

WORLD 7

UIGHURS' STERILISATION REPORT:
CHINA MAY SUE RESEARCHER

**MONEY 8**

'INDIAN ECONOMY SHOWING SIGNS
OF RETURNING TO NORMALCY'

SPORT 10

RAHANE WANTS TO
MAKE ODI COMEBACK

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**USUAL SUSPECTS**

SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Beijing's creeping control over world

Over the past 30 days or so, ever since the skirmish in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh that led to the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers and a greater number of soldiers of the People's Liberation Army of China, there has been wide ranging public discussions on the threat posed by our big eastern neighbour across the Himalayas. Although some sort of disengagement has been negotiated, there is little expectation — in India at least — that "peace and tranquillity" along the Line of Actual Control will endure.

How Beijing views the situation and the larger relationship with India is still a subject of speculation because decision-making in China tends to be opaque and outside public gaze. However, read with China's larger global thrust and in view of the stated objectives of the Belt and Road programme, there is an expectation that the claims of Chinese sovereignty over areas that are perceived to be under the direct or indirect sway of the Middle Kingdom will endure. If there is an offer by China to meet India half-way, the apparent show of reasonableness will be entirely tactical. In its bid to reverse the "century of humiliation" and reclaim the Mandate of Heaven by 2049 — the centenary of the establishment of the People's Republic by Mao Zedong — China will never lose sight of its so-called lost territories.

One of the big errors that cloud public discussions in India on the challenge/threat posed by China is the disproportionate importance attached to the border question. This, in turn, focusses the debate entirely on the military dimension of the India-China equation. It inevitably also prompts the conclusion that China's acknowledged superiority in the military sphere — not to mention its indigenous capacities — means that India must proceed with an extra measure of circumspection. The history of the 1962 conflict that led to a humiliating defeat for India also hangs over the deliberations like a nightmare. In particular, the complete debacle of Jawaharlal Nehru's knee-jerk "forward policy" is held out as a reason why India should proceed with utmost caution against a superior enemy.

The assertion, frequently mouthed by those blinded by their anger against China's perfidious history, that 2020 isn't 1962 are not misplaced. India certainly is better prepared militarily to counter China. This state of readiness is also backed by political determination and an unwillingness to be deluded by China's double-speak. Nor does the present political dispensation of Narendra Modi entertain ideological hang-ups of the variety that clouded the vision of Nehru and his political circle.

Yet, one of the shortcomings of the public discussions of national security within India is that the India-China tensions are seen within a narrow South Asian perspective. An international view puts the whole subject in a slightly different perspective. What is becoming increasingly apparent is that there are growing misgivings over two issues: the extent of China's strategic control over key sectors of the developed world; and the political distortions resulting from China's bid to extend its influence.

Last week, for example, the US administration banned the use of the Tik Tok app for members of the armed forces and government employees. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has said that the Donald Trump administration is considering a national ban on the app that is seen as a major threat of national security because of the suspected transmission of data to China. This comes in the wake of the decision in the United Kingdom to exclude the Chinese-controlled Huawei from the 5-G services in the country. Earlier it had been decided that the Chinese firm would play a big role in the upgradation of a crucial sector of British infrastructure.

These developments over the past month are indicative. They suggest that Western powers have finally got over their preoccupation with short-term economic calculations and commitment to free trade and begun to look at the larger strategic consequences of allowing Chinese companies to acquire a big foothold in Europe and US. Although the restrictions have been justified on issues that centre on the immediate — the crackdown in Hongkong is cited as a factor in the UK — the misgivings go far deeper. I believe that in the days to come, China will find that its ability to do business smoothly in the West has been drastically curtailed, particularly in public utilities and nuclear power.

The fears over data security and reverse engineering have been complemented by wariness over China's creeping control over important public institutions. The extent to which higher education in the US and the UK is dependant on the huge numbers of Chinese students is causing grave discomfiture. Last week, the Royal United Services Institute in London produced an 86-page report entitled *China's Elite Capture*. According to *The Times* (London) which has accessed this confidential report: "The report alleges that Beijing uses various influence tactics in the UK, including 'useful idiots' as well as agents of the Chinese Communist Party to develop links with politicians, business people and academics to build a presence in critical infrastructure. It claims that Britain's universities have been wide open to Chinese influence — partnering in research on gait recognition, cryptography and missile technology. One of Beijing's key aims, it says, is to ensure that UK tech companies are open to acquisition."

It is unlikely that this approach has been confined to the UK. There have been similar revelations about the vulnerabilities of Australia. In this context, it is pertinent to peruse the minutely researched book, *Chinese Spies: From Chairman Mao to Xi Jinping* (2019) by Roger Faligot. The writer warns that "The word 'Guoanbu' will probably become as familiar in the 21st century as the acronyms MI6, CIA and KGB were in the 20th." The full name of *Guoanbu* is *Guojia Anquanbu* and it is the Ministry of State Security. It is the world's biggest intelligence network that spans the globe, including India.

China starts Pangong pullback

Major positive sign towards peace as stand-offs at 4 places started from Pangong lake on May 5

- The latest satellite images show a clear and marked reduction of the Chinese soldiers
- This pullback was noticed in the contested "Finger 4" area along the banks of Pangong lake
- India will insist that the Chinese remove their boats as soon as possible to facilitate smooth disengagement



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Chinese have finally started to withdraw troops from the Pangong Tso (lake), one of four face-off sites at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. While the other three "friction points" — the Galwan Valley, Hot Springs and Gogra — witnessed the pullback for the last five days, the thinning out of troops from Pangong on Saturday signalled a major positive sign towards peace.

Incidentally, the eight-week old stand-offs at the four places started from the Pangong lake on May 5 when the Chinese intruded into Indian territory and stopped a patrol. This led to fisticuffs between the personnel of both the armies.

Giving details of the latest pullback from the Pangong site which witnessed a brief brawl in 2017 also, sources said here the latest satellite images showed a clear and marked reduction of the Chinese soldiers. This pullback was

noticed in the contested "Finger 4" area along the banks of Pangong lake.

They also said while the Chinese had also removed tents and makeshift bunkers from the Indian side, scores of tents and other infrastructure was still intact close to the LAC on their side. Similarly, the Chinese have also not removed their fast interceptor boats from a jetty in the perceived Indian zone in the lake. A giant Chinese map is also put up at the jetty.

Realising the sensitive

nature of this face-off site, the Corps Commanders of the two armies next week will discuss the issue, officials said, adding India will insist that the Chinese remove their boats as soon as possible to facilitate smooth disengagement.

As of now, the Chinese continue to dominate the spurs (referred to as 'Fingers') in this region with tents erected along the course of rivulets located along the contours of the spurs.

There are eight noticeable

the banks of the high-altitude Pangong Lake in Eastern Ladakh. India maintains that the LAC here lies at "Finger 8" while China believes it lies further to the West.

The de-facto boundary presently lies at Finger 4 beyond which Chinese forces have prevented Indian soldiers from patrolling.

Dozens of Indian soldiers were seriously injured in clashes here in May. India has repeatedly stated that it has right to patrol till Finger 8, a claim contested by China.

BJP luring Congress MLAs to topple Govt, says Gehlot

Rajasthan Opp dares CM to prove charge or quit politics

PNS ■ JAIPUR



Attempts of the Opposition to topple their Government by offering huge sums of money to Congress MLAs.

The BJP on Saturday dared Gehlot to prove his allegation of horse-trading levelled against it or quit politics, and claimed he was targeting the Opposition party as he was unable to check the infighting in the State Congress.

Notices have been issued to the Chief Minister, the Deputy

Chief Minister and Government chief whip for recording their statement in connection with the matter," an official source told news agency Press Trust of India.

The sources told news agency PTI that nearly a dozen MLAs and others may also be issued notices soon.

The SOG on Friday registered booked two people under IPC sections 124-A (sedition) and 120-B (conspiracy), alleging that the duo also talked about the chances of earning ₹1,000-2,000 crore by toppling the Government, it stated.

The FIR stated that they were allegedly talking about the rift between Gehlot and Pilot and toppling the Congress government by poaching MLAs.

On Friday night, more than 20 Congress MLAs issued a joint statement claiming that the BJP was trying to lure the MLAs.

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UP Govt forms SIT to probe police's 'connivance' with Vikas Dubey

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh Government constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Saturday to probe the local police's alleged connivance with slain gangster Vikas Dubey, a statement said.

Additional Chief Secretary Sanjay Bhoosreddy will head the SIT, which will have Additional DG Hari Ram Sharma and DIG Ravinder Goud as its members.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 8,49,823
DEATHS: 22,687
RECOVERED: 5,36,228
ACTIVE: 2,90,528

India's 2018 Tiger Census has entered the Guinness Book of World Records for being the largest camera-trap wildlife survey yet. The fourth edition of the tiger census, in 2018-19, was the "most comprehensive" to date, "in terms of both resource and data amassed", Guinness World Records

A tiger standing in a natural habitat, possibly a forest or jungle, looking towards the camera.

team has said on its website. Terming this achievement a great moment, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar tweeted, "The All India Tiger Estimation is now in the Guinness World Records for being the largest camera-trap wildlife survey, a great moment indeed and a shining example of Aatmanirbhar Bharat."

He also said that under the leadership of the Prime Minister, India fulfilled its resolve to double tigers' numbers four years before the tar-

captured 3,48,58,623 photographs of wildlife (76,651 of which were tigers and 51,777 were leopards; the remainder were other native fauna).

From these photographs, 2,461 individual tigers (excluding cubs) were identified using stripe-pattern-recognition software.

Apart from the unprecedented camera trap usage, the 2018 "Status of Tigers in India" assessment also conducted extensive foot surveys that covered 5,22,996 km of trails and

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Taking no risk with the health of students during Covid times, the Delhi Government on Saturday cancelled all upcoming examinations of the Delhi State universities.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said these state universities have been asked to promote their students and award them degrees adopting a "progressive method of evaluation".

"All Delhi State University examinations stand cancelled. It is unfair to conduct examinations amid the coronavirus pandemic, which has already hampered the learning in the absence of regular classes, practicals, and lab work. It is also unfair to withhold their degrees now without which they cannot start with their professional journey," Sisodia said, adding, "extraordinary time calls for extraordinary measures."

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Amitabh tests Covid-19 +ve, hospitalised

Mumbai: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on Saturday said he has tested positive for Covid-19 and admitted in the isolation ward of a city hospital.

The 77-year-old actor, who is at the Nanavati hospital, shared his health update on Twitter. "I have tested Covid positive. Shifted to Hospital.

Hospital informing authorities, family and staff undergone tests, results awaited," Bachchan tweeted.

"All that have been in close proximity to me in the last 10 days are requested to please get themselves tested," he added.

PTI

CAPSULE

HARDIK PATEL WORKING PREZ OF GUJARAT CONG

New Delhi: Patidar leader Hardik Patel, 26, was appointed the new working president of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee on Saturday. Patel rose to prominence when he led an agitation by the Patidar community in 2015, demanding that the community should get benefits of the quota for backward castes.

MPS TO PHYSICALLY ATTEND MONSOON SESSION

New Delhi: Secretaries general of both Houses of Parliament were asked on Saturday to make necessary arrangements for the upcoming Monsoon Session, which is likely to be physically attended by members while following social distancing norms, sources said.

6 NSCN(IM) REBELS KILLED IN ENCOUNTER

Itanagar/New Delhi: Six NSCN (IM) rebels were killed in a gunfight with security forces in a jungle in Longdeng district of Arunachal Pradesh early Saturday morning, military and police officials said. One soldier of Assam Rifles was injured in the operation and his condition is stated to be stable, they said.

NEW DELHI | SUNDAY | JULY 12, 2020

HOME THEATRE

A bit of heavy breathing

BREATHE: INTO THE SHADOWS

Amazon Prime Original

Episodes: 12

*ing: Abhishek Bachchan,

Madhavan, Amit Sadh

Rated: 5/10

Abhishek Bachchan's debut in a second season of an established series *Breathe* was being awaited with well-bated breath. He does not disappoint but one really never gets to go beyond the Jr Bachchan's persona much as he tries to get into the skin of a beleaguered psychiatrist. He is still his father's son, in the sense he carries some of senior Bachchan's mannerisms into the character, messing it up, at times.

Breathe's Season 2 is better than Season 1 in the sense that the premise of the plot is better placed on believability but it suffers from all kinds of loopholes that stand tall throughout the drama unfolding around the kidnapping of a little girl from an outdoor birthday party.

Before proceeding on the ifs and buts of this season, a word first on the remarkable and presence of Amit Sadh who returns as Inspector Kabir as much more muscular, much more sensible and much less doused in alcoholic persona. Sadh is a delight to be with when he gets into waylaid characters like a guilt-prone father lubricating his liver with only *daru* and yet having the keenest eye for detail on a crime scene. In this one, he does well as a plain and simple Crime Branch spook handling the case of psychotic serial killings with acumen and incredible presence of mind.

The problem with *Breathe* 2 is that it has a lot of jargon, a lot of mumbo jumbo and even Abhishek, as Avinash the shrink, seems to be analysing the crime with frivolous conclusions and many OTT liners on "ravan kay 10 sar, meaning dus

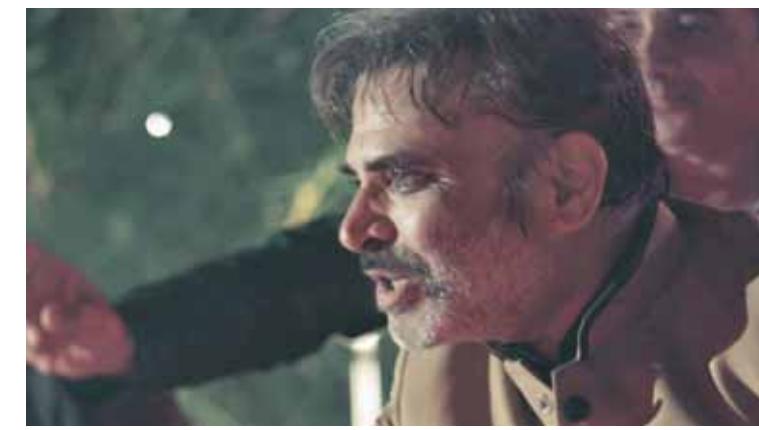


emotions to kill" type of analyses.

Flashbacks though meant to explain, often intrude on the story which itself is struggling with reason and logic most of the time. A kidnapper picks up a girl and does not make a move for nine months and then suddenly plans the killings of sundry people across Delhi. The moment it is revealed who the killer is, you lose interest in the proceedings. And that's revealed in the sixth-seventh episode and you

still have five more to go to the conclusion, which incidentally, is predictable but well mounted.

In short, *Breathe 2* is not too easy to inhale or exhale, but keeps going nevertheless with all kinds of sub-plots and side stories of people in extraordinary circumstances, be it a lesbian relationship, a dark incident in college and gerrophobia to name a few. A case of flailing limbs to stay afloat in a sea of crime dramas.



The one to watch

UNDEKHI

SonyLiv Original

Episodes: 10

*ing: Harsh Chhaya, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Ankur Rathee, Anchal Singh, Abhishek Chauhan and others

Rated: 9/10

The more the virus is forcing you to stay home, the more you are marvelling at some stunning content emerging from OTT platforms, *Undekhi* being the latest thriller in this altered entertainment environment.

Raw, aggressive, intense, intriguing and fleshed out with the minutest of details of the story and its characters, this Original lives it up in style. Created by Siddharth Sengupta, *Undekhi* unplugs a stinging, action-packed story emanating from a resort wedding in Manali where a dancer is shot in cold blood with no regrets in any of the gun-toting, power drunk, alcohol doused gentry led by the ruthless adopted owner Rinku (brilliantly played by Surya Sharma) to kick scruples in the butt as hard as you would be taught to do the same to wrongdoing in a missionary school.

Harsh Chhaya, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Ankur Rathee, Anchal Singh, Abhishek Chauhan, Ayn Zoya, Apeksha Porwal and Sayandee Sen are not names you would remember in a hurry but after their measured performances in *Undekhi* you would like to do a quick roll call.

The 10 episodes keep you in the

grip without really playing to the gallery in an in-your-face way. Along the way, the faulty lifestyle, the blatant immorality, the extreme insensitivity or should we say the animalistic mindset of an upper class Punjabi business family and its cohorts are laid bare with maximum impact and precision. Abuse, assault and sex, the oiling of the system, an innately corrupt police force, the fall of grace of many citadels of honesty — it is all there to leave you heaving in impact. Also, there is a story to reckon with and that's quite delightfully in-your-face, giving meat to the series.

Besides Surya Kumar, Debyndu Bhattacharya as the seasoned DSP and Apeksha Porwal as the tribal girl being hunted down lead the list of stellar performances, not to mention Harsh Chhaya who lives it up as a debauched, abusive motormouth patriarch of the family which dotes on its sleazy, hazy and totally anti-social existence.

The depiction of our society by Sengupta shows up the place of women in our society, be it the trophy wives of the rich and the powerful, or a daughter of the forgotten and the powerless. Injustice, and the acceptance of it by and large not just by the perpetrators and the victims but also by the media, churns up a scenario where you feel the need for purge.

Well, it is such raw depiction that thrills and kills in this gem of a series punctuating a space where a lot of intrigue has been fighting for a pedestal.

Slick teen thriller

ALEX RIDER

SonyLiv

Episodes: 8

*ing: Otto Farrant, Stephen Dillane, Ronke Adekoluejo and others

Rated: 6.5/10

Let's get to the issue *Point Blanc*. It's a teenage James Bond and Jason Bourne mix that helms the crime, cloning, syndicated world of fast-paced action, murder, British Secret Service and a global ring of swish criminals that keeps Rider and its viewers on their toes. Flitting from London to a shadowy training school for errant teenagers in the snow-capped French Alps, this not exceptional and yet not run-of-the-mill spy thriller is both for young adults and, well, old adults in a season where home entertainment is the buzzword.

As a book, *Alex Rider*, written by Anthony Horowitz, sold a staggering 20 million copies in the teenage espionage segment and this series does not take too many artistic liberties from the book. *Stormbreaker*, its original film version, however, took quite a beating at the box office, making this home entertainer a revelation.

The story gets going after Farrant, an otherwise normal school-going teenager, suffers a familial setback in the murder of his uncle and is consequently blackmailed by a shadowy unit head of the British Secret Service to penetrate into a crime ring and extract information.

Unknowingly trained into secret service mores by his uncle, Farrant plays the central role with precision and perfection turning into an errant teenager with issues that need a *Point Blanc* intervention.

What comes out of this so-called high society correctional facility is a truth so dirty and alarming that the Secret Service is stunned too even as Farrant puts up the nonchalance of an irreverent teen with the right amount of gumption to pull a fast one on the syndicate run by a fascist doctor and his Woman Friday Stellanbauch.

Rider does well to remain in top gear all through and leave a window for a second one perhaps? Tune in with your teen and his friends for an eight-hour soiree built carefully to engage you in the proceedings without being entirely teeny or entirely adult.



'I have been acting since I was 10'

HARSH CHHAYA tells MUSBA HASHMI what made him take up the role of Papaji in Sony Liv's *Undekhi*, his fondest memory from the sets and his takeaway from the industry in his 30-year career

■ What is your role in *Undekhi*?

I play a rich, powerful and out of control kind of man, Papaji. He is a resort owner in Manali and couldn't care less about anything on the planet. His only solution to everything is *goli mardengay*.

■ Were there any apprehensions before taking up the role?

Absolutely not. I was perfectly fine with the project and the role. I like to do different things but most of the times, I have played similar parts and this was something different. I just had to say yes to it as soon as I heard the narration.

■ Your fondest memory from the sets.

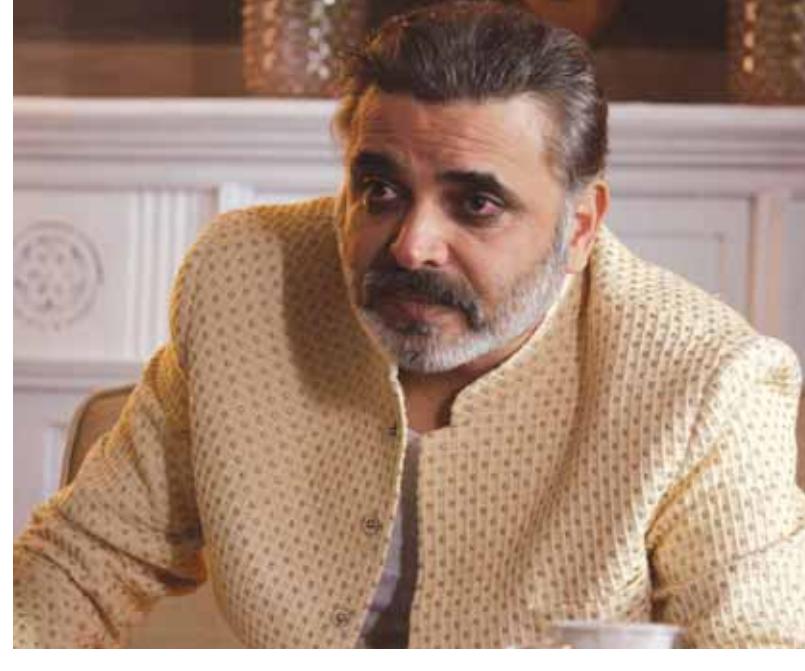
Everything went on without a mishap, that was the best part actually. We were shooting in Manali for 15 days and it was fun. I was working but at the same time I was also on a holiday. The whole unit was fun to work with. There were new actors and some of them were first timers so the whole energy was different and exciting.

■ Was acting always on cards?

Yes, it was. I have been acting since I was 10. There's nothing else I would have chosen to do but acting.

■ In almost 30 years of career, what has been your takeaway from the industry?

To keep to yourself and deliver your best on time and in the way people want you to. Rest keep out of everything else.

■ Where do you find yourself most comfortable working in — TV, films or OTT platforms?


That is dependent on the part I am playing. As long as, I have a part of my interest I am fine with working in any medium. If I have a film and TV offer at the same time, and I like the part in TV then I would take that.

■ What is there in the pipeline?

Right now there is nothing to talk about because the things that we were in talks with has been postponed or cancelled. At this point of time, I really don't know.

role but getting the mere opportunity to wear a police officer's uniform filled me with such pride. I was ecstatic when I got the role of Haseena Malik, but with that came the responsibility to do justice to this role and represent our heroes with immense respect. These past few months have filled me with so much gratitude towards the police force and witnessing their relentless and courageous efforts towards keeping the society safe by putting themselves on the frontline. I am so proud to have the opportunity to represent such a force and I want to salute the police force for their unparalleled contribution. They have truly defined the words — *Kuch Baat Hain Kyunki Jazbaat Hain*."

EISHA ALL SET TO MAKE COMEBACK

With people across the country stepping into the new normal, Zee TV has resumed shoots of its shows and is all set to reconnect its audiences with the journeys of their beloved characters that have become their favourite dinner-table companions. With an aim to reunite the audience with another such character that had struck a chord with the viewers, Zee TV's *Ishq Subhan Allah* will

see the return of the original Zara Siddiqui that was essayed by Eisha Singh till last year. Season one of *Ishq Subhan Allah* had ended with a heart-wrenching twist when Zara (Eisha Singh) was assumed dead after her car having fallen off a cliff. Viewers hoped for a magical turn of events that would reunite Kabir (Adnan Khan) and Zara, however, the second season of the show brought in a fresh and engaging plot full of twists and turns between the lovestruck, grieving Kabir and a new Zara. However, in a fresh twist post lockdown, Eisha Singh will return in a new *avatar* and leave everyone stunned!

Assumed to be dead all this while, the real Zara aka Eisha Singh will make an exciting comeback into the lives of Kabir and his family. She will be seen in an all-new avatar, though — that of a music healer who believes in the extraordinary healing powers of music and its potential to revive even the most depressed. Questioning Kabir's prior mindset that music is haraam as per his interpretation of religion, she challenges his traditional belief system, while denying that she is the Zara of his life.

AN INSPIRING MESSAGE

The rerun of *Jyoti* on Dangal TV is all about a woman's journey and the sacrifices she makes, her courage and how she stands proud despite the problems she faces, says SHALINI SAKSENA

It is not very often that one gets to see a show that talks about a woman's courage in the face of an adversary. Most of the serials are the usual *saa-bahu* drama and after some time, each show ends up along the same storyline. However, *Jyoti* that aired back in 2009-2010, stood out for a few reasons. First, it showed the lead protagonist as a very strong character. Second, it sent a message across to women that despite roadblocks, it is possible to stand tall and proud.

Interestingly, the story of *Jyoti* is based on a real-life person — unfortunately, she died many years back. Writer Purnendu Shekhar tells you that when the makers approached him to write, the first thing he thought about was to write a story about this brave and strong woman who tied rakhi to him. "When the makers asked me to write a story, her story was waiting to be told. She was sister's friend and colleague. So, she was a sister to me as well," Shekhar says.

He tells you that it is sad that TV serials have become regressive. But there is a reason for this. Back in the 90s, the shows on DD were watched by a select few because owning a TV was a luxury. Hence, the content also matched the intellect of the niche. "Today, while it is good that every household can afford a TV, it has also meant that the content that is being shown caters to the taste of the masses hence, the usual *saa-bahu* dramas. Also, soon the makers and channels realised that people were looking for drama and twists and turns. The end result was that though the shows started on a good note, they all went the drama way. Take *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and *Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki*. Both Tusu and Parvati are such strong characters. Yes, they were housewives but had a mind of their own. It was the drama for the sake of it and the unbelievable drama made the show look regressive and gave them the tag of *saa-bahu* shows. Regression became the core of drama," Shekhar explains.

The advantage with *Jyoti* was that since the character was based on a true person, it was easier for the writers to be as true to her life as possible. Also, there were twists and turns in her life. It was easier to not dramatise and yet not give away everything. "Some of the dialogues in the show have actually taken place and were spoken by my mother and sister



to her," Shekhar says and tells you that one must watch the rerun of *Jyoti* for one simple reason.

She is such a strong character. The message that she gives is that even in the worst-case scenario one must stand tall, proud and strong," Shekhar says.

Sneha Wagh who plays the lead in the show says that it would be wrong to say that television doesn't do woman-centric shows. "All the shows that are shown for the women, TV is mostly for and about women because a large portion of viewership comes from women. TV is a woman-oriented platform," Wagh says. She tells you that to play *Jyoti* was not something that she had planned but it was a big opportunity. "Everything was happening around me and it was not something that I had a choice. I said yes to whatever good that came my way," she says.

"This show is off the normal track. Also, the character is relatable to today's scenario and not the usual *saa-bahu* drama. Her character, since it is based on a real-life person, makes what happens in the show so much more than the drama that one gets to see," Wagh says. The hitch that TV faces when it comes to air women-centric shows even though the majority of the audience is women is because TV is all about family viewing. "The entire family sits and watches TV and it would be wrong to compare the content that one gets to see on the OTT platforms and small screen," Wagh tells you.

However, it doesn't mean that one can't show more such shows that portray women in a strong light that are based on real-life women. "It is important to send a message to even the women sitting at home in small towns and villages. We don't always show women all decked up. There is a need to air shows where women are powerful. We have a patriarchal society and will continue to be so unless we change our mindset. Shows like *Jyoti* will go a long way to change this thinking," Wagh says.

TELLY TALE
SALUTE TO WOMEN POLICE FORCE

Earlier this year, Sony SAB launched *Maddam Sir*, a show which addresses social issues through the eyes of four dynamic women police officers taking every challenge as it comes and solving cases with *jazbaat* i.e. policing with a heart. The show features Gulki Joshi as SHO Haseena Malik and Yukti Kapoor known as Sub Inspector Karishma Singh along with Sonali Naik as Head Constable Pushpa and Bhavika Sharma as Constable Santosh.

Taking a cue from the challenges presented to them in their real-life as the Maddam Sir team, the actresses had an exclusive tête-à-tête with real-life women police officers. The cast even discussed nuances of being able to successfully represent policewomen on-screen and took this opportunity to thank the real-life women police officers for their contribution towards our safety and well-being during this challenging phase.

Gulki Joshi recalls her audition days of the show and says: "When I wore the prestigious uniform during my audition for *Maddam Sir*, I didn't know if I will get the

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No home-isolated city patient died in July 1st week: Study

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The National Capital has reported no deaths in home isolation in the first week of July and the total number of daily deaths due to coronavirus has come down to 3.02 per cent from 3.64 per cent in June, according to findings of a study conducted by the Delhi Government.

As per the report a total of 691 deaths took place in Delhi during the fortnight 24 June and 8 July which is an average of 46 deaths per day during this period. All these deaths were studied and analysed by

health department of Delhi government," the government said in a statement.

"Daily deaths have come down to around 46 a day during the last fortnight from a high of 101 daily deaths in mid-June. Out of a total of 691 deaths that happened in the last fortnight, only 7 deaths happened in home isolation (between 24 June and 30 June)," it said.

The National Capital did not report a single death of a patient in home isolation in the first week of July, it said, adding that this can be attributed to the Chief Minister's

decision to distribute oximeters to all patients under home isolation.

"The use of these oximeters alerts the patients of any dropping oxygen levels which is an early sign of deteriorating health," it said.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took a review meeting on Friday to discuss measures that need to be taken to further reduce mortality.

"Since now almost all deaths are taking place in hospitals (nil deaths in home isolation), therefore, it was felt that systems in each hospital need to be examined in detail," it said.

As per Central Government's

Paul Committee, 45 per cent of deaths in India occur during the first 48 hours. In Delhi, this has come down to only 15 per cent. Various steps taken by the government are responsible for this.

"Of the 691 deaths, 505 patients were in serious condition, when admitted to hospitals. 291 of these patients were already in a hospital when tested positive, everyone else got timely admission into the hospital. The study found delay in hospital admission in case of only 28 patients," it added.

The Chief Minister had initiated

a plan to improve processes and systems at six crucial points of serious Corona patients' treatment cycle including increased testing, emphasis on home isolation of asymptomatic and mild symptom patients and released a large number of hospital beds among others that has started yielding results.

Besides, the government improved the home isolation experience of patients by daily tele-counselling and providing oximeters so that people feel safe and comfortable at homes.

"The ambulance response time has reduced from 55 minutes to 30.5 minutes within the last month. Many more ambulances have been hired to ensure zero refusals. This has ensured timely transportation of patients to hospitals. CM's representatives and separate officers were appointed for each hospital to ensure that a patient is first admitted in and paperwork done later," it added.

steps were taken to drastically increase the number of beds in both private and government hospitals. Now, the problems of shortage of hospital beds have been resolved.

Against an availability of 15000 covid hospital beds, only 4500 are occupied today," it added.

It further stated that as serious Corona patients, especially those with comorbidities, often need ICU, several steps were taken to increase emergency care infrastructure. Against an availability of 2000 ICU beds, only 1100 are occupied today, it said.

The move came after Kejriwal had directed the health department to study all deaths in the last fortnight to understand what steps could be taken to further reduce deaths.

Two held for duping man of ₹2 crore

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Economic Offence Wing (EOW) has arrested two men for allegedly duping a person of ₹2 crore.

The accused have been identified as Sanjay Kumar and Manoj Chaudhary, both residents of Greater Noida in UP.

According to OP Mishra, the Joint Commissioner of Police, EOW, one Rajesh Kumar Garg was induced to invest in a project called Airwill Intellicity, developed by accused persons, in Greater Noida on the pretext of fixed return in the form of add on profits three per cent per month on an investment of Rs two crore.

"The accused assured that if they fail to return the money with interest within one year, the two residential villas in will be allotted Airwill Intellicity project to Garg. The accused neither returned the money nor fulfilled their promises and cheated Garg of Rs two crore," said the Joint CP. "Kumar and Chaudhary engaged in real estate and construction business. Six other criminal cases were also registered against them at EOW, Delhi Police and Gautam Budh Nagar Police," he said.

36-year-old wife, minor daughter, two others arrested for killing man

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police have arrested a 36-year-old woman, her minor daughter and two other persons for allegedly killing her husband in south Delhi's Maidan Garhi area.

The accused have been identified as Sarita Tawar, a resident of Dera village and her friend Manoj (22), a resident of Loni in Ghaziabad. Police said that Sarita's minor daughter and the girl's school friend were also apprehended. All four persons were involved in the incident, police said.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, on July 2, a decomposed body of a man was recovered from a drain at Mahabali Puram near Bhati village. Police saw a tattoo with the initials 'ST' on the body.

"An abandoned car was also found around one kilometre from the spot. Based on the ownership of the car, the deceased was identified as Mahender alias Sanjay, a resident of Dera village," said the DCP. "During investigation, the

brother of the deceased said that Mahender used to drive a taxi. He went out to pick up a booking but did not return. When the officer asked Mahender's wife, she said that his phone was switched off and he had not returned since July 1. Mahender's brother also informed that one Manoj used to visit his house and the couple used to fight over this issue," said the DCP.

Police questioned Manoj who confessed to his crime. On his instance, Sarita was nabbed. The daughter of the deceased and her school friend, were also apprehended. Interrogation revealed that Manoj was a close friend of Sarita for the past eight to nine months. They used to meet and Mahender knew about it," said the DCP.

"The deceased allegedly used to beat his wife and daughter. Manoj was annoyed with it and planned to kill him. On June 30, Mahender was drunk when Manoj reached his house. The accused persons overpowered Mahender and strangled him. Later, they loaded the body in Mahender's car and dumped in the drain," the DCP added.

₹5.10L draft given to wife of scribe who killed self

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress president Chaudhary Anil Kumar handed over a draft for ₹5.10 lakh to the wife of a journalist who allegedly committed suicide by jumping from the fourth floor of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) trauma centre recently.

Chaudhary said that the

money was collected from the

Congress workers in Delhi

under the 'Aao Madad Ka Haath Badhayen' (Congress cares) campaign.

The Congress president also demanded the Delhi Government to treat journalists who died of Coronavirus as Corona warriors.

"Tarun Sisodia was also on the line of duty in the fight against Corona as a press reporter and his family should be given compensation like other corona warriors who lost their lives to the pandemic.

Kumar also demanded a judicial inquiry into the circumstances that led to Sisodia's death.

Police Commissioner reviews crime, Covid situation in Delhi


STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Commissioner, SN Shrivastava reviewed crime and Covid arrangements in

National Capital on Saturday.

The CP also awarded police personnel in recognition of

their exemplary professionalism and bravery, displayed in various cases in the past 2 weeks.

According to Anil Mittal, the Additional Public Relation Officer (APRO), in Dwarka district.

Inspector Naveen Kumar, Sub-Inspector (SI)

Ranjeet Kumar, SI Bijender, SI

Manjeet, ASI Umesh, ASI

Surender, Head Constable

(HC) Sumit Gulia, HC Ashok,

Constable (Ct) Praveen and Ct

Raj Ram of Special Staff were

awarded as they had played

instrumental role behind the

arrest of close associates of Raju

Basodiya - Kala Jathedi.

"In Outer district, V N Jha, the Station House Officer (SHO) of Nangloi police station, SI Reena, HC Bijender, HC Naveen and Ct. Manjeet were awarded for solving a

blind case of robbery-cum-

rape and arrested both the

accused persons," said Mittal.

"Darshan Lal, SHO of Outer North district's Bawana

police station, SI Rinku, ASI

Narender, Ct Chetan were

awarded for busting a gang of

desperate robbers with the

arrest of two accused, who

were awarded for solving this case," the APRO said.

Delhi WCD Min visits 'Bal Griha' to ensure proper arrangements

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Women and Child Development Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam on Saturday visited 'Bal Griha' to ensure proper management and arrangements for the children residing at these homes in the time of Covid-19 pandemic.

The minister visited centers like Phulbari Bal Griha and Aashiana Bal Griha situated in Alipur and reviewed the implementation of guidelines issued by the Delhi Government regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gautam asked the officials to strictly ensure the cleanliness of these child care complexes. "The Delhi government officials are doing a thermal screening of the people going inside the centres. The Delhi government has also installed a sanitization machine at the main entrance of these homes," he said.

The minister also examined the protective measures taken by the Delhi government to prevent any adverse incidents with children.

Lifetime adventure for some ... is routine for us.



A CUT ABOVE

INDIAN AIR FORCE

A CUT ABOVE

Demands for Rahul to take over as party chief dominate Cong meet

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A meeting of Congress Lok Sabha MPs called by party president Sonia Gandhi to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and the political situation in the country was dominated by calls for Rahul Gandhi to take over as the party chief on Saturday.

The demand was first raised by party chief whip in Lok Sabha K Suresh and seconded by a majority of MPs who attended the virtual meeting that lasted over three hours, sources said.

Suresh is learnt to have said that Rahul Gandhi, who has been at the forefront of espousing people's issues during the pandemic, needs to take over the reigns of the Congress at this critical time.

The demands were raised with Rahul Gandhi in attendance at the meeting, even though neither he nor Sonia Gandhi said anything on this issue, the sources said.

Manickam Tagore, Gaurav Gogoi, Anto Antony, Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka, and some others backed the demand.

Rahul Gandhi resigned as Congress president after the party's 2019 Lok Sabha poll debacle and Sonia Gandhi was installed as interim chief on August 10 by the Congress Working Committee, the party's highest decision-making body.

On Saturday, she had convened a meeting with party Lok Sabha MPs to discuss the current political and COVID-19 situation in the country.

According to the sources, the MPs also raised the demands for convening

the Monsoon Session of Parliament and how the government was evading parliamentary scrutiny. The India-China stand-off was also raised by many MPs, including Rahul Gandhi, who said the government continues to mislead the country on Chinese incursions and the current situation in Ladakh.

All the MPs demanded restoration of MPLADS funds which have been discontinued due to the pandemic. The Congress members said since

they were public representatives, they were unable to fulfil their responsibilities in view of the suspension of the scheme.

The Central Government suspended the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) for two years in view of huge funds requirement to fight COVID-19. The funds under MPLADS for the next two years will be part of the Central pool to fight the pandemic.

The Congress parliamentarians also raised the issues of economic downturn, agricultural distress, high petroleum prices. Many suggested the party should raise the cause of the middle class, who have been the hardest hit due to the slowdown and job losses.

Rahul Gandhi said the Congress was not playing politics on the issue of Chinese incursions and the party did not want India to be seen as a "weak country" by ceding its land to China. He also accused the Prime Minister of "misleading" the country on the border issue, the sources said.

On COVID-19, the former Congress chief said the central government has "mishandled" the situation and highlighted its apathy in handling the crisis.

Now, he said, when the situation has gone out of hand, the Centre has left it to states to fend for themselves. He also demanded that the PM-CARES Fund be audited as it has accepted public money and raised the issue of donations received from some Chinese companies into the fund which, he added, needs to be probed.

The Congress is likely to raise the issues discussed on Saturday during the Monsoon Session of Parliament, which may take place next month.

The Congress has been critical of the BJP-led Government over various issues, particularly its handling of the pandemic as COVID-19 cases have risen exponentially after the easing of lockdown, and the situation at the border with China in eastern Ladakh where 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a violent stand-off with Chinese troops on June 15.

COVID-19 CURBS VIOLATIONS

Gautam Buddh Nagar: 62 held, 973 vehicles penalised

PTI ■ NOIDA

Sixty-two people were arrested and owners of 973 vehicles penalised across Noida and Greater Noida on Saturday for allegedly violating curbs imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gautam Buddh Nagar police said.

Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) Section 144, which bars assembly of more than four persons, is in force in Gautam Buddh Nagar, whose urban areas fall in the 'Red Zone' for COVID-19.

Eighteen FIRs were registered and 62 people arrested for violating the curbs. A total of 1,950 vehicles were checked across 200 barrier points in the district and challans issued to 973 of them, while four were impounded, the police said in a statement.

Altogether, Rs 40,650 was collected in fines during the action, the police said.

The security checks have intensified in view of fresh lockdown-like curbs which began at 10 pm on Friday and will continue till 5 am on July 13 to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 and other vector-borne diseases, the officials said.

The Noida-Delhi border continues to remain sealed for movement except for essential services and people having passes issued by the district administration, according to officials.

All shops, offices, commercial establishments, including shopping malls, shall remain closed till July 13 across Noida and Greater Noida, Gautam Buddh Nagar administration had said on Friday.

The administration also warned that people will be fined ₹500 each time for non-



compliance if they are found without face cover or masks outdoors.

Supply of essential goods and services shall be allowed through home delivery while there will be no restriction on supply of medical goods and services during the period.

Such category of people whose movement is permitted by the government order do not require separate passes. Identity cards issued by respective organisations or industry shall be considered as valid for their movement.

Movement to and fro railway stations and airport shall not be prohibited till July 13.

Assam Cong MP urges CM to set up SIT for arresting drug syndicate bosses

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Assam Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi has requested Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal to take steps for curbing the menace of drug in the state and constitute a Special Investigation Team to arrest kingpins of drug syndicates.

In a letter to the chief minister, the MP from Kaliabor said there has been an alarming rise in drug addiction cases among the youths of Assam and drug-related crimes are also increasing consequently.

Around 9 kg of heroin was seized from a single peddler last year, he said in the letter.

"These drugs were being stored with the intention to

traffic to different states of the North East and even to Myanmar via Nagaland.

These incidents are a testament to increasing drug abuse and trafficking-related cases in Assam," the MP said.

Drug abuse adversely affects not just the individuals who are addicts but also their families, various businesses and government resources, Gogoi said in the letter.

"Therefore, I urge you to take immediate steps to unearth and nab those involved in drug peddling in the State. I request you constitute a top-level special investigative team (SIT) to arrest the key culprits in the drug syndicate," his letter to the CM read.

Meanwhile, a police officer on Saturday said they have arrested two drug dealers in upper Assam's Dhemaji district and seized 2 grams of opium from them. They were captured near Kulajan when they were trying to cross Bogibeel Bridge over Brahmaputra to reach Dibrugarh on Tuesday.

Delhi Govt cancel ...

From Page 1

The State universities under the Delhi Government include National Law University, Delhi Technological University, Ambedkar University, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Netaji Subhas University of Technology and Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women.

"Online classes are being streamed. But the absence of regular physical classes, lab classes, practicals, and field

IMA demands setting up of all-India medical services for healthcare admin

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has demanded the setting up of an Indian Medical Service (IMS), on the lines of IAS, IPS and IFS, to bring about a drastic change in the healthcare sector, the doctors' body said.

The IMA feels that there is a dire need for a drastic change in health administration which can be realised by raising a new cadre of administrators, it said in a statement.

The IMS will be responsible for holding the administrative responsibilities pertaining to the district medical officer, project officers of various disease control programmes, and the various ranks of secretaries in the Union health ministry and

the state health departments and the heads all other areas in the health sector, Dr Rajan Sharma, IMA national president, said.

The basic qualification to sit for the IMS examination should be MBBS, he said.

"Even though IMA has been enthusiastically working, we request the government of India to emphasize upon the certain major provisions.

Meticulously continuing the public health activities of contact-tracing and testing will ensure a minimal morbidity rate," he said.

"There is an urgent need for a new post-COVID healthcare structure. The IMA also demands for creation of 'One Nation - One set of guidelines for health'," Dr R V Asokan, IMA secretary general, said.

ments during the pandemic, the IMA said it has been involved in various activities like availing of insurance for healthcare workers, anti-violence ordinance, inclusion of clinics, nursing homes and hospitals in MSME, modifications in testing policy, PPEs in work places, policy for quarantining of caregivers and plasma therapy among others.

Management of this pandemic would have been better had the public infrastructure and the strategies in place been better, it said.

"There is a dire need for the government to increase its GDP allocation to five per cent for the healthcare structure. The IMA also demands for creation of 'One Nation - One set of guidelines for health'," Dr R V Asokan, IMA secretary general, said.

Karnataka Govt to implement anti-cow slaughter law soon

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka will soon implement a ban on cow slaughter, sale and consumption of beef in line with other States, Animal Husbandry Minister Prabhu Chavan has said.

The BJP in its manifesto ahead of the 2018 Assembly election had promised prohibition of cow slaughter.

The Government is committed to enact the anti-cow slaughter law.

Once the Covid-19 crisis eases an expert committee would be constituted to look into its implementation, and if need be, it will visit states like Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh to study about implementation there," Chavan was quoted as saying by his office in a release on Friday.

He said he will hold discussions with the Chief Minister in this regard and was committed to make it more effective than other States.

If the law is enacted, along with prohibition on slaughter, sale and use of beef, illegal transportation of animals for

slaughtering will be stopped,

development of gaushalas and give encouragement to dairy products, he added.

Chavan said following the Supreme Court's directions, the state government has also set up an animal welfare board, as he noted that a war room is being set up to help those engaged in animal husbandry, with expert advice, among other necessary things.

development of gaushalas and give encouragement to dairy products, he added.

Chavan said following the Supreme Court's directions, the state government has also set up an animal welfare board, as he noted that a war room is being set up to help those engaged in animal husbandry, with expert advice, among other necessary things.

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Corrigendum No.2 to the tender notice no. 171(e-Procurement Tender Notice) dt:10.07.2020

The following corrigendum notice have been floated through e-Procurement. Tenderers are requested to visit the web-site [www.ireps.gov.in](#) and submit their offers. It may be noted that the offers submitted manually or on paper will not be accepted. Offers sent by post are not entertained.

Tender Notice No. & Date. Tender Notice No. 171 of 04.06.2020

Tender Notice No.:TMC201908

Description: Due date of tender opening is changed.

For complete details please refer [www.ireps.gov.in](#)

Dy. Chief Engineer/TH/HQ/ Secunderabad

TENDER NOTICE No.66/2020

dt.10.07.2020

SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS.

e-Procurement/Tender Notice

The following Tenders have been floated online. Tenderers are requested to visit the website [www.ireps.gov.in](#) and submit their offers online. The

Tender Description, Qty, EMD, SD may be seen in Website. Offers submitted manually will not be accepted. Offers by post will not be entertained. Tender Closing time is 14.30 hrs of the Due date of the Tender. "For all indigenous offers, EMD will be accepted only via online system as available on [www.ireps.gov.in](#).

Tender No. & Short Description

82.20.5104 Running Contract for Procurement of Personal Protective Kit

81.20.1443 Die Penetrante System

65.20.5003 Heavy Duty Elevators

Note:- Due dates of Tender Opening:

Opening:S.N.01 on 29.07.2020; S.No. 02 on 06.08.2020; S. No. 03 on 12.08.2020.

Beside above mentioned tenders there are other tenders having value below Rs. 25 lakhs. For details, please visit Railway website above.

Principal Chief Materials Manager/ A085/20

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents,

Please visit website at [http://www.ireps.gov.in](#) or [www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in](#)

BJP luring Congress MLAs to topple Govt...

From Page 1

The State universities under the Delhi Government include National Law University, Delhi Technological University, Ambedkar University, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Netaji Subhas University of Technology and Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women.

"Online classes are being streamed. But the absence of regular physical classes, lab classes, practicals, and field

research has hampered with the learning of the students. It would be unfair and difficult to hold examinations for the semester for which teaching-learning was hampered," said Sisodia who also holds Education department.

Highlighting Government's decision to take extraordinary measures in these extraordinary times, the Education Minister of Delhi said, "July is the most important month for examinations and evaluation at universities. Delhi Govt believes that in these extraordinary times, we need to make extraordinary decisions.

That is why the Delhi Govt has decided that all upcoming examinations in the Delhi State Universities should be cancelled. This includes all semesters and final year examinations.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has written to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting him to scrap upcoming Central University exams amid the widespread coronavirus pandemic and consider awarding degrees to students based on internal assessment and previous semester marks.

governments in several states.

It now wants to play the same game in Rajasthan, that it did in Madhya Pradesh, Gehlot said.

"But they have been exposed and people will give the BJP a befitting reply at the right time," he added.

People going out of Rajasthan will have to obtain passes: Order

PTI ■ JAIPUR

People going out of Rajasthan will have to obtain passes from authorities, the state government said in an order on Saturday night as it decided to regulate interstate movement in view of a surge in COVID-19 cases.

The passes will be issued by district collectors, police commissioners, deputy commissioners, deputy superintendents of police and local police stations, the home department order said.

Yellow, the least dangerous of all weather warnings, indicates the possibility of severe weather over the next few days.

A few places in the state, including Manali, received light rains on Saturday.

railway stations and bus stands to provide on spot passes after verification of identity, it said.

For those travelling outside the state by road, other than scheduled buses, screening and verification of passes and identity will be ensured at check posts, which will be set up at inter-state borders, the order said.

Those entering the state will also be screened at these check posts, it said.

People travelling by scheduled flights, trains and state roadways buses on July 12, with prior confirmed reservation, will be exempted from requirement of passes, it said.

BJP MPs, PAC chief spar over PM CARES scrutiny

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The lines are drawn in the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) over the scrutiny of the PM CARES Fund. While the BJP MPs in the panel have strongly opposed its examination by the PAC, panel chairman Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who is also the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, has favoured a proper scrutiny of the Fund and is expected to use his prerogative as the panel head to give it a go ahead. The Congress and its president Sonia Gandhi have been raising questions over the setting up and utilisation of the PM CARES Fund and seeking an audit of it.

In the PAC meeting on Friday, the BIP, which has 12 MPs on the panel, objected to any examination of the controversial PM CARES Fund by the parliamentary panel citing that the expenditure or the revenue is not related to Parliament authorisation.

Chowdhury invoked the interest of the nation to appeal

to the MPs against objecting to the examination of the PM CARES Fund as it is a fund of the Government and the country needs to know how the money collected funds from the public is utilized.

Many BJP MPs protested the move of the PAC Chairman to include the examining of the PM CARES Fund in this year's subjects selected by the panel. According to them, this move was just a politically-motivated one to summon the officers of the PMO and Home Ministry to settle political scores.

It is learned that even though a majority of the MPs reject a subject to be included, as PAC Chairman, Chowdhury has the right to use his prerogative to include the subject.

BJP MPs are expected to complain to the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla if Adhir uses such prerogative.

But Opposition MPs pointed out that the PAC Chairman, who is always from the main Opposition party, has the prerogative to include subjects like on earlier occasions during the UPA regime when BJP

leader and panel chief Murli Manohar Joshi used his power to include many subjects opposed by the then majority Congress MPs in PAC.

Opposition MPs also pointed out that the PAC Chairman needed the Speaker's clearance only for summoning Ministers. He requires no clearance for summoning officials. In Friday's meeting, Opposition MPs countered the BJP MPs saying that the Parliament has the right to know who are the donors in the PM CARES Fund as well as how it was utilized.

Though the PAC Chairman is from the Opposition party, the majority is always with the ruling party as the members are selected on the basis of representation.

While 15 MPs are selected from Lok Sabha including the Chairman, seven MPs are selected from Rajya Sabha.

The total strength of the PAC is 22 MPs including the Chairman. At present, two seats from Rajya Sabha quota are vacant.

Migration from cities to villages to spike corona cases: Study



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Migration of labour post-lockdown from cities to vulnerable forest-fringe villages particularly in Central India will flare up the infected cases as well as fatalities given the crumbling and negligible infrastructure in these regions, according to a study published in the Current Science.

To curb the cases, researchers from John Hopkins and Azim Premji University among a few others have suggested lenient restrictions for people within a village as well as between villages to reduce the exposure of the locals.

"Such a 'village bubble' strategy could reduce the risk of spread among vulnerable

populations and requires that essential goods reach villages," they said. Interestingly, New Zealand has successfully implemented a bubble strategy, with initial bubbles restricted to the household level and broadened to larger social groups as restrictions ease.

The researchers from the institutions such as School of International and Public Affairs from New York, Ashoka University from Sonepat, International Institute of Health Management Research, Azim Premji University also participated in the study.

Based on a previously collected household survey of 5,000 villages across 500 forest-fringe villages in 32 districts of central India, the researchers

identified migration patterns over the last 5 years.

Villages with seasonal workers are widely dispersed (75 percent of surveyed villages) and 81 per cent of destination cities had reported Covid-19 cases at the beginning of the lockdown.

Such a 'village bubble' strategy could reduce the risk of spread among vulnerable populations and requires that essential goods reach villages," they added.

With the outbreak of Covid-19, the potential for seasonal migrants to carry the virus from cities to their home villages generates grave concern both for local people and authorities managing the crisis.

India has already reported over 8 lakh cases and 22,000 deaths till date.

Using a disease spread model to assess distancing strategies if returning migrants carry the virus to villages, the researchers said that they found that lenient restrictions for people within a village combined with maximal restrictions between villages could

reduce the number of people exposed compared with moderate restrictions both within and between villages.

There have already been reports how the cases are gradually moving from urban to semi-urban and now to rural areas in the hitherto untouched regions.

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Based on a previously collected household survey of 5,000 villages across 500 forest-fringe villages in 32 districts of central India, the researchers

already returned persist. Alternatives to severe physical distancing are needed to reduce the chances of exposure while allowing people to obtain essential supplies, plant crops and carry out other necessities of daily life, said the study.

The populations include many tribal communities living in and around forests, with Gonds and Baigas as the main tribes. Moreover, "availability of health facilities is more than five times less than the national average. Eighty-seven per cent of rural households rely on wood as a primary cooking fuel, although recently, the availability of LPG has penetrated into remote areas."

A primary concern is to contain the spread of the virus across villages in the case of exposure in one village.

To reduce chances of exposure in the population in a rural setting such as Central India, the model results suggest that a prudent post-lockdown strategy might focus on easing physical distancing restrictions within villages but maintaining movement restrictions between villages, while quickly imposing strict lockdown both within and between villages if a case emerges.

DCGI approves restricted use of Itolizumab in Covid-19 treatment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Itolizumab, a drug used to cure skin ailment psoriasis for the last many years, has been approved for "restricted emergency use" to treat Covid-19 patients with moderate to severe acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Written informed consent of each patient is required before the use of this drug, said the drug regulator Drug Controller General of India while approving the drug for the treatment of viral infection.

A senior official from the DCGI said that Drug Controller, Dr V G Somani, approved monoclonal antibody injection Itolizumab, an already approved drug of Biocon for several years, for restricted emergency use. It is for the treatment of 'cytokine release syndrome in moderate to severe acute respiratory distress syndrome patients due to COVID-19, he added.

"The approval was given

after its clinical trials on COVID-19 patients in India was found satisfactory by the expert committee comprising pulmonologists, pharmacologists and medical experts from AIIMS, among others, for treatment of cytokine release syndrome," said the official.

"It is already an approved drug of Biocon for treating psoriasis for the last many years," the official said.

The company has received the DCGI approval to market Itolizumab injection 25mg/5ml solution for emergency use in India for the treatment of cytokine release syndrome in moderate to severe acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) patients due to COVID-19, Biocon said in a BSE filing.

The company, however, did not disclose the price at which it will be selling the drug.

The firm has repurposed the drug, an anti-CD6 IgG1 monoclonal antibody

launched in India in 2013 as Alzumab for treating chronic plaque psoriasis, Biocon said.

The drug will be manufactured and formulated as an intravenous injection at the company's bio-manufacturing facility at Biocon Park, Bengaluru.

"As an innovation-led biopharmaceuticals company, I am proud of the successful outcome of the pivotal study we conducted with our novel immuno-modulating anti-CD6 monoclonal antibody, Itolizumab, which has proven to be an efficacious intervention in treating the serious hyper immune response seen with COVID-19," Biocon Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said.

"This positions India among the leading global innovators in their effort to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, she added.

"We plan to take this therapy to other parts of the world impacted by the pandemic," Mazumdar-Shaw said.

Before he joined the Congress, he had claimed neither he nor any member of his Samiti would ever join politics or form a party and had argued for citizen activism.

BJP had accused him of being the Congress party's B-team during the 2017 assembly polls.

Patel's appointment is being seen as Congress party's attempt at wooing the resourceful Patidar community in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home State. The party also changed the district unit presidents of Anand, Surat and Dwarka.

India made right choices on Covid: Jaishankar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India made the right choices in its response to the Covid-19 pandemic and is as realistically well placed as any country could be under the prevailing circumstances, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday.

Jaishankar, who is part of the Group of Ministers (GoM) on Covid-19, said that when the pandemic started assuming global proportions, choice that every country faced was how to respond while playing to their own strengths.

Some countries had better testing capabilities like South Korea, while others like Germany had a strong ICU system, he said while speaking at the India Global Week 2020 via a video link.

What is interesting is that while India is at number three in the world in terms of case-load, in terms of fatalities, it is at number eight, Jaishankar said.

"We still have our challenges ahead, we are very conscious of it," he said.

Modi to States: Emulate Delhi's Covid-19 fight

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Appreciating the efforts of the Centre, State and local authorities in containing the COVID-19 situation in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called for the replication of a similar approach in the entire NCR area to check the contagion.

Reviewing a meeting to take stock of the COVID-19 situation in various parts of the country and the preparedness of various states, the Prime Minister also directed that real-time national level monitoring and guidance should be provided to all affected states and places with high test positivity rate.

The Prime Minister reiterated the need to observe personal hygiene and social discipline in public places, a statement from the Prime Minister's Office said.

Modi said the awareness about the pandemic should be disseminated widely and a continuous emphasis on preventing the spread of the infection should be laid.

He said there is no room for any complacency in this

regard, according to the statement.

"The Prime Minister appreciated the concerted efforts of the Centre, state and local authorities in containing the COVID-19 situation, with complaints of non-availability of beds in hospitals for patients and difficulty in getting the tests done in laboratories.

Shah had discussed ways to check the spread of the virus in the NCR with chief ministers of Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

The NCR comprises districts belonging to Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. The prominent ones being Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida), Ghaziabad, Gurgaon and Faridabad.

During Saturday's meet, the "successful example" of surveillance and home-based care through 'Dhanvantri Rath' in Ahmedabad was highlighted and it was directed that it may be emulated in other places, the statement said.

India's COVID-19 tally zoomed past the eight-lakh mark with the death toll climbed standing at 22,123 even as 519 people died in 24 hours.

Of the 519 new deaths reported, 226 are from Maharashtra, 64 from Tamil Nadu, 57 from Karnataka, 42 from Delhi, 27 from Uttar Pradesh and 26 from West Bengal.

Andhra Pradesh reported 15 fatalities, Gujarat 14, Telangana eight and Rajasthan six. Assam, Jammu and Kashmir reported five deaths, followed by Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Punjab with four deaths each from Haryana and Puducherry three fatalities each while two persons have succumbed to the infection in Chhattisgarh.

CPM calls UGC's proposal for online exams discriminatory

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CPI(M) politburo on Saturday objected to the UGC's proposal to conduct online exams citing that internet connectivity is accessible to only 36 per cent of the population and thus, it is unfair to the students from rural areas and marginalised sections of the society.

The CPI(M) said that under the pandemic situation, it is best to give the degrees based on previous performance.

handle the coronavirus situation in the national capital amid rising cases and criticism in different quarters of the Delhi Government's handling of the COVID-19 situation, with complaints of non-availability of beds in hospitals for patients and difficulty in getting the tests done in laboratories.

"He further directed that a similar approach should be adopted with other State Governments in containing the COVID-19 pandemic in the entire NCR area," it said.

The review meeting was attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and the cabinet secretary among others.

The Union Home Minister had stepped in last month to

sible under the conditions of the pandemic and lockdown.

"Internet connectivity in the country is still around 36% only. Access to online classes or examinations does not exist for a vast majority of our students, particularly the marginalised and those living in remote digitally unconnected parts in our country. This UGC direction is highly discriminatory and hence cannot be accepted," said the CPI(M) politburo in a statement.

The party said that educa-

ED raids tour and travel operators' offices



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has conducted searches under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) at eight different locations in the national Capital and neighbouring Ghaziabad on the premises of a number of tour and travel operators and associated chartered accountants and seized unaccounted cash amounting to ₹3.57 crore.

The searches at the residences and offices of Directors of the tour and travel companies besides the Chartered Accountants were conducted on Thursday that continued till next day. The searches yielded several incriminating documents and digital records besides the unaccounted cash, the agency said here on Saturday.

Investigations under FEMA, 1999 were initiated against various entities including tour and travel companies on the basis of specific inputs that these entities were involved

in unauthorized receipt of foreign remittances through payment gateways in the name of providing e-visa services to the foreigners, the ED said.

"Investigations conducted in the matter so far have revealed that two such entities received foreign remittance of more than ₹200 crores for processing Indian e-visa applications of foreigners without any authorisation from the Government of India," agency said in a statement.

The seizure of unaccounted cash of ₹3.57 Crores during the search operations has raised further suspicion about the operations of such entities and their blatant violation of the statutory requirements, it said.

Further investigation in the case is under progress to unravel the larger nexus of the syndicate and the intended purpose behind the suspicious transactions, officials added.

PTI ■ JAMMU

The All Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat Conference (AJKPC) Friday requested the Centre to order a comprehensive security audit of Panchayat members in all vulnerable areas.

The killing of political workers and elected Panchayat members is a matter of concern for all. Family members of our Sarpanches and Panches are living under constant fear in such

a hostile atmosphere. We appeal to the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister to direct the UT administration for early conduct of a security audit so that all Panchayat members in vulnerable areas are provided adequate security," Anil Sharma, UT president of AJKPC told a press conference.

The AJKPC leader, who was on a week-long visit to different Panchayats and Blocks in Kashmir Valley, said every

Panchayat member wants to contribute more for the development of his village and Panchayat, but their movement and activities are confined due to security reasons.

Blasting the Pakistani Army, the ISI and their nurtured terrorists' organisation, Sharma said they are unable to face the brave armed forces of India, so they target innocent civilians and PRI members.

What is interesting is that while India is at number three in the world in terms of case-load, in terms of fatalities, it is at number eight, Jaishankar said.

"We still have our challenges ahead, we are very conscious of it," he said.

Some countries had better testing capabilities like South Korea, while others like Germany had a strong ICU system, he said while speaking at the India Global Week 2020 via a video link.

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REPORT ON FORCED STERILISATION OF UIGHURS

China may sue researcher

Beijing: After several reports of the Chinese government torturing its ethnic minority community surfaced, the authorities are now considering to sue the researcher and think tank who are behind these revelations.

The Global Times has reported that German researcher Adrian Zenz and a think tank — Australian Strategic Policy Institute — will be sued for spreading "disinformation about China."

Recently, Mr. Zenz had revealed in his research that the sudden decline in the birth rate among the ethnic minority communities in Xinjiang might be an indication of the fact that the targeted birth prevention strategy is being conducted.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo condemned the coercive family planning against Uighurs and said that continuous repression of minorities in Xinjiang reflects that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has no respect for



human life and basic human rights.

"The United States condemns the use of forced population controls against Uighur and other minority women and calls on the CCP to cease its campaign of repression.

History will judge how we act today," he tweeted.

German researcher Adrian Zenz's shocking revelations are sadly consistent with decades of the CCP practices and ask all nations to join the United States in demanding an end to these dehumanising abuses." AGENCY

human life and basic human dignity," he said while adding "We call on the CCP to immediately end these horrific practices and ask all nations to join the United States in demanding an end to these dehumanising abuses." AGENCY

Trump says China relationship severely damaged, rules out phase 2 of trade deal

Washington: US President Donald Trump has for the time being ruled out a second phase trade deal with China, saying the relationship between the two countries has been severely damaged by Beijing's handling of the coronavirus outbreak.

"The relationship with China has been severely damaged. I don't think about it now," Trump told reporters on Friday from Air Force One when asked about the trade deal.

Earlier in the year, the Trump administration had signed a mega phase one deal with China, after intense negotiations between the two countries.

Relations between Washington and Beijing have spiralled downward since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus. US President Donald Trump has questioned the

Asian powerhouse's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two countries have also sparred over China imposing a new national security law in Hong Kong, restrictions on American journalists, treatment of Uighurs Muslims, and security measures in Tibet.

"Relationship with China has been severely damaged. They could have stopped the plague, they could have stopped it, (but) they didn't stop it. They stopped it from going into the remaining portions of China from Wuhan province. They could have stopped the plague, they didn't," Trump said.

The coronavirus, which first emerged in China's Wuhan city, has claimed over 1,30,000 lives in the US with 3.1 million confirmed cases. The virus toll in China stands at 4,641 with nearly 85,000 confirmed infections. PTI

Trump threatens to pull tax exemption for schools, colleges

Washington: In his push to get schools and colleges to reopen this fall, President Donald Trump is again taking aim at their finances, this time threatening their tax-exempt status.

Trump said on Twitter on Friday he was ordering the Treasury Department to re-examine the tax-exempt status of schools that he says provide "radical indoctrination" instead of education.

"Too many Universities and School Systems are about Radical Left Indoctrination, not Education," he tweeted.

"Therefore, I am telling the Treasury Department to re-examine their Tax-Exempt Status and/or Funding, which will be taken away if this Propaganda or Act Against Public Policy continues.

Our children must be Educated, not Indoctrinated!" The Republican president did not explain what prompted the remark or which schools would be reviewed.

But the threat is just one more that Trump has issued against schools as he ratchets up pressure to get them to open this fall. Twice this week Trump threatened to cut federal funding for schools that don't reopen, including in an earlier tweet on Friday.

It's unclear, however, on what grounds Trump could have a school's tax-exempt status terminated. It was also not

clear what Trump meant by "radical indoctrination" or who would decide what type of activity that includes.

The White House and Treasury Department did not immediately comment on the president's message.

Previous guidance from the Internal Revenue Service lays out six types of activities that can jeopardize a non-profit organisation's tax-exempt status, including political activity, lobbying and straying from the organization's stated purpose.

But ideology is not on the IRS's list, said Terry Hartle, senior vice president of the American Council on Education, which represents university presidents. Any review of a school's status would have to follow previously established guidelines, he said.

"It's always deeply troubling to have the president single out schools, colleges or universities in a tweet," Hartle said. "Having said that, I don't think anything will come of this quickly."

In his latest threat, Trump revived his oft-repeated claim that universities are bastions of liberal ideas. He used the same argument last year when he issued an executive order telling colleges to ensure free speech on campuses or lose federal research funding. AP

Trump working on executive order to establish merit-based immigration system: WH

Washington: President Donald Trump is working on an executive order to establish a merit-based immigration system in the US, the White House has said.

The White House statement came soon after Trump, in an interview with Spanish-language Telemundo News channel, said he is working on a negotiated legislative solution to DACA, one that could include citizenship, along with strong border security and permanent merit-based reforms. This does not include amnesty, the White House said.

"This does not include amnesty. Unfortunately, Democrats have continually refused these offers as they are opposed to anything other than totally open borders," said the White House in a statement.

During the interview, Trump alleged the Opposition Democrats broke the deal with him on the DACA.

"I had a deal with the Democrats and they broke the deal. The DACA could have been taken care of two years ago, but the Democrats broke the deal. All of a sudden they just broke it for no reason. Actually, they had a court case that slightly went their way, and they said, 'Oh, let's not talk about the deal anymore,'" he said.

Trump said the recent Supreme Court ruling gave the president tremendous powers when they said that he could take in, in this case, 700,000 or so people.

"Based on the powers that (SC) gave, I'm going to be doing an immigration bill. One of the aspects of the bill that you will be very happy with, and that a lot of people will be, including me and a lot of Republicans, by the way, will be the DACA. It will give them a road to citizenship," Trump said.

President Trump had tried to cancel the Obama-era programme, but the Supreme Court last month said it could stay in place.

Trump, who is seeking re-election in November, has long sought to overhaul the US immigration system to be based on merit rather than family ties. Immigration remains one of Trump's signature campaign issues.

"As the president announced today, he is working

15 people killed in Nepal landslides

Singapore: Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's People's Action Party has retained power with a "clear mandate" in the general election held amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, but the opposition staged its best performance ever by securing a record 10 seats in Parliament.

The People's Action Party (PAP), in power since 1965, won 83 of 93 parliamentary seats or 61.2 per cent of the vote - down from nearly 70 per cent it had in the 2015 general election. In 2015, the PAP secured 83 seats out of 89 seats in 29 constituencies.

The surprise this time was that the opposition Workers' Party secured 10 seats - its best result.

Friday's election was widely seen as a referendum on the Prime Minister Lee's handling of the coronavirus outbreak.

Singapore is currently facing the city state's worst recession with economy projected to shrink between 7 and 4 per cent.

Singapore is only a handful of countries to have held an election during the pandemic.

This was not a "feel-good"



election, said Lee. But he noted that the ruling PAP received a "clear mandate" from the people.

"We have a clear mandate, but the percentage of the popular vote is not as high as I had hoped for," 68-year old Lee told a PAP's post-results press conference on Saturday morning.

"Nevertheless, the results reflect broad-based support for the PAP," Lee said at a press conference marking the end of the election. Singaporeans understand what is at stake and why we must come together to uphold our national interests."

"I will use this mandate responsibly to deal with

COVID-19 and the economic downturn to take us through the crisis safely and beyond," he added.

Prime Minister Lee congratulated the Workers' Party for what he called a "strong performance."

The opposition Workers'

Party secured 10 seats and defeated a team in the Group Representation Constituency of Sengkang led by former Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Ng Chee Meng who is also the Secretary-General of the power National Trades Union Congress (NTUC).

"I congratulate the

Workers' Party for their strong performance," Lee, who leads the PAP as secretary-general, wrote in a Facebook post. "I look forward to them participating in and contributing to the debate in Parliament, and to the national debate, as we deal with the urgent issues before us."

Lee assured it is "only right" that Workers' Party's Indian-origin secretary-general Pritam Singh be "formally designated" as the Leader of the Opposition, and that he will be provided with "appropriate staff support and resources to perform his duties".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday congratulated his Singaporean counterpart for winning the general elections.

"Congratulations to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong for success in the General Elections. Best wishes to the people of Singapore for a peaceful and prosperous future," Modi wrote on Twitter.

The son of country's founding father and long-time ruler Lee Kuan Yew, Lee has been in office since 2004. For the second time in

Oli says intra-party disputes can be resolved through dialogue as NCP again postpones its meeting

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Under mounting pressure to resign, Nepal's beleaguered Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has downplayed the intra-party rift and said such disputes are "regular phenomena" that can be resolved through dialogue, as a crucial meeting of the ruling party was postponed by a week to give more time to the warring factions to reach a power-sharing deal.

Prime Minister Oli also vowed to protect Nepal's sovereignty and territorial integrity, amidst a border row with India.

In a previously unannounced address to the nation on Friday night, hours after the crucial Standing Committee meeting of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) was

postponed for the fourth time, Oli said that it is the duty of a political party and its leaders to resolve the internal matters and disputes.

The meeting of the NCP's 45-member powerful Standing Committee was scheduled to be held on Friday. But it was postponed for a week at the last moment, citing floods and landslides that killed at least 22 people.

Top NCP leaders, including former prime minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', have demanded Prime Minister Oli's resignation, saying his recent anti-India remarks were "neither politically correct nor diplomatically appropriate." But in his prime-time address, Oli tried to downplay the intra-party rift and growing demand for his resignation. PTI

Dozens of US Marines in Japan's Okinawa get virus

Tokyo: Dozens of US Marines at two bases on the southern Japanese island of Okinawa have been infected with the coronavirus in what is feared to be a massive outbreak, Okinawa's governor said on Saturday, demanding an adequate explanation from the US military.

Gov. Denny Tamaki said he could say only that a "few dozen" cases had been found recently because the US military asked that the exact figure not be released. The outbreaks occurred at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, which is at the center of a relocation dispute, and Camp Hansen, Tamaki said.

Local media, citing unnamed sources, said about 60 people had been infected.

Okinawans are shocked by what we were told (by the US military)," Tamaki told a news conference. "We now have strong doubts that the US military has taken adequate disease prevention measures."

Tamaki demanded transparency in the latest development and said he planned to request talks between the US military and Okinawan officials. He said Okinawan officials also asked the Japanese government to demand that the US provide details including the number of cases, seal off Futenma and Camp Hansen, and step up preventive measures on base.

Okinawan officials made similar requests to the US military on Friday in order to address local residents' concerns, Tamaki said.

The Marines said in a statement on Friday that the troops were taking additional protective measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus and

were restricting off-base activities. The statement said measures are "to protect our forces, our families, and the local community," without providing details on the infections.

The Marines did not immediately respond on Saturday to an Associated Press inquiry about the latest outbreak.

Okinawa is home to more than half of about 50,000 American troops based in Japan under a bilateral security pact, and the residents are sensitive to US base-related problems.

Many Okinawans also oppose a planned relocation of the Futenma air base from the current site in a densely populated area in the south to a less populated area on the east coast.

AP

demonstrators in the Russian Far East city of Khabarovsk have held a protest against the arrest of the region's governor on charges of involvement in multiple murders.

The Saturday demonstration in the city 6100 kilometers (3800 miles) east of Moscow was unsanctioned but no arrests were reported. Local news media gave estimates of the crowd ranging from 5,000 to 35,000.

Sergei Furgal, the Khabarovsk region governor, was arrested Thursday and flown to Moscow where he was interrogated and ordered held in jail for two months.

Russia's main criminal investigation body says he is suspected of involvement in several murders of businessmen in 2004 and 2005, before his political career began. AP

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"As the president announced today, he is working

UNESCO regrets Turkish move to convert Hagia Sophia into mosque

United Nations: The UN's cultural agency has voiced deep regret over Turkey's decision, "made without prior discussion", to convert Istanbul's iconic sixth-century Hagia Sophia into a mosque, saying its status as a museum reflects the universal nature of its heritage and alike.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan signed a decree following years of campaigning by a cultural association, and the decision earlier in the day by a Turkish court, handing control of the building over to the nation's religious directorate, allowing it to reopen for worship as a mosque, the UN said in a statement.

"Hagia Sophia is an architectural masterpiece and a unique testimony to interactions between Europe and Asia over the centuries. Its status as a museum reflects the universal nature of its heritage, and

makes it a powerful symbol for dialogue," UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said in a statement on Friday.

Azoulay said that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) "deeply regrets" the decision of the Turkish authorities, "made without prior discussion, to change the status of Hagia Sophia" and shared her serious concern with the Ambassador of Turkey to the UN cultural agency.

Responding to questions on the issue, UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said at his daily press briefing that the UN Secretary-General fully backs UNESCO. PTI

5 killed as gunmen storm church in S Africa over leadership battle between two factions

Johannesburg: Five people were shot dead and over 40 suspects arrested after a heavily-armed group stormed a prominent South African church near here and held several people hostage reportedly following a battle between two factions over its leadership.

Police reportedly freed about 200 people who had taken refuge inside International Pentecostal Holiness Church in Zwartekom, west of here after attackers arrived in several vehicles in the early hours of Saturday and began shooting randomly inside and outside the church.

National police spokesman Brigadier Vish Naidoo said that four men were shot and

Indian economy showing signs of returning to normalcy: RBI Govt

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian economy has started showing signs of returning to normalcy in response to the staggered easing of lockdown restrictions, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Saturday.

He further said the need of the hour is to restore confidence, preserve financial stability, revive growth and recover stronger. "The Indian economy has started showing signs of getting back to normalcy in response to the staggered easing of restrictions," Das said at the 7th SBI Banking and Economics Conclave.

Indian companies and industries respond better in a crisis, he noted. Das, however, said it is still uncertain when supply chains will be restored fully, how long it will take for demand conditions to normalise, and what kind of durable effects the pandemic will leave behind on potential growth.

According to him, targeted and comprehensive reform

measures already announced by the government should help in supporting growth. Possibly in a vastly different post-COVID global environment, reallocation of factors of production within the economy and innovative ways of expanding economic activity could lead to some rebalancing and emergence of new growth drivers, Das added.

The central bank, he said, strives to maintain the balance between preserving financial stability, maintaining banking system soundness and sustaining economic activity.

"Post containment of COVID-19, a very careful trajectory has to be followed in orderly unwinding of counter-cyclical regulatory measures," he said.

The financial sector should return to normal functioning without relying on the regulatory relaxations as the new norm, he added.

He said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has reduced policy rates by 250 basis points since February

2019 to support growth.

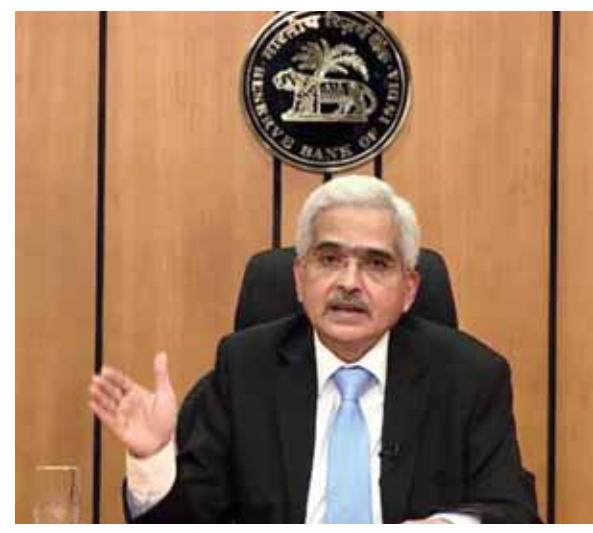
The conventional and unconventional monetary policy and liquidity measures by RBI have been aimed at restoring market confidence, alleviating liquidity stress, easing financial conditions, unfreezing credit markets and augmenting the flow of financial resources to those in need for productive purposes, he said.

"The broader objective was to mitigate risks to the growth outlook while preserving financial stability," he added.

Das said despite the substantial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's financial system, including all the payment systems and financial markets, are functioning without any hindrance.

"RBI is making continuous assessment of the changing trajectory of financial stability risks and upgrading its own supervisory framework to ensure that financial stability is preserved," he said.

Banks and financial intermediaries have to be ever vig-



ilant and substantially upgrade their capabilities with respect to governance, assurance functions and risk culture, Das noted.

The Governor also said banks will have to improve their governance, sharpen their risk management and raise capital in an anticipatory basis instead of waiting for a situa-

tion to arise.

He said as the lockdown has obstructed RBI's on-site supervision to an extent, the central bank is further enhancing its off-site surveillance mechanism. The objective of the off-site surveillance system would be to 'smell the distress,' if any, and be able to initiate pre-emptive actions, he added.

'Need legally-backed 'resolution corporation' to deal with stressed financial firms'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Saturday advocated the creation of a 'resolution corporation' with legislative backing for resolution and revival of stressed financial firms.

The Government in August 2017 had introduced the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance (FRDI) Bill in Parliament which, among other things, proposed setting up of a resolution corporation.

However, after a year, the government decided to withdraw the bill as there were concerns raised about the protection of depositors' money if it was passed with the controversial "bail-in" clause, under which a bank's liabilities could be cancelled/modified to shore up its finances. "Going for-

ward, we need the legislative backing to have some kind of a resolution corporation, which has to deal with resolution and revival of stressed financial firms," Governor Das said at the 7th SBI Banking and Economics Conclave. He said the regulator can issue early warning signals and flag the emerging risks.

"The regulator will continue to take necessary measures, continue to engage with the management of the bank or NBFCs to identify the vulnerabilities, but there has to be a legally-backed arrangement," he noted.

The governor said setting up a resolution corporation was earlier part of the FRDI Bill which the government withdrew because there were certain issues which needed closer examination.

He further said the notification issued under Section 227 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has given additional powers to the RBI to deal with non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs).

By using those powers, the RBI had appointed an administrator for Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL) and that has been referred to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), he said.

DHFL, the third-largest pure-play mortgage player, is the first NBFC/HFC to face the corporate insolvency resolution process. Das said the resolution of DHFL is on stream now. "That is going on fairly well. We review it, we do monitor it from time to time," he added.

Rate cut helping deliver growth is not working in simplistic way: Rathin Roy

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Senior economist Rathin Roy Son Saturday said the assumption that rate cut helping deliver growth is not working in simplistic way as transmission is not happening.

Rathin Roy, director of National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) - a think tank backed by the Finance Ministry, said the assumptions on linear relationships between rate cuts resulting in growth by lowering the cost of capital is not working for some time now.

"I am not persuaded by the RBI's monetary policy state-

ments, including that of the governor, regarding the rush down for these rate cuts. I heard him (Governor) just before this session and I continue to not being convinced," Roy said at Annual Economics Conference organised by State Bank of India. Roy was also a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, who addressed the gathering before the economists' panel, reduced rates by a cumulative 1.15 per cent in two moves since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, on the top of over one percentage point cuts before

that with an eye on the sagging growth, which slipped to 4.2 per cent in FY20. "It is very clear that this assumption (of rate cuts delivering growth) is not working in a simplistic way for some time now. Transmission is not happening," Roy said. He also said there is an "additional danger" posed by the lack of any known analysis done by the RBI on whether we are getting into what he termed as a J-part of the interest rate curve". Roy also expressed concerns on the collateral free lending scheme as not making the cut from a regulations perspective.

"That's actually breaking

Expressed concerns on the collateral free lending scheme as not making the cut from a regulations perspective

your own regulations, hopefully for a noble purpose. I would like to know what that noble purpose is." The noble purpose I can discern can only come from one place: the lack of action in terms of direct income support by the government," he said.

It can be noted that as part of the Centre's stimulus package, a ₹3 lakh crore collateral-free lending scheme has been announced for a limited period for helping small businesses come out of the crisis. Only existing borrowers will be given money under the scheme, which has government guarantee.

'Banks need to raise capital on anticipatory basis'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Banks need to raise capital on anticipatory basis to build up adequate capital buffers to mitigate risks arising out of coronavirus outbreak, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Saturday.

He said building buffers and raising capital will be crucial not only to ensure credit flow but also to build resilience in the financial system."In such a situation, it has become a lot more important that the banks have to improve their governance, sharpen their risk management skills and banks have to raise capital on an anticipatory basis instead of waiting for a situation to arise.

"Proactively, it is necessary for both public and private sector banks to build up adequate capital buffers," Das said at SBI's banking and economic conclave.

The economic impact of the pandemic - due to lockdown and anticipated post-lockdown compression in economic growth - may result in higher non-performing assets and capital erosion of banks, he said.

A recapitalisation plan for public sector and private banks has, therefore, become necessary, he added. For the five years - between 2015-16 and 2019-20 - the Government had infused a total of ₹3.08 lakh crore in public sector banks.

However, the Government

refrained from committing any capital in the Budget 2020-21 for the PSBs, hoping that the lenders will raise funds from the market depending on the requirement.

Many private and public sectors such as State Bank of India, PNB, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Canara Bank are looking to raise capital through various means this fiscal.

The governor also asked banks and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) to conduct stress test to analyse the impact of COVID-19 on their balance sheets and prepare a plan for any possible risk.

The RBI has recently (June 19 and July 1, 2020) advised all

banks, non-deposit taking NBFCs (with an asset size of ₹5,000 crore) and all deposit-taking NBFCs to assess the impact of COVID-19 on their balance sheet, asset quality, liquidity, profitability and capital adequacy for the financial year 2020-21, Das said.

Based on the outcome of such stress testing, banks and non-banking financial companies have been advised to work out possible mitigating measures, including capital planning, capital raising, and contingency liquidity planning, among others," he added. The idea is to ensure continued credit supply to different sectors of the economy and maintain financial stability, the governor noted.

Apple deploys new Nokia data centre products in Denmark

IANS ■ HELSINKI

Apple is deploying a new line of Nokia data centre switching products at its Denmark facility to improve its efficiency, the Finnish equipment maker has said. According to Nokia, it has redefined data centre fabrics with the launch of a new and modern Network Operating System and a declarative, intent-based automation and operations toolkit. This will allow Cloud and data centre builders to scale and adapt operations in the face of exponential traffic growth and constant change brought on from technology shifts like 5G and Industry 4.0.

The new Nokia Service

Router Linux (SR Linux) NOS and Nokia Fabric Service Platform were co-developed with leading global companies, including Apple. "We regularly upgrade our data center equipment with technology to increase efficiency and reduce energy consumption. Using Nokia's new system will enable better networking and routing capabilities in our Viborg, Denmark facility," Adam Bechtel, Vice President and Networking lead at Apple, said in a statement.

Facing massive growth in demand for cloud-based applications and use of new technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Augmented Reality.

Healthcare spends, making India slum-free should be Govt's priority: Experts

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Government can turn COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity by investing in healthcare, and it should also pursue making all the cities slum-free by 2023, according to economists.

At the seventh economic conclave - organised by State Bank of India on Saturday, there was an unanimity among the economists on laying greater thrust on decentralisation in policy-making in the future, as a one size fits all approach may not work always.

India at present has the third highest number of COVID-19 cases after the US and Brazil, and has already lost over 22,000 people.

"Its very concerning that a lot of this discussion of the Atmanirbhar (Bharat) package or other packages are not talking at all about what investments are taking place in the health sector. How much are we spending on testing, basic information campaigns.

"This is a health induced crisis, you got to respond to that in order to respond to the economy," Rohini Pande, who is associated with Yale University, said. India has historically under-invested in health and the increase is not very much right now as well, she said, stressing that we need to recognise that for economic recovery, humanitarian and

Reliance closes deal with 4 investors, gets ₹30,062 crore

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

After Facebook Inc, Reliance Industries has closed deals to sell a minority stake in its digital arm to four other investors, receiving a total of ₹30,062 crore.

In a regulatory filing, Reliance said it has closed sale of 6.13 per cent stake in Jio Platforms with L Catterton, The Public Investment Fund, Silver Lake and General Atlantic.

Reliance had sold a total of 25.09 per cent stake in the subsidiary which houses India's youngest but largest telecom firm, Jio, to 11 investors for ₹1,17,588.45 crore.

It had earlier this week closed the deal with the biggest investor Facebook when it received ₹43,574 crore from Jaadhu Holdings, LLC (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Facebook Inc).

Jio Platforms Ltd has allotted equity shares to Jaadhu Holdings following which Jaadhu Holdings holds 9.99 per cent of the fully diluted equity share capital of Jio Platforms Ltd, the company had said on July 7.

Now, Intersteller Platform Holdings Pte Ltd of L Catterton has paid ₹1,89,450 crore for a 0.39 per cent stake in Jio Platforms.

Petrol, diesel futures trading to start soon on exchanges

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) may soon allow futures trading in auto fuels petrol and diesel giving an opportunity to bulk consumers of these petroleum products to hedge their risks from a volatile market where there is a sudden spurt in prices.

Sources said that petroleum ministry has approved the plan to allow trading of petroleum products in the derivative market and the commodity exchanges would be able to launch petrol and diesel futures soon after SEBI releases its final regulations in this regard.

Futures are financial contracts which help the buyer to purchase a commodity, or the seller to sell the commodity, at a predetermined future date

and at a predetermined price. In the case of petrol and diesel, the derivative product would involve buying a specified quantity of the at a specified price with delivery set at a specified time in the future. In a rising market where prices of fuel is going up, the futures product would protect the participant from losing out as the financial product would hedge the risk and ensure uniform pricing of the commodity.

"It is a good development as it will allow industrial and bulk consumers of the two petroleum products to hedge their risks. But in current market conditions, in the absence of a big pick up in demand oil prices are either stable or falling, hedging would work against the interest of participants as it would add up to the cost of hedging," said an oil sec-

tor analyst asking not to be named. Currently futures trading is allowed in crude oil giving opportunity to refiners to hedge their risks against frequent price fluctuations. The addition of petrol and diesel with give them another instrument to hedge their refining margins.

Sources said that as current market conditions may not be conducive for a futures market in petroleum products, it may wait before intruding the new product in the market.

Petrol and diesel futures in any case will not benefit retail customers as the quantum of fuel used by them would be low. SEBI may allow derivative products with a floor of say 100 litre of petrol and diesel. This will be too high a level for retail customers to participate in the futures market.

Balance of Payment surplus of \$60 billion this year due to lower crude price and falling imports. It is a big surprise that amid such strong FDI inflows, the rupee is still not strengthening as the RBI is mopping up all dollars to the reserves."

According to Sajal Gupta, Head, Forex and Rates, Edelweiss Securities: "The rupee appreciated swiftly to ₹74.52 per dollar due to large FDI flows and rising equity markets and then weakened to ₹75.20 on the back of the RBI's efforts to mop up dollars to shore up reserves which stand at a record high of \$513 billion dollars."

"India is expected to see a

enough for the rupee to break free from its current range.

The Indian rupee has been caught in a flux of higher FDI inflows and swelling foreign exchange reserves, thereby restricting its future movement around the ₹75 per US dollar mark. Analysts opined that the rupee is caught between higher foreign inflows and the Reserve Bank of India's efforts to shore up reserves.

Even a lower import bill and stable exports do not seem

over the next few weeks, with volatility remaining at a low."

"With the RBI continually increasing its forex reserves and investment in dollar via forward contracts, a floor seems to be placed below ₹75 levels on spot," Anindya Banerjee, DVP, Currency and Rates, Kotak Securities, told IANS.

"The upside is also capped due to improving sentiments in the equity and bond markets. All in all, we are looking at a range of Rs 74.80 to Rs 75.80

and stable exports do not seem

to be enough for the rupee to break free from its current range.

According to Sajal Gupta, Head, Forex and Rates, Edelweiss Securities: "The rupee appreciated swiftly to ₹74.52 per dollar due to large FDI flows and rising equity markets and then weakened to ₹75.20 on the back of the RBI's efforts to mop up dollars to shore up reserves."

Besides, he pointed out that imports have slowed down at a faster pace as domestic economy looks weaker compared with global markets.

Presently, India's foreign exchange reserves increased

by \$6.416 billion during the week ended July 3.

The reserves grew to \$513.254 billion from \$506.838 billion reported for the week ended June 26. Last month, official data showed India posted a marginal current account surplus in Q4FY20 on the back of a lower trade deficit, along with higher remittances, and an increase in investment flows. The current account is the net difference between inflows and outflows of foreign currencies.

SEARCH FOR MISSING BOY

General public is hereby informed that one boy Namely: Mohammad Muntazir, S/o: Nasim Akhtar, R/o: T-3376, Near Balmiki Mandir, Prem Nagar Road, Baljeet Nagar, Delhi-110008. Age: 13years, Height: 4'1", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Medium, Wearing: Blue colour lower, T-shirt, Hawali chappal in feet has been missing since 27.06.2020 from the area of P.S. Patel Nagar, Delhi.

In this regard a FIR No. 310/20, U/s 363 IPC dated 29.06.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Patel Nagar, Delhi.

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

ROAD LESS TRAVELED

SHALINI SAKSENA speaks with **VISHAKHA FULSUNGE**, the country's first woman motovlogger about what got her interested in riding and experiences from her travels

She loved to compete with the boys in her area and do one better. She was in primary school when the neighbourhood boys bought themselves BMX cycles and she had no intentions to be left behind and insisted that her father buy her a cycle as well. She got a girl bike which she rejected on sight. She wanted the one that the boys were riding. When she was in Class VIII they graduated to motorbike and she also wanted one. Since then there has been no stopping this 26-year-old — the country's first motovlogger. Meet Vishakha Fulsunge who has three Indian Book of Records to her name for her feat. The first, India's first woman to ride solo to Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The third is on the way.

For those who don't know who or what a motovlogger is, he is a person who shoots a video log while riding a motorcycle. While her parents may have indulged her and told her to follow her passion, it was not very easy for Fulsunge to reach where she is today. She tells you that it is tough to be a rider in this country especially if you are a woman.

There have been a couple of instances where Fulsunge has had to resort to threats to get a room in a hotel. "I ride alone. When I am all geared up people can't tell whether I am a man or a woman. But the minute I take off the helmet, there is no hiding. Sometimes I ride long hours but other times I take short breaks. As a woman rider I can't pitch a tent anywhere. When I went to this hotel and asked for a room, he refused. I understood that he thought that since I was a woman and alone, he could take me for a ride and I would beg. Instead, I threatened him and told him that I was recording whatever he had said. He had not expected that and finally relented and gave the room," Fulsunge recounts.

Another time, she ended up getting the fright on her life while taking a parikrama of the Narmada River. It had got late and she took a wrong turn and it took her on a narrow kuccha narrow lane. Soon she reached a dead end and realised there were three men squatting and staring at her, walked up to her and asked: *Aur chhori kahan ja rahe hai.* "That really scared me but I knew if I showed fear they would pounce so I calmly without looking at them turned the bike, it took a bit of back and forth since there was no space and rode out of there like there was a fire on my trial. It was dark and on a bike the headlights give light only in front. In a jungle one doesn't know from where the danger can come," Fulsunge tells you.

Then there is the whole issue of toilets. "It is not easy to leave all the gear on the bike and go to the washroom. It takes ages to take off all the protective gear and wear it again. Also, when I take a break to eat, I have to park the bike where I can see it all the time or pick a snack I can eat on the go," Fulsunge says.

Then there have been some serious accidents that she has met with. An acci-

“ WHEN I FIRST STARTED TO GO ON RIDES ALL ALONE, BUYING THE GEAR WAS A CHALLENGE. TO BEGIN WITH, YOU JUST CAN'T GET ONTO ANY BIKE AND BECOME A RIDER. YOUR MACHINE AND YOU HAVE TO GET USED TO LONG HOURS OF BEING ON THE ROAD. FOR THIS, THE BIKE HAS TO BE IN PRISTINE CONDITION AS WELL AS YOU TO BE ABLE TO TAKE LONG HOURS OF RIDING ”



rider. "When I first started to go on rides all alone, buying the gear was a challenge. To begin with, you just can't get onto any bike and become a rider. Your machine and you have to get used to long hours of being on the road. For this the bike has to be in pristine condition and so should you be, to be able to take long hours of riding," Fulsunge says.

She also had to get used to wearing all the protective gear. It took her two years before she could buy proper riding gear. This includes a jacket and we all know the price of a good quality jacket in the country. In a country like India, where it is hot nine out of the 12 months, the jacket that she has to wear has to be special, that which has to withstand extreme heat and extreme cold since she has traveled the length and breadth of the country excluding North-east which is on her wish list and she all set to go there when the lockdown was announced. Her plans have had to be put on hold but not for long, she tells you.

"Back then, it was extremely difficult to get quality products in the market. I would ask my friend or acquaintance who would travel abroad to get me the gear that I needed," she tells you.

More so, because Fulsunge had decided she would pursue her passion under her steam and not borrow money from her parents. For this, even she was still a teenager, she took up jobs that came her way.

"When I was in college, I used to earn money by asking people to fill coupons. I would save up for months on end to buy what I needed. I was also very confident and could chat with people easily. I am also unlike most bike riders. I am petite. People take to me easily. There was an event at a mall in Mumbai where I was working when I saw that the organisers were a bit agitated. I came to know that their host had not turned up. I told them I could do it. It was the best event that the company had had in a long time and I walked away with Rs 4000. Slowly, my earnings increased and bought my gear and then started vlogging. Today, there are many companies that cater to women riders and it has become easy to source the protective gear. It is still expensive though," Fulsunge says.

Then there are knee-high boots with special soles to protect the feet from all the grit that hits when you ride. The length of the boot is to protect the legs from road burns if she falls. Riding pants and gloves are just as important. She tells you that a riding jacket costs ₹25,000 depending on the level of protection, pants ₹18,000, a helmet ₹22,000, gloves ₹5000 and boots another ₹25,000.

Interestingly, before she started her channel, she completed her integrated MBA. "In our country, people give importance to a degree and not skillsets. I wanted to pursue degree. But I also knew that I was the kind to be tied to a 9 am to 5 pm job. I love what I do. Yes, there are perils that come with it but the freedom that it gives me, makes me happy," Fulsunge says.

dent last year put her in the ICU. Her mother was a pillar of strength. While people told her that maybe her riding days were over, it was her mother who told her that her bike whom she has named Kashish is waiting for her at home. It was only once Fulsunge was home, after three months, that her

mother broke down and cried. Since then, she has a few people who are immediately contacted if her bike falls. There is an app that she has synced to her phone and any jolt sends a message to people listed as emergency contacts.

There are safety measures that she devised. One of them is a ponytail that

she has attached to her helmet which has pink ponies to let people know she is a woman rider and not to touch her. At night, the ponytail is out for the same reason — she doesn't want people to know she is a woman rider.

It is not just about people giving her strange looks because she is a woman

dharam gurus and Hema Malini ji we started the campaign in Rishikesh. At that time, my father was the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand at that time and the campaign was a Government project. However, there was no certainty that the next Chief Minister will have the same feelings for the campaign, so we privatised it. And now, more than 5.5 lakh people from around the world are associated with this campaign," Nishank tells you.

Her passion for Kathak came from her mother. "My mother was a Kathak dancer. She left all of us at an early age. Seeing her photos where she is all dressed up in classical attire and performing Kathak, I got interested in the dance form and started pursuing it when I was in Class VIII. The thought that some day I would also look that beautiful in the classical attire excited me a lot. Also by God's grace, my family has that values and virtues that we are automatically inclined towards Indian culture," she tells you.

This is not it. In 2016, she also boosted the Clean Ganga Initiative through her Kathak shows *Ganga Tujhe Salam* in Dubai and UAE. The purpose of these shows was educating the NRIs about the importance of River Ganga and its cleanliness. Even her compositions and choreography like *Ganga Avataran*, a story of Goddess Ganga coming to earth, and *Sajda*, a classical Kathak dance performance are based on the Sufiyana theme.

"Being from the young generation, I know that the best way to give out a social message is to do it in an entertaining way. I have studied in Toronto, and have had a lot of friends from India and abroad. Whenever we conversed, I realised that it is not like our generation isn't concerned about anything, they do care about our culture and environment. But the fact is they don't want to see it in the

“ I ALWAYS HAD THIS THING IN THE BACK OF MY MIND THAT ONE DAY I WILL CREATE A SOCIETY WHERE WOMEN WILL BE CREATING SYNERGY WITH EACH OTHER AND WHERE ONE PLUS ONE WILL BE 11 ”



about the benefits of Ayurveda and to create employment.

The sense of empathy strike Nishank at an early age, all thanks to her being the eldest daughter of the family. "I have two younger sisters, and everyone knows that the eldest in the family is automatically more responsible towards the family. That was the case with me. As I grew up, I became responsible towards my career and when I achieved that, I realised that I am responsible to bring in good things to our society as well. That is how I started doing all the social work," she tells you.

What made her play an active role in women empowerment, she says, is the reason that a woman's greatest enemy is a woman. "We all have heard the saying once in a while, but somehow we never understood its depth and essence. Gradually, when you grow up and face a lot of politics in your respective fields, you realise how true it is. I faced a lot of difficulties in my life. Sometimes when you are pretty, you are bullied, you are pushed around by other girls and people are judgemental about you because of who your parents are. Having faced all this, since a very young age, I always had this thing in the back of my mind that one day I will create a society where women will be creating synergy with each other and where one plus one will not be two but 11," she says.

She adds that in Uttarakhand women are the bread earners of the family. "These women are the best exam-

ple of women empowerment. They are so mentally and physically strong that no one can even dare to touch them. To help these women even more, we with the help of other women from different countries came up with policies at IWEP in Dubai," she tells you.

With the help of NGOs in Uttarakhand, Nishank also helped in generating more employment opportunities for these ladies. "We used Vimal tree's bark to make a fabric out of it. The bark was also used by these women to make baskets. This not only created employment opportunities for 800 women of Uttarakhand, but also acted as a substitute for plastic. Then we used the flowers and petals that were drained into Ganga to make scent sticks, this further gave employment to around 200 women. The numbers are small but we plan to grow even more," Nishank tells you.

She recalls a story that she says was the introduction of women power to her: "It was my school days and I was in Rajasthan. One day, I saw a member of the hostel staff who lived nearby, she made her toddler sit on a charpoy/khat and placed a tub underneath it. She then bathed her son and utilised the water to wash her clothes and gave the remaining to the animals. She didn't waste a single drop of water. We have been using the ornamental words like reuse and recycle for decades now, but the real essence of these words is known by our women who are doing it since eternity. That was a wake up call for me to understand a woman's brain."

Being a film producer, there were certain Bollywood films on Nishank's cards which are now on hold. "Keeping in mind the current situation, all those projects are now on hold. But we are eyeing the digital space at the moment. We shall come up with something soon," she tells you.

Young and beautiful at heart

She dons several hats and that is what sets her apart from others. **ARUSHI NISHANK** tells **MUSBA HASHMI** how she got interested in social work and how she is using her dancing skills to give out a social message

At an age, when most people focus on their career and yearn for name and fame, this leading lady thought of giving it back to Nature. When children are busy playing around with mud and building sand castles, this young heart realised the importance of preserving and respecting Mother Nature.

Meet a 33-year-old social activist, environmentalist, youngpreneur, film producer and dancer, Arushi Nishank. It is not easy for Nishank to don several hats, it took years of effort, hard work and not to mention eternal dedication.

Having been born in Kotdwara, Uttarakhand, Nishank always feel

Late wickets boost Windies hopes



Dom Sibley raises his bat to celebrate his fifty runs during fourth day AP

AFP ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Zak Crawley stepped up with the highest score of his short Test career as England established a hard-fought lead but a late surge from

the West Indies bowlers left the tourists sensing a day five victory at the Ageas Bowl.

After losing just three wickets in the first two sessions England blinks late in the day, seeing their next five go down

1st Test, Day 5
Live from 3:30pm IST
SONY SIX NETWORK

for just 30 runs as they closed 170 ahead on 284 for eight.

The hosts had threatened to take real control for the first time in the match when Crawley joined captain Ben Stokes in a stand of 98 for the fourth wicket, but when Stokes fell for 46 and Crawley followed for 76 moments later the tone dramatically shifted.

Azari Joseph and Shannon Gabriel shared four wickets in the final hour, with Jason Holder responsible for Stokes' scalp for the second time this week.

None of what followed should take away from Crawley's efforts, the 22-year-old showing maturity beyond both his years and his five international caps to produce the highest score of the match amid high tension.

It may prove to be the moment he leapfrogged Kent team-mate Joe Denly in the selector's eyes but there is plenty to do in this match before focus shifts to Joe Root's return at Emirates Old Trafford next week.

Openers Rory Burns and Dom Sibley laid a firm foundation, soaking up 10 taxing overs on the third evening and then continuing their good work in the morning session.

Resuming on 15 without loss they settled early to their task, quickly getting on top of the West Indies attack who laboured without joy for an hour. There was a slight hint of deterioration in the pitch —

BROAD SHOULD BE PLAYING EVERY TEST MATCH: CORK

SOUTHAMPTON: Former England pacer Dominic Cork has backed Stuart Broad, saying the ace pacer has every reason to be angry as he should be playing every Test match.

Veteran pacer James Anderson was given the nod alongside Mark Wood and Jofra Archer as Broad had to be content with following the action from the bench.

"Absolutely I agree with him," Cork was quoted as saying by Sky Sports. "It's a big decision to leave someone out of his quality."

"Look at what he's done, not just over the last two years, and how well he has bowled, but throughout his career."

Holder persuading one to keep low to Burns and seeing another draw blood when it leapt into Sibley's elbow.

Things tightened considerably after the drinks break and, after just 11 runs in 13 overs, Burns' patience snapped as he slashed a short ball from Roston Chase straight into John Campbell's hands at backward point. He hung his head before departing, his hard-won score of 42 thrown away.

Sibley pressed on with Denly at his side, eventually reaching 50 from 161 deliveries. He prodded at his 162nd and saw an inside edge splay his stumps, only for third umpire Michael Gough to hush Gabriels'

"He always seems to have to prove himself to people what a superb bowler he's been. He and Jimmy Anderson are up there with the best pairings in world cricket."

"Of course he should be frustrated, of course he should be angry."

"He should be playing every Test match so, fair enough, come out and put the people who've made this decision under pressure and say 'I want to be in this side, I deserve to be in this side, this is my shirt.'

"Let's see what happens, whether he plays in the next Test match," he added.

IANS

celebrations by calling a very tight no-ball.

The Trinidadian was visibly agitated but he returned to his mark and finished the job two balls later, Sibley caught down the leg side in an increasingly familiar fashion.

Denly was out next, for his Test average of 29, when he tamely lobbed Chase to the waiting Holder at short mid-wicket. By that point Crawley

was already looking a more fluent source of runs, scoring more briskly than his county colleague.

He accelerated his scoring either side of tea and reached his half-century in 80 balls with his fourth boundary off

Chase, a neat reverse sweep.

With Stokes looking confident and driving crisply at the other end the lead had swelled to 97 when the second new ball arrived. Gabriel was loose with it initially, conceding 13 in an over as Crawley moved past his previous top score of 66 and Stokes took back-to-back fours.

The fourth-wicket pair soon had the best stand of the match — topping 81 between Chase and Shane Dowrich — and were two short of the century when Stokes fell.

For the second time in a row he was beaten by his opposite number, stepping across his stumps to Holder and edging to the first of two gully fielders. His timing had been good but his footwork perhaps too busy for its own good.

There was time yet for Crawley to define the day but he joined his captain in the very next over, aiming Joseph towards the on-side but feeding a leading edge straight back to the seamer.

The picture had changed rapidly, with England's 139-run lead suddenly looking far thinner than it had just minutes before.

Jos Buttler was wholly unable to improve things, reversing an lbw on five only to be cleaned up by Joseph for nine. The final word went to Gabriel, who went hard at the stumps in his last burst, casting Dom Bess and Ollie Pope to finish with three for 62 and place his team in the ascendance.



Rahane wants to make ODI comeback

NEW DELHI: India Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane is trusting his instincts to make an ODI comeback, a format he last played in February 2018.

The 32-year-old said he is mentally preparing himself to play all three formats.

"I am ready to bat at any position in ODI cricket, whether opening or No 4 or whatever, I am ready. My instinct answers yes, I want to make a comeback in ODI cricket," Rahane told ESPNcricinfo Cricketbaazi.

"But when the opportunity will come, we don't know. Mentally I am preparing to play all the formats. It is all about being positive yourself and about your abilities."

To make an ODI comeback will be tougher than ever considering the stiff competition. He will be comfortable batting at four but fellow Mumbaikar Shreyas Iyer has secured that spot for now. The team also has a settled opening pair in Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan.

"I have enjoyed opening the innings, but I don't mind batting at number 4 if I am asked to. I have enjoyed both roles," he said when asked which position he would prefer in ODI cricket.

"It is very hard to suddenly open the innings and adjust to it after you have been batting at No 4 for a while, which I had done. It is hard to say which position I prefer. I can do well in both," said Rahane who has played 90 ODIs.

Rahane has also played in 65 Tests, the last being in February this year. He has also not been a part of the Indian T20 team for nearly four years.

Asked about his approach in T20s, he said, "I don't try and copy anyone in T20 cricket. My cricketing shots are inside out, behind the bowler, and other shots I have developed."

"I think if you are sure of your shots, you should back them. If I am playing 18 overs, I aim to see how I can get my strike rate to 150-160."

Rahane said it's important to break down innings in T20 cricket. "For example, if I am batting after sixth over, I have to plan accordingly."

He said he got advice from the great Rahul Dravid that it does not matter whether a shot looks good or not as long as the runs are coming.

"Sometimes the shots you play in T20s don't look good. But Rahul bhai told me not to bother about what the shots look like, whether it's bad or looks bad from outside. He said it does not matter. He said in T20 cricket, one needs to watch the ball and hit it," he added.

PTI

Trinidad and Tobago to host entire CPL

PORT OF SPAIN: The entire Caribbean Premier League 2020 will be played in Trinidad and Tobago from August 18 to September 10 as the organisers got the approval from the local Government.

Though international cricket has already begun, CPL will be the first T20 league to take place after the Covid-19 forced break.

Strict safety procedures will be in place for the tournament to minimise the risk of virus transmission to the local population and among those who will be travelling to Trinidad and Tobago from overseas.

All teams and officials will be housed in one hotel and everyone will be subject to strict quarantine protocols for the first two weeks they are in the country.

Teams and officials will be put into "households" where social distancing will need to be in place.

There will be smaller clusters within each household where these measures can be relaxed.

"However, if any member of this cluster displays signs of Covid-19 at any time during the tournament all members of that cluster will be expected to self-isolate for a period of 14 days from the time that a member of that cohort first shows symptoms," the statement read.

"All members of the CPL party will be subject to regular temperature checks and will be re-tested for the virus throughout their stay in Trinidad and Tobago from overseas," it added.

The CPL will feature overseas and Caribbean players including Rashid Khan, Chris Lynn, Carlos Brathwaite, Dwayne Bravo, Alex Hales and Kieron Pollard.

PTI

Dhoni won so many trophies because of Ganguly's hardwork: Gambhir



IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Former India captain MS Dhoni was lucky in the way that he inherited teams consisting of great players when he took over the Indian captaincy in all formats of the game, according to former batsman Gautam Gambhir.

As Test captain, Dhoni is credited with being the first to lead India to the top of the Test rankings and Gambhir said that it is because of fast bowler Zaheer Khan that the team managed to be so successful.

"The reason Dhoni became such a successful captain in Test cricket is because of Zaheer Khan. He was a big blessing that Dhoni got, for which credit goes to Sourav

Ganguly. According to me, Zaheer has been India's best world-class bowler," Gambhir said on the Star Sports show Cricket Connected.

The 38-year-old was involved in two of India's greatest achievements during Dhoni's captaincy — the 2007 T20 World Cup and 2011 World Cup wins.

"Dhoni has been a very lucky captain because he got an amazing team in every format. Captaining 2011 World Cup team was very easy for Dhoni because we had players like Sachin, Sehwag, Myself, Yuvraj, Yusuf, Virat, so he had got the best teams, while Ganguly had to work very hard for it, and as a result, Dhoni won so many trophies," said Gambhir.

"So that's the danger zone for a lot of the other players because if anyone can get through these difficult times and these challenges it's Serena Williams, with what she's had to go through in her life. This will be a like piece of cake for her, so watch out for her."

Twenty-three-time Grand Slam champion Serena recently committed herself for the 2020 US Open which will be played at the Flushing Meadows from August 31 to September 13 behind closed doors in New York.

'Serena will have fresh perspective when tennis returns'

IANS ■ NEW YORK

Tennis great Chris Evert feels Serena Williams can make the most of this Covid-19 induced lockdown and aim to clinch a 24th Grand Slam title.

"Maybe she will be calmer out there," she was quoted as saying by BBC.

"I think she will have a fresh perspective and approach."

At 38, Serena lost her last four major finals.

"She looks really fit and in great shape and she seems to be really eager to get back," the 18-

time Grand Slam singles champion told BBC Two's Wimbledon: The Best of the Championships.

BWF seeking 'more clarity' before deciding on events in China

NEW DELHI: The Badminton World Federation on Saturday said it was waiting for "more clarity" from China before it takes a call on the World Tour Finals scheduled in December.

China's General Administration of Sport on Friday said the country will not host any of its planned international events this year except the trials for the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing to stop the spread of coronavirus.

The decision has put in doubt events including the World Tour Finals in Guangzhou, which was pushed back by a week to December 16 to 20 in the 2020 calendar.

"The BWF is aware of the directive announced by the General Administration of Sport of China regarding the restriction of international sports for the rest of 2020," the badminton governing body said in a statement.

"BWF is in close contact with its relevant partners including the Chinese Badminton Association (CBA) to get more



clarification on the situation and how this affects the BWF Tournament Calendar 2020."

Among other events to be held in the country, China Masters which was scheduled in August has already been called off, while the China Open World Tour Super 1000 event (September 15-20, Changzhou) and the Fuzhou China Open World Tour Super 750 (November 3-8) are still scheduled later in the year in the revised calendar.

PTI

'Pro League will help team gain momentum for Olympics'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian men's hockey team skipper Manpreet Singh is delighted with the revised schedule for FIH Pro League, saying back-to-back matches next year will help them gain the "right kind of momentum" ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.

The Indian team will resume its Pro League campaign in April with an away tie against Argentina, according to a revised fixtures announced by the International Hockey Federation on Thursday.

"I feel after the four-week gap between our matches against Argentina and Great Britain, we will play back-to-back matches almost every weekend right until the end of May and that's the kind of momentum we are looking for ahead of the Olympic Games," Manpreet said.

"We will test our body and mind during this time to see how we can cope up with the pressure of playing back-to-back high-



intensity games and manage the load. This will be an ideal test for us before the Olympics," he said.

To start with, India will play Argentina on April 10 and 11.

India will then face Great Britain away from home on May 8 and 9 before travelling to Spain to play matches on May 12 and 13.

The team will take on Germany in

away matches on May 18 and 19 before finally playing a home tie on May 29 and 30 against New Zealand.

Chief coach Graham Reid too said tough competition against top nations will help his team prepare well for the Olympics.

"It's very encouraging to have international competition restart-

ing and the Hockey Pro League will give us that tough top level competition in the lead-up to the Olympic Games next year," he said.

"We are also working at the

moment to ensure that we have

enough

competition throughout

the latter part of 2020 and the early

part of 2021.

"We have the Asian

Champions Trophy still planned

for November 2020 and a trip to

Malaysia to play the Netherlands

and a 4 Nations Tournament in

New Zealand in February 2021

which are all in the planning stage

Champions suffer setback

Pope stars between sticks as Burnley end Liverpool's home run with 1-1 draw

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Jurgen Klopp was frustrated by Liverpool's lack of killer instinct as Burnley became the first visiting side to avoid defeat at Anfield in the Premier League for 18 months in a 1-1 draw on Saturday.

Andy Robertson's first-half header had the champions on course to maintain their perfect home record this season and close in on a record points tally for the English top flight.

But the Reds were made to pay for a host of missed chances when Jay Rodriguez's fine finish earned a point to further Burnley's late push for a place in Europe next season.

"We left the door open, we didn't close it. We should have scored two, three, four goals at least," said Klopp, who was also irked by referee David Coote's lenient attitude to Burnley's physical approach.

"The ref let all these challenges today happen. When the ball comes in the box, Burnley are always dangerous."

"They stayed completely in the game, they just did what they wanted to do. It is frustrating because we should have scored much earlier."

Liverpool can still break Manchester City's record points haul of 100 two seasons ago, but will now need to win all three of their remaining matches against Arsenal, Chelsea and Newcastle.

Klopp has insisted he is not looking to rewrite the record books, but there was no sign of the German easing up with a first title in 30 years long since won.

Robertson and Sadio Mane were recalled from the side that won 3-1 at Brighton on Wednesday with only injured captain Jordan Henderson and Trent Alexander-Arnold missing from Klopp's



Liverpool's manager Jurgen Klopp, left, speaks to Burnley's goalkeeper Nick Pope after the end of the match AP

FIGURATIVELY

23 Liverpool had 23 shots in this match, their most in a PL game December 2017 (23 vs Everton)

4 Jay Rodriguez has been directly involved in a goal in each of his last four PL games (three goals & one assist), one more goal involvement than he managed in his previous 19 matches

14 Andrew Robertson is the 14th Liverpool player to score a league goal at Anfield this season, only in 1992-93 (15, excluding own-goals) have they had more different players score at home in a Premier League campaign

5 Norwich City have become the first team to be relegated from the Premier League on five separate occasions

4 Michael Antonio is the first West Ham player to score four goals in a league match since David Cross against Spurs in September 1981

strongest XI.

Salah's double in midweek kept him in the running for a third Golden Boot in as many seasons at Liverpool and only Nick Pope in the Burnley goal prevented the Egyptian closing in on Jamie Vardy at the top of the scoring charts.

Pope turned a fiercely struck Salah volley over before spreading himself well to deny Liverpool's top scorer in another one-on-one.

The opening goal came from a much more unlikely source as Fabinho picked out Robertson's run and the Scotland captain looped a header into the far corner for his first goal since November.

Pope and Liverpool's Alisson Becker are battling for the Golden Glove and the

Antonio's 4 relegates Norwich

AP ■ NORWICH

Mikhail Antonio scored all the goals as West Ham beat Norwich 4-0 to relegate the Canaries from the Premier League on Saturday.

Antonio has been a standout since the league restarted amid the coronavirus pandemic. Since July 1 he's scored six out of his eight league goals this season and assisted another.

Norwich is 13 points from safety with a maximum nine points possible.

"I feel really sorry, especially for our supporters and everyone connected with this amazing club, that we were not able to work another miracle," Norwich manager Daniel Farke said.

"I'm in the responsible role so I am disappointed I was not able to work another miracle."

Farke said his team was "more or less the same" as the squad which won promotion from the second-tier Championship last season, so relegation was "not the unexpected outcome."

Antonio opened the scoring with a tap-in at the far post after Issa Diop flicked on Jarrod Bowen's corner in the 11th minute.

He made it 2-0 at another set-piece when he headed in off Mark Noble's free kick in first-half stoppage time.

A simple pass over the top from Noble found Antonio in plenty of space on the counterattack for the third. Tim Krul saved his first shot but



the rebound was at the ideal height for Antonio to head in.

Noble had a hand in the fourth goal as well, finding Ryan Fredericks in space on the right. Fredericks sent in a low cross through Norwich's static defense for Antonio to apply the finish.

Norwich started the season brightly with a rash of goals from Finnish forward Teemu Pukki and a stunning upset victory at home over Manchester City.

But the good form soon faded and the club had bad fortune with injuries. Since English football restarted last month in empty stadiums, Norwich has lost every match it's played — six in the league and one in the FA Cup.

England international showed why he is in the lead with 14 clean sheets as he kept his side in the game once more before half-time to turn Mane's powerful shot over the bar.

Chances continued to come and go for the hosts after the break. Remarkably, despite Liverpool's home form, their number nine is still yet to score at Anfield in the league this season as Roberto Firmino hit the post to extend his wait for a home goal.

Liverpool's profligacy was punished 21 minutes from time when Rodriguez's bril-

liant finish from James Tarkowski's knockdown beat Alison from the edge of the area.

Burnley then had the best chance to win the game in the final stages as Alison flapped at another set-piece and the ball fell for substitute Johanna Berg Gudmundsson, who hit the crossbar.

A prized point moves Dyche's men up to ninth, with eighth possibly good enough for a place in the Europa League should Manchester City's two-season ban from European competitions be upheld.

Spurs vs Arsenal Live from 9:00pm IST STAR SPORTS SELECT reporters.

"I'm focused on my three-year contract. I believe that in my three-year contract we can win trophies. If we don't, but the club does it in the new era if I stay here only for three years, I'll be happy with that."

"I work for the club. I'm not thinking about myself. I keep saying my ambition is the same, my DNA is the same, but probably I'm in the stage where I look less to myself and my records and I look more to the club."

Mourinho said that Spurs, who have not won a trophy since the 2008, when they won the League Cup under then-manager Juande Ramos at the expense of Chelsea, do not need to invest heavily on players in the close season.

"I'm optimistic because I start working from day one... I believe we're going to make some changes in our squad, and for that we don't need a huge investment like the club made in the past summer," Mourinho added.

Tottenham host Arsenal in the league on Sunday.

Real can almost touch title

AFP ■ MADRID



If Barcelona manage three victories out of three.



We still don't know what is going to happen," said Real coach Zinedine Zidane. "La Liga is very hard and we have three finals still to go." "We have to stay focused," added Raphael Varane.

After sacking their coach Asier Garitano last week follow-

Zidane will be relieved all the same, particularly as he had to do without a string of key players. Ramos and Dani Carvajal were both banned while Marcelo was injured, taking out three of Madrid's regular back four. Eden Hazard was unable to start but came on in the second half to ease concerns about niggling problems with his ankle. A makeshift defence, including Lucas Vazquez at right-back, chalked up another clean sheet, Madrid's fifth in a row for the first time in 12 years. It is also their sixth in eight games since the restart.

MARCELO OUT OF SEASON

Real Madrid's defender Marcelo is expected to miss the rest of the La Liga season after the club confirmed he has an adductor injury.

Tests showed Marcelo has a problem in his left adductor muscle and while Madrid have not given a recovery time, the Brazilian looks set to play no further part in the run-in.

Hosts Lazio survived an early scare when Sassuolo striker Giacomo Raspadori was denied an early goal for offside.

But Simone Inzaghi's men grabbed the lead against the run of play 12 minutes before half-time as

Lazio rarely looked like grabbing an all-important victory and was vulnerable at the back, though, and Caputo pounced to nod home in the second minute of injury-time after the Lazio defence fell apart after failing to clear a corner.

Alberto's blocked shot bounced back off his shin and looped into the top corner.

But Sassuolo continued to be the better side and deservedly levelled seven minutes into the second period as Mehdi Bourabia won the ball high up the pitch and fed Caputo, who squared for the 20-year-old Raspadori to cap his first Serie A start with a simple tap-in.

Lazio rarely looked like

grabbing an all-important victory and was vulnerable at the back, though, and Caputo pounced to nod home in the second minute of injury-time after the Lazio defence fell apart after failing to clear a corner.

Alberto's blocked shot

Ibra reveals possible Milan departure

AGENCE ■ SARAJEVO

Zlatan Ibrahimovic has announced that his days in Milan are likely over since the club is not performing at the level he would like, Bosnian media has reported.

The 38-year-old striker, who returned to Milan from LA Galaxy in January and scored six goals since, said that neither he nor Milan belong in the Europa League.

"They told me that retiring in America was too easy, so I came back to Milan. I am here purely for passion, because I'm basically playing for free... Then the Covid-19 situation stopped everything and I thought, maybe there's something trying to tell me that I should retire."

"We'll see how I feel in two months. We'll also see what's happening with the club. If this is the situation, to be honest, it's unlikely you'll see me at Milan next season," he added.

Ibrahimovic further said he is not sure if there will be another club after Milan but added that he still has too much passion for football.

I can bring silverware to Spurs: Mourinho

AGENCIES ■ LONDON

Spurs vs Arsenal Live from 9:00pm IST STAR SPORTS SELECT

reporters.

Tottenham Hotspur manager Jose Mourinho is confident that he can deliver trophies at the Premier League club if he is given time like Jürgen Klopp at chame-

pions Liverpool.

Mourinho, who took over from the sacked Mauricio Pochettino in November, is used to battling for sil- verware at his previous clubs but his ninth-placed Tottenham are struggling to qualify for Europe this sea-

son. But the Portuguese pointed to Klopp, who joined Liverpool in 2015 and guided them to the Champions League, UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup last year before ending their 30-year wait for an English league crown this season.

"We'll see how I feel in two months. We'll also see what's happening with the club. If this is the situation, to be honest, it's unlikely you'll see me at Milan next season," he added.

Ibrahimovic further said he is not sure if there will be another club after Milan but added that he still has too much passion for football.

"How long it took for Jürgen and Liverpool? Four years, four seasons. Buying one of the best goalkeepers in the world, buying one of the best centre backs in the world and so on," Mourinho told

But the Portuguese pointed to Klopp, who joined Liverpool in 2015 and guided them to the Champions League, UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup last year before ending their 30-year wait for an English league crown this season.

"I'm optimistic because I start working from day one... I believe we're going to make some changes in our squad, and for that we don't need a huge investment like the club made in the past summer," Mourinho added.

Tottenham host Arsenal in the league on Sunday.

East Bengal will 'surely and soon' join ISL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

East Bengal will "surely and soon" follow traditional rivals Mohun Bagan into the Indian Super League, a top official of the legacy club asserted on Saturday as it navigates its way through a few hurdles, primarily financial.

Hours after the merged ATK Mohun Bagan's first board meeting, passionate fans of the century-old club got excited following Bengaluru FC owner Parth Jindal's invite to East Bengal to join the ISL at the earliest.

"We are going to be there in the ISL for sure, I can say you this much," one of East Bengal's most influential executive committee members, Dababratra Sarkar, said.

Jindal had earlier tweeted, "Come on @eastbengalfc come in to the @IndSuperLeague now already — your the only thing missing from the league now."

The club has been grappling with financial woes following the premature pullout of its former investor Ques Corp, who were its title sponsors for two seasons.

The club is currently in talks with a few investors and, after a final settlement with Ques, is hopeful that it will find takers and make its way into the ISL.

Ranjit Bajaj, former owner of Minerva Punjab FC, reportedly expressed his willingness to buy 70 percent of Ques East Bengal FC shares and bag the club's sporting rights.

Since last edition I-League winners Mohun Bagan's merger with reigning ISL champions ATK, all eyes have been on East Bengal to follow suit.

Lazio title bid hit again

AFF ■ ROME



could climb into sec-

Lazio were only one point behind Juventus when the Italian top flight resumed following the coronavirus lockdown, but they have been beaten four times in six matches since.

Hosts Lazio survived an early scare when Sassuolo striker Giacomo Raspadori was denied an early goal for offside.

But Simone Inzaghi's men grabbed the lead against the run of play 12 minutes before half-time as

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grabbing an all-important victory and was vulnerable at the back, though, and Caputo pounced to nod home in the second minute of injury-time after the Lazio defence fell apart after failing to clear a corner.

Alberto's blocked shot

Hamilton storms to Styrian pole

AFF ■ SPIELBERG

Defending six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton delivered one of his greatest qualifying performances in treacherous rain-swept conditions on Saturday when he stormed to pole position for the Styrian Grand Prix.

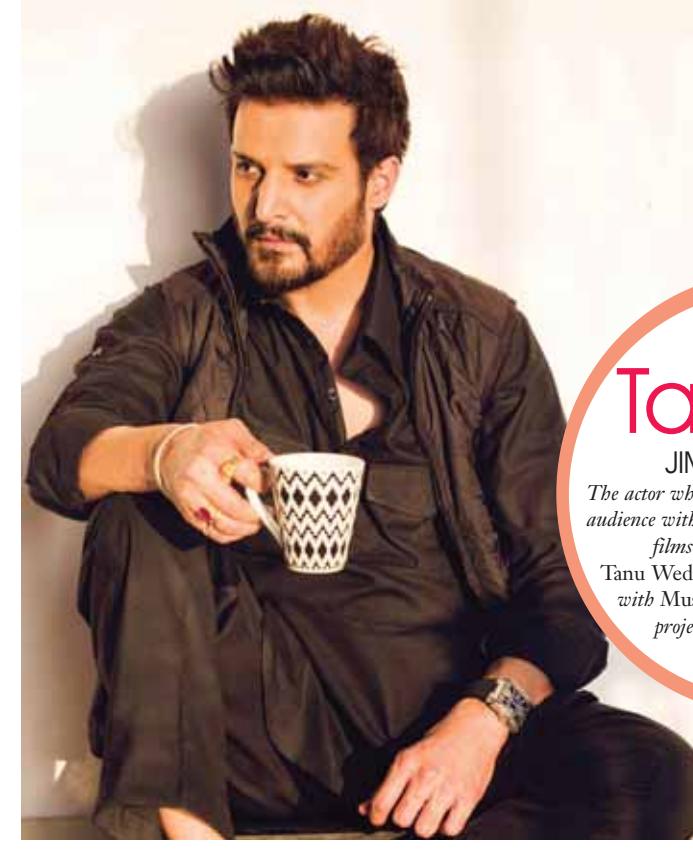
The Mercedes driver, who struggled in practice on Friday, bounced back to his best with a fastest lap in one minute and 19.273 seconds, outpacing nearest rival Max Verstappen of Red Bull by a

stunning 1.2 seconds.

His performance confirmed his enduring class on a day when heavy rainstorms had delayed the session by 45 minutes and forced the cancellation of third practice.

It was his third pole success at the Red Bull Ring circuit, the 89th

'I'm enjoying working on OTT platforms'



Talktime

JIMMY SHEIRGILL

The actor who has never failed to impress the audience with his stupendous performances in films like Mohabbatein and Tanu Weds Manu to name a few, speaks with Musba Hashmi about his latest project Your Honor, among other things

yes, because I have a son almost the same age as my on-screen son, it somewhere did give me that extra edge in emoting out the scenes. At times, I was

able to put myself into a particular situation to understand how I would react to it, to bring in that reality into the scenes. Hence, it did give me a little edge as an actor.

■ What made you say yes to Your Honor?

It has a great script. Also, I ended up watching the original Israeli series *Kvodo*. The director, producer, the Applause Entertainment's team and of course the amazing cast convinced me to take up the project. And last but not the least, the character that I am portraying is

full of dimensions and it left no reason for me to turn it down.

■ Being a father in real life, how did it help to explore the depth of the character?

My character is very well etched out already. But

I don't think that you are apprehensive about anything that you have gone ahead and signed. Because you are sure about it, have done your homework, heard the narration, read the script and met the team. So you know what exactly you are getting into. It can be the other way round.

When you like a story and script, you start shooting for it and you find out that it was not the way you thought it would be and that the team are compromising on many elements.

But I have a memory of *Yahaan*, a film that I did with Shoojit Sircar.

■ Was there a project that you were initially apprehensive about, but it turned out well?

I don't think that you are apprehensive about anything that you have gone ahead and signed. Because you are sure about it, have done your homework, heard the narration, read the script and met the team. So you know what exactly you are getting into. It can be the other way round.

When you like a story and script, you start shooting for it and you find out that it was not the way you thought it would be and that the team are compromising on many elements.

But I have a memory of *Yahaan*, a film that I did with Shoojit Sircar.

Because I have a son almost the same age as my on-screen son, it somewhere did give me that extra edge in emoting out the scenes. At times, I was able to put myself into a particular situation to understand how I would react to it, to bring in that reality into the scenes

It was his directorial debut. The shooting started in Manali and it was my first day on the sets. The shot was done and we saw it on the monitor, which I usually don't do except for the first day of the shoot just to make sure my looks are okay and stuff. After we saw the shot, everyone was blown off and I was shocked too. People said that Shoojit was making a Hollywood film, because I had my introduction in the film from behind the back, which was not very common back then. And till now people tell me it was way ahead of the time in the way it was shot and executed. It is one of my favourites.

■ What is the best thing about working on OTT platforms?

As an actor, I have thoroughly enjoyed it. If I get good stories, I would love to carry on working on the platforms. An actor or for that matter a director gets more time, more layers and a lot more to emote on OTT platforms. Until and unless I have some bad experience of working on this medium, the strike rate is 100 per cent. (laughs)

■ A show from the good old days that you would like to see a remake of on OTT platforms.

Sab ke to ban gaye. However, there is a British series — *Hustle*. It is fantastic and can be made into a show.

■ A change that you would like to see in the industry for actors and other working professionals.

I have seen a lot of change already. When I came in the industry in 1993 or so and when I got *Maachis*, at that time four-five producers were there with the same number of TV channels. Everything else was C-grade. The great stuff was in limited number and those were the only options that you had. And everybody couldn't be casted with these five-six directors and big banners. So from there, there has been an extensive growth in everything. There are a lot more TV channels with humongous shows, web series are being made, so many films are being made, there's so much happening now. It kept happening, from single screen theatres to multiplexes, the growth is unstoppable. You have to adapt to changes gradually. I think we should go a little slow, everything is breakneck. Also there is work for everyone, even if they don't they will get it. Just run a bit slow, stop for two seconds, catch a breath and then start again.

'My childhood instilled love for poetry & music'



Indo-American singer-songwriter SUBHI recently released her song *Naqaab*. SHALINI SAKSENA chats her up on her plans and the person behind her musical journey

♦ From Delhi to Chicago, how would you like to describe your journey?

It's been an amazing journey. It has helped me grow as an individual and an artist. Living in Delhi, New York, Mumbai and then Chicago — each city has its own characteristic and I have gathered so many stories from my stay in all of them. These stories are reflected in my songs and music.

♦ Which language do you think is the most preferable either to converse or even in music?

I love speaking in Hindi because it makes me feel closer to people. Hindi for me has a certain nostalgia and warmth to it. In terms of music, I enjoy songs in both Hindi and English so I can't pick one over the other.

♦ What is the inspiration behind your achievements in this musical journey?

When I was eight years old, encouraged by my grandmother, I started learning Hindustani Classical music. Every evening, my grandfather would recite some of his favourite poems (Hindi and Urdu) and explain their meaning. My childhood instilled a love for poetry and music in me. Since then music has always been a part of my life. I am a storyteller and am inspired to tell people my stories and what I've learned from life.

♦ You've sung solo songs, what about collaborations?

Collaboration is definitely something I plan on doing this year. I have done a lot of solo projects and am looking forward to learning and growing as an artist through collaborations with other indie artists and musicians.

♦ From Cage to now Naqaab. What made you choose such names and even write on it?

Every song I write has a story to tell and lyrics are a very important part of my story. That is why every song is very personal to me as I try to describe my experiences through it. My writing is inspired by Gulzar who always uses meaningful words in his poetry. I think subconsciously I tend to use meaningful words as well. Like my latest release, *Naqaab*, is a song about unfulfilled desires. The song talks about unmasking your desires and letting the world see the real you.

♦ Any future projects you would like to talk about?

I have a lot of exciting things coming up this year and next. I am currently working on my debut English EP with producers in LA and India. The EP will be out later this year.



MASK UP YOUR STYLE

Designer masks are trending and becoming the new normal.

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with industry experts to tell you how the demand for them has increased manifold



can be comfortably worn using elastic ear loops/easy-to-tie fabric string to keep you at ease for longer hours. The masks entail fine stitching quality to ensure surface softness to avoid any kind of skin irritation.

"Some of the variants are reversible and can be used the other way after wash. These non-surgical fabric masks are meant for general protection and are not intended for medical use," Seth tells you.

The best sellers, he says, are definitely the hand block printed ones.

"However, men prefer solid masks in darker shades. Women are quick to pick up the lighter shades with smaller prints. Delicately embroidered masks are also something that customers have shared their liking for. We are observing that customers are not just buying for self-use but are also picking it up for family & friends. It is also being considered a thoughtful accessory to gift — safe and fashionable," he adds.

Since, this time used to be the wed-

ding season, of course before the pandemic, but there are people out there who are getting married in small private affairs. And to not let them feel left out, Taneira is offering customised bridal masks as well and why not because bridal masks are now a thing.

"There is demand for customised masks and the brand is extending this facility to all the brides for a mask that perfectly complements their bridal and wedding wear," Seth tells you. The cotton face masks are priced at ₹100, while the exclusive ones crafted in silk are at ₹300.

Not only the big players, but also a lot of homegrown brands are here offering as much variety as possible.

"We are manufacturing stylish and trendy 100 per cent cotton masks with three layers. Apart from this, we also manufactured a mask made from the scrap material, in order to reuse the fabric which is generally discarded by the designers/manufacturers. The masks are available in different colours and prints like floral print, zebra print, and mosaic print which will complement women's attire," Nidhi Yadav, Co-founder-CEO, AKS Clothings, tells you.

Satpal Yadav, Founder, AKS Clothings says that people are now seeing masks as a fashion statement, more so because it has become an integral part of their daily lives.

"The demand of mask is increasing day by day. We are selling around 1000 units per day. One of the reasons is that now people are carrying it as a style statement and they are hunting for stylish and designer masks," he says.

Connecting lives

There are hundreds of COVID-19 warriors who are doing their bit, some sanitising their city and others saving lives. MUSBA HASHMI speaks with one such warrior — SARATHK VERMA, the founder of Plasma Connect, about what makes the app so pertinent in the present situation



feedback that I get and constantly trying to upgrade the app," Verma says.

The app that was launched on June 30, 2020 on Play Store has seen 52 registered members till date, both donors and recipients. Some of the features of the app are that it is easy to use, not only the donors but anyone can register in the app, donors can view nearby recipients and vice versa, the donors and recipients are sorted by their blood groups in order to process requests faster and make it easier for people.

"To add additional security the mobile numbers of donors is only shown to the recipients after they have submitted a request form providing the necessary details of the patient and the hospital he is admitted in," Verma explains. Apart from that people can also keep a count of total donors and requests made through the platform in real time.

However, there is much more on Verma's cards. "Like I said, I am constantly working to improve the application in every possible manner. There are a few feature additions in my mind. One, we can provide e-certificates to the donors so that they can feel proud and also share them on their social media handles which, in turn, will motivate more potential donors to step up."

Two, we can reimburse the travel cuts of donors through the help of project supporters. Three, this app can also be connected with the new Plasma Bank in Delhi so that

the whole process becomes more feasible. This will also allow us to manage, secure and visualise this sensitive data easily. Four, we can educate people about the details and know hows of Plasma Therapy through the app directly," he explains.

For many Corona survivors, registering on the app is the least they can do to help people in the time of crisis. Such has been the case with a Mumbai-based, healthcare worker, Pranay.

"Being associated with a hospital I have to visit the facility for work. You are not safe even after taking utmost precautions while visiting the hotspot and this might be the reason I contracted the virus. However, the only way to fight it is to keep your immunity primed at all times and be mentally strong. Once you have done both then there's nothing to worry about. That has been the case with me. By registering myself on the app as a donor, this is the least I can do to help save people's lives," he says.

crisis, I observed that people were and still are having problems connecting to plasma donors for COVID-19 patients. My social media accounts were full of pleas for plasma donors. This got me thinking. That is how I came up with Plasma Connect, an app to connect the donors and recipients in seconds," Verma tells you.

It took Verma not more than 15 days to come with the app, all thanks to his proficiency in the IT sector. "I realised the urgency, so I kept aside all my ongoing work and

worked day in and out for around 15 days to build the first version of the app, since then I am working on every



the pioneer agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

Hope in the times of pandemic

Leaders have emerged because of their genuine interest in helping people out, their intellect, and by being proactive

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Unlock the mind to heal

If we negotiate the challenges coming our way with fortitude and intelligence, we may be able to contain the damage

To not have any hope is where things start to get really bleak. Things are possible. The impossible can be possible
— Sarah Paulson



Automation will become the key driver of “Vocal for Local” narrative for the manufacturing industry in India, writes PRADEEP DAVID, as he explains how Collaborative Robots will be significant in proliferating businesses in the post Covid-19 era

A CASE FOR COBOTS

The world has come to a standstill and the global economy has taken the worst hit in history. Right from the negative pricing of crude oils to the worldwide lockdown, it has brought the global economy to its knees, looking for the road to recovery. With the global cases mounting up to 8 million, the impact of the grave pandemic can be witnessed across geographies. This has resulted in a major shift of leading lives and the whole world is coming to terms with the new normal. As the famous saying goes, ‘Every crisis brings an opportunity’ and this pandemic has provided an opportunity for businesses to be creative and adapt an innovative approach to sustaining the tide. Most of the countries — whether developed or developing — are actively pursuing opportunities to become completely self-reliant to battle the situation and also prepare for any future disruptions.

THE INDIAN SCENARIO

The labour-intensive manufacturing sector has been one of the hardest-hit due to the coronavirus. According to a business publication, the seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI), a reflection of the health of the manufacturing economy, fell to 27.4 in April, from 51.8 in March this year.

Like the rest of the world, India, too, is experiencing a major outbreak of the Covid-19 virus and has slowly reached the second phase of the pandemic. According to the World Bank, India was the world’s sixth-largest manufacturer at the end of 2018. However, having a labour-intensive manufacturing sector has resulted in the sharpest deterioration in business conditions in the last 15 years, with the seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) — a reflection of the health of the manufacturing economy — falling from 51.8 in March 2020 to just 27.4 in April.

As the current unlocking phase across the nation takes place, social distancing, stringent hygiene measures, and remote working have all become a part of the new normal. The manufacturing sector, however, is one of the few places where online meetings can only do so much. After all, the majority of the nature of the work is on-site, physical, and time-sensitive, so work-from-home is not always an option.

OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIA

The ground reality is that Covid-19 is not expected to abate anytime soon, so our daily lives must instead incorporate the right measures to prevent the risk of contagion. According to Forrester analytics, we are stepping in the second stage of the pandemic, which steers us to ‘Adapt and Overcome’ the situation. To stay afloat, the industry needs to adjust to the new normal and strategise how to



accelerate recovery from the losses incurred so far, optimising efficiency and encouraging self-dependency.

THE NEW APPROACH: COLLABORATIVE ROBOTS, OR “COBOTS”

While the government’s Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan initiative is a significant step towards restart the operations and encouraging various sectors to stabilise themselves, it is vital that manufacturers recognise the need to join hands with technology and embrace automation. In fact, a study by EY found that 41% of employers across the world are fast-tracking automation plans in an endeavour to make up for lost productivity and also prepare for the post-crisis world. Normalising the allegiance of employees and technology will pave a path that will lead the sector to growth, stabilising Indian business and enabling self-sufficiency.

Rewiring an industry and making it tech-friendly comes with its own challenges. Some of the obstacles faced by the manufacturing industry include an abundance of unskilled labour, a lack of space on the shop floor, and the lack of technical expertise to operate complex new technology. Collaborative robots, or “cobots,” are a niche robot technology that present the perfect solution by addressing all these challenges, offering an easy automation solution for Indian manufacturers.

EMPOWERING MANUFACTURING THROUGH HUMAN ROBOT COLLABORATION

While industrial robots have been around for years, collaborative robots are a much newer technology. Cobots are an advanced robotic arm that — unlike their industrial robot predecessors — were created to share the same workspace as humans, without the need for any cumbersome caging or fencing

COBOTS ALLOW MANUFACTURERS OF ALL SIZES TO AUTOMATE AREAS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED TOO SMALL OR TOO EXPENSIVE TO AUTOMATE, LOWERING THE BARRIERS TO AUTOMATION THROUGH USPs THAT TRADITIONAL ROBOTS AND AUTOMATION SOLUTIONS SIMPLY CANNOT PROVIDE

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(subject to application risk assessment). This is thanks to their advanced safety features, backed up by 65 patents, including a protective stop that is enabled when an obstacle blocks a cobot’s path of motion, ensuring that a person that may come in contact with a cobot is not harmed. By simply changing the end-of-arm-tooling on a cobot, it can be used for a variety of tasks, ranging from the tending of CNC and other machines, dispensing, quality inspection, pick and place, screwdriving, and much more. This makes them versatile to use in a multitude of applications across virtually every industry.

Cobots can handle tasks that require high repeatability, precision, and quality, as well as jobs that pose ergonomic risks. Humans are then free to cater to tasks that require mental efforts and human ingenuity, often leading to the upskilling of labor. In a crucial time like this, it has become a priority for industry leaders to not just utilise their workforce wisely to handle tasks that need human intervention, while cobot can handle work that could cause physical and mental stress to people.

Human Robot Collaboration is one of the key drivers of Industry 4.0 and, in fact, a study on a BMW assembly plant, conducted and published in MIT Technology Review found that there is a whopping 85% reduction in the idle time of workers when they collaborate with robots. Cobots, thus, can empower domestic production and facilitating the Make in India mission. In the Covid-19 era, when manufacturers are facing issues of labor uncertainty and recognising the need to automate but unsure how to start, cobots are one of the quickest solutions on the market, addressing many common barriers to automation faced by Indian manufacturers.

HOW COBOTS BOOST MANUFACTURING

Social Distancing: By allowing humans and cobots to work side-by-side, cobots reduce the need for contact between human workers, ensuring that they maintain safe social distancing standards. This is especially vital in crowded assembly lines and worker-dense factory floors, which will have to take measures to ensure that distance is maintained between individuals but no efficiency is lost. In essence, this enables businesses to optimise productivity while also helping flatten the curve of Covid-19 contagion.

Partial Automation: Complex automation with heavy machinery is expensive, space-consuming, and difficult for most manufacturers to carry out. Cobots, however, enable the automation of specific applications instead of an entire plant, thereby reducing capital expenditure significantly. This partial automation means that manufacturers can start small and identify applications that involve high precision, monotony, or potential ergonomic risk

for humans, and use cobots to handle these instead. For example, at Baxter Lab, one can see that the cobots are placing bottles in boxes, while the man is manually holding the boxes open for the cobot to do so. Both are thus, working together and the process is only partially automated to optimise efficiency.

Quick Deployment and Flexible Redeployment: Their ease of use and setup means that cobots are one of the fastest automation solutions currently in the market. While traditional automation solutions can take months to deploy, a cobot can be set up for a simple application within a single day, even by first-time robot users. Plus, a cobot can be programmed time and again for different tasks, functioning like a lightweight “tool” with many uses. In this uncertain environment, many manufacturers need to repurpose their assembly lines to focus on different products based on the urgency of requirements and changing consumer demands. Cobots are flexible and easy to re-station as needed, enabling high mix/low volume production.

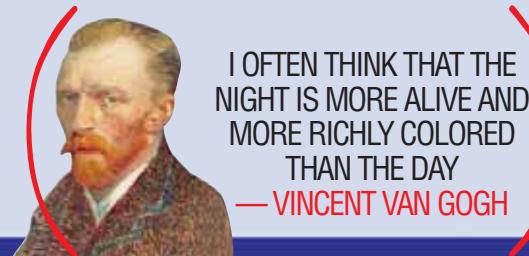
DEMOCRATISED AUTOMATION

As you can see from the USPs highlighted above, collaborative robots are easy and quick to set up, have a low footprint, and enable flexible redeployment. This, combined with the Human Robot Collaboration facilitated by cobot, make it possible for manufacturers of all sizes to deploy this Industry 4.0 technology with ease. Cobots lower the barriers for automation faced by Indian manufacturers, allowing them to use robotic technology without having to make drastic changes to their existing shop floors. As SMEs are the building blocks of the Indian economy, it is vital that they are able to automate to meet global standards of quality to achieve their Make in India dreams.

To sum it up, the Covid-19 virus has caught the world unprepared, taking businesses by storm and showing no sign of abating anytime soon. If anything, the pandemic has shown us all the unpredictability of life and the need to invest in smart decisions to prepare for the possibility of any future disruptions.

With the spotlight on India as the new destination for global manufacturing, industries need to prepare for a prolonged recovery period where it has become of paramount importance to learn how to manage human capital and production capabilities. Cobots allow manufacturers of all sizes to automate areas previously considered too small or too expensive to automate, lowering the barriers to automation through USPs that traditional robots and automation solutions simply cannot provide. They enable manufacturers to increase agility to cater to rapidly changing demands.

The writer General Manager, South Asia, Universal Robots



HOPE IN THE TIMES OF PANDEMIC

We have role models who have led the fight against the pandemic in India. These leaders have emerged because of their genuine interest in helping people out, their intellect, and by being proactive.

You step out in Mumbai and humanity is at your feet, almost all revealed. There is much squalour with some glitz. There is chaos and also the calm of the sea. You either move or get pushed down by the crowds. People and constructed spaces in this city flow like opium, filling up your senses. I have found maximum city Mumbai to be as overwhelming as life can get. It is these crowds and deeply socialised nature of the city that eventually played a strong role in augmenting the reproductive ratio of Covid-19 here leading to winning the race in India that no one wants to win — of having the most number of active Covid-19 cases until recently.

Mumbai could have been more prepared. In a note authored by Professor Dhaval Monani and myself, that we submitted to the Prime Minister's Office on April 2, 2020, we had proposed the setting up of temporary hospitals within vacant community halls, marriage halls, office spaces. But it was not until end of April that BMC decided to take over vacant spaces to create temporary hospitals for Covid-19 patients and for quarantining those at risk. BMC's search also included the wrong spaces — *maidans*, warehouses — which are not only expensive to convert to Covid-19 recovery facilities, but also dusty and therefore detrimental to the condition of the patients. For setting up facilities at scale, we needed to keep the per-bed cost as low as possible. Instead, most of the facilities used expensive steel beds and equipment that was not needed.

Never waste a good crisis — I was dismayed to see this as the motto of several government officials to make a quick buck in procurement, of politicians who would be more interested in press coverage rather than getting any work done, and people in the private sector who overnight became dealers of testing kits at huge margins. I also watched (furiably) how CSR was at times used as a garb for profiteering off the crisis. My team's efforts come free of cost. However, for-profit ventures for social good are also excellent as this builds in incentives to do good so that it is sustainable — but when doing so the model needs to be transparent. Mumbai, a city where dreams are realised as fast as they are crushed, was even during a pandemic using its elbows to get ahead in the crowd.

Large private sector companies have not stepped up. While elsewhere in cities like Pune, companies like Wipro set up temporary hospitals within their



office buildings or the Serum Institute of India who is collaborating with universities to create a vaccine, where are the corporate giants of Mumbai? CSR is not enough, but even that has been inadequately spent to help Mumbai cope with the virus.

The city has woken up to randomised testing far too late. This week the BMC has removed the earlier order for the need of prescription to get a Covid-19 test and has introduced a new rule that does not require a prescription. People can now get a test done at any hospital. Right from the start of the spread of the pandemic, there should have been no need to make it so darned difficult to get tested! After the initial hic-

cups, Covid-19 tests were available in abundance. Numerous experts cried hoarse advising the government to make testing easier, but it was to no avail. Panic early, Mumbai.

Communications from the government has been confusing and damaging. At first, there was fear induced amongst people against Covid-19 which led to severe stigmatisation against patients. And then economic interests took over the concern for health, which suddenly made it alright for certain sectors to open up. Ironically, now as numbers of active cases of the Coronavirus soar, it has never been easier during this pandemic to be out and about in the city. There has been extreme short-sightedness on the part of

MUMBAI COULD HAVE ADOPTED DIFFERENT POLICIES IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS DEPENDING ON THE LOCAL CONDITIONS. THE EPIDEMIC COULD HAVE BEEN CONTAINED IN SOME AREAS WHERE IT WAS RAMPANT, AND CERTAIN UNAFFECTED DISTRICTS COULD HAVE BEEN OPENED UP

the government, in at first believing that social distancing would work in a country where 1 of 6 urban dwellers live in slum zones. In most cases — and more so in a health disaster — we can not copy-paste solutions that have worked for other countries on to the unique context in India. Economy and health needs to be balanced, but it should have been balanced very differently than done. Mumbai could have adopted different policies in different districts depending on the local conditions. The epidemic could have been contained in some areas where it was rampant, and certain unaffected districts could have been opened up.

There is hope. We have role models who have led the fight against the pan-

demic in India. These leaders have emerged because of their genuine interest in helping people out, their intellect, and by being proactive.

For example, I was introduced to Amin Patel when we were making our first Covid-19 quarantine centre in Mumbai in early May 2020. Those were the days when my team at my company Sustain Labs and at the Anant Centre for Sustainability a think-teach-do tank that I established two years ago, was manufacturing equipment and moving trucks across India amidst a complete nation wide lockdown. Amin is a three term MLA from the Mumbadevi constituency in Mumbai, but his concern was for all of Mumbai. He set up a 200 oxygen cylinder bank for everyone to use in Mumbai — this is refreshing as often the challenge for democracy is populism, and that too combined with a narrow vision of pleasing the constituency for votes.

When Covid struck, Amin's first reaction was to send ration to the Kamthipura area where overnight sex workers saw their incomes disappear due to social distancing rules in place. He once told me, "Even if one family anywhere in Mumbai needs ration I send a tempo with food." His sleep routine is highly unrecommended — he sleeps at 1 am; is awake from 3.30 am to 6 am answering distress calls that he would have received while asleep and taking action on them; then he goes back to sleep from 6 am until 8 am.

While setting up the Covid-19 recovery facility with the help of Amin, one of the partners in the project had a demand for 10% of project cost as management fee to which Amin's reaction is one that I will never forget. He was appalled at the demand and said, "10% of project cost can make 20 beds and save 20 lives every fortnight! We will refuse to pay that!" It is only too common for government officials and politicians to be in a hurry to get things done just to look good to the higher ups and the voters.

Why is it so difficult to help the government in India? This could well be the title of my next book as there is so much to reflect upon and write about this. In the meantime, all power to those government representatives on the frontline who are genuinely and effectively fighting for the rest of us.

The writer is CEO of Sustain Labs and Adjunct Professor at SciencesPo Paris. She is also a columnist and author of the 2019 bestseller Indian Instincts — essays on freedom and equality in India

Covid tales: The joy of homecoming

From keeping the various documents ready prior to the journey, to all the procedures and possible mishaps that could occur at the airport, travelling feels like a daunting mission nowadays. VANDANA SRIVASTAVA shares her first person account

A tense mood had surrounded our household, as our family braced up for a monumental change in their lives. My husband had just got his transfer order, which would entail us to move back to Delhi from Dubai in one of the repatriation flights, since we were diplomats. Undertaking such a massive transfer process along with the four hour journey in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic got me anxious for quite a few days. However I maintained my calm, and felt stronger by reassuring myself that this time would soon pass.

Finally, when all the boxes were packed and the rooms rendered empty, it was time for us to leave. As I started packing my final bags, I realised that it was time to say goodbye to Dubai, the place where I had spent 5 and a half golden years of my life. We were finally done with our final shopping in the region, and were getting braced up to travel during these trying times. Obviously, our main travel essentials were going to be Sanitisers, PPE, Masks, Face Shields, Disinfectant Sprays, and the like; as opposed to the usual earphones and a good book to read.

As advised by various acquaintances, we wrapped our entire check-in luggage in cellophane wraps. This would allow us to just open and discard them as soon as we reached our destination, allowing the main baggage to not be contaminated, and eliminating the need to disinfect the same. We reached the DXB airport at 10.00 hours (UAE time), and saw quite a meticulous arrangement of people waiting for their health checkup before moving on to the usual airport protocol. A vivid depiction of responsibility and unity was portrayed before our eyes as we saw every single person wear masks, gloves, maintain social distance, and follow all the new rules and regulations during the pandemic throughout the airport.

We passed our Covid health screening at the airport, and moved on to the usual airport procedure. We got our boarding passes, gave our check-in baggage, took care of some over-sized baggage since we were moving on a transfer basis, and moved on through the X-Ray area to the gates, where we would wait until boarding started. Air India also gave us Face Shields, Sanitisers, and extra Face Masks for use during the journey. They were also giving out PPE kits to everyone sitting in the middle seat. However, upon seeing two kids



traveling with me, they decided to give PPE kits to all of us. Even the security at the airport allowed all kinds of sanitisers and sprays to be taken on flights during this pandemic, which was strictly forbidden in the past.

Finally, our flight's announcement was called out and it was time for us to suit up in our PPE kits, Face Shields, Masks, and Gloves. We all resembled astronauts on a field mission in our face masks and shield combo. We boarded a bus and entered our airplane as usual, but were informed soon that there would be no food or drinks served in this flight. Contrasted with the old times, air hostesses were giving out hand sanitisers instead of refreshments. On top of all the security measures taken by the airport and the airline, we also made it a rule of thumb to spray disinfectant everywhere we went and everything we came in contact with.

A small box of food and a water bottle were already kept on everyone's seats, but we chose to keep it on the ground and ignore it. Owing to our fear and alertness, we did not eat or drink anything throughout the journey, and realised later on that it was everybody on the flight who did the same. It was pretty uncomfortable for all of us to wear masks and shields, and to add on to the inconveniences, the flight was already running an hour late. Living such a surreal moment, I was reminded of John Milton's poem, "On His Blindness", where he thought that god was testing him during every single moment of his life.

The 3 hour journey seemed much longer than it actually was, but we soon made it to the Indira Gandhi Airport in New Delhi. However, as opposed to what everyone believed, this was nowhere close to the end. We were told to remain

seated inside the plane until further notice, and to also download the Aarogya Setu app on our smartphones, which was a contact tracing app created by the Government of India in order for citizens to protect themselves from the Coronavirus. The plane was being sanitised from the outside, and soon the air hostess started calling out seat numbers on the PA system, upon which the respective passengers stood up and left the plane.

Upon entering the New Delhi airport, we were informed that a flight from Melbourne had just landed and the airport authorities were conducting their due procedures with passengers of the Melbourne flight first. Once all the passengers from that flight were cleared out, we proceeded to our checkups, and kept all our documents ready. Firstly, our temperatures were taken and our self-declaration health forms were checked, and

stamped. This allowed us to carry on to the next process, which was the standard immigration process, upon which our health forms were checked once again. Notably, they also kept a copy of the same for their own records. We followed the standard airport process since and moved to the conveyor belts, where the luggage was kept by the side of the belts instead of on the belt, owing to the very few amount of flights operating. We looked for our luggage and gathered it, all while maintaining social distancing and using disinfectant spray throughout.

After all standard procedures were over; we met yet another medical official at the airport who checked our Blood Pressure, temperature, and oxygen levels. Then, we went outside of the main airport building to a small makeshift office made by the airport authorities. The purpose of this office was to rule out if we had the Coronavirus or not, and would suggest the necessary means of precaution tailored to each person's health situation. We cleared all formalities, and were declared Covid negative. There was an SDM to check our quarantine documents, and we availed due permission to use our personal vehicle to get to our hotel, which was our designated quarantine center. It was now 21.30 hours (IST): almost 12 hours since we had started our journey from Dubai.

As soon as we reached, the hotel staff disinfected our luggage. We were taken to our room quickly, where we removed our masks, took a bath, and felt like we were in paradise. It was almost after 13 hours now, when we had the second meal of our day. It truly was pure bliss to finally see this journey come to an end successfully, and we were grateful that we made it safe.

To conclude, I would like to preface by saying that travelling anywhere during this pandemic is obviously not an easy thing to do. Ranging from the various documents to be kept in order prior to the journey, to all the procedures and possible mishaps that could occur at the airport, travelling feels like a daunting mission nowadays. However, throughout this experience, I would like to mention that the airports were well equipped and very cooperative, and all essential measures were taken to ensure that all passengers travel safely with the least amount of hassle possible.

The writer is a lawyer by profession and philanthropist by heart

Online education: Dispel fear of surveillance

In the wake of Covid-19 pandemic, online education has become a buzzword as some are eulogising its endless potential and others are casting aspersions, and predicting doom for the education sector in India. Of course, online education is not a substitute for face-to-face classroom interaction between students and teachers. However, we need to understand the apprehension of people about the "online education", which is fast emerging as the "new mode of education".

There is a widespread recognition that online education can become an additional tool, technique, opportunity, and avenue for further exploration of and experimentation with new ideas by both teachers and students. Online education should not be equated with the supply of more and more information, rather it is a process of retrieving relevant information, synthesising and critically analysing, and presenting them to students coherently and effectively. Online delivery of education requires re-learning not only on part of students but also on the part of teachers. In the "new mode of education", the role of teachers is going to become more important because they have to decide what is relevant information and how to critically analyse and deliver them; and it is challenging also because the students will have the opportunity to evaluate and scrutinise the teachers as all the sources of information are available at the click of the mouse.

Effective communication is one of the most essential characteristics of a teacher; how a teacher was teaching inside a classroom was very little known beyond the circle of the students who attended his or her classes. Online teaching, which may be recorded and put on a website, could be seen and compared with other teachers' methods. Online education is not passive broadcasting of news reports or entertainment channels, they also adopt different strategies and styles to connect with their audiences. This is the reason some channels and movies become very effective in communicating their messages and transforming people's ideas and thinking.

Teaching is an art, and teachers have to become an actor and performer; teachers need to learn new ways of performing on a digital platform, to connect with their students, to create curiosity among them, to



understand their requirements and help overcome anxiety and ambiguities perplexing their minds.

Resistance to technology is coming from two factors: Fear of mediating reality and psychological fear of surveillance. Opposition to online education emanates from people's apprehension about the safety of their data and the fear of being watched. The moment we enter online education, we leave behind digital footprints captured by smart digital devices and the Internet of Things. In a study, it was found that most of the people have limited knowledge about what types of personal data are collected and how they are used. Some scholars are apprehensive that "authoritarian administrators are attracted by online education as it offers centralised control and scaling at will". Contrary to their belief, internet-based online education is not centralised control and administered by an authoritarian regime, rather it provides an opportunity for the democratisation of education, both for teachers as well as for learners.

Another fear is that contrary to face-to-face interaction where a teacher creates a communion with students and critically shapes their thinking and learning experience,

technology-mediated interaction distorts the form of communication. The fear of distorted reality emanates from the assumption that technology-mediated reality may not present the intended meanings or may even distort the meanings of reality. However, we know that we grasp reality only through the mediation of either our sensory perceptions or through technology. Even our sensory perceptions are shaped by the mental frame of our mind that we acquire through our upbringing and social experience. We do not have access to naked reality. All reality is mediated through technology and theoretical framework. Take the example of coronavirus, we cannot see it with naked eyes, we have to use an electron microscope to visualise it; technology-mediated image (reality) is presented to people through media and people construct their imagination about coronavirus.

People who are sufficiently exposed to news, talks, discussion, and presentations on the coronavirus do acquire the level of understanding that scientists and doctors want them to acquire. Similar is the concept of online teaching: how effectively we are presenting our ideas.

Many studies have shown that it is little or no difference in students'

performance between television education and face-to-face education or between video instruction and face-to-face instruction. In a study conducted by Allen & Seaman in collaboration with Pearson and the Sloan Consortium, it was found that most of the academic managers (75 per cent) recognise that learning outcomes in online courses are equal to or better than classroom courses. Although the findings of these studies could be contested, they indicate the heralding of "new mode of education".

It will not replace the traditional mode of education rather it will reinforce the "traditional mode" and exist in tandem with it. The educational institutions which are not going to get the reinforcement by adopting the online learning management system will face their existential crises. The new mode of education is not infringing upon the traditional mode of education, it is rather entirely a new way of making the education available to people anywhere, any time, at their own pace and convenience. Technology is not going to replace the need for a teacher but they do require to embrace the new paradigm of education.

It is the teaching style of the teacher and his ability to engage the students that makes a physical class

an interactive learning class. The same is true with the online delivery of education.

The effectiveness of technology-mediated learning depends on three factors: easy and convenient access to technology, the willingness of the teachers, and the motivation of the students. The internet services are fast expanding in the country and the digital platform for delivery of education is becoming user-friendly day by day as they provide both synchronous and asynchronous communication and support the exchange of a variety of didactical elements such as texts, graphics, audio and video materials in real-time. Attitudes of a teacher, his/her teaching style, and his/her dexterity in dealing with information communication technology are important to make online education effective. It has been found that students attending a class of a teacher who has a positive attitude towards online teaching and learning and who encourages the use of technology are more likely to experience more positive learning outcomes. It is true that in online teaching students feel isolated as there is no classroom environment for interaction. This could be overcome, to a large extent, by adopting an interactive teaching style and encouraging students for more interaction among the class by engaging them in individual as well as group activities.

Technology mediated interaction may pose, sometimes, technical problem, an effective teacher must be able to do some basic troubleshooting task, or be backed up by a technical team to support online delivery of education. Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of students do influence their learning outcomes. But this is true in both cases, online as well as in the traditional mode of education. The online mode rather provides better opportunities to design different levels of learning materials and allowing them to proceed with their own pace of learning.

Online education has been adopted globally to expand access to higher education and training needs of people as a supplement to the brick and mortar capabilities of their higher educational institutions. As the internet facility is expanding in India and the technology for online delivery of education is becoming user-friendly, it is the right time for Indian universities to embrace online education as an additional pro-

gramme lest they lose the opportunity to Western universities.

Many renowned universities have already started the online programme and many more are in the process of launching their graduate and postgraduate degree programmes to cater to the growing need of the students across the world. India is getting ready for the digital revolution. There are more than 600 million internet users, more than half of them are in rural areas and 90 per cent of users have 4G connection. The majority of internet users (70 per cent) are in the age group of 12-29 years, the main cohort engaged in education and learning programmes. Globally, India has the cheapest average 4G tariff at \$0.26 per GB. The Government of India has launched the National Broadband Mission intending to provide broadband access to all villages by 2022.

Online higher education is not only intended for the traditional cohort of (18-24 years of age group) people, rather it is open to any age group of people in the society. As the value of lifelong learning is greatly recognised, the need for online education will increase tremendously in the society. Many studies have shown that online availability of educational and training programmes have helped the working class in Ghana in improving their skills and career advancement and prospects of changing their career. There is indeed a digital inequality in terms of access to digital technology and the ability to use them.

There is also a substantive digital divide along with gender as there are only 35 per cent of women internet users in the country. However, the solution to these problems is not to reject the technology but to work for bridging both types of digital inequality and to capitalise on the opportunities thrown up by a new wave of the technological revolution. The recent step of the Government to allow 100 universities to start online education and separate TV channels for delivering education from Class I to XII is in the right direction. TV is accessible to more than 90 per cent of the population in the country and it will certainly help delivering the education to most deprived and marginal section of the society.

(The writer is a Professor and Chairperson of the Centre for Studies in Science Policy, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

As the internet facility is expanding in India and the technology for online delivery of education is becoming user-friendly, it is the right time for Indian universities to embrace online education as an additional programme lest they lose the opportunity to Western universities



MADHAV GOVIND

PERSPECTIVE

From an elected Prez to permanent leader!

The unbridled power of Russian President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin has grown over the last two decades. He enjoys enormous popularity. At its highest, his poll rating was close to 90 per cent.

Sensing the global public pandemic and home quarantining of millions in Russia, Putin affected amendments to the Russian Constitution. And the parliament of the country, Russian State Duma, has approved a slew of amendments, including the extension of his presidential terms (if he wants) up till 2036. This allows him to enjoy another two six-year terms starting from 2024, when his current term comes to an end. Without any iota of doubt, the Russian Legislature voted 383 to 0 to amend the Constitution. And Putin now holds the office of the President till he turns 83 years and that would be his 36th year in that office. This unusual parliamentary move was made by 83-year old former cosmonaut and now member of Duma Valentina Tereshkova, who said, "Putin knows much more than all of us. Why do we need to create some artificial constitutions? We should be honest, open, consider publicly and cancel all limitations on the number of presidential terms in the Constitution. Or, if the situation demands and people want that, let the current President run again for this position." This was more than sufficient to launch Putin to the orbit of power again by Tereshkova and thereby she has become a part of a deal that is gradually pushing Russia deep into the hands of Putin. In fact, the abolition of presidential term limits will make him the country's longest serving ruler since Joseph Stalin.

Meanwhile, the helpless Russian Opposition is furious. A former MP and Opposition leader Dmitry Gudkov aired his anger: "That was a Brezhnev era, poorly directed performance. Putin must be feeling almighty, and hopes to live forever." But how does it make any difference to Putin. His rule is passing on to a new era, wherein he is aging and his former KGB aides are fast proliferating to each sphere of administration around Russia.

When Duma has already approved the amendments, why Putin wanted the same to



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting with members of working group to prepare proposals on amending the Russian Constitution via teleconference in Moscow, Russia, Friday, July 3, 2020

be passed in a public referendum at Covid-19 times? As it is too dangerous to gather in public, he should not have demanded an approval from the people of Russia. Precisely, it is a traditional tactic used by the authoritarian rulers to marshal a stamp of legitimacy from the commoners. The aim is to be in the "Democracy Club". And Putin and his administration are successful in performing this act so far since he has come to power in 1999.

What disturbs the international community is that Putin is a fighter and he is a survivalist. Therefore, he needs to be considered seriously. If he says he will do something, then it is understood that he is prepared to do it. Further, he has the practice of finding a way to sort out difficult things by using every means available to him. Interestingly, he and his core team at Kremlin wanted the world to view him as a

street fighter, a low profil and possibly an underdog. But he is not. The way he has meddled with the US politics, he has made his mark. Over the decades, he has carefully crafted a system, wherein he has to deal only with a selected number of people, he has literally abstained himself from dealing with ordinary actors in politics and administration. This indeed allows him to strategise for every possible hurdle that might come on his way.

With Putin, Russia will be definitely heading for a stable political system. But the regime is only favouring a few, some allege. The desire for freedom and political mobility is completely bleak under Putin, they claim. If he stays till 2036, the answer to the question "who comes after Putin" is elusive. The reason is too simple: neither Putin has allowed an Opposition to thrive or even a successor to be groomed for a distant

future. This and a total control on all aspects of the Russian State have enabled him to virtually keep all probable political rivals at bay till date.

The big mystery is how he has risen to this stature? Looking at his roots, one can easily observe that he comes from a very humble family. His father worked in the Soviet Navy and mother was a factory worker. The family lived together in a lower income group community housing project. But somehow, he was sent to the college and finally to the law school. After graduating from the law school, he served as a KGB agent for about 16 years. In fact, KGB was the primary security agency for the USSR from 1954 until the historic collapse of the union in 1991. Basically, the KGB worked as a multi-faceted organ of the state, both within and outside the USSR. Clearly, the organisation was known for delivering its extra-

ordinary service for intelligence and as a wing of the "secret police". In 1988, the official White House photographer inadvertently spotted Putin spying on then US President Ronald Reagan in the guise of an ordinary Russian tourist in Moscow. After retiring from the KGB in 1991, Putin managed to get a job in the office of the mayor of St Petersburg and by 1994, he became the deputy head of city administration. In 1997, Putin was running a political party called "Our Home-Russia i.e. Nash dom-Russiya", originally founded on May 12, 1995 by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of then President Boris Yeltsin. Initially a liberal and centrist political movement, the main objective of this party was to rally behind more technocratic and reformist supporters for the Government. Though the party was disbanded on 2006, Putin, the ever clever KGB guy had climbed the echelons of power from this unknown political platform. From here when he moved to Moscow, he was soon made the chief of the presidential staff of Yeltsin in 1997. Breaking all the political norms, an ailing and ageing Yeltsin, suddenly appointed Putin as the Prime Minister and named him as his successor. When he resigned unexpectedly on December 31, 1999, Putin became the acting President of the Russian Federation. Today, he has amassed more than \$70 billion worth of property. Probably his assets would also represent one of the largest personal fortunes ever accumulated by a sitting head of a state. This makes him much more powerful and helps him to sideline his rivals to make his way forward.

Russia has no longer the normal tools of democracy i.e. a free media, free election and an independent judiciary. A few independent magazines and papers that reach the outside world surely can't match what the state-owned Russian TV sends out to the world. A pure "manufacturing of consent" is practised. Another malaise of Russia today is that its people are hardly capable of electing the local governors and their parliamentarians.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



MAKHAN SAIKIA



REALISE DEEPLY THAT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS ALL YOU HAVE. MAKE THE NOW THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF YOUR LIFE
— ECKHART TOLLE



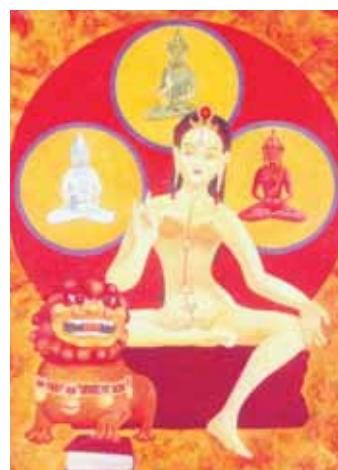
YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA

**ARIES** March 21-April 19

This week you are likely to neglect your physical and emotional health. It is high time you change your lifestyle and choose a more healthy way of living. You need some time to rebuild your physical, mental and spiritual energies. Ensure a positive outlook in life to deal with health issues. On the career front, you will experience some negative energies that may cause mental pressure upon you. Be sincere towards your work and no harm will come to you. Financially, this is not a good time for a lot of you. Stay away from gambling as major loss is indicated. In love, a committed relationship may bring a new height of intimacy and joy. Singles, may soon find deep and true love in someone.

Lucky number 3
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Saturday

**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

Something big awaits you this week. You are full of enthusiasm and are adventurous to face the challenges life chooses to throw at you. Your health is at its best and you will experience high energy and vitality. Positive attitude and jolly nature will enhance your personality. In career, stay focused and keep a positive outlook. Be careful about the rivals at your workplace and do not disclose your strategies and plans to anyone. The week is favourable for spiritual healers and medical practitioners. Utilise this time to enhance your knowledge. Listen to your inner voice to follow the right track. In terms of the relationship, committed couples will enjoy strong bonding this week. Your reputation and goodwill will fetch you rich dividends and this will help you lead a charmed life.

Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Camel Brown
Lucky day Friday

**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

Your health is likely to get affected due to stress and anxiety. A disappointing situation will leave you emotionally exhausted. Make sure you take some time out for meditation and proper rest. Be optimistic. On the work front, you are likely to face difficult circumstances due to your thoughts and perspective. Try to look at things with a different viewpoint and you may find many options available to sort out the difficulty. Those looking for employment may get a call for an interview. This week you may feel that your relationship is becoming boring. Therefore, you need to sit and openly discuss your feelings with your partner. Things will change for the better. Singles, analyse what you want from the relationship and then consider to enter into it.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Rose Gold
Lucky day Tuesday

**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

Your health will be good this week and you will be confident about your future. Explore new ideas to maintain good health. Stay away from circumstances that will make you lazy. Those suffering from some illness may expect a speedy recovery. It is important to be grateful to those who stood by you in the journey of your progress. Professional life looks good. Those who are employed are like to get the next position in line. Negotiating your value is worth your effort. A partnership proposal from an old friend or colleague is on the cards. Go for it as this will prove lucky for you. On the relationship front, express your feelings with passion. Singles may find love this week. A positive start will give you confidence.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Off-White
Lucky day Monday

**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you will possess the inner strength to take up any physical and mental challenge. You should make some efforts to uplift your fitness level by following a workout regime. Follow a diet chart to ensure balanced intake. A legal issue is likely to cause worry and keep you a little tensed. You should work towards avoiding negative vibes, this will help you be a confident person. On the career front, you will not have any pending work. Those who have started a new venture may have a reason to worry, but this will be temporary. It is advised to stay calm this week. Relationship wise, love will bloom and so will you. Happiness and contentment in all relations are indicated. Your dream for a perfect relation may come true.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Wednesday

**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This week your health will be good. Look out for new ways to maintain this — this could be by following a new fitness routine or a diet plan. Follow whatever suits you, as it will increase your vitality. Emotionally, you are content and will spend some good time with your family. On the work front, you will be successful in achieving your goals. Your efforts and hard work will be acknowledged. This week you will shine, but make sure that success doesn't get into your head as this will bring disappointment. Those seeking jobs may find one. In the love life, if things are not going well, then talk to your partner openly. Singles, before starting a relationship you need to be aware of your emotional issues and try to correct it.

Lucky number 16
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Sunday

**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

Be very careful about your health and at the same time, be observant as there are fine solutions for many health issues. Do not avoid situations where you have to decide on your health, as this can help you recover from your health issues. Maintain balanced behaviour and a positive outlook. On the career front, you will be overburdened and likely to be weighed down by responsibilities and commitments. You need to impose time management techniques to ensure that the work burden doesn't exhaust you. Ensure you take rest. Relationship wise, this week foresees happy family time, both for committed and single people. You and your partner will enjoy a peaceful time as you both are on the same page.

Lucky number 7
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Thursday

**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you will be full of energy and vitality and this will further help maintain a perfect harmony with respect to your body, mind and soul. You know what you want from life and will maintain a balance between personal and professional life. You need to take some time out to relax. On the professional front, the week is satisfactory. Those in the field of finance will perform better. Trust your communication skills and listen to your inner voice. This will bring you desired results. You are likely to connect with important people who will play a role in your professional growth. On the relationship front, a fresh start is foreseen. This is a good time for love birds. Couples will experience a truly deep love in the coming days. Love is in the air.

Lucky number 9
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Tuesday

**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

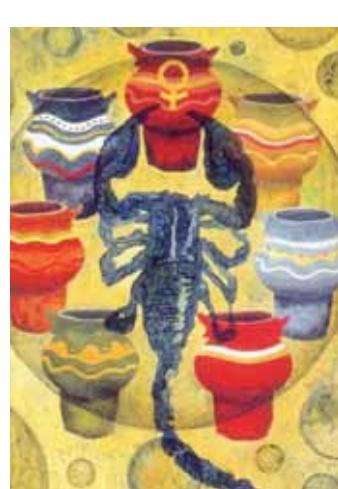
This week you will witness a sound mind and body connection. Consider your thoughts and behaviour while dealing with a health issue. Genetics and environment play an important role in creating such conditions, but negative thinking makes the situation worse. Seek help from a counsellor to deal with this negativity. At work, you need to think before acting on any situation, else it will lead to an unfavourable consequence. If required, re-evaluate your goals and change your priorities. There may be some turbulence in your love life. A relationship might end or have already ended. It will be an unpleasant situation as you will dwell in the memories of the past. You may heal by forgiving and learning from the mistakes.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Pastel Blue
Lucky day Thursday

**CANCER** June 21-July 22

You will work towards correcting the issues for the betterment of your health. If the issues become problematic, then it is advised to make some changes for a healthy lifestyle. Pay attention to your diet, exercise, and relaxation. If required, consult a health professional. On the career front, those looking for a new position will attain it. This week is a crucial time for you. You are likely to gain a new project. Work towards maximising your potential for a longer period. With hard work and persistence, you will leave a positive impact on senior management. Love life is not so rosy. A relationship has either ended or is on the verge of getting over. Don't let this situation dishearten you. You will overcome this situation.

Lucky number 1
Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Friday

**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 22

You will enjoy good health this week. Therefore, invest your energy into something productive. This is the right time to start a new health regime like a fitness plan, a diet plan or an exercise routine. Those who are facing health challenges, are likely to recover soon with the help of their loved ones and people around them. Being optimistic will help you big time. On the professional front, things look favourable. You will be happy to help others and will make the working experience a pleasant one. The money will be in abundance. In the love life, you are likely to face conflicts. Therefore, try to have open communication with your partner to avoid any misunderstandings. Singles, this is not a good time to get into a relationship.

Lucky number 17
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Saturday

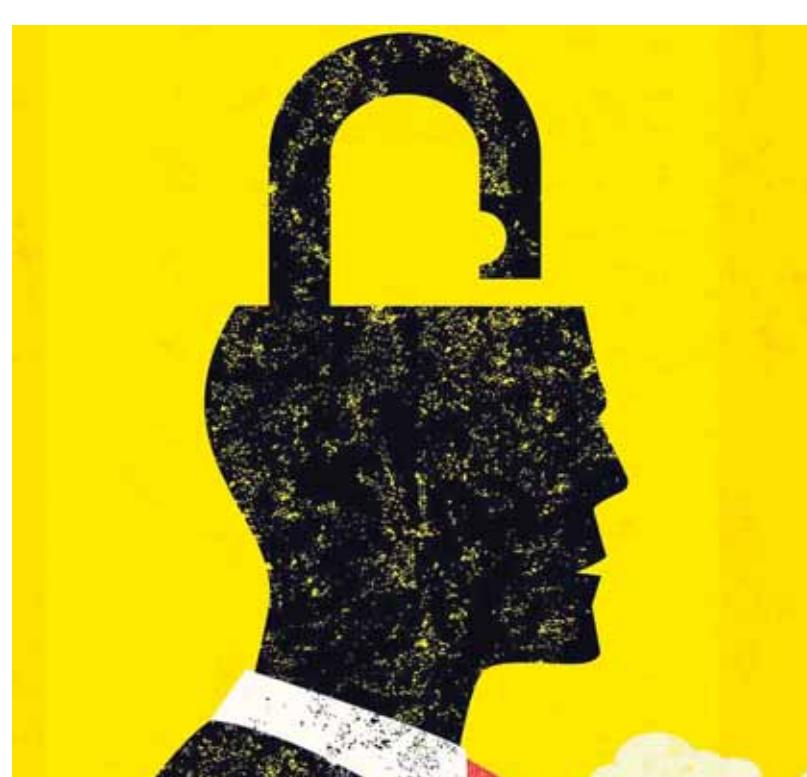
**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

For a healthy life, you need to have patience and mental strength. Stay optimistic and spread good vibes around you. Share your motivation and inspiration with others. That might just as well heal them. Those who are dealing with bad habits, this is the right time to correct it. On the career front, uncertainties and confusions will dominate your mind and decisions and make your goals unclear. Colleagues and peers might try to limit your capabilities. Be confident and you will be able to overcome all opposition. In the matters of heart, you and your partner are likely to feel inspired and motivated. Spend time with each other and try to express your feelings. A new beginning is on the cards for singles. Use your creative energy productively.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Sunday

ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Unlock the mind to heal



future life takes off. Accordingly, each mind involuntarily develops its individual specific defining principles that guide all actions on our part — the desires nursed and pursued, the initiatives we take, or how we respond or react to a particular situation. That, of course, is subject to further modification as we go through learning lessons during ongoing life. With such a preconditioned mind, our scope of vision comes under restriction. That doesn't let us look at the issues in hand with an open mind, and so often fail to perceive things in the right perspective due, and evidently to our detriment.

The beauty of human mind, however, is that it can self-reflect upon its own trends and could respond to fresh educational inputs also. That empowers us to watch our thought-trends and make necessary amends through conscious efforts. The paradox, however, is that seldom do we remain conscious about using the above exclusive privilege. Often, our ego also plays spoil sport, as it doesn't let us identify and acknowledge our fault lines. Here comes the role of Astrology, which can dispassionately read your personality trends. For, it reads your individual energy signature with a fair amount of precision. And energy knows no bias.

Here is the case of a person who came seeking guidance on how to come out of acute stress he is undergoing. Look at his astrological pointers. The Sun conjunct Saturn in the *lagna*, a fixed sign, both opposed to Jupiter conjunct mischievous Neptune. That speaks of a hardened negative mindset. Second, he is stuck to his self-defined delusional beliefs and perceptions. Third, has a swaggering ego, who wishes to live exclusively on his own terms. All the more because mind signifying Moon occupies a dual sign Gemini and afflicted by both the sign lord Mercury and *lagna* lord Venus. That clouds his vision and interpersonal relationship skill. If all that would not be enough, fiery Mars conjunct erratic Rahu, lock horns with both Mercury and Venus. He, thus, has a restive and a cynical mind, who habitually finds fault with others for all the wrong happening. I wish, he unlocks his pre-conditioned mind, and things will definitely turn better.

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Lockdown is being gradually eased out. People are trying to resume normal activities, but the problems confronting us are not yet over. It will take some time before things settle down. As nature goes through unforeseen twists and turns, we are faced with unprecedented situations. We can't change nature's course. But how we respond is definitely in our hands. If we negotiate with the challenges coming our way with fortitude and intelligence, we may be able to contain the damage. We faced similar pandemic during 1918-1920 in which more than 50 million people lost their lives, which included 2.25 million Indians. This time, however, the recovery rate is higher and death toll so far has been much lesser. It is not that world's destiny has taken a different turn. It needs to be appreciated that it is the result of human endeavour that medical science has grown substantially and we are better equipped today.

In life too, we are often confronted with challenging situations, many of them beyond our control. Many of us become a victim of our own making also because of our flawed perceptions. But here again, what matters the most is how

we respond to the situation. Some amongst us are able to face the situation bravely, intelligently negotiate the challenges and keep marching ahead in strength. But many, particularly the weak, come under great pressure, that is difficult to withstand, often at times calling for medical intervention. The question now is: Why given a similar situation, different people respond varied ways?

The answer lies in the unique character of each being, coming as it may as one's karmic carryover from the past. In one's life time, we would have learnt and unlearnt many things, acquired skill sets, developed habits and attitudes, acquired virtues and attributes, and also have unfulfilled desires left. Their imprints get carried over in the form of thought seeds to our successive incarnate body-mind organism. As and when the thought-seeds get a congenial ground, they come into play involuntarily. That may be to our advantage or detriment, depending on the character and content of the thought-seeds. To sum up, we are all invariably born with a preconditioned mind, which sets the premise of one's thought process — the basic fabric of individual mind-frame — on which our