming from other districts/states to Athagarh will be screened by the Surveillance Team at the NAKA Point. The detailed history of the persons shall be recorded in separate register with their address and contact number," the Collector's order said.

"The Tehsildar and IIC shall jointly finalise at the spot on the entry of the outsiders coming to Athagarh subdivision," the order stated.

Singhania students excel in CBSE exam

PNS ■ RAYAGADA

The Lakshmi Pat Singhania Public School has set a benchmark as its students secured outstanding result in the recently declared CBSE board examination.

Total 37 students of the school appeared in class- XII board examination held in March. All the students of the schools have passed with first class. Out of 37 students eight have secured more than 90 per cent, 12 have secured more than 80 per cent and remaining 17 have secured more than 60 per cent.

Master Mohammed Anas secured highest percentage with 94.6 per cent and stood first in the school. Master Somesh Panda secured second position with 94.2 per cent and Simhadri Naveen secured 3rd position with 94 per cent.

For this outstanding results of the school, the top executives of JK Paper Mills management Vinay Dwivedi, Executive Vice President (Works), Biswajeet Dwivedi, Vice President (Comm) and school principal Pradipta Kishore Panigrahy congratulated all the students, parents and the teachers.

Establish large tech centre in Kalahandi

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Well-known nonresident Odia (NRO) Prof Digambara Patra has urged both Central and State Governments for setting up of a large technology center in Kalahandi district by boosting the Solar Charkha Mission in the KBK region.

In his letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Patra mentioned that most of the big initiatives and projects of the Central and State Governments are limited to the coastal Odisha region and none of them have been proposed in the KBK region.

Odisha has about 4 lakh MSME units, which constitute 0.6 % of MSMEs in the country. This number is too small when its population is 3.2 % of India, remarked Patra.

About 60 per cent of MSMEs render repairing service, suggesting Odisha has limited contribution in manu-

facturing despite being known for its metal and mining.

Presently, Odisha generates 474-MW solar power against India's 34.6 GW production. Thus, Odisha's share is 1.4 per cent. By 2022, when India aims to have 100 GW solar power, Odisha's target is 1.5 GW, which is again 1.5 per cent.

Compared to its population both in solar power and MSME, Odisha's share must grow two-fold and five-fold, respectively. The KBK region can potentially be developed for alumina, cotton, and agricultural-based MSME and solar industries.

Unfortunately, most of the aluminum and textile parks in Odisha are being established outside of the KBK districts, which play a major role in cotton production. Cotton cultivated in Kalahandi, Nuapada, Rayagada, Koraput, and Balangir districts is well known for its quality internationally. District wise Kalahandi is among the topmost districts for

Create jobs under Solar Chakra Mission: NRO urges PM, CM

cotton production. Similarly, Kalahandi, Sonepur, Bargarh, and Koraput region is known for handloom textiles. Even Khadi products in the Kalahandi region were known in the old days.

Additionally, exploitation of bonded laborers from KBK districts, especially Kalahandi, Nuapada, and Balangir in various cities of India have drawn international and national condemnation for human right violation.

Since the Ministry of MSME has a special focus on Khadi through Solar Charkha Mission, both Centre and State Governments should encour-

age cotton growing farmers, villagers and migrant labourers in KBK region by giving them training and help to establish MSMEs.

The Ministry of MSMEs has a proposal to make 20 large technology centers and 100 small technology centers to facilitate MSME. A large technology centre for south-western Odisha is essential.

Finally, cotton and textile-based MSME can lead to establishing a "Textile and Cotton Park" in Kalahandi region under the Ministry of Textile, which would create employments in the KBK-Kandhamal-Gajapati-Bargarh region.

DAV Vedanta posts 100% results

PNS ■ LANJIGARH

Vedanta Lanjigarh-run DAV Vedanta International School has registered 100% results in the CBSE Class XII examinations with all 14 students securing 1st division.

Subhasmita Mohapatra of Biswanathpur topped the batch securing 95.4% in the exams, followed by Ashish Kumar Sahu of Muniguda with 93.6% marks and Ashutosh Barik of Vedanta Staff Colony who scored 90.6% marks.

11 students from the passing out batch secured 80%+ marks and the rest scored more than 75%.

Chief Operating Officer, Vedanta Limited, Lanjigarh unit and Chairman, Local Management Committee, DAV Vedanta International School said Rakesh Mohan congratulated the students.

780-bed Covid centre set up at BPUT facility

RMC takes slew of measures as cases soar in Rourkela

PNS ■ ROURKELA

A 780-bed Covid Care Centre has been established at the Biju Patnaik University of Technology, Rourkela, by the Rourkela Municipal Corporation looking into the soaring figure of Corona positive cases in Sundargarh district.

Besides, a dedicated registration center has been established at the BPUT multipurpose building.

The RMC on Monday informed that considering the stiff rise in Covid positive cases, it has increased its Covid care facilities. According to a

release, apart from exiting 200 bedded Covid Hospital at Hitech Medical College, Rourkela, the RMC has established Covid care centres in three buildings of BPUT, Rourkela, where as many as 780 Covid positive patients can be treated.

"The center is well equipped with various facilities of Covid treatment, besides arrangement of sanitisation, food and drinking water for the patients," the release said. "A dedicated Covid registration counter has also been opened at BPUT's multi purpose building, where in the people coming from outside Rourkela will register themselves," the release added.

"Apart from this, at different locations of Rourkela city, temporary medical camps (TMC) have been established, where in as many as 550 persons can be accommodated, as

a part of institutional quarantine," the release said.

"Besides, efforts are on by the RMC to establish several TMCs, in a bid to accommodate another six hundred persons," the release added.

RMC Commissioner Diby Jyoti Parida appealed the public to consider the registration a must

According to sources, while at least three areas of the city has been declared as containment zone, the RMC on Sunday evening declared Traffic gate area as the containment zone. The areas included the vegetable market, Street starting from Gali-1, Gali-2, Traffic Gate basti. The vehicular movement of public transport and personal movement in the locality has been stopped and all the residents of the containment zone have been advised to confine to their homes.

GP in Pallahara shut down

PNS ■ PALLAHARA

The administration has declared a shutdown in Rajadongra gram panchayat in Pallahara subdivision to contain spread of Covid-19 after a man of the neighbouring Saradhapur village tested positive of the virus three days ago and shifted to a Bhubaneswar-based Covid-19 Hospital.

The affected person has come in contact with two other persons of the gram panchayat whose families consist of 13 members.

On Pallahara Sub-Collector Ajit Pradhan's instruction to the local BDO, the Sarpanch brought the concerned persons to an isolation centre. Later, six of them went to home quarantine due to cancer.

Jajpur-Kolkata bus service cancelled

PNS ■ JAJPUR

The Jajpur district administration on Tuesday imposed restrictions on bus services between Jajpur and Kolkata in West Bengal and Rourkela with immediate effect.

The decision was taken during a meeting at the district Collector's residential office on Tuesday in wake of increasing cases of Covid 19 in the district.

The plying of buses to Kolkata and Rourkela has been suspended after both the cities have turned into Covid-19 hotspots, the officials said.

"In view of rapid spread of Covid-19 pandemic and as per the decision taken in the meeting held on July 14 in the residential office of the Collector, Jajpur, the plying of buses

(Stage Carnage) Jajpur to Kolkata (to and fro) and Jajpur to Rourkela (to and fro) is hereby suspended until further order," said Jajpur Collector Ranjan Kumar Das in an official order.

Earlier, Bhadrak district administration also imposed restrictions on the movements of buses to and from Kolkata.

Notably, the Covid-19 tally in Jajpur district rose to 914 as on Tuesday with 1 more person tested positive for the virus in the last 24 hours.

Most of the positive cases which were reported from the district have travel history to West Bengal.

As many as 2,956 migrants from West Bengal have returned to Jajpur since outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Youth on dharna at in-laws' house to get back wife

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

Demanding return of his wife to him, a youth on Monday staged a dharna in front of his in-laws' house at Baro village under the Nikirai police station.

Asit Das had a love affair with neighbourly girl, Sraddhanjali Parida, daughter of Kulamani Parida. Later, Asit and Sraddhanjali had their registered marriage last year. But Sraddhanjali's parents slyly took her to their house by assuring Asit that they would organise Sraddhanjali's marriage with him, after the marriage of Sraddhanjali's elder brother.

But for last three months, the family members of Sraddhanjali allegedly were delaying the marriage and also forced Sraddhanjali to terminate her relation with Asit.

However, when Asit came to know that the family mem-



bers of Sraddhanjali were slyly planning to marry her off elsewhere, Asit on Monday staged the dharna demanding that his wife be handed over to him.

He also threatened to commit suicide by consuming poi-

son if Sraddhanjali's family did not concede.

When contacted, Nikirai police station IIC Kabuli Barik informed that the police were yet to receive a complaint in this regard.

Teacher axed for Covid norm breach

KENDRAPADA: The headmaster of Baradanga-based Jagamohan Nodal High School under Mahakalapada block was placed under suspension by the District Education (DEO) officer on Tuesday for violating Covid guidelines.

Notably, While the state Government has closed down all the educational institutions and private tuitions/coaching classes across the State due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, headmaster Giridhari Rout gave private tuition by congregating more than 60 students. To the surprise, neither the students wore masks nor did they follow social distancing. Even, when it has been restricted for a Government teacher to indulge in private tuition, Rout was indulged in it.

District Collector Samarth Verma came across a viral video in this regard. Taking the matter seriously, he directed the DEO of Kendrapada to conduct an inquiry and take stern action. PNS

Youth run over by truck trying to flee cop custody

RAYAGADA: A youth arrested on the charge of betraying a young woman was run over by a container truck while trying to escape from police custody in Rayagada town on Monday.

Santosh Kumar Pandu had been arrested from Bisama Cuttack of Rayagada district and was to be forwarded to court. At the Rayagada police station, he told police personnel accompanying him that he was feeling nauseous and wanted to vomit. He came outside; and while running towards the main road, he was hit by the truck and killed.

Santosh had established sexual relationship with the young woman from Tikiri in the district on the pretext of marrying her. But he later tried to evade the marriage proposal. On July 9, the woman met Santosh in Rayagada town. Santosh took her to a temple, where he attacked her with a lathi and then left her in an unconscious in the custody of one of her relatives. PNS

Too many countries in wrong direction: WHO



US, Brazil, India remain worst affected with coronavirus infection

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the number of coronavirus cases around the world increased by a million in just five days, the World Health Organisation (WHO) warned that the pandemic is worsening globally and that "there will be no return to the old normal for the foreseeable future as COVID-19 cases globally going past the 13 million figure. Without taking any names, WHO said "too many countries are headed in the wrong direction" with the pandemic and some were not taking the proper steps to curb infections. The United States, Brazil and India remain the worst-affected of virus infections. WHO, in its latest briefing also said that it won't be wise to expect a vaccine to solve our problems.

Speaking at a virtual briefing in Geneva, WHO director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, "Let me be blunt, too many countries are headed in the wrong direction, the virus remains public enemy number one." "If basics are not followed, the only way this pandemic is going to go," Tedros said. "It is going to get worse and worse and worse. But it does not have to be this way," he warned asserting "there will be no return to the old normal for the foreseeable future... There is a lot to be concerned about".

Centre raises corona fund in view of rising cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake of Covid-19 pandemic which has infected over nine lakh people across the country, the Union Health Ministry has revised its fund requirements to ₹6.04 lakh crore during 2021-2026 as it identified new areas for support which include urban health, essential medicines, Diplomat of National Board (DNB) courses and post-Coronavirus health sector.

The Ministry has submitted a revised proposal for fund requirement to the Finance Commission from the earlier demand of ₹4.99-lakh crore. After a meeting with the 15th Finance Commission, the Ministry in a statement said it will require ₹6.04 lakh crore to fund healthcare during the five-year award period 2022-2026, to support new areas including post-Covid health sector reforms. The estimate increased by ₹1.05 lakh crore from the earlier requirement of ₹4.99 lakh crore.

The Commission held a meeting with Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and senior officials of the ministry on revising the State-specific proposals of the ministry in light of the Covid-19 experience. "Looking at the peculiar state of the pandemic, the commission's final report will have a separate chapter on health," said Chairman of the Commission, NK Singh.

Covid-19 pandemic may lead to surge in HIV, TB, malaria deaths: Lancet study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Disruption in health services due to deadly Covid-19 pandemic will have a ripple effect causing a surge in HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria deaths over the next five years in some low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), a study published in the Lancet Global Health journal has warned.

Some LMICs could see HIV, TB, and malaria deaths increase by as much as 10 per cent, 20 per cent, and 36 per cent respectively over the next five years due to services diversion to the ongoing outbreak and its response.

Modelling the public health impact of virus infection on HIV, TB, and malaria in LMICs over the next 5 years, researchers estimate the substantial disruptions by overwhelming already fragile health systems, or through response measures limiting routine programme activities and care-seeking, and interrupting medical supply chains.

HRD norm for online classes: Max 30 min for preprimary, 90 min for I-VIII, 3 hrs for seniors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With concerns being raised by parents about schools conducting online classes like in normal times, the Union HRD Ministry on Tuesday recommended a cap on the duration and the number of sessions in a day for students, extending not beyond a total of 180 minutes and not more than four sessions a day.

The HRD Ministry has made the recommendations in the guidelines called "Pragyata". Parents have been complaining about schools resorting to increase in children's screen time after the COVID-19 pandemic forced a shift from classroom teaching to online learning as schools continue to remain shut for over four months.

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said. He said that the guidelines have been made with a focus on online education for students who are at home. "The guidelines have been developed from the perspective of learners, with a focus on online, blended, digital education for students who are presently at home due to the lockdown.

PLFI terror funding: NIA arrests one

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a PLFI Terror Funding case accused from Jharkhand. The People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI) is a banned Naxal outfit.

On Monday, the NIA arrested the accused Fuleswar Gope, 44, a resident of village Palkot Guma, Shanti Nagar, District Rohtak, Jharkhand. This case arose out of Crime No.67/2016 of Police Station Bero, Ranchi that was registered under relevant sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and various sections of the Indian Penal Code besides provisions of Criminal Law Amendment Act and pertains to seizure of ₹ 25.38 lacs, belonging to Dinesh Gope, Chief of PLFI. The money was seized by the police

just before being deposited in SBI, Branch Bero, Ranchi on November 10, 2016 by the associates of Dinesh Gope. The State police had arrested four accused persons on November 10, 2016 and the chargesheet was filed January 9, 2017.

Vikas Dubey encounter: UP to file status report, SC to hear pleas on July 20

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh Government told the Supreme Court Tuesday it would file a status report detailing the steps taken by the authorities on encounter killings of gangster Vikas Dubey and his associates.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde said it may consider appointing a committee headed by a former judge to probe the encounters of Dubey and his aides as also the killing of eight Uttar Pradesh policemen by the gangster. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Uttar Pradesh, told the bench that he would file the status report by July 16.

'Employee Welfare Scheme' launched in honour of late Arun Jaitley

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday launched its "Employee Welfare Scheme", named after former Finance Minister and BJP stalwart late Arun Jaitley.

Jaitley's wife, Sangeeta Jaitley, has donated the family pension for the betterment of the Group C employees of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat. The scheme will be called 'Arun Jaitley Financial Assistance for Group C employees' scheme. Children of the Group C employees will be rewarded with this welfare scheme, providing them three scholarships for higher technical/professional education in the fields of Engineering, Medicine and MCA/MBA/LLB. Along with this, families of Group C employees will be supported with a financial cover in case of death and medical emergency.

The family pension of Arun Jaitley at the present rates comes to over ₹3 lakh annually and his wife, Sangeeta Jaitley has already transferred the amount to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat for the period after Jaitley's death last year. The family had refused to accept the former finance minister's due pension last year on the grounds of Jaitley's "philanthropic past".

Twitter row between Priyanka, Union Minister over Lodhi Estate bungalow

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A Twitter row erupted between Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Union Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Tuesday over the Lodhi Estate bungalow. Dismissing claims that she had requested for an extension of the tenure beyond August 1 to vacate her government bungalow, Priyanka clarified that she would be vacating her government accommodation by August 1. This prompted the union minister Hardeep Singh Puri to counter her by stating that a "powerful Congress leader, a political advisor, had indeed made such a request on her behalf.

In a response to a news report, Priyanka tagged the news report and tweeted, "This is FAKE NEWS. I have not made any such request to the government. As per the eviction letter handed to me on the 1st of July, I will be vacating the government accommodation at 35 Lodhi Estate by the 1st of August". The news report claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has agreed to a request to allow Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to retain the 35, Lodhi Estate Bungalow for some time. The report also claimed that "when the matter [of Priyanka's bungalow] was brought to Modi's notice, he said

extension in good faith", he tweeted. "Would only request you to first sort out these issues within your own party before venting in public. Streak of entitlement and playing victim don't go well together," the minister further added. The Minister's tweet did not go unchallenged. Priyanka's husband Robert Vadra also tweeted, "This is completely incorrect!! We have not asked for any extension of stay. We were sent a notice on the 1st of July to leave in 30days. We at a time of "Covid" have packed our entire household, and will leave a week before time".

Congress leader Randeep Surjewala tweeted: "Priyankaji fights for the cause of people and needs no favours from your ilk. So stop bragging unwarrantedly. The issue is closed. And so that all know, did you allot 35, Lodhi Estate to a Congress MP or BJP Spokesperson? So please stop sensationalizing your lies."

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Vijay S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, Age: Approx 33-35 years, Height: 5'5", Face: Round, Built: Normal, Hair: Black, Wearing: Blue coloured shirt, gray coloured pant and brown belt, was found in decomposed condition at RZD-25, Gali No.5, Mahavir Enclave, New Delhi on 12.10.2019 at 09:38 AM. In this regard a DD No. 31A dated 13.10.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Palam Village, New Delhi.



Vijay

P.S. Palam Village, New Delhi
Ph.No.: 011-25365980-81, 25362243
Mob.: 7065036227

PUBLIC NOTICE
That I, Akash Kamal aged about 34 yrs, S/o Shri N.S. Kamal R/o 1/394, Sector-1, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, UP-201010 do hereby irrevocably, unconditionally and irreversibly declare and state that I had disowned my sister from his inheritance absolutely and forever hereto due to her unacceptable and irresponsible behavior which was beyond the control and supervision. And whosoever will deal with her, will be doing so at his own risk and responsibility and I shall not be liable for any act of my sister i.e. Ms. Sakshi Kamal.
Nishant Bhadoria
(Advocate)

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform to all concern that JYOTAN CHADHA D/o Mahip Singh & W/o Shri N.S. Kamal R/o 245, Gallagers road, Glen Waverly, 3150, Melbourne, Australia, presently at D-328, Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024 is the allottee of Flat No. 1104, 11th Floor, Hibiscus, Paramount Floraville, Sec. 137, Expressway, Noida, Distt. G.B. Nagar (UP) has sold the said property on GPA basis to the following person (s). GPA was executed in favour of Ganvi Panjraht Dio Mahip Singh & W/o Col. Indrajit Singh Panjraht resident of D-328, Defence Colony, New Delhi-24 on 4.2.2017. That the said flat is going to be transferred in favour of Kapil Awasthi S/o Braham Kumar Awasthi R/o House No. 127/361, W-1 Block, Saket Nagar, Juhu Colony, Kanpur, UP. If anyone has/has objection he/she may file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Residential Group Housing Dept. of the Noida Authority within 15 days from the date of Publication of the notice.
Ganvi Panjraht

POLICE HEADQUARTERS JAMMU & KASHMIR JAMMU
Phone/Fax No.: 0194-2443031/2443032 (Sgr), 0191-2459029/2459255 (JMU)
Website :- www.jkpolice.gov.in, E-mail :- phqjk@nic.in
e-NIT No: 29 OF 2020
DATED: 10.07.2020
Online e-tenders in two cover system (Technical & Financial Bid) are hereby invited from original manufacturers/authorized dealers (having specific authorization from their original manufacturer/s to quote against this tender (as per format provided in Appendix-I) for finalization of rate contract for supply of Stationery Items to J&K Police as detailed in Annexure A to this NIT. (as indicated in the detailed SBD and BOQS). The download of NIT shall start on 11.07.2020 at 1300 hours. Tenders shall be submitted online on J&K e-Procurement Portal www.jktenders.gov.in before 25.07.2020 upto 1600 hours. The samples shall be submitted at Police Central Store, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu before closing date of submission of e-tender. Samples received after the prescribed date or time shall not be accepted. The tenders (technical bids only) will be opened online on 27.07.2020 at 1100 hours at Police Headquarters J&K Jammu/Srinagar. In case of unforeseen circumstances, the date of opening will be next working day. Detailed tender documents (SBD) with terms and conditions are available on J&K State e-Procurement Portal www.jktenders.gov.in. No: DIP/J-237/20 Dated: 13.07.2020

J&K BJP chief +ve, several leaders quarantined

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Several senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders, including national general secretary Ram Madhav and MoS PMO Dr Jitendra Singh, were advised to stay in home quarantine immediately after Jammu & Kashmir unit chief Ravinder Raina tested positive for coronavirus on Tuesday.

These senior BJP leaders had visited Bandipora on July 12 to meet the family members of the slain BJP leader Sheikh Wasim Bari to offer their condolences.

MoS PMO Dr Jitendra Singh himself tweeted, "Have gone into Self-Quarantine with immediate effect from 4 PM

today, after receiving the news about #Corona positive test of J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina who had accompanied us from Srinagar to Bandipora on 12th July".

Wishing speedy recovery to Ravinder Raina, Ram Madhav also took to twitter and posted a message, "Am quarantining myself for a few days since my colleague n BJP J&K President Ravinder Raina tested +ve for Corona today and I was with him 48 hrs ago in Srinagar. I tested -ve for Corona 4 times during travel in the last 2 weeks. Yet taking precautions to ensure safety of me and others".

In Jammu, soon after the test reports confirmed the



BJP leaders meets family members of the slain BJP leader Sheikh Wasim Bari in Bandipora on July 12

results Ravinder Raina also posted a message on his twitter handle saying, "I spent five days in Bandipora/Kashmir after the killing of BJP leader Sheikh Wasim Bari. I was feeling feverish and went for Covid screening. Tested positive.

There were no other symptoms".

Raina was shifted to a dedicated Covid-19 facility at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspecialty hospital, Kakryal near Katra. Senior BJP Vice President

Avinash Rai Khanna, organisation secretary Ashok Kaul, former MLC Vibodh Gupta, former MLC Sofi Yousaf were among others who accompanied these leaders and participated in different events during their stay in Kashmir valley. Raina stayed in Kashmir for a period of five days and returned to Jammu on Monday.

BJP, National General Secretary, Ram Madhav had also addressed a separate condolence meeting in an auditorium while MoS PMO had chaired a high level review meeting with senior officers to take stock of the measures adopted to contain coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir. Several

party workers and media persons had come in close contact with these leaders and interacted with them to record their comments.

According to official sources, on their arrival in Jammu senior BJP leaders were subjected to mandatory screening at the Jammu Airport on Monday.

The test results of Avinash Rai Khanna and Vibodh Gupta tested negative while Ravinder Raina tested positive.

Official sources in Jammu told The Pioneer, "efforts were on to shortlist all the contact persons who may have come in close contact with these leaders in the last couple of days".

GOLD SMUGGLING CASE — Ex-Principal Secy to CM quizzed over link with Swapna

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Gold Smuggling through Diplomatic channel busted by the Customs officials at Thiruvananthapuram Airport took a new turn on Tuesday as M Sivsankar, the former principal secretary to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, was questioned by Customs officials. A team of officials from the Customs Department called on Sivasankar at his residence in the capital city and was issued a notice asking him to present himself for questioning in their office at the Air Cargo Complex.

The Customs officials summoned Sivasankar for questioning amidst reports aired by TV news channels that the latter had telephonic conversations with the accused in the gold smuggling case Sarith and Swapna Sures, who are in NIA custody now.

The questioning was continuing at the Customs Office at the time of going to Press. This is the first time in the history of Kerala, a senior official in the CMO is questioned in a gold smuggling case by the Customs, pointed out political commentators.

In another development, news channels aired that K T Jaleel, Minister for Higher Education and a leader of the banned SIMI, had telephonic conversations with Swapna Sures many times.

But Jaleel told reporters that he spoke to Swapna as per the directive of the UAE Consul General in connection with the

distribution of Ramzaan relief materials. Though Swapna was working as an executive of the Kerala Government owned Space Park, the Minister said he spoke to her in her capacity as the executive secretary at the UAE Consulate.

Jaleel said he was unaware of the phone calls between his staff member and Swapna.

The Minister also avoided the question why should he, as a Minister, speak to the executive secretary of the Consul General when a staff members in his office could have attended to the disbursement of Ramzaan relief materials.

PC George MLA and leader of Jana Paksham, said whatever has been reported as gold smuggling through diplomatic channel was just the tip of the iceberg.

"This issue will lead to the resignation of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan who has been literally caught with his pants down. Vijayan should quit immediately owning up the responsibility for the immoral activities of his principal secretary," said George.

But Chief Minister Vijayan scoffed at these allegations and said let the investigating agencies come out with concrete proof of the involvement of officials in this scam.

"A team of officials led by Chief Secretary is looking into allegations that Sivasankar was having liaison with persons associated with gold smuggling. Let them come out with the report and we will see what should be done," said the CM.

Tamil Nadu records 4,526 cases, 67 deaths on Tuesday

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

On Tuesday, Tamil Nadu Health department diagnosed 4,526 new patients with Covid-19 pandemic while 67 persons succumbed to the disease during the last 24 hours.

Except for a small fall in the number of positive cases diagnosed in Chennai, rest of the State gave an impression that things are going out of control.

Alarmed over the continued increase in the number of cases, Tamil Nadu Government has resorted to Yoga and Naturopathy to cure Covid-19 patients, according to Health Minister Dr C Vijaya Baskar.

Yoga and Naturopathy treatment is being provided in all Government Medical Colleges in the State and more than 61,000 persons have been benefited by this treatment," the minister said in a statement.

Chennai, where the coronavirus cases were hovering in the 1200-1100 marks for the last one week saw the numbers coming down to 1,078 on Tuesday. But the information from the prob-

lematic three neighbours of the capital city was a cause of concern for medical professionals.

Chengalpattu (264), Kancheepuram (117) and Thiruvallur (360) recorded higher number of covid-19 cases on Tuesday.

Adding more concern was the report from the other districts in the State. Madurai tested 450 positive patients on a single day while Virudhunagar had 328 covid-19 cases. Sivaganga, the home district of Congress strongman P Chidambaram tested 113 positive cases.

Chief Secretary K Shanmugam has sent a directive to the district collectors to replicate fever camps experiment which was found to be successful in Chennai. Out of the 67 deaths reported on Tuesday, 65 has co-morbidity problems.

There is no let up in Tamil Nadu in testing the population as 106 laboratories across the State tested 39,776 persons on Tuesday. This took the total number of persons tested till date to 1.6 million.

Situation in Kerala grim, says CM as 608 more +ve

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The Covid-19 pandemic in Kerala could be brought under control only by the year-end and the situation in the State is really grim, according to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Kerala saw 608 new cases of Covid-19 on Tuesday, the highest number of positive cases tested on a single day which made Vijayan repeat throughout his interaction with the media that community transmission could set in any time from now.

While the number of persons diagnosed with the pandemic recorded the highest number, there was equally worrying information the chief minister shared with the public. Tuesday saw 720 persons afflicted with the pandemic get-

ting admitted to hospitals. This includes the persons who were tested positive during yesterday and last week.

The Chief Minister said that he was equally worried over the number of persons afflicted with coronavirus through social contacts. The day saw 396 persons getting infected through social contacts, he said.

"It is almost sure that the disease could be brought under control by the year-end. So all we can do is to observe the mandatory guidelines and take enough precautions," he said.

According to Vijayan, a sense of ennuui has set in among health workers and officials because of the prolonged work and the repetitiveness of the job. "This is further aggravated by the complacency shown

by the general public," said the Chief Minister.

"The situation is very serious. We are tightening the rules and the police have been to take stringent action against those who violate covid-19 rules. They are already registering cases against those who fail to wear face masks and violate social distancing norms," he said.

Vijayan also came down strongly on the local body governments and councillors for their lethargic attitude. "The situation could be controlled only with the cooperation of the general public," said the Chief Minister.

Thiruvananthapuram (201) and Ernakulam (70) led the table of districts with high number of covid patients in the State on Tuesday.

Ahead of 100th b'day, fully recovered retired teacher discharged in Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ NMUMBAI

In a heartening development that came a day ahead of his turning 100 years, a retired teacher was discharged from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)-run Hindu Hriday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray Hospital at Jogeshwari in north Mumbai on Tuesday afternoon, after he fully recovered from Covid-19.

Shortly before he was discharged, Arjun Govind Naringrekar -- a retired ashram school -- had a pleasant surprise when he was wheeled to the hospital's reception area where nurses and other staff members celebrated his birth centenary in advance and in their own way.

The hospital staffers helped the to-be centurion cut the cake and placed a piece of it into his

mouth. Born in Naringre village of Sindhudurg in coastal Konkan region on July 15, 1920, Naringrekar had been admitted to the HHSB Thackeray Hospital on July 1, after he was diagnosed with Coronavirus a few days earlier.

Naringrekar had initially developed pneumonia, after some of his family members tested positive for Covid-19. Later on, he himself had tested positive for the pandemic -- a development that had shattered his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren who were preparing to celebrate his birth centenary at home.

At the hospital, Naringrekar -- who was the senior-most patient -- was treated with utmost care by doctors, nurses and other staffers during his two weeks' stay there.

BJP MLA's death due to hanging: Preliminary reports

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Amid intensified protests by the BJP against what it called a "cold-blooded" murder of its party MLA from Hemtabad in North Dinajpur district postmortem reports -- made public by the State Government a day after the Legislature's unnatural death -- indicated at his having committed suicide.

Suggesting suicide as the most probable cause of the BJP leader's death Bengal Home Secretary Aalpan Banerjee on Tuesday said, "other than the ligature mark around the deceased's neck and one pressure abrasion encircling his left hand, no other injury mark was found on the body. Preliminary findings and evidences have suggested Roy's death was an act of suicide".

Roy, a CPI(M) MLA who had defected to the BJP post 2019 general election was on

Monday morning found hanging from a bar outside a shop about a mile away from his village house. His family members and the new party claimed that he had been murdered possibly by his political rivals even as BJP president JP Nadda slammed the Trinamool Congress Government for perpetrating "Gunda Raj" in the State.

A senior officer from the district said "prima facie it seems a matter of suicide because had it been a murder by strangulation with a rope then the ligature mark would have been continuous around the neck ... but here the autopsy surgeon's report says that it was non-continuous ligature mark which indicates that the MLA committed suicide by hanging". However, he said that the chemical reports and other supporting evidences were being waited for.

Meanwhile, stray violence marred the dawn-to-dusk North

Bengal bandh called by the BJP to protest against the alleged "murder" of the MLA. Angry protesters pelted stones at buses at Coochbehar, and torched motorcycles at Toofanganj. A nearby TMC party office was also torched, sources said.

The bandh had a partial impact in Malda, North Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Coochbehar districts while in South Dinajpur its impact was not felt, sources said.

Meanwhile, one person was arrested from English Bazar area of Malda in connection with Roy's suicide sources said adding the deceased MLA had named two persons in his suicide note holding them responsible for his taking the extreme step. The second person was being looked for, police said.

Sources said the MLA who had recently sold a few bighas of his land to fight financial crisis in his family might have been duped by these two persons.

BJP team meets Prez, Shah, seeks TMC Govt's dismissal

New Delhi: Demanding dismissal of the Trinamool Congress Government in West Bengal because of the "political killings" there, a BJP delegation met President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday and also sought a CBI probe into the mysterious death of party leader Debendra Nath Ray.

The delegation, which included BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, Union minister Babul Supriyo, party MP Raju Bista and nominated Rajya Sabha member Swapna Dasgupta among others, told President Kovind that Ray's "murder" is another one in the long series of "political killings" in the state.

The delegation later met Home Minister Amit Shah and presented him with similar demands. The body of Hemtabad MLA Ray was found hanging from the ceiling of a verandah outside a shuttered shop near his home in Bindal village in North Dinajpur district on Monday.

"Democracy has been hanged in West Bengal. Political workers were being killed so far, and now elected leaders are being murdered and shown to have committed suicide. Anarchy prevails in the state, and its government has no right to be in power.. We have demanded that the assembly be dissolved," Vijayvargiya said after meeting the President.

He claimed that over 105 people associated with the BJP have been killed in the state in the last three years.

Bista alleged that the state police and other agencies were being used by the Mamata Banerjee government to "harass" her political rivals, and that a CBI probe was necessary to bring out the truth.

Dasgupta said "political murders" in the state have just gone on for too long, and Ray's alleged killing was not an isolated incident. "We have seen a series of them... There is also harassment of political rivals in violation of all democratic norms," he said.

Supriyo said the memorandum submitted to the President contained details of the "murder of Hemtabad BJP MLA Debendranath Roy and also 105 BJP workers & supporters who were killed in the last 3 years".

Agencies

Kerala's worst month has become Ramayana Month

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Come Thursday and for the next 32 days the Hindu homes in Kerala would reverberate every mornings and evenings with stanzas from the great epic Ramayana.

The family head, preferably grandma or the lady of the house would sit in front of a lighted traditional oil lamp and recite/read Ramayana starting from 'Bal kaand'.

This Thursday marks the beginning of Karkkadaka (the last of Malayalam month) and the month itself is known in the State as Ramayana Month, a unique distinction.

The Ramayana Month would conclude on the 32nd day when the readers last wind up the book by reading Yudha Khanda, that marks the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya with Sita after killing the demon king Ravana and installing Vibheeshana as the King of Lanka.

Though literary world is agog about the thousands of Ramayana in vogue, Hindus in Kerala read Adhyatma Ramayana, authored by Thunchathu Ramanujan Ezhuthachan, rated as the Father of Malayalam and the Primal Poet of Malayalam. It is not known when was the Ramayana Month came into being but Prof C I Issac, member of Indian Council of Historical Research is of the view that it has been in practice in the State for more than thousands of years.

"Karkkadaka is the month of uninterrupted rain as the South West Monsoon would be in full flow. That was the scenario much before the dense rainy forests were destroyed under the pretext of building dams and extending cultivation of cash crops," said Prof Issac.

He said the rains forced the people to confine to their homes as no farming operations could be done during this period and they turned to God to ward off hunger and diseases that always accompanied the down-

pour. "Ramayana authored by Thunhathu Ezhuthachan came in handy because the poet had used Bhakthi (devotion to God) as the basic theme in this work," said Issac.

Swami Chidanandapuri, head of Kulathoor Advaithashram, who is the spiritual guru of Hindus in the State, says the recitation of Ramayana in Kerala was there since time immemorial.

The monk said there are no other books in Malayalam which had influenced readers like the Adhyatma Ramayanam authored by Thunchathu Ezhuthachan. "It is in pure Malayalam and an average reader does not require any interpreter to explain the message. That is the secret behind the success and popularity of Ezhuthachan's Ramayanam in which Lord Rama is portrayed as incarnation of God," he said.

It is interesting to note that how a work became an obsession in a State where the Progressive Writers under the auspices of CPI(M) had given a call to burn Ramayana terming it a literary work of Fascists.

"The Virat Hindu Meeting held at Kochi in 1982 was the turning point and since then Ramayana became a part and parcel of the Hindus, cutting across caste barriers," said R Sanjayam, director, Bharatiya Vichar Kendra, a national level think-tank.

Even as the sloka "Sree Rama Rama Rama, Sree Ramachandra Jaya.." reverberates across Kerala, the person who wrote the book is yet to get recognition in his birth place or in Kerala. "There are no statues of Thunchathu Ezhuthachan anywhere in Tirur, his place of birth. We Muslims who are a majority here are against statues because it is un-Islamic to install statues," said Ali Akbar, noted movie maker and writer.

Adhyatma Ramayanam remains as the top seller Malayalam book in Kerala even after 500 years after it was written!

Mumbai cops bust int'l fake social media profile creation racket

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ NMUMBAI

With the arrest of one key person, the Crime Branch sleuths of the Mumbai Police on Tuesday ripped the lid off an international racket involving creation of fake profiles on social media and fraudulent activities in social media marketing business.

Acting on a complaint made by Bollywood playback singer Bhoomi Trivedi that a person had created a fake profile of Instagram, the crime branch officials used analytical Techint and also through sources to arrest one Gauri Shankar from Kurla in north-central Mumbai.

Shankar was produced before a city court which remanded in the crime branch's custody till July 17. The investigations have revealed that Shankar was allegedly a part of a larger international fraud racket. "The racket involves creation of fake identities on various social media platforms. The fraudsters create fake performance statistics such as fake followers, fake comments and fake views in order to inflate influencers' performance statistics," a senior crime branch official said.

Shankar had allegedly created "5 lakh fake followers for total of 176 profiles in Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook and other social media platforms" in order to fraudulently project them as influencers.

The investigations have revealed that the fake followers were created either manually or by cer-

tain illegal softwares (mostly called as bots).

By manipulating the existing system of respective social networks, these racketeers post such fake followers etc. "There are estimated more than 100 such portals involved in such rackets across India. The arrested accused was working for one of such portals viz. www.followerskart.com," the crime branch officer said.

This is for the first time that such a racket which has international ramifications, been busted in India.

The investigators have found that these types of fake profiles and followers are being used to create rumours and panic amongst the society.

The perpetrators behind the racket are found operating through Indian as well as foreign internet networks and servers. 54 such Indian portals have been duly identified by the Crime Branch and efforts are on to bring the culprits to justice.

The Crime Branch sleuths are working in tandem with almost all the social media platforms in order to curb the menace of such fake influencers' fraud racket. Realising the scale of such illegal business growing exponentially, an Special Investigation Team (SIT) of CIU and Cyber Cell has been set up under the supervision of DCP Detection Nandkumar Thakur to investigate and curb the malpractices.

6,741 fresh infections, 213 die in Maharashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ NMUMBAI

In not so significant fluctuation in the Covid-19 graph, Maharashtra on Tuesday witnessed 6,741 fresh infections and 213 new deaths in various parts of the State.

With the new positive cases and fatalities, the total number of positive cases in the state mounted to 2,67,665, while the total number of deaths rose to 10,695.

Of the total 213 deaths, Mumbai alone accounted for 70 deaths, while neighbouring Thane recorded 64 deaths.

With the new deaths, the total number of deaths in Mumbai went up from 5,335 to 5,405, while the number of infected cases in the metropolis rose by 954 cases to touch 95,100..

With 65,324 infected cases and 1769 deaths, Thane continued to be the second worst hit dis-

trict in Maharashtra.

Pune, which has emerged as the third worst affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 42,092 infections and 1152 deaths till now.

Meanwhile, the total number of patients discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year touched 1,49,007. The recovery rate in the state stood at 55.67 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 4 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the state at 1,07,665.

Out of 13,72,939 samples sent to laboratories, 2,67,665 have tested positive (19.49 per cent) for Covid-19 until Tuesday.

Currently, 6,98,854 people are in home quarantine while 42,350 people are in institutional quarantine.

Locust control steps taken in nearly 3 lakh hectare across 9 States so far: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the locust menace continues, the Centre on Tuesday said control measures to stop the spread of the crop-threatening pest have so far been carried out in about three lakh hectare area across nine States, including Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The control measures are still continuing and were carried out in 33 places in three states -- Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana -- in the past two days, it added.

From April 11 to July 12,

were active in Barmar, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jhunjhunu, Sriganaganagar, Alwar and Churu districts of Rajasthan.

They were also active in Bhiwani and Mahendragarh districts of Haryana, while in Sitapur and Gonda districts of Uttar Pradesh, it said.

The control operations in the rest of the 1.36 lakh hectare area in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana -- by locust circle offices (LCOs).

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The control operations in the rest of the 1.36 lakh hectare area in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were carried by state governments, it added.

PAPER WITH PASSION

Pilot sacked

The fact that Congressmen across the spectrum sympathised with him and not Gehlot after his dismissal is proof of his worth



ASHOK K MEHTA

In the end, the Congress has chosen to waste away wilfully rather than renewing itself to make sense in contemporary politics. And perhaps it is reconciled to the idea of natural destruction rather than carrying on its tired self. Its central leaders, namely the Gandhis, have decided to go by their known playbook, even if it is hopelessly out of sync with the times. So instead of addressing the anxieties of younger leaders, who were crafting a new party and rebuilding it with one State election after another, the high command has decided to be content with its old courtiers, who themselves are well past their prime and as directionless and confused about the party's future as the central leadership. But mutually serving each other, they could last for a while, existing but not functioning. And so it is that the party sacked Sachin Pilot for revolting against the high command-endorsed Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. And the sad part is like Jyotiraditya Scindia, he did everything right, strengthening the grassroots matrix of the party, scoring electoral wins and attracting a younger demographic that has a more social than political vision, all of which were interpreted as political overreach. Needless to say that both have been true blue Congressmen, sons of fathers — Madhavrao Scindia and Rajesh Pilot — who have been dynamic and forward-looking leaders of their time and were quite indispensable to the party. Nobody is saying that experience should be overlooked or not valued but when all the old guard did was to ensure stasis, the Young Turks did move and shake things around and had only wanted their rightful place and accommodation. Both Scindia and Pilot had even agreed to junior positions if not the chief minister's posts in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan but were not made use of or allowed to function. Both wouldn't have rebelled against the party they called home if they were given space to grow. Besides, the Congress rout in the 2019 general elections, especially in the three States which it had won just six months before in the Assembly polls, was an embarrassment for both Gehlot and Kamal Nath. Gehlot's son even lost from Jodhpur. Still they were prized for past loyalties, their propaganda that they had the state units in their grip and their veiled sabotage threats if denied primacy.

Yes, Gehlot has played his politics well. Fearing a Gujjar consolidation around Pilot and an erosion of his base, he had made the relationship between a Chief Minister and his deputy dysfunctional from day one. With constant provocations and clipping his powers, he pushed Pilot further away, who still held on with all his might. And when Pilot began questioning his own Chief Minister on sensitive issues like the Kota child deaths, Gehlot got busy praising Priyanka Gandhi Vadra for taking on UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. He has encashed that obsequiousness now and by serving Pilot police summons for conspiracy to topple his Government, he got him in the exact spot where he wanted. Pilot, who had been approached by a watchful BJP informally for some time, burst forth, making it easier for Gehlot to justify his junior's breakaway tendencies and demand action from the central leadership. And unlike Kamal Nath, he prepared himself, herding a majority of legislators, securing his bargaining position and isolating Pilot. Even if the latter has 30 odd MLAs, he cannot ensure his political survival without the BJP. So yes, Gehlot is more skilled in the art of political entrapment. But Pilot has the popular perception, of a leader who staked his life in Delhi to work the ground in Rajasthan. And the Congress leadership, particularly Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi, would be seen as untrustworthy simply because they didn't even bother to defend their peerage in the public eye. This is their defeat as legacy bearers, unless they are happy that their surname will anyway ensure their continuity, friends or not. The BJP has been subtle about its Operation Lotus attempt this time around as Pilot, unlike Scindia, was not particularly inclined to swing in extremes. As parties ready for a floor test, the Congress has the support of 107 MLAs, one MLA each from CPI(M) and the RJD, and that of 13 Independents, six more than are necessary to remain in power. It may woo back some MLAs from the Pilot camp, threatening disqualification that would leave them with no gains. This would bring down the halfway mark to around 92-94, a number that suits Gehlot. He is also reshuffling his Ministry to humour some. BJP has 72 MLAs and its ally RLP three. Pilot may be the lone wolf now and may have to fight a pack in the avaricious BJP if he joins it. But if he continues working the way he has, he would soon turn into an asset anywhere. Even Scindia, who broke away with 23 MLAs, is still getting more Congress legislators into the BJP. Some rebel Congressmen have emerged mighty successful in the BJP like Himanta Biswa Sarma. The fact that Congressmen across the spectrum sympathised with Pilot and not Gehlot after his expulsion is proof that dedication is the bigger political capital.

Problem of plenty

With a record percentage of meritorious students, how will colleges accommodate them despite raising cut-offs?



If the CBSE Class XII results brought relief to students, given the uncertainty over their declaration and forward career planning, they have thrown up a new challenge. Due to the revision in the marking scheme necessitated by the Corona-induced exam disruptions, the pass percentage has touched an all-time high of 88.8 per cent and there is a glut of meritorious students. Presenting universities and colleges with a problem of plenty, the number of students scoring 90 per cent and above has breached the 1,00,000-mark. The number of high scorers has gone up by 63,000, from 94,299 in 2019 to 1,57,934 this year. The number of students scoring 95

per cent and above has also more than doubled to 38,686 from last year's 17,693. Lucknow girl Divyanshi Jain has got a perfect score of 100 in six subjects. The CISCE, too, has seen similar stupendous results and 96.84 per cent of students have cleared them.

Colleges and universities are already considering increasing the cut-offs for undergraduate admissions. In fact, these institutions have suggested that as the percentage of students in the high-scoring bracket keeps increasing each year, the marking system at the school level be re-evaluated. But this year might see the pressure easing off premier universities and colleges due to the pandemic as many students might opt for studying in their home States. If this happens, then it might give meritorious local students the chance to get admissions in hard to enter premier institutions. We need to worry about the bigger picture though, that of imposing an unrealistic performance pressure on the younger generation, considering that only a skimming layer of five to 10 per cent students will get into good colleges. Are we building an unfair expectation of deservedness among our young and not preparing them for a failure in a realistic competitive scenario that's not based on marks or grades but application of imbibed knowledge? While there is much debate going on about CBSE's marks moderation policy, which allows grace space to students, and a demand for a more equitable assessment code, question is the status of the average students who may not have breached the 90s' barrier but aren't too bad either. Clearly, standardisation marking protocols are building up more complexities in the system of higher education. Testing methods are being simplified and made more objective without factoring into account analytical ability or subjective assessment, the last being the preserve of humanities. The problem with such a format is that it encourages learning by rote rather than priming creative thinking or challenging teaching quality. In the process, merit, too, is being compromised as two students with different real capacities, maybe one 80 per cent and the other higher, are being flat-planed on a performance graph.

Muddling through

The actual situation along the LAC is by no means what is being depicted. This is where the battle of narratives is either compromised or lost when we should be calling the shots



Deciphering the statements made by India and China after the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) meeting (July 10) is instructive. In the Indian statement, there is no reference about restoring status quo ante as on end of April/May 5. Instead, it calls for full restoration of peace and tranquility in accordance with border protocols, "urging both sides to honour and respect the Line of Actual Control (LAC)." It does not reiterate claim over the Galwan River Valley or blame China for the clash. On the other hand, the Chinese statement emphasises: "Disengagement and de-escalation" be done in a timely manner, leading to peace and tranquility (which is a historical Chinese formulation first made in the 1993 Peace and Tranquility Agreement). China has not used the word LAC but "border area."

It justified its stand during the Galwan clash by indirectly blaming India while pontificating on the rights and wrongs of the clash. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on July 5 that both India and China have strategic interests and do not pose a threat to each other (another historic formulation after India named China as the reason for its nuclear tests). Chinese Ambassador in India, Sun Weidong, posted a video saying that China is not a war-like State and that both should meet each other halfway and not fall into the conflict trap. He stressed on the risks of decoupling India-China trade from bilateral relations. Chinese statements have to be taken with a pinch of salt as they can only be judged by deeds, not their words.

On the ground, except for one categorical report of breakdown in talks between local military commanders on mutual disengagement in Galwan (PP14), Hot Springs (PP 15) and Gogra Heights (PP17 A), all other sources have called the first phase of disengagement a success and according to Foreign Minister S Jaishankar, "a work in progress." The dissenting report confirms disengagement only from Galwan but to India's disadvantage, where concessions have been made on the alignment of LAC. Indian

troops have withdrawn from their own territory. Military commanders met this week to deal with Pangong Tso (Fingers area), where some thinning out has taken place and Depsang, where troops are confronting each other dangerously. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is trying to shift the LAC westwards towards the Shyok River to provide strategic depth to the G219 Highway from Xingjiang to Tibet via the Aksai Chin.

The Government of India is not making any assertions of the actual situation along LAC but using sources to disseminate information. For example, the use of DMZ/buffer zone, suspension of patrolling and other disengagement details are coming from journalists, who are attributing the information to "sources," who are Army officers leaking information. Independent journalists are crediting "my sources" for information. They are also presumably Army officers. Last time even Army Chief Gen Naravane got it wrong when he reported disengagement from Galwan when the PLA was waiting in ambush.

The Government is constrained because it is not sure about the PLA's sincerity. The actual situation along the LAC is by no means what is being depicted by "sources." This is where the battle of narratives is

either compromised or lost when we should be calling the shots.

This is, therefore, neither a case of breakdown nor breakthrough but muddling through towards some disengagement. Galwan, which was deemed to be the tough nut, appears to have been frozen. The Fingers area is very complex and has been the bone of contention for years where the PLA has made creeping territorial gains. Depsang is not a new intrusion site. Still, Government supporters are attributing the implementation of disengagement to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's muscular message in Ladakh ("Modi calls China's bluff") and Doval's conversation with his counterpart Yi.

Facts are different: The first phase of disengagement had been worked out by military commanders on June 30 and was to be completed by July 4 and verified by July 5, much before the claimed political intervention. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh already knew on the morning of July 5 that the troops had started withdrawing from Galwan, much before Doval spoke to Yi.

Lt Gen SL Narasimhan of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) has categorically stated in an interview to *The Wire* that claims of Chinese build-up, incursions and forti-

fications are "exaggerated and none is true." He even said that during the clash on June 15, some Indian soldiers may have crossed over to the Chinese side and when the clash ended, no Chinese troops were on the Indian side of the LAC. This lent weight to Modi's statement to the all-party meeting on June 19 that Indian land was safe and not violated. Overall, he squarely blamed the journalists for inaccurate reportage due to impatience and competition to report first. By creating an illusion of strength, the Government is misleading the nation.

Assuming it is indeed the Government's coercive diplomacy that led to the PLA starting a faithful disengagement from LAC, why did Modi blink first? Reason: He neither wants a limited conflict nor another skirmish like Galwan, given the military's operational unpreparedness. Modi has not named China anywhere and apparently not wished the Dalai Lama on his 85th birthday this month. His thundering from Leh served another purpose: Boosting the morale of the Indian soldiers, who are periodically driven into fire brigade actions along the LAC in Ladakh and Bhutan because India has not developed a usable conventional deterrent.

As for Government failures for enabling multiple intrusions

along LAC in Ladakh, 144 veterans have appealed to the President to hold the people accountable. These intrusions are happening on a regular basis where the Army and ITBP are being caught off guard. Let us not forget the lessons from the 73-day stand off at Doklam. After disengagement (India was made to pull back first) from Doklam, the PLA returned after three months in this area, where they had built enormous military fortifications and continued building the road to Jampheer Ridge through a circuitous route but across territory disputed by India and Bhutan. India did not invoke Article 2 of the India-Bhutan Treaty of 2007 to intervene as it had done earlier and let China have its way. Unfortunately, we are repeating the mistake of Sumdorong chu, too. In 1995, when our posts overwhelmingly dominated the PLA intrusion at Wangdung along Sumdorong Chu, they were ordered to pull back. Question was then asked: Why are we quitting our own territory? We are doing the same now when the intruder should be pulling back.

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

SOUNDBITE

The high command was compelled to take the decision because since a long time BJP was conspiring and resorting to horse-trading. We knew it was a huge conspiracy.

Rajasthan CM
—Ashok Gehlot



My music was being heard all over the world, regardless of the language. I could high five God, but I wasn't living to the fullest. I was sad. I was depressed.

Singer
—Ricky Martin



We have been culturally deceived as India has distorted facts. Sita was not given in marriage to an Indian prince. Ram came from what is present-day Nepal, as did Sita.

Nepalese PM
—KP Sharma Oli



Because you're Virat Kohli, your standards are high. Watching you on TV, I don't expect you to just play well against Australia. I expect you to win.

BCCI chief
—Sourav Ganguly



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Declining fortunes

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Piloting a revolt" (July 14). It is unprecedented in Indian political history that a Chief Minister has sent a secession notice to his own party colleague. Though the relationship between Sachin Pilot and Ashok Gehlot was frosty since the party formed the Government, Pilot's sacking from his party post was the final nail in the coffin. He had worked hard to ensure the Congress' victory in the 2018 Assembly polls. The Gandhi family's ostrich-like approach never helped the party in the past nor will it in the future. The Congress-led Government in Rajasthan may survive for now but if the party leadership does not learn lessons, it will have no one else to blame.

Bal Govind
Noida

Drugs shortage

Sir — The shortage of game-changing drugs Remdesivir and Tocilizumab is resulting in chaos at private hospitals. With huge demand and less supply, these

Congress must balance the old and young

This refers to the editorial, "Piloting a revolt" (July 14). Rumbblings in the Rajasthan Congress unit have the potential to dislodge the Ashok Gehlot-led Government. The developments followed close on the heels of what happened to the Kamal Nath-led Government in Madhya Pradesh. In both these States, injuries to the grand old party were self-inflicted. Both Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sachin Pilot, sons of towering figures in the Congress under Rajiv Gandhi, are now being flushed out from the party. With the Congress yet to overcome the leadership crisis, it is but natural for younger leaders to seek opportunities in a bid to sustain their political lives and grow further.

It's no secret that both Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Pilot were at loggerheads when the latter was to be rewarded with the Chief Minister's post but the former's hold over the party came as a stumbling block. The current situation in the Congress explains how the power tussle between the old guard and the Young Turks has peaked. Lacking mass support, the Congress leadership is on a sticky wicket



and is unable to have a hold over party legislators. The back to back drubbing in general elections discounted the political face value of Sonia and Rahul and also evaporated the little gains made in a few State elections. The present state of affairs can lead to implosion as voices are now being aired from the likes of senior leaders like Kapil Sibal, who have blamed the party management. The Congress must retain young and talented leaders in the party.

N Sadasiva Reddy
Bengaluru

Leadership crisis

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Piloting a revolt" (July 14). Sachin Pilot's defiance is another wake-up call for Congress president Sonia Gandhi after Jyotiraditya Scindia's exit from the party. This shows there is

something wrong with the party. Entrenched nepotism, leadership vacuum, lack of efforts aimed at democratisation of the rank and file are now putting paid to the hopes of an early resurgence of the Congress. Unless the central leadership issue is resolved, there can be no hopes for revival for the party.

Rashmi
Via email

Focus on the economy

Sir — RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das has outlined how the Corona pandemic has severely affected the supply of goods and services and movement of capital and labour across the world. Das has made it clear that growing the economy is his priority. The RBI's measures such as a reduction in interest rates and the supply of cash have brought relief to the general public. Thanks to this, the financial stability in the country has been maintained.

Bhupendra Singh Ranga
Haryana

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Break this toxic nexus, now

If we don't stop electing criminals as our *netas*, then we are just getting the Government we deserve



KALYANI SHANKAR

Recently, the BJP president, JP Nadda, while addressing a virtual rally observed, "Criminalisation of politics has scaled new heights. Now we all hear about cut money in Bengal. We need to cut to size these leaders who demand a cut. We need to restore Bengal's glory and remove this Government lock, stock and barrel." He was so right in his observations that what followed a week later confirmed the need for checking criminalisation of politics.

Last week's encounter killing of Uttar Pradesh-based don Vikas Dubey by the State police brings into focus once again the nexus between politicians and criminals and has sparked off a wider debate. Dubey was shot dead on July 10 by the UP Police, who claimed that he was trying to flee after the vehicle carrying him from Ujjain skidded and toppled over. Prior to that, on July 3, Dubey and his henchmen had killed eight policemen in a shoot-out in Kanpur amid allegations that some politicians and police officers had been shielding him. Both, his arrest and the encounter, have raised several inconvenient questions. The Opposition parties in UP have accused the BJP-ruled Yogi Adityanath Government of shielding him, forgetting that many other parties which ruled UP over the years helped him to grow as a don. UP leaders, right from Mayawati, Akhilesh Yadav to Priyanka Gandhi Vadra have demanded a probe, alleging that the gangster who was trying to join the BJP, was killed to protect leaders in the UP Government.

Former DGP and a distinguished ambassador Julio Ribeiro has put it succinctly in an opinion piece: "How did Vikas Dubey, a local hoodlum whose territory did not extend beyond a couple of districts in Uttar Pradesh, lose all respect for the police and authority of the State? The answer is not difficult to formulate. All the classical signs of decay of the judicial system, because of the politicisation of the institutions of governance, were long visible to even those outside this system."

With a criminal career spanning over three decades, Dubey is a classic case of how a small-time goon grew to head a major criminal network with the help of the corrupt system. Dubey's death marks the 118th encounter killing since March 2017, when Yogi Adityanath took over as the Chief Minister of UP. Unfortunately with the encounter death, the truth is now lost as the don was needed alive and not dead to know the names of his backers. Many say that the killing was outside the law and an encounter death is not real punishment as he needed to go through the judicial process. The judicial system was equally to blame as with about 60-odd criminal cases against him, Dubey had managed to remain outside prison, on bail.

The criminalisation of politics has often been debated in public fora. This nexus between the *netas* and criminals saw an upward trend from the 80s onwards. While the politicians used criminals earlier, the latter saw that they themselves could get into Parliament. The Supreme Court and the Election Commission of India (ECI) — the two constitutional bodies — have since undertaken some commendable steps to reform the electoral process. The February judgment of the apex court in this regard will have a far-reaching impact as the court has asked for "reasons for such selections, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates." If implemented, for the first time the political leadership will be answerable for criminalisation of politics. In the last four elections, there has been an alarming trend of increased criminalisation of politics. Interestingly the judgment also noted that, "In 2004, 24 per cent of the Members of Parliament (MPs) had criminal cases pending against them. In 2009, that went up to 30 per cent; in 2014 to 34 per cent; and in 2019 as many as 43 per cent of MPs had criminal cases pending against them." The first test of implementation of this judgment will be the Bihar elections, although successive judgments barring criminals have done little good. Under the current law, only people who have been convicted at least on two counts can be debarred from becoming candidates. What is needed are urgent judicial reforms, police reforms and electoral reforms, which are long overdue. For instance there have been a number reports on electoral reforms, including the Dinesh Goswami committee, that are lying unused. They need to be dusted out and their recommendations implemented. The Election Commission needs to be provided with more powers. The nexus between the criminals, police and politicians needs to be broken and checked.

Interestingly, many criminals have entered politics and become lawmakers. Nearly half of the newly-elected Lok Sabha members in 2019 have criminal charges against them, a 26 per cent increase as compared to 2014, according to the Association of Democratic Reforms. Many Governments have talked about these reforms but nothing concrete has been done. What is lacking is the political will and the support of all parties to bring legislations to address these issues. The public, too, should not elect criminals. If we don't stop electing criminals then we are just getting the Government we deserve.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THERE IS NOTHING IN PILOT'S HANDS, IT IS THE BJP WHICH IS RUNNING THE SHOW. THE SAME TEAM WHICH WORKED IN MADHYA PRADESH IS AT WORK HERE.

—RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER
 ASHOK GEHLOT



OUR PRIORITY IS THAT THIS GOVERNMENT LOSES ITS POWER. WE ARE VIGILANT AND WILL DECIDE OUR STRATEGY AS THE SITUATION UNFOLDS.

—RAJASTHAN BJP PRESIDENT
 SATISH POONIA

Future mortgaged for food

Tax collections are far from adequate to pay for free food and the Govt is borrowing heavily to make up for the shortfall, thereby imposing an unsustainable burden on the future generation of taxpayers



UTTAM GUPTA

To shield millions of poor from the devastation caused by the COVID-19, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced that the Government would give five kg of rice or wheat per person per month for "free" to around 80 crore people through the Public Distribution System (PDS) for three months. It would also give for "free" one kg of pulses per household for three months. This was in addition to five kg of cereals per person per month that 80 crore beneficiaries are already getting at a heavily-subsidised price of ₹3 per kg rice, ₹2 per kg wheat and ₹1 per kg under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

As the deadline for the free supplies ended on June 30, the same day the Prime Minister announced extension of the scheme for five months till November 30. This time, the Government will also provide one kg grams free to each family per month.

Enumerating a spate of festivals during the extended period, when the demand normally increases, Narendra Modi exhorted that it was necessary to continue with additional supply (albeit for free) to ensure that people are not hard-pressed. He also thanked farmers for producing the required quantity of food and the taxpayers for helping the Centre garner resources to facilitate supplies to the poor, free of cost.

But what Modi didn't say is that collections from tax are far from adequate to pay for free or subsidised food supplies and that the Government is borrowing heavily to make up for the shortfall, thereby imposing an unsustainable burden on the future generation of taxpayers. Let us check out some facts.

Under the NFSA, the supply of wheat, rice and coarse cereals to the beneficiaries/consumers at ₹2/3/1 per kg is a fraction of the cost of procurement, handling and distribution (e.g. 1/12th in case of wheat). The supplies are made by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other State agencies on behalf of the Centre who reimburses to them an amount equal to "the difference between the cost and the sale price multiplied by the quantity sold." This reimbursement amount is known as food subsidy.

In recent years, food subsidy has increased to frightening levels. During 2019-20, against an already high Budget Estimate (BE) of ₹1,84,000 crore, the actual spend during the year was ₹2,19,000 crore. Of this, the Revised Estimate (RE) was ₹1,09,000 crore even as the balance ₹1,10,000 crore was borrowed by the FCI from the National Small Savings Fund (NSSF). For 2020-21, the expenditure was estimated to be ₹2,53,000 crore, including ₹1,16,000 crore as BE and likely borrowings of about ₹1,37,000 crore by the FCI.

That was before the COVID-19 crisis. It does not include the impact of free food given during April-June, (₹60,000 crore) and promised by Modi for July-November (₹90,000 crore). With this additional expenditure of ₹1,50,000 crore, the total spend on food subsidy during the current year will cross the ₹4,00,000-crore mark (in case, the scheme is extended beyond November, that will further inflate the bill).

Given the highly-fragile resource position (due to a steep fall in tax collections on the one hand and COVID-19-related hike in expenses on the other), the Government is unlikely to provide any extra amount over and above the Budget

“ UNLESS THE FOOD SUBSIDY IMBROGLIO IS ADDRESSED AND PAYMENTS ARE BROUGHT DOWN TO SUSTAINABLE LEVELS, INDIA RUNS THE RISK OF FALLING INTO A DEBT TRAP. BROADLY, THERE ARE THREE MAJOR FACTORS BEHIND HIGH AND EVER-INCREASING FOOD SUBSIDY VIZ HIGH COST OF SUPPLY, LOW ISSUE PRICE AND AN OCEAN OF BENEFICIARIES ”



allocation of ₹1,16,000 crore. This means that all of the incremental amount, ₹1,50,000 crore, will be borrowed by the FCI. Together with the ₹1,37,000 crore initially budgeted, the total borrowings by the FCI during 2020-21 will be ₹2,87,000 crore.

Add to this figure the cumulative borrowings of ₹2,00,000 crore as on March 31, 2019 plus ₹1,10,000 crore borrowed during 2019-20. The total amount owed by the FCI to the NSSF would be close to ₹6,00,000 crore by the end of the current fiscal. Though staying on the balance sheet of the FCI, the fact remains that this mammoth debt is entirely the liability of the Union Government and will need to be serviced from the latter's tax collections in the future.

In the past, thanks to inadequate allocation in the Budget, the Government had been making short payments to the FCI, forcing the latter to borrow from banks to sustain operations. When the FCI started taking loans from the NSSF in 2016-17, the Centre had committed to release the subsidy arrears to enable it to pay back in subsequent years. But that was not to be. The subsidy arrears kept mounting and the FCI kept on borrowing more and more from the NSSF.

The Indian food subsidy regime remains fundamentally vulnerable. The COVID-19 crisis has only aggravated this vulnerability. The irony is that despite spending mammoth sums, even the poor are not getting full justice. The supplies under the NFSA at five kg per person per month barely cover 50 per cent of the requirement of a person which is 10 kg per month, as estimated by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO).

This forces him/her to buy the bal-

ance quantity from the market at a much higher price, which in the case of rice, is at least ₹35 per kg, being linked to the cost of supply. For buying 10 kg, the poor have to spend a total of ₹190 (five kg at ₹3 per kg plus five kg at ₹35 per kg). Thus, the effective price works out to ₹19 per kg instead of ₹3 per kg that s/he should be paying. Unless the subsidy imbroglio is addressed and payments are brought down to sustainable levels, India runs the risk of falling into a debt trap. Broadly, there are three major factors behind high and ever-increasing food subsidy viz. high cost of supply, low issue price and an ocean of beneficiaries.

The cost of supply includes the Minimum Support Price (MSP) paid to farmers besides the handling and distribution cost. While the former is computed as cost of cultivation plus 50 per cent of this as profit, the latter is reimbursed to handling agencies on "actual" basis. This system of paying on "actuals" devoid of any norm with regard to efficiency in operations lies at the root of both the MSP and handling and distribution cost being on a rising trajectory at all times.

The price at which foodgrains are issued to beneficiaries, i.e. ₹2/3 per kg for wheat and rice, are almost close to "zero." This means that almost the entire cost of supply is subsidised. In case of rice, with ₹35 per kg being the cost, ₹32 comes from the Government as subsidy. In such a scenario, rampant misuse of subsidy is inevitable.

Finally, the beneficiaries getting food at near zero price are over 80 crore or nearly two-third of the population. Is India home to that many poor? There is something seriously amiss as the official word on the number of poor is no more than 25-30 per cent. Yet, if over

80 crore people are eligible for food virtually for free, the subsidy bill is bound to become unsustainable.

In early 2015, a committee under Dr Shanta Kumar, a senior BJP leader, had examined these issues. It recommended a cut in beneficiaries from 67 per cent to 40 per cent. It also proposed restricting the benefit of ₹12/3 per kg only to the poorest of poor people under the *Antyodaya Anna Yojana* while increasing the supply to seven kg per person and making the rest pay 50 per cent of the MSP paid to farmers. That report is lying in cold storage.

The above recommendations can help in saving a good amount of money. But this is far from making a dent in the problem of a ballooning food subsidy. A sustainable solution won't emerge so long as the Government remains involved in procurement, handling and distribution of foodgrains; as then, all stakeholders will expect it to do all that keeps the subsidy bill rising all the time. Thus, farmers would want it to pay higher MSP; handling agencies won't rein in costs and more and more people would wish to come under the NFSA.

The Government should withdraw from buying and selling of food. Instead it should restrict its role only to giving subsidy directly to the poor using the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) option. This will also be in sync with its big bang reforms (announced on May 15) giving an unfettered role to the private sector in agri-marketing. The State agencies may continue but as a commercial entity at par with private players. Then only will we have real food security in the country without mortgaging the future.

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

Banks have yet to lend emergency credit

It is vital to implement the MSME loan package while balancing the interests of businesses and banks so that the financial system and credit cycle remain stable



APARNA RAMAM

The economic stimulus scheme for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), announced by the Centre on June 1, has still not been satisfactorily implemented, thanks to the ineffectual status quo process of credit approval and disbursement by commercial banks and specialised financial institutions such as the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). Unfortunately, even a crisis of this scale has not been able to reform commercial lending practices, which continue to operate in the same manner, both in terms of how bankers assess and select MSMEs to disburse

loans. The data on credit offtake provided by the Finance Minister's office on June 18, almost a month after the stimulus announcement, clearly shows that out of the ₹3 lakh crore allocated for the collateral-free Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), only about six per cent or approximately ₹52,000 crore has been disbursed.

Apart from the big Public Sector Banks (PSBs), namely the State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank and Punjab National Bank, the rest of the PSBs have fallen woefully short of both the sanctioned amount and disbursement target.

Private banks and small finance banks are yet to even participate in the ECLGS scheme. In the meantime, the cash flow situation of the majority of the over six crore registered MSMEs, including sole proprietors, is already extremely dire, with several small businesses in shut-down mode and their owners on the

verge of personal bankruptcy.

The drastic decline in demand and the prolonged absence of workers have made it nearly impossible for the MSMEs to pass the regular credit checklist of lenders. As a matter of fact, those with existing debt on their books or having stressed balance sheets are struggling to stay solvent until credit approvals are processed and funds disbursed to their accounts.

In the face of fast-disappearing equity, most MSMEs now face a looming threat of existing creditors invoking the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 and forcing them to declare bankruptcy.

The gravity of the situation that MSMEs find themselves in was recently brought to public knowledge by the Federation of Indian Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises, when its president, Animesh Saxena, sounded an alarm in an interview that

MSMEs were in the ICU and if not given working capital, they would not survive after another three to four months. The 2019 report of the RBI Committee on MSMEs estimated the difference between demand and supply of credit for them to be in the range of ₹20-25 trillion. The ongoing pandemic has increased this gap, making it harder for MSMEs to access credit than ever before.

Despite the Central Government's intention and the RBI's endorsement of the MSME rescue package, bankers still remain extremely wary of disbursing loans to those who need it the most. The ground reality is that lenders now view every MSME utilising the loan moratorium as a potential Non-Performing Asset with impaired repayment ability or inherent disability to service even short-term debt.

As far as the immediately borrowable amount of up to 20 per cent of outstanding debt is concerned, the

Credit Guarantee Funds Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) notwithstanding, the level of transparency and trust in lender-borrower relations has proved to be seriously inadequate to respond to the need for instant fund transfers to be implemented.

Based on an analysis of last month's reports in the Press, only PSBs have so far sanctioned emergency loans worth ₹8,320 crore to MSMEs in 12 States under the ECLGS, of which, ₹599 crore have been disbursed to 17,904 accounts. This is barely a fraction of the total number of MSMEs or of their total credit requirement.

Private bankers have also remained unwilling to increase credit exposure to their existing MSME clients due to the unprecedented uncertainty that has gripped the supply chains and manufacturing processes because of the pandemic. While on the one hand, bankers seek

to increase their customer base and diversify their loan portfolio, on the other, they are faced with the perennial risk of default and potential bad debts, which worsens the macroeconomic consequences of their confusion "to lend or not to lend" at such a time of crisis.

Since bank loans to MSMEs are classified as Priority Sector Lending and the RBI has recently exempted such loans from the statutory requirement of maintaining a Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) under Section 42(1) of the RBI Act, 1934, more liquidity will be available in the banking system and the balance sheets of the banks will not be under constant pressure throughout the year.

Since the recent revised definition of MSME removes the distinction between manufacturing businesses and service businesses altogether, and classifies them based on investment and turnover, they must now be given new financing options for growth and

expansion, separate from their day-to-day operational or working capital requirement.

It is vital to implement the MSME loan package while balancing the interests of businesses and banks such that the financial system and credit cycle remain stable and sustainable. Hence, the Government must remember that on the one hand, while it must create more entrepreneurs and employment, on the other, it must also take necessary steps to mitigate the risk to public deposits and the State's own investment in banks and financial institutions.

At the end of the day, the Prime Minister's clarion call for an *Atmanirbhar Bharat* and the *Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan* cannot be realised and become a successful pan-India model until and unless each and every MSME is made solvent as well as profitable in the long-term.

(The author is a lawyer and investment advisor)

China claims 1,000 years sovereignty over SCS

Denies US charges of building 'maritime empire'

Beijing: Refuting US allegations of building a "maritime empire" in the disputed South China Sea, China on Tuesday claimed its jurisdiction over the vast ocean existed for more than 1,000 years and accused Washington of attempting to sow discord between Beijing and the Southeast Asian countries.

In a major policy speech on Monday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the world will not allow China to treat the strategically important South China Sea (SCS) as its "maritime empire" and vowed to support worried Southeast Asian countries against Beijing's "campaign of bullying" to control the resource-rich region.

Reacting to Pompeo's statement, Chinese Foreign Ministry



spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing in Beijing that the secretary of state's remarks neglected the history and facts about the SCS.

His remarks also breaches the US government's open commitment to not taking position on sovereignty related issues of the SCS, Zhao said.

He disputed the US assertions that China has come up

with its nine-dashed line in the SCS in 2009 to beef up its claims.

"The US says China announced a dotted line in the SCS in 2009. It is not true. China's rights and sovereignty has a long history. Our effective jurisdiction over the relevant islands reefs and waters in the SCS has been there for over 1,000 years," Zhao claimed.

"As early as 1948 China had officially published the dotted line which is not questioned by any country in the region," he said, adding that China's rights have legal and historical basis.

About the judgement of an international tribunal in The Hague in 2016 which had rejected China's claims in the SCS and delivered a sweeping rebuke on Beijing's behaviour

including its construction of artificial islands, Zhao said the "arbitrary tribunal abused its mandate, breached the principle of consent."

The tribunal said China has no legal basis to claim "historic rights" to resources in the SCS and it has violated the Philippines' sovereign rights in the disputed waters.

The tribunal sided squarely with the Philippines, which brought the arbitration case "on almost all claims," Pompeo said. Zhao said, "the award was based on flawed evidence and unwarranted application of law. The US hyped up the arbitration to further its agenda, China will never accept that."

Zhao said that China is committed to resolving the issue with the concerned countries. The US is driving a wedge between China and the countries in the region, he said.

Pompeo had said that America stands with its Southeast Asian allies and part-

ners in protecting their sovereign rights to offshore resources, consistent with their rights and obligations under international law.

His comments came as two US aircraft carriers - USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan - drilled together in the SCS last week, amid China's drills around Parcel islands of the SCS which Beijing claims as Xisha Islands.

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

Beijing has impeded commercial activity like fishing or mineral exploration by countries like Vietnam and the Philippines, claiming that the ownership of territory belonged to China for hundreds of years. **PTI**

US rejects nearly all Chinese claims in South China Sea

Washington: The Trump administration escalated its actions against China on Monday by stepping squarely into one of the most sensitive regional issues dividing them and rejecting outright nearly all of Beijing's significant maritime claims in the South China Sea.

The administration presented the decision as an attempt to curb China's increasing assertiveness in the region with a commitment to recognizing international law. But it will almost certainly have the more immediate effect of further infuriating the Chinese, who are already retaliating against numerous U.S. sanctions and other penalties on other matters.

It also comes as President Donald Trump has come under

growing fire for his response to the COVID-19 pandemic, stepped up criticism of China ahead of the 2020 election and sought to paint his expected Democratic challenger, former Vice President Joe Biden, as weak on China.

Previously, US policy had been to insist that maritime disputes between China and its smaller neighbors be resolved peacefully through UN-backed arbitration. But in a statement released Monday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the US now regards virtually all Chinese maritime claims outside its internationally recognized waters to be illegitimate. The shift does not involve disputes over land features that are above sea level, which are considered to be "territorial" in nature. **AP**

Oli's remarks on Ayodhya invites sharp criticism

Kathmandu: Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's controversial remarks that Lord Ram was born in Thori near Birgunj and the real Ayodhya lies in Nepal on Tuesday invited sharp criticism, with a former premier saying it has "crossed the limit."

Several top Nepalese political leaders from different parties slammed Oli for making "senseless and irrelevant" remarks, and asked him to withdraw his controversial statement on Ayodhya.

"PM Oli's statements have crossed the limit. Extremism only creates trouble," former prime minister Baburam Bhattarai tweeted.

In his sarcastic remark, Bhattarai said, "Now let's hope

to hear the new Ramayan of Kaliyug from PM Oli."

"Such silly, unconfirmed and unproven remarks by the Prime Minister was not desirable. PM Oli's attention seems to have been drawn towards damaging Nepal's relations with India instead of improving them, which is not appropriate," said Kamal Thapa, former foreign minister and president of the pro-Hindu Rastriya Prajatantra Party.

Senior leader of the ruling Communist Party of Nepal (NCP) Bam Dev Gautam said that Prime Minister Oli should withdraw his controversial remarks on Ayodhya.

"The statement made by Prime Minister Oli was with-

out any evidence and it has only created controversy within and outside the country, so he must withdraw the statement and apologize for that," Gautam wrote on his Facebook page.

"There are large numbers of devotees of Lord Ram both in Nepal and India, and no one should hurt people's religious faith," Gautam said. "For a realistic communist it makes no difference whether Lord Ram was born here or there."

"Such senseless and irrelevant remarks made by a person of high position will damage the country's prestige," said Bishnu Rijal, deputy chief of the Publicity Committee of the ruling party. **PTI**

US carries out first federal execution in nearly 2 decades

Terre Haute (US): The US government on Tuesday carried out the first federal execution in almost two decades, putting to death a man who killed an Arkansas family in a 1990s in a plot to build a whites-only nation in the Pacific Northwest.

The execution came over the objection of the victims' family. Daniel Lewis Lee, 47, of Yukon, Oklahoma, died by lethal injection at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana. The decision to move forward with the execution -- the first by the Bureau of Prisons since 2003 -- drew scrutiny from civil rights groups and the relatives of Lee's victims, who had sued to try to halt it, citing concerns about the coronavirus pandemic.

The decision to move forward with the execution -- and two others scheduled later in the week -- during a global health pandemic that has killed more than 135,000 people in the United States and is ravaging prisons nationwide, drew scrutiny from civil rights groups as well as family of Lee's victims. Critics argued that the government was creating an unnecessary and manufactured urgency for political gain. "The government has been trying to plow forward with these executions despite many unanswered questions about the legality of its new execution protocol," said Shawn Nolan, one of the attorneys for the men facing federal execution. **AP**

Japan says coronavirus adds to security threat by China

AP ■ TOKYO

China is pushing harder to make territorial claims in the regional seas and even using the coronavirus pandemic to expand its influence and take strategic superiority, posing a greater threat to Japan and the region, Japan's government said.

The report highlighting the government's defence priorities was adopted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Cabinet on Tuesday, less than a day after the Trump administration rejected outright nearly all of Beijing's significant maritime claims in the South China Sea in a statement likely to deepen the US-China rift.

The Abe Government's Defense White Paper 2020 highlights what are potential Chinese and North Korean threats as Japan tries to further increase its defense capability. Under Abe, Japan has steadily increased its defense budget and capability and purchased costly American arsenals.

Defence Minister Taro Kono recently scrapped the deployment of a pair of costly US land-based missile intercepting systems due to technical issues, and Abe quickly announced his intention to revise Japan's defense guidelines, possibly allowing Japan to go beyond its conventional defense-only

role under the Japan-US security alliance, including discussing a possibility of acquiring a preemptive strike capability.

The White Paper accused China of using propaganda, including spreading disinformation, about the spread of the coronavirus.

"The COVID-19 pandemic may expose and intensify strategic competition among countries intending to create international and regional orders more preferable to themselves and to expand their influence," the report said. "We need to closely watch their move with serious concern affecting the national security." **AP**

US military Covid policy has multiple problems: Japan

Tokyo: Japan's defence minister said on Tuesday that officials have discovered "a number of problems" with US military measures to guard against the coronavirus among service members stationed in Japan after 95 Marines tested positive at several bases on the southern island of Okinawa.

Okinawan officials on Sunday said most of the cases since early July were at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, which is at the center of a relocation dispute. Others were at Camp Hansen, Camp Kinser and Camp McTearns.

On Tuesday, Kadena Air Base reported two positive cases. Combined with three cases at Kadena in March, the total among the U.S. Service members on Okinawa is 100, officials said.

"We have discovered a num-

ber of problems," Defence Minister Taro Kono said. "We need to more strictly scrutinise the situation with the U.S. Military in Japan."

Kono said the problems were discovered after Japanese officials requested information from the US Military. He refused to give details, but said the problems exist at US Bases throughout Japan, not just on Okinawa.

In a possible indication of one of the problems, Kono said Japanese officials are inspecting a hotel used by the US Military to house service members newly assigned to Okinawa from the US. While they undergo a 14-day self-quarantine. Okinawan officials and residents have raised concerns about whether adequate safety measures are in place at the hotel. **AP**

'Hallmark immune system response in severe COVID-19 decoded'

PTI ■ LONDON

Scientists have identified a unique signature of immune system molecules in 50 critically ill COVID-19 patients, which they say may provide a strategy for combined therapeutic approaches against the disease.

According to the researchers, including those from the Pasteur Institute in France, severely ill COVID-19 patients experience a combination of deficiency in the response of an immune system molecule called interferons, as well as an exacerbated inflammation.

The study, published in the journal Science, assessed blood samples from 50 COVID-19 patients with symptoms ranging from mild to critical, and found this signature may provide a rationale for therapeutic approaches combining interferon supplementation, along with neutralisation of inflammatory response in the body. The scientists said COVID-19 is characterised by distinct patterns of disease progression depending on the patient, implying that patients exhibit different immune responses to the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. Based on earlier studies, they said about five to 10 per cent of patients progress to severe or critical disease.

Nepal PM Oli, Prachanda hold fresh talks amid ruling communist party crisis

Kathmandu: Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and co-chair of the ruling communist party Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda on Tuesday resumed talks after a six-day hiatus in a bid to save the party from a split in the wake of growing differences between the two factions led by them.

Prachanda's press advisor said that the "two chairs (of the Nepal Communist Party) have resumed discussions." The Kathmandu Post reported.

Their last time held one-on-one talks on Wednesday. The talks are taking place ahead of the crucial Standing Committee meeting on Friday which is expected to determine the political future of the 68-year-old prime minister who has previously alleged that his detractors were trying to remove him with India's help.

The key meeting is taking place days after NCP executive chairman Prachanda said he will not allow the party to split and any attempt from anywhere to weaken its unity would hurt the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and natural disasters. Prachanda, addressing the NCP members in his hometown Chitwan on Sunday, said he was determined to keep the party unity intact as it is "natural to have differences of opinion, dispute and debate in a big party."

Top party leaders, including Prachanda, have been demanding Prime Minister Oli's resignation, saying his recent anti-India remarks were "neither politically correct nor diplomatically appropriate."

The differences grew further after Oli said that some of the ruling party leaders are aligning with the southern neighbour to remove him from power after his government issued a new political map incorporating three Indian territories. **PTI**

WHO ON CORONAVIRUS



Unrealistic to have a 'perfect vaccine' ready, WHO issues warning

There have been 13 million confirmed COVID-19 cases recorded globally and six months after, it is just as deadly and mysterious as before. There is no proper cure or treatment identified yet and work is in progress to develop a vaccine which could garner immunity against the deadly virus. Russian researchers too claimed to have found success in its human trials and are quite hopeful of launching the vaccine by August. Not only has the timeline been mooted by several epidemiologists and medical experts, WHO, in its latest briefing said that it won't be wise to expect a vaccine to solve our problems.

Can't pin our hopes on a vaccine alone, says WHO

Mike Ryan, executive director of health emergencies, WHO was also quick to admit that it would be wrong to pin all of our hopes on a vaccine alone. "And also, believing that magically we will get a perfect vaccine that everyone will have access to, is also not realistic." However, he did attest to the fact that despite everything, it is not impossible to develop a vaccine to combat COVID-19. "We can and will develop a vaccine, the question mark is: how effective will that vaccine be? And, more importantly, and more worryingly: 'who will get that vaccine?' And: 'will that distribution be fair and equitable?'"

What are the dangers we are facing?

After months of lockdown, several places have opened up with curtailed measures. However, there still are places where guidelines are not being followed. The US, for example, is recording a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases, which is now the worst affected nation by the pandemic. Following on the list are Brazil and India. Sharing light on this, Mike Ryan continued saying: "If people continue to frequent crowded places without taking the necessary precautions, if people aren't practising physical distancing, if people aren't practising hygiene, if people aren't wearing masks in the proper settings, then the disease will continue to transmit."

Coronavirus crisis may get 'worse and worse and worse'

In its latest briefing, the leading health body said that the situation has only been getting worse and worse. Even though we don't know for sure when will a vaccine be readily available, WHO mentioned that even with a vaccine, achieving immunity in the first go is a distant dream. According to WHO data, over seven groups have proceeded to conduct advanced phase II and II stages of their vaccine candidates, post which, regulatory checks can be expected. India too is seeing the development of two candidates, COVAXIN and another by Zydus Cadila.

Can a person be immune from COVID-19?

The briefing follows a sample study done by King's College, London, which found that antibodies, in recovered patients, begin to wane away in 3 months time and getting immunity is a far fetched dream. The WHO, also taking note of all developments said that while all of us continue to live in a new normal, the virus is here to stay. A statement said: "Expecting that we will eradicate or eliminate this virus in the coming months is not realistic."

Are there lessons we can learn from COVID-19?

Experts have long said that while pharmaceutical inventions and healthcare could help to an extent, in the nascent stage, simple measures like avoiding crowding, exposure, maintaining good hygiene protocols and most of all, wearing a mask could help curb the viral spread. It could also lessen the load on medical services and help them serve us better. The WHO official also added that government officials and authorities should use this pandemic as a lesson in managing public healthcare.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Namely: Mohd. Tahneel, S/o Lt. Sh. Mohd. Yameen, R/o H.No. 2, Toot Sarai, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi.** Age : 33 years, Sex: Male, Height: 5'5", Built: Thin, Complexion: Wheatish, Hair: Black, Face: Long, ID Mark: Mentally weak and no fingers in right hand, Wearing: White colour kurta-pajama and golden colour slipper in feet. He has been missing from his house from the area of jurisdiction of P.S. Malviya Nagar, New Delhi since 09.06.2020 at 06:00 pm. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 101A Dated 11.06.2020** has been lodged at P.S. Malviya Nagar, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this person please inform undersigned. Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in SHO Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. Malviya Nagar, Fax No. 011-24368639 New Delhi DP/117/SD/2020 Ph. 011-26691861, 8750870822

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one male was found in unconscious condition near Theke Wali Red Light, Shastri Park, Delhi on 03.07.2020. He was admitted in Hospital, where doctor declare him brought dead. In this regard a **DD No. 45-A/u/s 174 CrPc, Dated 03.07.2020** has been lodged at P.S. Shastri Park, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as under: Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: about 55 years, Height: 5'6" Feet, Face: Oval, Complexion: Shallow, Built: Normal, Wearing: Black and Red Colour T-Shirt and Lower. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform at website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in or Fax No.: 011-24368639, Tel. No. 011-24368638, 24368641, Ext. 2101. S.H.O P.S. Shastri Park, Delhi Ph.: 011-22170120, 22170106 DP/206/NE/2020

WESTERN RAILWAY VARIOUS WORKS

Divisional Railway Manager(WA), Western Railway, 6th floor, Engg. Deptt., Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008. Invites E-tender as per details given as follows.

Sr. No.	Executive No. & Date	Work & Location	Approx. Cost of work in ₹	EMD in ₹
1	Sr.DEN(N) BCT / 20-21/171 dtd. 13.07.2020	Virar- Surat Section:- Repairs to P.way under SSE(Palghar) Section for 12 months.	₹1,91,65,041.05	₹2,45,800/-
2	Sr.DEN(N) BCT / 20-21/172 dtd. 13.07.2020	Virar-Surat Sec.-Repairs to P.way under SSE(Dahanu Road) Section for 12 months.	₹1,79,02,457.54	₹2,39,500/-
3	Sr.DEN(N) BCT / 20-21/173 dtd. 13.07.2020	Virar-Surat Sec.-Repairs to P.way under SSE(Vapi) Section for 12 months.	₹1,97,43,614.55	₹2,48,700/-
4	Sr.DEN(N) BCT / 20-21/174 dtd. 13.07.2020	Virar-Surat Section:- Outsourcing of housekeeping staff at ZMC-BL for 24 months.	₹9,42,242.00	₹18,900/-
5	Sr.DEN(N) BCT / 20-21/175 dtd. 13.07.2020	Virar-Joravasan Section:- TRR(P)=9.228km & TFR=20.900km in connection of sanctioned track work (i) TRR(P)=14.503km (ii) TBR=65.587km, TFR=18kms & TFR=24.537kms.	₹1,37,44,980.83	₹2,18,700/-

Date & Time of submission : Sr. no. 1 to 4 : on 11.08.2020 till 15.00 hrs. & Sr. no. 5 : on 18.08.2020 till 15.00 hrs. Date & time of opening: Sr. no. 1 to 4 : on 11.08.2020 at 15.30 hrs. & Sr. no. 5 : on 18.08.2020 at 15.30 hrs. Regarding detailed nature of containing cost of tender document (Non-Refundable), EMD, Eligibility criteria, similar nature of work, detailed tender condition please visit www.treps.gov.in. Manual offer will not be considered.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all through this Public Notice that my clients Mrs. Krishna Devi W/o Sh. Ishwar Chand and Mr. Ishwar Chand S/o Late Shri Hanuman Prasad R/o 1/6452, 2nd Floor, Gali No. 5, East Rohtash Nagar, Shahdara Delhi-110032 has severed off/disconnected all kind of their relations with their son Sh. Umesh Chand Aggarwal & his wife Mrs. Pooja Tayal @ Nishu. They also disowned & disinherited both of them (Son and his wife) from their hard earned moveable and immovable properties due to misbehavior of their son and wife of son. Any body dealing with them in any manner shall do the same on his own risk and my clients shall not be responsible for any act deed and omission of all of them. **ASHWANI KUMAR (Advocate)** Enrol. No. D-5310/2018 Ch. G-709, Lawyer's Chamber Block, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110032

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one female namely **Sarita Devi, W/o Praveen Kumar, R/o: Jhuggi No. AO-111, Near Prem Bari Pul, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi, Age: 28 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Thin, Wearing: Pink colour Suit, Pajama and Hawai Chappal in feet, has been missing from her house with 2 daughter girl namely 1. Sonali, Age: 6 years and 2. Nancy, Age: 3 years since 28.06.2020. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 51A, dated 02.07.2020 has been registered at P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the female and her child but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about them please inform undersigned. Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Fax: 011-24368639 Ph. No.: 011-24368638, 24368641 SHO P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi DP/246/NW/20 Ph.: 011-27495198, 27497179**

PV SALES PLUNGE 78% IN APR-JUN: SIAM

SLUMP FOR 9TH CONSECUTIVE QUARTER

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Declining for the ninth straight quarter, passenger vehicle sales in India plunged 78.43 per cent in the April-June period this year hit by the coronavirus pandemic, making it the longest slowdown in 20 years, auto industry body SIAM said on Tuesday.

The commercial vehicles segment also saw a decline of 84.81 per cent in sales during the period, the fifth quarter in succession of decline, which is also the longest period of slowdown the segment has witnessed in the last 15 years, according to the latest data by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

Passenger vehicle (PV) sales were at 1,53,734 units in April-June 2020 as compared to 7,12,684 units in April-June 2019.

In the past 20 years, the previous longest streak of decline of five quarters in PV sales was witnessed between 2013-14 and 2014-15 and between 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Similarly, commercial vehicles sales stood at 31,636 units in the period as against 2,08,310 units in April-June 2019. The previous longest period of decline in CV was witnessed for eight quarters between 2013-14 and 2014-15, SIAM said.

"Currently, we are going through a very difficult phase due to coronavirus... We have

been suffering hugely on the demand side since last year; but this quarter, the degrowth is due to COVID-19. It is going to be very harsh on the auto sector," SIAM President Rajan Wadhra told reporters in a video conference.

He said the outlook for the auto sector looks grim due to decline in sales expected to range in 26-45 per cent across various vehicle segments of the industry, and forecast of lower GDP growth coming from various quarters including the RBI Governor and Ministers of the Government.

"Therefore, there is a need for a strong stimulus from the Government for the sector as was done in the past when the sector was hit by slowdown," Wadhra said.

He reiterated the auto industry's long-pending demand for 10 per cent reduction in goods and services tax

(GST) across all vehicle categories and introduction of incentive-based scrappage scheme to generate demand.

"The incentive for the scrappage scheme could be generated in the form of 50 per cent rebate in GST, road tax and registration charges," Wadhra said, adding the auto industry with an expected profitability of just around 3-9 per cent is not in a position to offer discounts anymore for scrappage incentive.

During the quarter, two-wheeler sales were at 12,93,113 units as compared to 50,13,067 units in April-June 2019, down by 74.21 per cent. Similarly, three-wheeler sales were 12,76,000 units as against 1,49,797 units in the year-ago period, a decline of 91.48 per cent, SIAM said.

Wadhra said SIAM members have resumed production, but it has not been smooth

due to supply chain issues owing to the health crisis due to continued restrictions in some places where supplier factories are located, non-availability of labour and delays in clearing of import consignments, besides COVID-19 cases emerging in and around production sites of some member companies.

He also said, henceforth, SIAM — which has been releasing monthly sales data across all vehicle categories — will be doing it only for passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and three-wheelers as commercial vehicle (CV) manufacturers have expressed their discomfort in sharing monthly sales data.

CV sales data will be shared on a quarterly basis along with grand total of all categories, Wadhra added. In June, passenger vehicle sales in India declined by 49.59 per cent in June at 1,05,617 units as against 2,09,522 units in the same month last year, SIAM said.

During the month, market leader Maruti Suzuki India sold 51,274 units, down 49.61 per cent from the same month last year. Hyundai Motor India post-



sales of 21,320 units, a decline of 49.25 per cent and Mahindra & Mahindra sold 8,075 units, down 54.54 per cent.

Two-wheeler sales were also down 38.56 per cent at 10,13,431 units as compared to 16,49,475 units in the same month last year. Motorcycle sales were at 7,02,970 units as against 10,84,596 units in June 2019, down 35.19 per cent.

Scooter sales were also down 47.37 per cent at 2,69,811 units as against 512,626 units in the same month last year.

Hyundai introduces new Tucson

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Carrying on with the trend of car launches taking place in the virtual world, Hyundai India on Tuesday launched the refreshed version of their large Sports Utility Vehicle, the Tucson. Available with a two-litre petrol engine producing 152PS and a six-speed automatic gearbox as well as a two-litre diesel engine with 185PS and an eight-speed automatic gearbox.

The latter is also available with an all-wheel drive option. Prices range from ₹22.3 lakh to ₹23.52 lakh for the petrol and ₹24.35 lakh to ₹27.03 lakh for the diesel.

Hyundai India Director, Sales and Marketing, Tarun Garg also took the opportunity to talk about how Hyundai has been coping with the lockdown and expressed optimism about the future.

He said that there had been over 45,000 bookings for the recently launched second-generation Hyundai Creta and over 56 per cent of them had

Prices range from ₹22.3 lakh to ₹23.52 lakh for the petrol and ₹24.35 lakh to ₹27.03 lakh for the diesel

been for diesel variants, with consumers who travelled long distances and requiring fuel efficiency still choosing the heavier fuel. He added that he expected the automotive market to recover even more sharply in July with sales expected to reach 90 percent of the total for July 2019 as the country emerges from the Coronavirus lockdown.

Another factoid also emerged that customers are choosing automatic variants of all vehicles in larger numbers, and to encourage that conversion, Hyundai India has come out with an 'intelligent' Manual Transmission (IMT) variant of the Venue which retains the traditional gear lever and eliminates the clutch pedal.

WPI inflation falls for third consecutive month

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

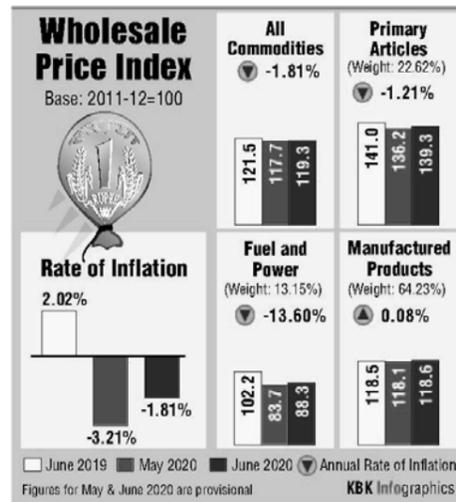
Prices in the wholesale market fell for the third straight month, declining 1.81 per cent in June, due to sharp decline in fuel and power items even as food articles remained expensive.

Inflation in May and April was (-) 3.21 per cent and (-) 1.57 per cent, respectively. In March it was 0.42 per cent.

"The annual rate of inflation, based on monthly Wholesale Price Index (WPI), stood at (-1.81 per cent) (provisional) for the month of June, 2020 as compared to 2.02 per cent during the corresponding month of the previous year," the industry Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

However, prices of food articles hardened with inflation at 2.04 per cent, as against 1.13 per cent in May.

While inflation in vegetables and onion stood at (-) 9.21 per cent and (-) 15.27 per cent, respectively; potato saw a spike in prices with inflation at 56.20 per cent. Pulses too saw rise in cost with inflation at 10.10 per cent, while the same for wheat was 5.17 per cent during June.



with all the major sectors except minerals displaying a sequential uptick in their year-on-year inflation.

"The divergence between the food inflation at the wholesale and retail level narrowed considerably while remaining substantial in June 2020, pointing to the continued varied dynamics driving food prices as the country emerges from the lockdown," Nayar said.

With vegetable prices rising sharply in the recent weeks, she noted that the uptick in wholesale food inflation may continue in July 2020.

She said higher vegetable prices and a stabilisation of crude oil prices at moderate levels are expected to contribute toward a further narrowing of the disinflation in the WPI in July 2020.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) takes into account retail inflation while formulating monetary policy.

The monetary policy framework of the RBI targets to keep inflation at 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent).

To boost economic activity, the RBI has cut interest rates by 250 basis points since February 2019.

Sensex, Nifty crash over 1.8% in line with global slump

Mumbai: Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty plunged over 1.8% on Tuesday, the biggest single-day decline in nearly five weeks, mirroring massive global selloffs amid simmering US-China tensions and mounting COVID-19 cases. The BSE gauge Sensex ended 660.63 points or 1.80% lower at 36,033.06; while the NSE Nifty closed 195.35 points or 1.81% down at 10,607.35.

Banking stocks continued to slump, crashing over 3 per cent; while metals and auto counters emerged as other major sectoral laggards, ending lower by 2.5% each. Shares of the HDFC duo led the fall on the indices, shedding up to 2.94%, after HDFC Bank said it has launched a probe into its auto lending practices following allegations against the conduct of a long-time executive who retired on March 31 this year.

IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, Maruti, PowerGrid, Bajaj Finserv and SBI were among the other major laggards.

On the other hand, Titan, Bharti Airtel and Bajaj Auto were the gainers. Broader mid-cap and smallcap indices finished 0.95 per cent lower.

"Key indices corrected close to 2 per cent on weakness in financial and metal stocks. We witnessed profit booking in key auto stocks as their volume numbers are already known to the street for the first quarter," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Negative cues from global markets amid escalating US-China tensions and rising COVID-19 cases dampened investor sentiment here, traders said. The markets exhibited high correlation with the global markets and with the virus infections hitting day highs in India, the uncertainty caught up with the markets. Global markets were weak following rising infections in US and US-China tensions being back in the news," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large, on behalf of our client, **Mr. Dharaminder Singh s/o Mr. M. P. Singh, r/o A-31, Sector-33, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budha Nagar, UP. ("Owner")** Mr. Chokhey Ram acquired the leasehold rights from Noida by virtue of Lease Deed which was duly registered with the concerned Sub-Registrar-Noida, as Document no. 4638-4639, Book no. 1, Volume no. 589/591, Page no. 83/537-562 on dated 12.10.1988. (Lost document (like:- Allotment Letter, Possession Letter/Certificate, Lease Deed & Transfer Memorandum in favour of Mr. Mahendra Pal Singh)). (All Lost documents) is stated to have been lost and an FIR dated 13.07.2020 bearing FIR/NCR/LAR No. LR417720 was also lodged. Thereafter Mr. Chokhey Ram transferred the schedule property to Mr. Mahendra Pal Singh by virtue of Transfer Deed which was duly registered with the concerned Sub-Registrar- Noida, as Document no. 3320-3321, Book no. 1, Volume no. 2/53, Page no. 172/655-672 on dated 12.11.1993. Thereafter Mr. Mahendra Pal Singh died on 26.07.2018, Noida. Mutated the schedule property in favour of Mr. Dharaminder Singh vide Mutation Letter dated 17.10.2019. Public are warned not to deal with the Document and any person receiving or dealing with the said Document would do so at their own risk and responsibility (including criminal liability) and our client shall not be liable in any manner whatsoever for any loss incurred by such person (s) on account of any such unauthorized dealing, our client will proceed to take such action including applying to concerned authorities for issue of duly Certified Copies / Certified True Copies / Duplicate Copies of the Document.

Schedule Property

Residential Plot no. 31, in Block A, area measuring 165.60 Sq. meters. Sector -33, Noida, Tehsil Dadrri, District Ghaziabad, (U.P.) Sachin Maheshwari Advocate

Khaitan & Khaitan
A-38, Kailash Colony, New Delhi-110048
Tel-011-49774545
Mob.-9911380328

DDA launches self-assessment scheme

New Delhi: DDA has launched a Self Assessment Scheme on its portal for benefit of all damage assesseses of 23 Nazul Estates. Public can access the portal through <https://www.dda.org.in/>.

Damage properties are those properties which have been existing on Govt. Land placed at the disposal of the erstwhile Delhi Improvement Trust (DIT) through the "Nazul Agreement" of March 1937, but occupied unauthorisedly by private persons, being unauthorised occupants of Government land. Such occupants are liable to pay Damage Charges to DDA under The Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act 1958, now Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.

Through this Self-Assessment Scheme, all the assesseses can fill up the details of their properties on the said Portal viz., date of payment of Damage Charges, Area and date of transfer of occupancy rights and superstructure occupied by them and can also assess damage charges themselves through Damage Calculator in the Portal.

All the damage properties wherein occupancy details vary floor-wise, damage charges will be calculated during the self-assessment.

Delhi Development Authority holds meeting

New Delhi: The Delhi Development Authority held its meeting on 14.07.2020 through video conferencing under the chairmanship of Anil Bajjal, Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Delhi/Chairman, DDA which was attended by Anurag Jain, IAS, Vice Chairman, DDA and other Members of the Authority. The Authority placed on record its appreciation for the contribution made by Hon'ble Members Somnath Bharti, SK Bagga and OP Sharma during their tenure with DDA which ended on 11.02.2020. The Authority welcomed Somnath Bharti, OP Sharma and Dilip Kumar Pandey Hon'ble Members of Legislative Assembly NCT/DT who have been declared elected unopposed for representation in DDA as Authority Members.

As a relief measure in view of ongoing pandemic DDA extends time for making payment of additional FAR charges and use conversion charges for residential properties/Coop.

GM Northern Railway holds performance review meeting

New Delhi: Rajiv Chaudhry, General Manager Northern & North Central Railways held a performance review meeting with the departmental heads of Northern Railway through video conferencing from Baroda House, NR headquarter office in New Delhi.

He discussed the zonal railway's accomplishments and the issues during the covid-19 lockdown and post lockdown period. As the train operation was minimal during the period, all Departments and Divisions used this window period to focus on safety, maintenance of Track, Electrical, S&T and Rolling stock holdings. Other infrastructures enhancing activities were also undertaken in spite of staff and labour crunch.

In total 36,440 Km railway track over the zone was inspected.

568 level crossings were overhauled or repaired and 46Km track renewal was done. Sectional speed of 5 sections totaling 392 km has been enhanced.

UK imposes ban on China's Huawei

ALL 5G KIT TO BE REMOVED BY 2027

PTI ■ LONDON

Huawei will be completely removed from the UK's 5G networks by the end of 2027, the UK government announced on Tuesday after a review by the country's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) on the impact of US sanctions against the Chinese telecommunications giant. In the lead up to this complete removal of all Huawei kit from UK networks, there will be a total ban on the purchase of any new 5G kit after December 31, 2020.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the UK's National Security Council (NSC) chaired by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, in response to new US sanctions against the telecom major imposed in May which removed the firm's access to products which have been built based on US semiconductor technology.

"5G will be transformative for our country, but only if we have confidence in the security and resilience of the infrastructure it is built upon," said Oliver Dowden, UK Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

AAI signs an MoU with BEL for cooperation in field of Civil Aviation

New Delhi: In what can be termed as a landmark event, Airports Authority of India (AAI) entered into an MoU with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) that will provide a platform for collaborative development and support for both the organizations to address the emerging airport business globally, including that of Asia Pacific region.

In furtherance of such cooperation, AAI, in the role of development partner, will render assistance to BEL in its domain of expertise to enable execution of the prestigious MEA projects outside India by BEL. Both the organisations will work in close cooperation with each other in the field of civil aviation in present and in future projects being handled by BEL.

The MoU was signed by Sanjai Kumar Singhal, General Manager (Business Development), AAI and Manoj Kumar, Executive Director (National Marketing), RO Delhi, Bharat Electronics Limited at AAI Corporate Headquarters on 14th July 2020 in the presence of Shri Arvind Singh, Chairman, AAI, M V Gowtama, CMD, BEL and senior management of both the organisations through video conferencing. Chairman AAI, addressing the experts from both sides exuded optimism that the partnership between the two organisations will be a game-changer in Indian aviation sector in the years to come. He also said that the manufacturing of Communication, Navigation & Surveillance (CNS) Equipment in India will reduce the cost substantially and will save foreign exchange outflow, making India Self-Reliant.

UJVVN Limited

H.O.: "UJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephone: 0135-2763808 & Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025886, Website: www.ujvvn.com

Date Extension Notice - 01

Due to unavoidable reasons the Date of Submission & opening of the NIT Nos. 04/EE/PCM-DKP/TN/2020-21 invited by the office of the Executive Engineer Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar is being extended as below:

Last date for submission of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs of 20.07.2020
Date of opening of tender	at 11:00 hrs. 21.07.2020

Other Terms & Condition will remain same. Information regarding Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation etc. of tender may be obtained from the website.

Full & Further Details of tender can be seen from the Nigam's website "www.ujvvn.com".

Executive Engineer
Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar
फ़ॉन: 433 - 14 / 07 / 2020

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Shilpa, D/o: Deeap, R/o: H-1, Gali No. 8 near Sarthi Public School Naveen Vihar, Begumpur, Delhi** has been reported missing since 05.07.2020 from the area of PS Begumpur, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 52A, dated 05.07.2020 has been registered at P.S. Begumpur, Delhi.

The description of missing girl is as under:

Name: Shilpa, Age: 20 Years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Hair: Black Long, Wearing: Blue colour Top, Blue colour pant and Black colour sandal in feet.

If anyone have any information about this missing girl please inform P.S Begumpur, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

SHO
Police Station, Begumpur, Delhi
Ph: 011-27579033, 8750870323

DP/227/RD/2020

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified body of a male namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown** was found on 03.07.2020 H.No. WZ 63-64, Gali No. 8 in front of Narsingh Garden, Khyala, Delhi in unconscious condition. During the treatment the doctors declared him dead on 03.07.2020 in DDU Hospital, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 13A, dated 03.07.2020 has been lodged at Police Station Khyala, Delhi. Dead Body has been preserved in DDU Hospital, Delhi mortuary for 72 hours for Identification. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

Name: Unknown, Age: 35-40 Years, Height: 5'6", Face: Long, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Medium, ID Mark: A Tattoo OM on right hand, Wearing: Jamuni Colour T-Shirt and Slati colour Pant.

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

SHO
Police Station Khyala, Delhi
Ph.: 011-28335686

DP/147/WD/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Binni D/o Lt. Daya Kishan R/o Jhuggi No.9, Block 8, Near A-229, Sangam Park Railway Line, Rana Pratap Bagh, Delhi** has been missing since 30.06.2020 at 10.00 AM from her residence. In this regard a DD No. 42A dated 05.07.2020 has been lodged at PS, Bharat Nagar, Delhi.

The description of missing girl is as under:

Name: Binni, Father's Name : Lt. Daya Kishan, Age : 24 years, Height : 5'4", Face : Long, Complexion : Fair, Built : Medium, Wearing : Green suit and salwar and slipper in feet.

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
e-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641
Extn.-210
Fax: 011-24368639

SHO
P.S., Bharat Nagar, Delhi
Ph. : 011-27301200, 27301400

DP/253/NW/2020

TAKE A LEAP

Online teaching has now become a strategic priority emphasising the need for value-based education and re-establishing standards of excellence, says DR JITIN CHADHA



Over the years, technology has been utilised to improve teaching and learning and help our students be successful. The concept of force multiplier when applied to technology allowed students access to online resources, assignments and assistance from teachers on-demand without the physical connection. It also expanded the school day by allowing them this access anytime and from anywhere with just an Internet connection.

Although design institutes amongst others have openly utilised this technological feature or outsourced it, it still formed only a part of the curriculum. The pandemic brought home the fact that our older business model was now in trouble as students and teachers remained confined within their homes. Thus as institutes, leaders, academicians, administrators, service providers, technological partners and students, we needed to up our game and adapt to a new normal, which involves understanding learning science and using technology as the intermediary to enable teaching and learning.

The core competency of any institute is the unique blend of imparting quality education and creating a conducive learning environment. Online teaching has now become a strategic

priority emphasising the need for value-based education and re-establishing standards of excellence. It has meant encouraging academicians to upskill, innovate and create learner-centric digital content, find newer interactive teaching methodologies and assessment mechanisms. The new understanding emphasizes that simply interchanging classroom teaching format onto the online medium as a notion of doing live classes isn't effective. It calls for a mindset change to create the correct interplay of synchronous and asynchronous teaching methodologies to influence learning outcomes, elicit interest and productively engage with students and cater to different learner groups without compromising on quality.

CHANGED MINDSET

The pandemic has brought about a changed mindset with regards to the age-old perception of the value of a teacher's physical presence in classrooms while simultaneously looking at how that value can be leveraged effectively online. There is a need now to clearly understand the workload of teachers as they combine offline and online teaching practices.

ONLINE EDUCATION

Online education has also put the ownership of learning

Institutes, academicians, service providers and students have to up their game and adapt to a new normal to enable teaching and learning. The core competency of any institute is to impart quality education and create a conducive learning environment

on to the students. Students learn best in an interactive and socially engaged environment. Teachers working closely with students help explore their difficulties and requirements leading to a better understanding of their learning journey and progress. It also supports that students have different learning styles some are self-motivated while others need the constant nudge to move ahead.

Art and design courses are inherently hands-on, experiential and participatory. As assessments and placements are evolving as key concerns, questions around how effective and valuable online education can be and how learners can apply their acquired learning to practical workplace scenarios need careful thought. This has therefore highlighted the need to relook and redesign our existing physical campuses while adhering to health and safety guidelines.

Reopening institutes call for streamlining processes that will help screen students and staff upon arrival, increasing cleaning and disinfecting the facilities, encouraging hand washing and sanitising and wearing face masks.

Within classrooms, social distancing can be created by strategically altering the existing space with clearly demarcated coloured markings so

desks are sufficiently separated. Flexible furniture and movable furnishings can also add to the space.

Social distancing can also be encouraged by making certain operational decisions like staggering class timings to limit students within a physical space and remove overcrowding, dividing students into groups and rotating their schedule so they have a mix of classroom teaching and home learning, limiting student movements by only allowing teachers to move between classrooms, restricting sharing of commonly utilised high-touch materials like sewing machines, library books, design tools, supplies and equipment.

Students should be encouraged to bring in their supplies to reduce the risk of physical contact. A combination of teaching methods, both offline and online also ensures students are not present within the facilities for extended periods.

Due diligence with regards to wireless connectivity within the physical campus need for setting up mobile hotspots, using mobile whiteboards and large writing surfaces for teachers, exploring electronic learning tools and devices are crucial to upgrade the educational facility.

The writer is director of Indian Institute of Art and Design

'Groom yourself to embrace change

It is important to keep a few guidelines in mind while choosing a B-school in order to reach the top of the ladder, says DR KULNEET SURI

Business management is one of the most sought-after career opportunities and a popular major for college students across the globe. Business management being the most lucrative career is acquiring more and more MBA aspirants every year and the student pool is consistently and dramatically broadening. The business management industry demands professionals who can keep up to the pragmatic, fast-paced race of the new era complexities, and hence taking up an MBA education programme now requires dedicated efforts more than ever before.

Only MBA seekers know how many aspects they need to keep in mind before racing into the constantly flourishing corporate world. Unlike other streams, MBA aspirants need to cope up and prepare themselves in an all-encompassing manner for the highly competitive platform. Besides, the changing paradigms of management education have brought about new ventures to its students and success will follow only if you groom yourself with the right understanding, outlook, and mindset. If you find the mentioned statements familiar and you are one of those pursuing education in MBA, you are at the right place. Listed below are some of the prevailing but potent pieces of guidance that will help you conquer the bigger picture as a new MBA student.

The idea of research might sound ordinary, but it is the foremost practical step to cut-off that nervous, shaky feeling on the first day of your B-school. Attending B-school is quite different from the rest of the streams, as you will need to be of the ongoing activities. MBA courses are mostly loaded with events, seminars, practical sessions, experiential learning, and industry visits and you can't seem to miss on even one.

This is the stepping stone to the active and swift business realm and every move counts. More than textbooks and theoretical knowledge, innovation, active participation, and embracing the dynamic opportunities will help you grow, and that is precisely how you need to start to avoid even the slightest regretful consequences. Moreover, you need to understand that institutions nowadays follow different trends of imparting education and a certain level of pre-research on your institution and course-structure will only ease you in settling you into your MBA life. Your personal and academic life will blend more than you assume. Now, this is a very tricky part that most of the students struggle to adjust with. An MBA course will require you to communicate, interact, and connect with



Dr Kulneet Suri
Senior Director, Institute of Management Studies, Noida

people, more than any other academic stream. Most of the projects will be divided into groups, and you can hence expect to spend ample time working with a team. This becomes a centralised issue for students who are of an introvert nature. However, remember that you do not need to be an extrovert to socialise and work efficiently in a team. These are some of the crucial and lesser discussed skills that you will learn to inherit during the course of your MBA programme that will further help you build the right attitude both for your academic and personal life. Apart from work, management students often need to be active in an extended classroom environment that involves college events, get-togethers, casual workshops, and webinars. You can always groom yourself to some extent to embrace the change, as it will always be fruitful for your career.

Last, focus on building valuable connections. Many of the MBA students get misguided by the idea of starting to take necessary steps like building connections, researching job availabilities, and grabbing additional opportunities after the completion of their MBA course. You need to keep spirits high when it comes to building a network and socialising with those who may contribute to your professional lives ahead.

However, a substantial part of skills and capabilities to attain the customs and practice depends on expertise of mentors. Hence, choosing the right institution is important.

Dedication towards work is driven by passion and interest and not through monetary needs. Employees should feel satisfied and get assistance to grow constantly to utilise the time at their workplace productively. For someone who does not aim to work just to make a living, shaping their hobbies into a career is the best way to begin.

Hobbies help us to attain mental and emotional peace and help in the development of social, interpersonal, and creative thinking skills. Students stuck at home during COVID-19 lockdown could utilise this time and polish their interests by enrolling in certified online trainings. If you are fond of doing any of the 3 things mentioned below during leisure time, you can learn these

professionally through online trainings.

Learning new languages: Your love for learning new languages has immense potential than just being a hobby. Enrolling in an online training such as the French language training can keep the complexities of learning during lockdown at bay. An official language of 29 countries, learning French can help you get an edge over your peers while applying for higher studies internationally. Through the training, one can learn to read, write, understand, and speak French in their everyday interactions. An in-built speech recognition engine allows you to practice your French-speaking skills and rectify their pronunciation mistakes. The training also features assignments,

MINDIT

assessment tests, quizzes, and exciting exercises. After getting certified in French language, you can work in MNCs, import-export houses, embassies, call centres, tourism and hospitality industry, and can take job roles like teaching and translator and interpreter.

Writing: Writing is a therapy for many. Those who love observing, have attention to details, and prefer to express themselves through write-ups instead of words, should enrol in a writing training program to enhance their skillset. Trainings such as

creative writing bring out your inner wordsmith and help you polish your short story, novel, features, news-stories, screenplay, advertising, or editing skills. The peer grading feature helps you to receive and give constructive feedback on the writing assignments. Your peers act as your readers and anonymously help you to rectify your mistakes and polish your writing skills. Reading their write-ups strengthens your vocabulary and allows you to explore different writing styles. Individuals professionally skilled in writing can find lucrative jobs in every industry. They can

work as copywriter, editor, journalist, speechwriter, technical writer, novelist, story writer, columnist, PR specialist, film critic, and social media specialist in industries such as education, entertainment, food, travel, hospitality, and healthcare.

Capturing moments: The integration of high-resolution cameras in our handsets helped a lot of people discover their passion for photography. Whether you love clicking the beautiful nature around you or have become the official photographer for every college outing, you could sharpen your skills of capturing emotions, storytelling, lighting and colour, framing concepts, and attention to detail by enrolling in an online photography course.

The course gives you a wide understanding of camera and lenses, white balance and exposure triangle parameters, camera metering and focusing, the art of composition and shooting techniques, and image post-processing. Along with a certificate, you also get placement assistance that helps you to find out the right career opportunities for you. After successfully acquiring the title of a certified photographer, one can work as a freelancer for travel, food, entertainment, and other industries, or could find lucrative job opportunities like a film set, pet, portrait, landscape, sports, product, fine art, fashion, architectural, and aerial photographer.

The writer is Sarvesh Agrawal, founder-CEO of Internshala

For further information contact
sbs.admissions@strath.ac.uk
Application deadline: September 1, 2020.

The Strathclyde Business School, Glasgow invites applications for its MBA Deans Excellence Scholarships for 2020. Candidates for full-time MBA programme in Glasgow will automatically be considered for these scholarships.

Number: 5
Value: £15,000
Subject: Accounting and Finance, Economics, Entrepreneurship, Human Resource Management, Marketing, Business, Strategy and Organisation, Hospitality and Tourism, Management, Management Science.

Eligibility: Candidates who are prepared to act as ambassadors for the Strathclyde FT MBA. Who can demonstrate through their ideas outlined in their application and interview how they would contribute to bring the class together through teamwork to create community, from the outset, in order to achieve the ultimate earning (and social)

How to apply: You need to take admission in an UG degree programme at the university.
Application deadline: The last date to apply is October 30, 2020.

The University of Melbourne is providing the Bachelor of Arts International funding for students in Australia. Participants from India can apply.

They can pursue a bachelor's degree programme in the field of Historical, philosophical, political and social studies; Language, literature and cultural studies at the university.

Eligibility: Apply as a full-time student. You need to complete the Victorian Certificate of Education or an equivalent qualification.
Language requirement: If your native language is not English, so you will be asked to satisfy the English language requirements of the university.

The fee education award provides 25 or 50 per cent fee remission, or a \$5000 bursary, to a select group of high-ranking international students.

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AT TOPHIRE

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹15,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4583298
Deadline: August 6, 2020

DATA ENTRY AT INVICTA CONSUMER

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹8,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4583300
Deadline: August 5, 2020

OPERATIONS AT ENETSTUDIOZ INCORPORATION

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹9,500-₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4583307
Application deadline: August 6, 2020

ADVANCED EXCEL (MIS) AT LABOTEK

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹15,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4583308
Application deadline - 5th August 2020

MARKET SURVEY AT DTHISIGMA SYSTEMS

Location: Lucknow
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4583309
Application deadline: August 3, 2020

QLT ASSURANCE/SOFTWARE TESTING AT WITSY

Location - Chandigarh, Mohali
Stipend - Rs. 5,000-8,000/Month
Link - internshala.com/i/4583310
Application deadline - 4th August 2020

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (SALES) AT URBANCLAP TECHNOLOGIES INDIA

Location: Bhubaneswar
Stipend: ₹8,000-₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4583312
Application deadline: July 27, 2020

COPYWRITING AT 120 MEDIA COLLECTIVE

Location - Work From Home
Stipend - Rs. 10,000/Month
Link - internshala.com/i/4583304
Application deadline - 5th August 2020

STUDY ABROAD

'Keep yourself updated with latest policy changes'

There are three key points that students who have applied to study in foreign universities need to keep in mind, says EESHA BAGGA

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated many sectors across the globe. The education sector too got overwhelmed by its might. Many universities like Stanford and Chicago have either suspended or canceled admissions until further notice. This has caused problems for those students who got their admission procedures cleared. So, if you were looking to apply for a programme in a foreign university then you must consider these three things before taking your final call:
Check country's current status report: The pandemic has affected different countries in different ways. Some are coming back on track while others are still suffering. Top universities in the UK like Cambridge and Oxford have asked their students to wait till they receive further notice from the Government.

Check for changes made in admission procedures: Almost all universities have closed their campuses until the circumstances get better and appointed different ways for admission. Like, the University of Kent which is admitting students online. They are also planning to start on-campus admissions from August. Also, some universities like the University of Louisville are arranging virtual visits.

Check for the changes in immigration policy: Countries like New Zealand have ill-advised foreign students to apply for a student visa because of the uncertainty in their immigration policies. They have recommended students to study online (if they are already admitted to any university in New Zealand). Later a student can use it as proof of association and the New Zealand Government will consider it while approving or extending his/her visa. Many countries are making similar changes. To be on a safer side you must keep yourself updated with the latest news on the country you are about to migrate to.

The writer is Director, Partnerships & Alliances, Mindler

IN BRIEF

ISBF PARTNERS WITH KINGSTON BUSINESS SCHOOL

The Indian School of Business & Finance (ISBF) has announced a partnership with Kingston Business School, Kingston University (KU), London to bring to aspiring Indian students its acclaimed undergraduate programme in Business Management, at less than half the cost of pursuing it entirely in London.

This programme offers students the unique opportunity to undertake the first two years of this degree in India at ISBF, and then move to Kingston University for third year and graduate in London. Throughout the programme, all students

are full-fledged Kingston University students, with the curriculum and the final degree both also coming entirely from Kingston University.

All students of this programme progress automatically to Kingston University in third year, without needing to appear for IELTS in doing so. They also enjoy the benefits of moving with an entire batch of classmates and friends, which helps significantly with making the transition easier. Transitioning students can also opt for hostel accommodation on campus at Kingston University, London.

WORKSHOP ON SCIENCE OF MUSIC

The KIIT World School organised a workshop on Science of Music. The workshop focused on how music plays an important role in our speech and how our language is scientific. Mayank Verma, a management consultant and corporate Acharya spoke about the science of music and its impact on our lives.

Verma said: "If we don't have the capability of sound, we will not be able to relate or identify any of our senses. Our Vedic science said, if we pay enough attention to listen to the sound around us, it can develop our faculty multifold. The sound makes the alphabet, the alphabet makes words and words make sentences which we use to express

ourselves. Listening is key to doing anything better and music does that beautifully. We can enhance our perception just by doing this." Neelima Kamarah, Principal KIIT World School said: "The science behind vowels is amazing. Our language is scientific and it's important as a teacher to understand these finer details."

TALENT SEARCH EXAMINATION FOR UG ASPIRANTS

The TIME is conducting its Talent Search Examination (TSE) for UG aspirants on July 19, 2020. Due to the current pandemic outbreak, students can write the test from the convenience of their homes in any one of the slots, 10 am or 6 pm. It as also taken the

initiative to provide an attractive fee waiver upto 100 per cent on CLAT/IPM/BBA/HM 20/21 courses. The fee waiver will be available based on their performance in this Scholarship Test. Here is the link for the aspirants to register: <https://www.time4education.com/local/articlecms/page.php?id=4211>.

As soon as the lockdown was implemented, TIME had announced its online classes for various courses like CAT, CLAT + IPM, Bank Exams, GMAT, GRE, and other. New courses are being launched every week.

Huge chance missed

Manchester United slip at the death to remain out of top 4

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United missed the chance to move up to third in the Premier League on Monday after Michael Obafemi's 96th minute equaliser earned Southampton a 2-2 draw at Old Trafford in the latest twist in the race for a place in next season's Champions League.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's men were unable to take advantage of weekend defeats for Chelsea and Leicester to remain in fifth. United had become the first side in Premier League history to win four consecutive games by a three-goal margin, but there was no cruise for the Red Devils this time even after they responded to Stuart Armstrong's early opener.

Two goals in as many minutes from Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial turned the game around, but United were caught out by a corner deep into stoppage time when substitute Obafemi turned home Jan Bednarek's flick on.

"It's the worst time to concede a goal but it happens in football. You have to be strong and take it,"



Southampton's Michael Obafemi, 20, celebrates after scoring his team's second goal against Manchester United on Monday

said United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. "We've won so many games that way ourselves but it's all part of the learning for this team."

Manchester City's victory over UEFA in the Court of Arbitration for Sport earlier on Monday upped the pressure on United to continue their

impressive form with only a place in the top four now good enough for Champions League qualification.

Solskjaer will still be confident of achieving that goal as his side have closed an eight-point gap on Leicester, who they face on the final day of the season, since the Premier League's

restart. But two dropped points were a reminder that United are far from the finished article if they aspire to challenge Liverpool and Manchester City for the title next season.

"We didn't deserve three points today," admitted Solskjaer. "We never

got the rhythm in our passing today, especially after 2-1."

Ralph Hasenhuttl's side remain in 12th, but have lost just once in six games since the restart.

"We are becoming more brave," said Hasenhuttl. "You can feel the guys really enjoy what they are doing."

Pep 'incredibly happy', but rivals brand Man City let-off a 'disgrace'

LONDON: Pep Guardiola on Tuesday said a weight had been lifted from Manchester City after their European ban was overturned by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), but rival managers Jose Mourinho and Jurgen Klopp criticised the ruling.

The court on Monday lifted a two-year ban imposed earlier this year on the Premier League club by European football's governing body UEFA over Financial Fair Play (FFP) breaches.

"I am incredibly happy for the decision. It shows all the people said about the club wasn't true," said Guardiola.

"People cannot understand how difficult it was for everyone as a club being under suspicion. Now we have proven it at the court, we go again on the pitch."

Tottenham manager Mourinho said the court's decision was a "disaster" and showed FFP, which limits club's spending in line with their revenue, is now dead, while Liverpool boss Klopp said City's reprieve was a bad day for football.

An initial fine of 30 million euros (\$34 million) imposed by UEFA was reduced to 10 million euros by CAS. However, the fine related only to City's failure to cooperate with UEFA's investigation rather than FFP breaches.

Mourinho said if they were guilty, City should be banned — but if they were innocent, they should not have to pay a penny.

"It's a disgraceful decision, because if Man City is not guilty then to be punished with some millions is a disgrace. If you are not guilty, you are not punished. By the other way if you are guilty you should be banned so it is also a disgraceful decision. In any case the decision is a disaster," said Mourinho.



Karim Benzema celebrates after scoring Real's second goal against Granada

One more win

Real will be crowned champions if they beat Villarreal at home tomorrow

AFP ■ GRANADA

Real Madrid need one victory to secure La Liga after they held off a second-half comeback from Granada on Monday to win 2-1 and move four points clear of Barcelona.

With two games left, Madrid will be crowned champions if they beat Villarreal at home on Thursday regardless of how Barca fare at the Camp Nou against Osasuna.

But they were made to sweat by a Granada team that are gunning for Europe and have been arguably the division's surprise of the season after being promoted from second tier last year.

Ferland Mendy and Karim Benzema looked to have set Madrid on course for a comfortable win at Los Carmenes but Granada were transformed after the break and Machis's 50th-minute strike gave them hope.

An increasingly nervous Madrid were clinging on by the end and needed Sergio Ramos to clear one shot off the line as Zinedine Zidane's side dug in for a ninth

consecutive victory.

"Our vision when we start every season is to win the league," said Zidane. "There are two games left. We are close but we're not there yet."

When the final whistle blew, Zidane roared with relief and Ramos clenched his fists after coming through their toughest test since the restart.

"We can't relax, we're a bit closer but we have to carry on," said Ramos afterwards.

"We let our guard down here a bit on the second half. We won the first half and lost the second and maybe that's a warning for us. We have to make sure we don't repeat that mistake."

Madrid could win La Liga for the third time in eight years at the Alfredo di Stefano Stadium on Thursday night. "It would mean a lot," said Ramos.

"We're in the race and hopefully on Thursday we can celebrate."

If Madrid slip up against Villarreal, they will still have a second chance on Sunday when they finish at Leganes while Barcelona visit Alaves.

Indian team hasn't yet figured out Pant's batting position: Kaif

NEW DELHI: Former India cricketer Mohammad Kaif has tried to decode as to why young wicket-keeper-batsman Rishabh Pant has been a hit with Delhi Capitals in IPL but has failed to put up consistent performances for Team India on the international arena.

Kaif, who is Delhi Capitals' assistant coach, has seen Pant from close quarters and stated his batting position hasn't been fixed by the Indian team management and that is why he hasn't been able to replicate his consistent IPL performance on the biggest stage.

Before coronavirus pandemic put a stop on cricket in March, Pant saw KL Rahul take over wicket-keeping duties in New Zealand in limited-overs formats as the southpaw was dropped following a string of underwhelming scores.

He, however, kept the gloves in the two-match Test series, which India lost against Kane Williamson's troops.

"Rishabh Pant is a free-flowing player. He is an attacking player and he should play attacking shots from ball one," Kaif told former India cricketer Aakash Chopra on his YouTube show *AakashVani*.

"At first, Dada (Sourav Ganguly), (Ricky) Ponting and I decided to send him early but then we figured out he has to play 10 overs. He should get 60 balls to play. This is something that Indian team hasn't done yet."

"An attacking player should get the role a finisher. I feel they haven't been able to figure out on Pant's batting position in the Indian team. In IPL, we know we have limited-overs to make him play the last 10 overs. He plays his natural game in the IPL and that is why he does well," he added.

Up to 2nd

Nerazzurri come from behind to tame Torino

AFP ■ MILAN

Inter Milan put one foot in next season's Champions League on Monday after coming from behind to beat relegation-threatened Torino 3-1 and move up to second place in Serie A.

Antonio Conte's Inter moved above Atalanta and Lazio to go eight points behind league leaders Juventus thanks to two goals early in the second half from Ashley Young and Diego Godin and another from Lautaro Martinez just after the hour mark.

The Milanese club are level on 68 points with off-form Lazio, who slumped to a 2-1 defeat at Sassuolo on Saturday, and one ahead of flamboyant Atalanta in fourth.

However, with a first league title since 2010 unlikely, the most important statistic for Inter is the



Inter's Lautaro Martinez, right, celebrates after scoring his side's third goal

14-point gap between them and fifth-placed Roma with six matches left to play.

"It's important to win matches like this any way you can... I think we deserved to win," said Godin to *Sky Sport Italy*. "We're second now and we want to continue winning... let's see where we can finish, but it's difficult to get closer to Juventus."

Torino meanwhile still have to look over their shoulders following their fourth defeat since the league restart-

ed last month.

Moreno Longo's side are 16th, five points above the relegation zone.

Inter were dismal in the first period and the transformation after the break suggested they had been subjected to one of coach Antonio Conte's famous roastings at halftime.

"It was a very good performance with over 60% possession, 20 shots on goal, nine corners to two," said Conte. "The lads did well. That goal could have made us nervous but they stayed on their feet and kept playing and finding the goal."

Messi can play till 2025: Garcia

KOLKATA: Former Barcelona midfielder Luis Garcia feels the club's superstar forward Lionel Messi can easily continue playing till 2025.

The 33-year-old is currently contracted until the end of next season with Barcelona holding talks with the ace Argentina forward about an extension.

There is speculation that record six-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi is unhappy with the club's leadership.

"Why not? The way he is playing, adapting his style to the game is impressive. Every year he shows us something different but keeps up the same amount of goals, of assists," Garcia, who played for Barcelona in the 2003-2004 season, said during a video conference facilitated by LaLiga.

"Even getting more every year! He's adapting, he doesn't

spend so much time up front because he knows it's harder, so he drops a little more. He shows why he's so intelligent. He adapts his game to what the team needs in every game. I could see him playing in 2025, easily!" added the former Atletico Madrid and Liverpool winger.

Real Madrid are closer to winning the LaLiga title after their 2-1 win against Granada on Monday which took them four points clear of Barcelona with two games remaining in the season.

"There have been a couple of games where they have struggled. But they carry the momentum when even not playing well they are getting the results. (Federico) Valverde has been one of their best players so far. Key players have been Ramos and Benzema," Garcia said on Real Madrid.

IAN S

Federer almost perfect tennis player: Edberg

IAN S ■ STOCKHOLM

Former Swedish World No 1 Stefan Edberg said that Swiss great Roger Federer is set apart by the kind of all-round ability that he possesses. Edberg coached Federer between January 2014 and December 2015.

"Like I said to Roger, he looks so easy when he plays, he floats around the court. He's got grace, he's got power, he's got touch, he's got everything you wish for. He's almost the perfect tennis player as I see it—both on and off-court. So he's very special like we all know," Edberg told *Eurosport*.

Edberg said that Austrian Dominic Thiem is a player he feels is closest among the younger generation of men's tennis players who can match up to the incredible career stats of Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic.

"He showed he could have won the Australian Open this year very easily," the Swede said about Thiem. "That was a big chance for him. If Rafa wasn't there, he's going to win the French Open one day. He's probably the closest one today, I would say."

"But at the same time, (Alexander) Zverev has shown a lot of potential, sort of lost track a little bit, but it doesn't take much to get back on the right track again."

"(Stefanos) Tsitsipas has shown some... He's definitely knocking on the door as well. I probably can add a few others. But Thiem, I would say at the moment."

Turner rates Kane ahead of Kohli in tough batting conditions

DUNEDIN: Former New Zealand captain Glenn Turner has rated current skipper Kane Williamson ahead of his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli when it comes to tough batting conditions.

Kohli and Williamson are regarded as two of the finest batsmen in modern-day cricket. As per the latest ICC Test rankings, Kohli and Williamson are placed at second and fourth spots respectively and have been leading their respective teams with great aplomb for a while now.

Turner believes Kohli's ability to play spin is second to none but he rated Williamson ahead



of him to bat in challenging batting conditions.

"Kohli is less likely to have been exposed early in his development to seaming pitches and the ball continuing to swing for extended periods, whereas Williamson will have experienced those conditions more

often," Turner was quoted as saying by *The Telegraph*.

"Kohli's greater exposure to pitches that take turn will have him more accustomed to playing spin better. Conditions less favourable for swing and seamers will also have allowed him more opportunities to become good at aggressively dominating that type of bowling."

"I would only say that under tougher batting conditions, I would back Williamson ahead of Kohli. Under good batting conditions, Kohli is likely to be more dominant, thereby providing his team with more time to get a favourable result," he added.

Holder reaches career-best rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

Jason Holder on Tuesday attained the highest rating points by any West Indies bowler in 20 years, reaching a career-best second place in the ICC Test Player Rankings after leading his team to a famous win over England at Southampton.

Holder, who picked seven wickets including a haul of six for 42 in the first innings, is now on a career-best 862 rating points, the best for any West Indies bowler since Courtney Walsh's tally of 866 in August 2000.

Indian cricketers, who have not taken the field since March due to the Covid-19 pandemic, have retained their positions in the top-10 of batsmen and



bowlers rankings.

Skipper Virat Kohli remains second in the batsmen standings behind Steve Smith while Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane remain seventh and

ninth respectively. Jasprit Bumrah is the only Indian bowler in the top-10 at seventh spot.

Holder retained 35th position among batsmen after the first Test and has also reached a career-best tally of 485 points at the top of the all-rounders' list.

The competition at the top promises to gain momentum as number-two Ben Stokes has also made huge gains to attain a career-best tally of 431 points, narrowing the lead from 66 to 54 points.

Stokes, leading the side in the absence of Joe Root, has equalled his career-high ninth position among batsmen that he achieved last November, after scores of 43

and 46 at the Ageas Bowl.

He is now only one place behind Root. Stokes has also risen three places in the bowlers' list to 23rd position with six wickets in the match.

For the visiting side, Shannon Gabriel has gained 46 points to reach a tally of 726 with a player-of-the-match effort of nine wickets, but risen only one place to 18th owing to the wide gap between him and Ravindra Jadeja (722) before the match.

Jermaine Blackwood's superb second-innings knock of 95 has helped him advance 14 slots to 58th position among batsmen while Shane Dowrick is at a career-best 37th position after scores of 61 and 20.

ENGLAND COACH BACKS UNDER-FIRE BUTTLER

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

England head coach Chris Silverwood has thrown his weight behind struggling Jos Buttler, saying he looked good with the bat in the first Test and will be given "the best chance to succeed" in the remainder of the series.

Buttler, a wicket-keeper batsman, has not scored a fifty in his last 12 Test innings and also dropped Jermaine Blackwood, who ended up scoring match-winning 95 for West Indies in the first Test.

Former England seamer Darren Gough believes Buttler's place in the team is under threat and he "has got two Test matches to save his career."

that road yet of putting Jos under pressure, because I don't think it's going to help him. So, first and foremost, we want to give Jos the best opportunity to succeed," Silverwood said.

"(Jos) looked brilliant coming into this game, in practice and everything. He looked very good in the first innings. He just needs to go and make those big scores now, doesn't he? Which he knows as well."

The 45-year-old said it is all about giving Buttler the confidence with the hope that he will come good in the next match.

"From our point of view, it's just making sure that he feels confident in the environment he's in. We'll give him the best chance to succeed really. The rest of it is, he has a good day out,

gets some runs, hopefully the rest will be history — he'll go on from there."

Another player who struggled in the opening Test is top-order batsman Joe Denly and he

might be dropped for the second Test with regular skipper Joe Root returns.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R.W.S&S
DIVISION, SAMBALPUR.
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Bid Identification No. RWSS (SBP)- 04/2020-21

1. Name of the Work	: Shifting D.I pipeline, stand post, vavle chamber, boundary wall widening of road.
2. Total Number of Work	: 04 Nos (Four)
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 8.32 lakhs to 70.92 lakhs
4. Class of Contractor	: B & A, C & B, D & C
5. Period of Completion	:

Procurements Officer	Bid Identification	Availability of tender online for bidding
Executive Engineer RWSS Division Sambalpur	RWSS (SBP)- 04/2020-21	From 17.07.2020 To 27.07.2020 up to 5.00 PM

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "www.tendersorissa.gov.in" Subsequent corrigendum if required shall be appeared in the website only
OIPR-25015/11/0001/2021 Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Sambalpur

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Percentage rate price bids through e-procurement in double cover system according to the norms of e-procurement system, in on-line mode from eligible contractors.

Sl. No.	Nature of work:	Rurall Piped Watter Supply
1.	No. of works:	01(One)
2.	Estimated Cost:	Rs 404.79 lakhs (app.)
3.	Time for completion:	12 (Twelve) Months
4.	Cost of bidding document:	Rs.10000/-
5.	Class of Contractors eligible:	A & Special
6.	Availability of bids on-line:	From 17 hour of 14.07.2020 to 17.00 hours of 05.08.2020
7.	Last date and time for seeking clarification:	17.00 hours of 29.07.2020
8.	Date & time of opening of technical bids:	On dt 06.08.2020 at 11.00 Hours in the office of the Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Puri (All documents should be submitted in online only. No original documents should be dropped in dropping box before opening of technical bid in Division Office).
9.	Date and time of opening of financial bids:	To be decided.

Further details can be seen from the website https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Sd/-
OIPR-25017/11/0003/2021 Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Puri