

WORLD 7
WON'T ORDER AMERICANS TO WEAR MASKS: TRUMP

MONEY 8
AGR DUES: VODA IDEA PAYS ANOTHER ₹1K CR TO GOVT

SPORT 10
ARCHER FINED, GETS OFFICIAL WARNING



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USUALSUSPECTS
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Cong has lost touch with national impulse

The first time I donated blood was in December 1971, shortly after my final school examinations. Having more than an hour to kill before meeting a friend, I was wandering aimlessly around Chowringhee in Kolkata. It was during the Bangladesh war and although the city was not far from the frontline, life was exceptionally normal. A few people spoke about the likelihood of air raids by Pakistani bombers but that didn't seem to worry people in the city. They went about their business normally.

The normalcy extended to political activity. Amid the cluster of hawkers selling woollen garments opposite Metro cinema, I heard loudspeakers blaring patriotic songs. On closer examination I discovered a makeshift stall set up by the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. It aroused my curiosity for the simple reason that in a city and state obsessed with Left politics, it was rare to see a so-called Right-wing political party doing its thing. However, my hopes of procuring some Jana Sangh literature were dashed when I discovered that, instead of propagating its politics, the party had organised a blood donation camp. The party wasn't actually collecting blood on the streets. It was merely setting up appointments for prospective donors to go to the blood donation centre in the big army base in Ballygunge. I volunteered, took a printed form and two days later donated blood for the jawans.

It wasn't a big deal and certainly nowhere as significant as the time in 1962 when all the women in our joint family set out one morning to donate a few of their precious gold bangles to the National Defence Fund. Yet, as a 16-year-old I felt good that I had done my modest bit for the war effort. At the same time, I was struck by the fact that in the midst of war, the party that had so bitterly opposed Indira Gandhi in the general election, barely nine months earlier, was organising a blood donation camp for soldiers.

To me, it was an important lesson in politics: the awareness that there are occasions when differences are set aside. Unfortunately, not all parties were aware of their national obligations. In 1962, a big section of the undivided CPI openly sided with China during the war. I remember a family friend, an active aristocratic Communist, being picked up by the police and detained for his pro-China sympathies. I also remember how a crowd taunted a next-door neighbour — also an active Communist — for his dodgy partiality for Maoist China. I don't recall any tears being shed by the elders for either gentlemen.

A war or even tensions involving a foreign country, inevitably results in the nation coming together regardless of whether they are Left or Right. In 1914, despite initial protestations about a possible "imperialist war", the socialist parties of Europe joined the war effort in their respective countries. Only a few, notably Lenin in Russia and Rosa Luxemburg in Germany, dissented and that became the basis of the enduring schism between the Social Democrats and the Communists. In the Britain of 1939, there was initially a reluctance to confront Hitler's Germany. However, once the decision to back Poland was taken, all the parties, with the exception of British Union of Fascists led by Sir Oswald Mosley, actively backed the war effort. The Labour Party even joined the National Government headed by Winston Churchill. Mosley — otherwise a brilliant and charismatic leader — became a political pariah. When he was interned — despite him invoking the law of Habeas Corpus — neither the people nor the judges thought his civil liberties took priority over national unity.

In normal circumstances, the duty of the Opposition is to oppose. However, war or a conflict with another country is a separate matter altogether. In such circumstances, it is always "my country right or wrong".

These lessons from history seem to have been lost on the Congress leadership. Over the past month, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has overruled other colleagues from his party and decided that the Narendra Modi Government must be confronted over the tensions — or even the undeclared war — with China. On the face of it, the former Congress president has been articulating an ultra-nationalist line and charging Modi with capitulation to China, but this is not how it comes across. To most people — only too aware of the misplaced Nehruvian attachment to Panchshila and Hindi-Chini bhai bhai — the Congress leadership's belligerence seems an attempt to undermine national unity at a time when China is at its aggressive best. In the public imagination, it is inextricably linked to the awkward noises made by the Congress in the aftermath of the Balakot air strikes against terror bases in Pakistan.

During the Kargil war of 1999, when Sonia Gandhi was at the helm, the Congress had displayed such an attitude. Throughout the conflict, it kept harping on alleged intelligence failures and military lapses. As spokesperson, Kapil Sibal was absolutely vitriolic in his denunciation of the Government.

The approach didn't go down well and in the general election held shortly after the war was over, the Congress was strongly rebuffed by the electorate. The pattern repeated itself in 2019 when the Congress, for the second time in succession, failed to secure 10 per cent of the Lok Sabha seats.

It is for the Congress to ponder over why this errant political behaviour is repeated over and over again. Whether this is due to Rahul Gandhi's innate lack of understanding of national impulses or the excessive influence of Left intellectuals in the Congress ecosystem is for Congress-watchers to ascertain. But contrarian behaviour in times when national unity is of paramount importance has merely served to drive a mainstream party to the fringes.

BJP seeks CBI probe into phone tapping

Centre asks Raj Chief Secy to file report; Cong claims Opp caught red-handed in bid to buy MLAs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/ JAIPUR/ GURUGRAM

The political row between the Congress and the BJP over the audio tapes, in which Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Congress MLA Bhanwarlal Sharma are allegedly heard plotting to topple the Ashok Gehlot Government, continued on Saturday with the BJP demanding a CBI probe into telephone tapping and the Congress claiming the BJP leaders have been caught red-handed in attempting to buy MLAs.

The Centre too stepped into the row with the Home Ministry seeking report from the Chief Secretary of Rajasthan on the telephone tapping.

Rajasthan Congress president Govind Singh Dotasra claimed that the Special Operation Group (SOG) team was made to wait by the BJP Government's Haryana Police until the Sachin Pilot camp's MLAs inside the resort (in Manesar) were moved out through a separate secret door.

"This shows the complicity of the BJP and its Haryana Government in the crime," Dotasra said, adding, "Will Sachin Pilot and Congress MLAs explain why they do not trust the police of their own



Rajasthan PCC president Govind Singh Dotasra (C) addresses the media in Jaipur on Saturday. PTI

State. These answers should be given to the Central leadership," Dotasra said.

There was a huge drama when the Rajasthan SOG reached Manesar and when they were prevented by the Haryana Police late on Friday.

The SOG said the audio will be first examined by FSL and then the accused will be interrogated.

The Anti-Corruption bureau of Rajasthan too registered an FIR after complaint by Congress chief whip Mahesh Joshi with regard to the two audio clips.

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TWO BUSINESSMEN CLOSE TO GEHLOT TO GET IT SUMMONS

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department will soon summon the promoters of three Rajasthan-based groups whom it had raided earlier this week for tax evasion, officials said on Saturday. The businessmen are said to be close to Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot.

Gehlot meets Guv, may go for floor test after 2 MLAs of BTP back him

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot late on Saturday met Governor Kalraj Mishra soon two MLAs of the Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP) announced support for his Government.

Sources said Gehlot may soon go for floor test to force the disqualification of the Pilot camps MLAs. The CM could request the Governor to convene a one-day special session of the Assembly to prove his majority.

Now that Gehlot has the support to the two BTP MLAs and assured of majority, he could catch the Pilot camp MLAs napping if he calls for a floor test. Majority of the MLAs are unlikely to risk a disqualification and vote against the Government. Even if they do so, they will be disqualified and Gehlot could breathe easy because the strength of the Assembly will come down.

Cong infighting to blame for political crisis in State: Raje

Party MLA's account differs

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje on Saturday broke her silence on Rajasthan political turmoil blaming the infighting in the Congress for the plight of the State, but a veteran MLA close to her flayed his own party for "horse-trading" to create political instability in the State.

"It is unfortunate that the people of Rajasthan are paying for the discord within the Congress," Raje said in her first reaction on the political crisis in the State.

"There is no point in trying to drag the BJP and the BJP leaders' names through the mud. It is the interest of our people that must remain paramount!" the former Chief Minister said.

An MLA from the Sachin Pilot camp had on Friday

accused Raje of helping the Gehlot Government by allegedly asking her supporter MLAs to help the Congress in its fight against the rebel Congress leader.

It's well known that Raje does not share best of relation with the BJP top leadership. It is also speculated that she didn't want Pilot to make inroads in the BJP and emerge as possible contender for the Chief Minister's post.

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Rajnath visits post near LoC

Army officers brief about security grid, Minister boosts morale of soldiers

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A day after sending a "strong" message to China from Lukung, one of the forward posts near the stand-off point at Pangong Tso in the eastern Ladakh sector, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday visited forward areas along the Line of Control (LoC) in North Kashmir's Kupwara district to take stock of the prevailing security situation on ground zero.

At the forward post, the Defence Minister created ripples in the high hills as he chanted "patriotic" slogans 'Jo bole so nihaal...' in chorus with the troops.

An elated Rajnath Singh



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visits a forward post near LoC in Kupwara on Saturday. PTI

even requested for a repeat performance from the troops and they happily obliged him.

The Defence Minister mingled with the jawans and also patted their backs while sharing snack.

Ahead of the first anniversary of abrogation of Article

370 and reorganisation of the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union Territories on August 5, Pakistan Army has been desperately trying to push heavily armed groups of terrorists inside the Indian territory to keep the terror pot boiling.

During Operation "All Out", a total number of 65 terrorists have been neutralised by the security forces since June 1, 2020. The list included several top commanders of different terror outfits including foreign terrorists hailing from Pakistan.

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ISIS' Sadia spills beans, planned to attack Delhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Islamic State (ISIS) operative Sadia Anwar Sheikh arrested by the National Investigative Agency (NIA) was planning lone-wolf attacks in Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir.

A team of NIA from Delhi brought Nabeel Siddique Khatri and Sadia Anwar Sheikh, accused in a case related to activities of ISKP (Islamic State Khorasan Province), to Delhi on July 13. Both were arrested from Pune.

The duo is under NIA custody here and the revelation has come during sustained interrogation, sources said, adding Sheikh was picked up earlier in

2018 but was let off for want of substantive evidence.

The sleuths are also interrogating her on the larger nexus and funding. The two were arrested by the NIA in an ISKP case, including a journalism student, a 22-year-old girl from Maharashtra.

On Sunday, NIA teams carried out searches in Pune and arrested the two accused persons — Nabeel S Khatri (27), resident of Pune, and Sadiya Anwar Sheikh (22) who hails from Phulnagar, Yerwada, Pune — in connection with the ISKP case, NIA spokesperson had said in a statement.

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Nepal protests road to Kailash Mansarovar through Lipulekh Pass

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After redrawing a controversial map by including Indian Territory and making objectionable comments on Bhagwan Sri Ram's birthplace, the Nepal Government has now opposed the road link connecting the Kailash Mansarovar through Lipulekh Pass by India.

In a diplomatic note to its counterpart in New Delhi, the Nepal Government has expressed displeasure over the construction of roads and dams citing that such development in India is causing flooding in Nepal. The protest by Nepal has also cast a shadow on the future of the proposed Pancheshwar multipurpose dam project that the two countries are jointly planning to build on the border.

According to Nepal's newspaper Kantipur, the KP Sharma Oli Government has raised objection to road and dam building by sending diplomat-

ic notes to India. The newspaper quoted Ravindra Nath Shrestha, secretary of Nepal's Irrigation Ministry, as saying that Nepal Foreign Ministry has raised objection on this matter by sending diplomatic notes to India.

"At the identical time, an attraction has been made to set up a gathering of joint committee of flood and water administration between the two international locations yearly," he said.

The road link through Lipulakh Pass at a height of 17,000 ft above sea level is supposed to be a shortcut to reach the Kailash Mansarovar in Tibet and will make it easier for devotees to reach the pilgrimage site nestled in the Himalayas. Till now, 76 km of the 80 km stretch, (that will cut down the travel time to two days by vehicles) is completed and the last 4 km stretch till Lipulekh Pass is expected to be completed by the end of 2020.

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Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 10,76,535
DEATHS: 26,826
RECOVERED: 6,77,480
ACTIVE: 3,71,830



| STATES | TOTAL CASES | DEATHS | RECOVERED |
|-----------------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| Maharashtra | 3,00,937 | 11,596 | 1,65,663 |
| Tamil Nadu | 1,65,714 | 2,403 | 1,13,856 |
| Delhi | 1,21,582 | 3,597 | 1,01,274 |
| Karnataka | 59,652 | 1,245 | 21,776 |
| Gujarat | 47,476 | 2,126 | 34,005 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 47,036 | 1,108 | 28,664 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 44,609 | 586 | 21,763 |
| Telangana | 43,780 | 409 | 30,607 |
| West Bengal | 40,209 | 1,076 | 23,539 |
| Rajasthan | 28,500 | 553 | 21,144 |
| Haryana | 25,547 | 344 | 19,318 |
| Bihar | 24,967 | 177 | 15,771 |
| Assam | 21,865 | 58 | 15,166 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 21,763 | 706 | 14,864 |
| Odisha | 16,701 | 112 | 11,937 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 13,198 | 236 | 7,165 |

Manipur top cop shoots self, condition critical

PTI ■ IMPHAL

A top officer of Manipur police department allegedly shot himself in his office Saturday afternoon, officials said. The officer, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Arvind Kumar, was taken to a hospital following the incident.

The top brass of police and officials, including Chief Secretary J Suresh Babu, visited Raj Medicity where Kumar was being treated.

The Chief Secretary said Kumar's condition is serious but he is responding to the treatment and has also spoken to the doctors.

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Ram temple trust invites PM to lay foundation stone on Aug 3 or 5

Ayodhya: The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lay the foundation stone of a grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya either on August 3 or 5, both auspicious dates, a spokesperson said on Saturday.

Mahant Kamal Nayan Das, the spokesperson of Trust's president Nritya Gopal Das said, "We have suggested two auspicious dates — August 3 and 5 — for the PM's visit based on calculations of movements of stars and planets."

Detailed report on Page 6

CAPSULE

1ST E-VEHICLE CHARGING STATION IN EAST DELHI
New Delhi: Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia inaugurated the first public e-vehicle charging station in East Delhi in his constituency Patparganj on Saturday.

3 COPS SUSPENDED AFTER 2 WOMEN TRY SUICIDE
Amethi/Lucknow: The Amethi Police suspended three policemen after a woman from the district and her daughter set themselves on fire outside the Chief Minister's office in Lucknow alleging inaction in a land dispute case.

UNDERTRIAL FOUND HANGING IN TIHAR JAIL
New Delhi: A 38-year-old undertrial prisoner, who was lodged in Tihar jail in a murder case, was found hanging inside a cell, officials said on Saturday.

GOVT NOTICE TO TWITTER AFTER RECENT HACKING
New Delhi: India's cybersecurity nodal agency CERT-In has issued a notice to Twitter asking the micro-blogging platform for full details of the recent global hack targeting high-profile users, as it sought complete information on number of Indian users affected as well as impact on data, a source said.

HOME THEATRE

Funny and entertaining



VIRGIN BHAVANPRIYA
Zee5
*ing: Urvashi Rautela, Gautam Gulati, Rumana Molla, Rajiv Gupta, Archana Puran Singh
Rated: 6/10

Given that Bollywood is not known to make good rom-coms when it involves anything to do with the topic of sex, *Virgin Bhavanpriya* is a welcome change. The good part about this movie is that it is definitely not a sex comedy even though the entire film revolves around Bhavanpriya played Urvashi Rautela quest to lose her virginity. Yes, Bollywood is somewhat coming of age and has started to realise that the audience is mature enough to enjoy a movie

on the said subject without people being judgmental.

But this could stem from the brilliant storytelling by writer-director Ajay Lohan. More so as the industry is not known to make films that explore a woman's sexuality or desires. The fact that it has done the same, is a breath of fresh air and it does this with its racy humour, catchy dialogues that will keep you entertained all through 111 minutes.

Rautela, who was last seen in *Pagalpanti*, plays the role of Bhavanpriya with aplomb and gives a great performance as the girl who wants to lose her virginity. A special mention for the support cast especially Rumana Molla who plays Rukul, Bhavanpriya's *bindaas* friend

who is unapologetic about her sexual needs. Her mission is to introduce her friend to potential candidates to lose her V-card.

More than Bhavanpriya and her quest, it is the dialogues and banter between Rajiv Gupta who plays Bhavan's father and Archana Puran Singh who plays the mother that need to be applauded for their brilliant performance here. They are the ones that keep your funny one tickling with their dialogues and relationship — love to hate each other. Each character has been well-fleshed out and makes them relatable and the movie a must-see.

Does Bhavanpriya manage to lose her virginity? Log on to know. — Shalini Saksena



Never a dull moment

CURSED
Netflix
Series: Season 1, 10 episodes
*ing: Katherine Langford, Devon Terrell, Gustaf Skarsgård, Daniel Sharman, Sebastian Armesto, Matt Stokoe, Lily Newmark, Shalom Brune-Franklin, Emily Coates, Billy Jenkins, Bella Dayne, Peter Mullan
Rated: 6.5/10

Yes, there are way too many characters. Yes, there are way too many twists and turns. Yes, there are way too many secrets. Yes, there are way too many who want to get their hands on the Sword of Power and the legend associated with it — whoever wields it rules the throne. This latest Netflix offering based on an American fantasy based on the illustrated novel of the same name by Frank Miller and Tom Wheeler manages to ensure that one binge watches and curses oneself since there is no news when the second season will be out.

Despite the fact that the web series

sound and appear to be familiar — remember *Game of Thrones*? What manages to capture one's attention is the led character Nimue — a young heroine with a mysterious gift destined to become the powerful yet tragic Lady of the Lake.

We know it is tragic since the opening scene gives away what will behalve our heroine at least in this season. In the episodes to follow, it just confirms the same. It is also interesting to see how the Arthurian legend comes to life with its familiar characters.

Katherine Langford as Nimue carries the weight of her character with ease. She brings out the vulnerability and innocence of Nimue to fore and yet grows into her skins as the story progresses. Another plus are the stunning locales.

Even though the series are somewhat familiar, one doesn't get bored. For Season 2 — we want more Merlin, more Arthur and definitely more Nimue even if she is at the bottom of the lake.

— Shalini Saksena

Don't get lured in by name

MILF
Netflix
*ing: Virginie Ledoyen, Axelle Lafont, Marie-Josée Croze, Victor Meutelet
Rated: 4/10

One can't hit a high each time a new movie releases on the OTT platform. MILF comes under the category of one can't always win even though the film is unapologetic about what it is all about — that is all about being raunchy with skinny dipping at night and bawdy escapades. Or the fact that the six characters go on about how being a cougar is bad but an MILF is good. Given that the film does nothing to stimulate the brain or any other body part, it makes this film boring from the word go despite the subject about three 40-year-old women who go on a vacation with a plethora of relationship issues and the trip is all about taking a break.

Even though one gets a glimpse of the vulnerability of each woman, the shenanigans — flashing while driving, the camel toe joke and the ogling by three 20-something year olds of our main leads in bikinis is cringe-worthy even though age is just a number. It is just sad and pathetic how the dance parties and sunbathing take one on mindless affairs that tries to be funny and rather than give an insight into human relationships, it takes one on a ride that needs to be given a miss.

— Shalini Saksena



TELLY TALE

START SEEKING FOR SEEKER

Applause Entertainment, an Aditya Birla Group venture, the content studio led by media veteran Sameer Nair has announced its first International partnership with the highly acclaimed Gurinder Chadha's Bend It Films & TV and Sunder Aaron's Locomotive Global, to expand its global footprint.

Under this partnership the companies are developing an original, multi-season, drama series chronicling the life of an Indian Guru. This show titled *Seeker* witnesses the journey of a man who starts with noble intentions, his incredible rise to global fame and following even as he evolves into a grey mystic. The simple *ashram* gradually turns into an empire, soon too complicated for him to handle. With a colourful cast of characters and dark, complex layers, the series is currently under development and a multi-national writers room has been set up for it. It will feature an International Indian cast and be shot at various locations within and outside of India.

Commenting on this exciting partnership, Sameer Nair, CEO, Applause Entertainment said: "We are thrilled to announce our collaboration with Gurinder Chadha and Sunder Aaron. Gurinder's passion for telling stories and the global expertise of Locomotive Global aligns well with our philosophy and strength for investing in and creating outstanding premium content. This is an incredible time to tell this particular story, about the faith of the human race in a higher power, and in the telling, to cater to a universal, global sensibility."

Award-winning filmmaker and Chairperson, Bend It Films & TV Gurinder Chadha said, "As an International Director and Producer, I have been inspired to witness the strong appetite that both Indian and global audiences have for original, ambitious, border-crossing drama series. I am excited about this creative collaboration with Sameer Nair and his team at Applause along with Sunder Aaron."

SHUBHA ALL SET TO PLAY A MOTHER

The dazzle of small screen finally seems to return on the floor and Sony Entertainment Television is also all set to bring back its shows for the audience. Fans over the past months have not failed to express their love for *Ek Duje ke Vaaste 2*, where they constantly wished for the show to return back



on screen soon. Produced by StudioNEXT, the show brings to the viewers the story of two star-crossed lovers Suman and Shruvan. Now, when the show is finally set to broadcast its new episodes, Shubha Saxena and Ahtesham Azad Khan will make their entries in the show. Shubha will be seen in the role of Anjali Tiwari (Suman's mother) and Ahtesham will play the role of Rajendra Malhotra (Shruvan's Chachu).

In the upcoming episodes of the show, audience will see a twist as the Summer holidays begin in school and the army kids decide to form a study circle. Shruvan, in the attempts to impress Suman also joins the circle and while the friendship between the two would be seen budding, enmity drives in between their families. In between these family conflicts, Shubha and Ahtesham would also play a major role in supporting their respective families.

Excited to enter the show Shubha Saxena said: "*Ek Duje ke Vaaste 2* is a beautiful show and the place it has made in the hearts and minds of the viewers in such a short term of its run is commendable. I would be seen in the role of Anjali Tiwari who is the mother of Suman and belongs to an army family. Army wives generally have a different poise and politeness in their attitude, and I am glad that I am getting to play such a character. The role is very different from the past roles I have essayed."

On his entry in the show, Ahtesham Azad Khan said: "I am excited to be a part of the family. The cast is shooting in Bhopal, staying together and away from their families is a new experience in itself".

ALKA & HIMESH DAZZLE STAGE

With the lockdown gradually lifting and people across the country stepping out into the new normal, Zee TV's *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*



Li' Champs season 8 is all set to make a comeback, but with a fresh new look as Himesh Reshammiya and Javed Ali join Alka Yagnik as judges and popular actor and anchor, Manish Paul continues as the host. However, what truly makes the first episode post lockdown exceptional is the franchise's tribute to the Covid Warriors, India's unsung heroes. The upcoming episode will put the

spotlight on heroic doctors, police officer and workers and their inspirational stories during this pandemic. But that's not it! Viewers are in for a treat as the three judges will be making some really exceptional revelations during the show as well.

During this unique episode, contestants Ananya Sharma and Saumya Sharma will be seen singing Alka Yagnik and Kumar Sanu's beautiful song *Odh Li Chunariya Tere Naam Ki* from the movie *Pyaar Kiya Toh Darna Kya*. Coincidentally, the song was composed by Himesh Reshammiya, and not just that it was also Himesh's first project ever. However, post the performance, Alka ji made a statement that left everyone surprised. There was a time when she had actually avoided Himesh.

Talking about the time when she didn't know who Himesh Reshammiya was, Alka Yagnik said: "This is the first song I worked with Himesh, some 22 years ago and to be honest, I didn't know much about him. My diary was filled with dates of recording songs for multiple movies day after day. When I got a call and was told he's a new guy (HR), who wishes to record a song with me but since my calendar was full I did not entertain him. Then Vipin Reshammiya called me and said his son was composing for me for the first time and he's a huge fan, that's when I actually met HR and as soon as I heard this song, I knew it would top the charts."

WEB SERIES ON VIKAS DUBEY'S LIFE

Filmmaker Manish Vatsalya is all set to direct a web series based on the life of late Kanpur-based gangster Vikas Dubey who was killed allegedly in police encounter last week. The thriller crime series has been titled *Hanak*.

"As a filmmaker, I feel bound to show the paradigm of our social compass. Vikas Dubey epitomises the vice of human existence. What drew me towards his character is the flaws that define its entity and how they can be pictured to inculcate the values of virtues in our society," Oscar Eligible director Manish Vatsalya.

Which actors are on his mind for the role of the notorious gangster as well as that of the police personnel? "The concept and the structure of the story is something I was approached with but its nuances have to be conceived and redefined. We will be taking guidelines from the facts, which are in public domain or non-classified police records. Once the details fall into their logical place, the actors who fit the bill will be approached. However, I assure you that you will see the masters of their craft featuring in this series," replied the director.

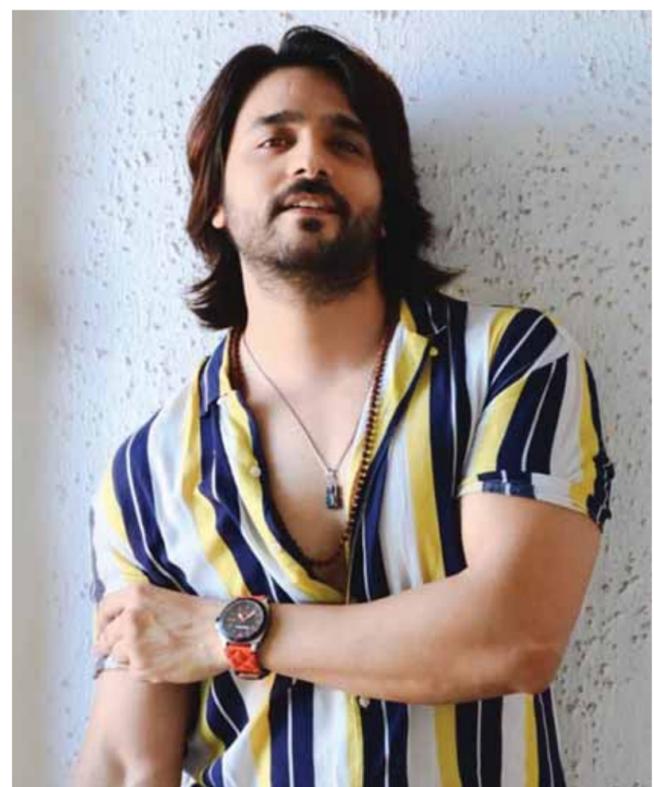
Filming begins in October this year. Due to social distancing regulations, "the new norms will be adhered and adopted without compromising on our artistic canvas," informed the director.

The web series will be produced by Aditya Kashyap and Awadhesh Tiwari while the story has been penned by Mridul Kapil and Subodh Pandey.

'You are on your own in this industry'

ASHISH SHARMA, who is known for his roles in *Rangrasiya* and *Prithvi Vallabh*, shares with MUSBA HASHMI his fondest memory from the sets of *Chandragupt Maurya*, which is now being rereleased on Dangal TV

Today, I am absolutely happy with no regrets. I am in a position where I can choose what I want to do and what not. I am happy that I have made great content and have been a part of good projects



Your fondest memory from the sets of Chandragupt Maurya.

Chandragupt Maurya was my second show and I must say it was one of the landmark shows in my career. There are a lot of memories associated from the show because it has given me friends and most importantly I met my wife, Archana, for the first time because of the show. I was shooting in Baroda at Sagar Studios for *Chandragupt Maurya* and Archana too was shooting for a different show in the same vicinity. So, our cottages were also nearby. I was roaming around in the Greek skirt when she saw me for the first time, that's where it all began. Later, our shoot moved to Mumbai and even she was back in Mumbai. We became friends and eventually things fell in place for us and we got married. It seemed like everything was destined.

Were there any apprehensions about taking up the role?

Not at all. On the contrary, I wanted to do it even before they offered the role to me. My show, *Gunaho Ka Devta*, was on air at the time when *Chandragupt Maurya* was launched with younger Chandragupt Maurya. I was very impressed with the way it was shot, executed and researched. It was way

ahead of its time. I was aware of the whole history as I had read a lot on Chanakya and Chandragupta and I liked the way they kept history intact. So, there were no apprehensions at all about taking up this role.

A role that comes close to you.

It has to be Rudra from *Rangrasiya* and Prithvi from *Prithvi Vallabh*. Both had a lot of me in them.

What kind of roles attract you?

Stories attract me, roles are parts of stories, story has to work for me on a whole and then what am I doing in it. I always look at the story first and how I will be a part of the narrative.

In all these years, what has been your takeaway from the industry?

My takeaway has been that, this isn't an industry, it's just a disintegrated field of work and you are on your own. So, one has to be very strong at heart and mind if you have to sustain here for long. Patience and persistence is the key. I have grown not only with my skills but also personally. I have become a lot calmer and more

composed over a period of time. I have begun to see myself very objectively. I believe you grow as an actor when you grow as an individual and it is all interconnected.

Was acting always on your cards?

Not really, I guess I just played my cards well. Today, I am absolutely happy with no regrets. I am in a position where I can do what I want to do and choose what I don't want to do. Over the years I have made some great content and have been a part of great projects.

Is there anything in the pipeline?

Right now, all the pipelines are blocked. Once this blockage is clear that's when any one would be able to tell what's in there for them. I have been working on some ideas during the lockdown. I do have some upcoming web series, which I am hopeful will start to shoot soon. Also, I am looking forward to portray the role of a common man whenever I sign up for something. Hopefully, when the situation get back to normal, I will be able to announce some of my projects.

Sisodia unveils 1st e-vehicle charging station in East Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia inaugurated smart charging stations at Patparganj which will charge e-vehicles between 45 and 90 minutes besides providing information on preventive maintenance as and when required.

Spraking on the occasion, Sisodia said, "Electric Vehicles are the future of India. Expanding EV adoption will lead to a curb in pollution." As per the Delhi Government, the first ever EV station in East Delhi is well equipped with modern facilities.

"It can charge four vehicles at the same time, for 45 to 90 minutes. Heavy duty vehicles like SUV, Mahindra, Hyundai, Kona etc can be charged at this EV station," an official associ-

ated with concern department said.

Elaborating further on the role of electric vehicle, Sisodia said, "Electric vehicles are our future as we can make Delhi pollution free. People who have purchased EVs are currently facing charging issues. This EV charging station installed here will solve that problem."

"As we come across petrol pumps everywhere, now we will also see EV charging stations everywhere." This station will cater to the needs of the people of East Delhi and Patparganj area.

The charging stations under PlugNgo are expected to cater to the charging requirements of 15 to 18 cars per day, a senior BSES official said, adding that the facility inaugurated in line with the commitment towards building a robust electric mobility ecosys-



tem. BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) and EV Motors India Pvt Ltd (EVM) have partnered to set-up smart charging stations.

P R Kumar, CEO - BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) said, "BYPL is gearing up to play a major role in the emerging EV sector. This is a very exciting moment for us and we are working closely with our strategic partners to set up many more charging stations. This partnership with Electric Vehicle Motors India is a testimonial to these efforts. Through this association, we at BYPL aim to reiterate our commitment to energy efficiency and sustainable growth. We plan to install more such smart public Electric Vehicle charging stations in the months ahead."

Vinit Bansal, Managing

Director, EV Motors India said, "We are delighted to partner with BYPL to launch our first jointly managed EV charging infrastructure. Mobility is going through a global transformation as we build solutions to improve air quality, make clean energy more accessible and reduce fossil fuel dependence. Through this association, we look forward to transforming the mobility landscape in the capital, thereby accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles."

In this endeavour, EV Motors has partnered with ABB, a global leader in EV fast charging solutions. Through its expertise and legacy in this field, ABB has established itself to provide EV Charging Equipments for electric vehicles.

These smart charging stations being set-up are truly

smart and equipped with an 'analytic platform', which will help Electric Vehicle (EV) owners get a seamless digital experience, the official said, adding that the vehicle charger at the outlet is integrated to the innovative PlugNgo mobile application that enables end consumers to locate and operate chargers.

The official said that the tentative total cost of running an e-vehicle is between Rs 1.25 to Rs 1.50 cost per km, depending on the maker of the vehicles, which is extremely competitive compared to petrol, diesel and even CNG vehicles.

Thus a user can save substantially per km on an electric vehicle. Apart from this, e-vehicles will lead to a savings of over 30 tonnes of CO2 for a lifespan of 10 years, he said.

Raghav inspects water augmentation project

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Vice Chairman of Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Raghav Chadha on Saturday visited the Palla region and inspected the water augmentation project being carried out by the civic body.

In accordance with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal vision of 24*7 drinking water supply to Delhiites, Chadha pointed out how additional 25MGD water can be extracted in a sustainable manner through this region as extracted groundwater gets recharged automatically during the flood season.

Further, the team also vis-



ited an automation center created by DJB to control and monitor all the working of tube wells in the Palla region. Chadha also stressed upon the need of water auditing and instructed DJB to put flow

meters in the complete supply system of the existing 25 MGD as well as for future extraction so that water is not wasted at all.

"In order to bring about overall improvement in the water management system of the board, this additional 25 MGD should be extracted and connected to the main supply to augment the distribution of water in North and North West Delhi," he said.

Chadha also asked the officials to focus on the fact that DJB should not leave any stone unturned to provide 24*7 uninterrupted water supplies to the citizens of Delhi.

DJB is already extracting

25 MGD water from the Palla region. Further, it is estimated that the work of installation of 200 tube wells to extract 25 MGD water will be complete in two years. Water extracted will be connected to the main supply to augment water in North and North West Delhi.

Chadha along with the officials also visited the site of Delhi government's ambitious plan of floodwater harvesting in the floodplains of Delhi. "The project is being executed by 'Irrigation and Flood Control Department' and instructed DJB officials to provide all kinds of assistance to make the project a success. The 25 acres of pond with a depth

of 1.75 acres was also checked," he said.

More than 35 piezometers have been installed up to the distance of two kms to study the impact of recharged water during floods.

Chadha said, "Many technical committees, researchers and scientists' opinions were brought to the table, believing the fact that this project has the potential to increase the ground water levels which can be extracted during lean season to augment the water supply in the Capital.

Currently, the pilot project is being executed on 25 acres which will be extrapolated to 1000 acres, he said.

1,475 fresh +ve cases in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The National Capital reported 1,475 fresh cases of Coronavirus on Saturday, taking the total tally to 121582 till now.

As per the health bulletin released by the Delhi government, at least 101274 patients have recovered, been discharged or migrated so far, while a number of active cases stood at 16711.

Rapid-antigen tests started in the city on June 18. Since then a total of 798783 tests through the RT-PCR (reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) and rapid-antigen methods have been conducted in Delhi with around

6246 (RT-PCR) tests conducted on Saturday.

The helpline numbers can be contacted on 1031, 1800-111-747, 22391014, 22301028, 22302441, 22307133, 22304568, 22307745, 22307135, 22307145, 22300012 and 22300036.

According to health authorities, rapid-antigen testing is an easy and cheaper method as compared to the RT-PCR test. Each testing kit costs Rs 450 and can provide results within 30 minutes as compared to RT-PCR test that takes three to four hours.

The kits, called Standard Q COVID-19 Ag detection, have been developed by South Korean company S D

Biosensor. The testing method involves looking for antibodies which are produced when the body is exposed to a pathogen. If a person has antibodies associated with novel coronavirus, it means the person is either COVID-19 positive or has recovered.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research, suspected individuals who test negative for COVID-19 in rapid-antigen test should undergo RT-PCR to rule out the infection.

Rapid-antigen testing requires a prescription and an ICMR form filled by a registered doctor, and a government identity proof, same as that for RT-PCR test.

Illegal dairy operators attack municipal team

ASHOK NIRWAN ■ GHAZIABAD

Dairy operators attacked the municipal team, which arrived in Mirzapur under Vijay Nagar police station area to remove illegal dairies on Saturday. In which many suffered minor injuries. In this regard, FIR has been lodged in Municipal Corporation Vijay

Nagar police station. In which 2 people running dairy have been nominated.

Municipal Corporation Health Officer MK Singh said that this afternoon, the enforcement team of the Municipal Corporation went to remove the illegal dairy from the health department, while some people attacked the team, although no

one suffered serious injuries during this time. He said that police reached the spot. He said that the dairy operators who attacked had lodged a report against obstructing government work.

At the same time, the villagers say they did not give any notice and started removing their ladies, after which there was a dispute.

DEMOLITION AT LAXMI MARKET

CM shedding crocodile tears on plight of 100 families: Congress

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress accused Delhi Chief Minister of shedding "crocodile tears" and making a "mockery" of the plight of over 100 families whose houses have been demolished at Laxmi Market by East Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Congress Delhi unit president Anil Kumar said that Congress has been demanding rehabilitation and compensation of all the affected people ever since the demolition of these houses was carried out.

Kumar said that people have been living in East Laxmi Market since 1982 though the cluster had come up as far back as 1962 and they have all the valid documents to prove their residential status.

The Congress president had also written to the Lieutenant Governor on 15th July, requesting his intervention in the rehabilitation of the uprooted people under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna.

Meanwhile party vice-president Jaikishan also visited the area and sought compensation from the government of Rs 25 for each of the affected family.

"The party will take the street against the ruling AAP government and the East Corporation if the residents are not rehabilitated," he said.

Man arrested for duping people on pretext of selling mobile phones

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested a 36-year-old man in South Delhi for allegedly duping people on the pretext of selling mobile phones. Police said that the man used to show original mobiles but later used to swap it with dummy mobiles.

The accused has been identified as Umar Zahid, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Meerut area. Police said that Umar along with his associate used to come into the city from Meerut to commit crime and after that they used to return back.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, on July 17, at 7:30 PM, a police team near BRT road signalled a biker to stop but the rider tried to flee away.

Constable assaulted in Shahdara, 3 held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

An on duty Delhi Police Constable was assaulted by a group of men in Delhi's Shahdara area on Friday. Police said that they have arrested three men while one accused managed to flee from the spot.

The accused have been identified as Raghuvir, Arun and Rampal. Police said that the trio is a driver by profession.

According to a senior police official, on Friday, constable Pradeep was on patrolling duty along with head constable Akash.

"When at about 9 PM, they reached near the Rahman building in the area, the constable noticed that many persons were standing there without any reason. The constable Pradeep asked these men reason for standing there while Head Constable Akash was some distance from him," said the senior police official.

"On this, the accused opposed and abused the constable and all manhandled him. Seeing Pradeep being manhandled, the head constable Akash rushed to the spot and they both apprehended Raghuvir, Arun and Rampal while one person ran away from the spot," he said.

"The uniform of police personnel was torn by the accused. The constable Pradeep was medically examined and on his statement a case under section 186/353/332/34 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered and the accused were placed under arrest," the senior police official added.



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DSGMC starts free medical transportation to corona patients

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) has started round the clock free medical transportation to Coronavirus patients in need of mobility support in the national Capital.

In this first phase, 12 ambulances equipped with ultra-modern medical facilities have been rolled from various parts of Delhi, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, president of DSGMC said, adding that all these ambulances have been stationed at Gurdwara Nanak Piao, Guru Hargobind Institute of Management and Information Technology Hargobind Enclave, Gurdwara Moti Bagh, Guru Harkrishan Public School premises so as it can reach their destinations at the earliest.

Woman wanted in armed robbery case held after 8 yrs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 32 year old woman, who was absconding and was wanted in an armed robbery case, was arrested by Delhi Police after eight years in National Capital's Mandir marg area. Police said that the woman was also declared 'Proclaimed Offender' (PO) by the local court.

The accused has been identified as Aarti, a vagabond. Police said that she used to reside at Platform No 1 of New Delhi Railway Station (NDLS) at the time of commission of crime in 2012.

According to Dr Eish Singhal, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), New Delhi district, Aarti was apprehended on Saturday from Nabi Karim by the PO team of Mandir Marg police station.

Commissioner interacts with 950 Traffic policemen

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Commissioner, SN Shrivastava, on Saturday interacted with around 950 Traffic police personnel through Video Conferencing.

The CP during the meeting stressed upon importance to be laid on the visibility of Traffic Policemen and officers on Delhi roads for ensuring proper regulation and management of traffic. "Personal conduct of traffic policemen and officers should be courteous but firm, emphasis to be laid on discipline, punctuality and integrity. Professional posturing while on duty is very critical and the staff should be alert and ready to respond in a given situation. Supervisory officers should ensure that the traffic staffs remain visible," the CP directed.



"There should be constant interaction with general public, RWAs, Market Associations, Transport Associations, Taxi/TSR Associations etc for suggestions and improvement of traffic management in the local areas. Extensive and optimal use of all resources, modern equipments like E-Challans Machine/Body Worn Cameras/Speed Radar Guns/App based Challans provided by the Department and ensuring their safe upkeep," the CP said.

"The main objective of deploying traffic police personnel on roads is to ensure road safety and smoothen traffic flow. All our efforts should be geared towards this," said the CP. "The traffic police staff should be extra cautious about their health and use masks, hand sanitizers while on duty. Social Distancing be ensured amongst themselves and with the public. Concerned officers to ensure regular supply of masks and hand sanitizers for use of field staff. Traffic staff should also continue to do physical exercises," CP said.



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शमन योजना - 2020

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एक सुन्दर शहर हमारा संकल्प

Imran's move to tighten grip over PoJK thwarted

New Delhi/Muzaffarabad: The Imran Khan Government's move to strengthen its hold over Pakistan Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK), through a council which had been abolished by former premier Nawaz Sharif's party two years ago, was thwarted.



Islamabad had set up the PoJK Council under PoJK's Interim Constitution Act 1974, "to serve as a bridge" between the federal and the provincial governments, Pakistani newspaper Dawn reported.

The council, headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan as chairperson, was de facto government of the PoJK.

The federal government had ensured that the council's financial and administrative powers were above scrutiny.

Directorate General of Audit.

It would retain 20 per cent of the income tax generated from PoJK as well as some other funds to meet the administrative expenditures of its inflated secretariat in Islamabad and some other miscellaneous heads, and also to carry out development activities in Pakistan and PoJK, Dawn reported.

However in June 2018, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) through the 13th amendment of the PoJK constitution abolished the council's "administrative and financial powers in accordance with its election manifesto and popular public demands".

PML-N at the time dominated both the PoJK Legislative Assembly and the Council.

"Interestingly, according to a recent statement, revenue collection had substantially increased in the wake of the 13th amendment, even though the COVID-19 pandemic and an earthquake in the southern districts had affected business activities," in PoJK last year.

Quoting its sources, the Dawn reported that "some elements in the federal government were hell-bent upon revival of the council's fiscal and administrative powers through the proposed 14th amendment".

On Thursday, in a press release issued by Raja Muhammad Wasim, press secretary to PoK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider, said a cabinet meeting was held in

Muzaffarabad on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Haider where a threadbare discussion was held on the draft of amendments, received from the federal ministries of law and Kashmir affairs on June 22, among other things.

Describing it as an "extraordinary meeting", the statement said the PoJK cabinet has unanimously agreed to not agree with the draft of constitutional amendments, formulated jointly by the federal ministries of law and Kashmir affairs.

The press release did not specify the draft proposals received from Islamabad.

"It's the unanimous opinion of the (PoJK) cabinet that the ideological relationship of

the state of Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan is a reflection of the eternal wishes of the Kashmiri people. This does not belong to any individual, political party or government but is a mutual possession of the people living on both sides of the state. And this affiliation is completely in accord with the vision of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah," the press release said.

In view of Indian government's reorganization of the Jammu and Kashmir state, "steps should be taken (by Islamabad) with mutual consultation (with the PoJK government) to further empower the government to represent the wishes of the Kashmiris on both sides", the statement said. IANS

Assam flood: 3 more dead, 27.64 lakh people affected in 26 districts



Guwahati: Flood-related incidents claimed three more lives in Assam, where the deluge has hit 27.64 lakh people in 26 of the 33 districts and destroyed houses, crops, roads and bridges at several places.

Two persons died in Barpeta and one person in South Salmara district, taking the death toll to 105, including 26 in landslides, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority said in its daily flood report.

Ninety animals have died in Kaziranga National Park this monsoon season, it said.

Chief Secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna said there is no problem in flood management as separate teams of government employees have been deployed for flood and COVID-19 currently affecting the state.

Addressing a press conference here, Krishna also said, "There is also no problem regarding funds as enough funds have been released to the districts. Doctors are regularly visiting relief camps to monitor the health of the inmates here."

The ASDMA said the districts affected by floods are Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Sonitpur, Darrang, Baksa, Nalbari, Barpeta, Chirang, Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, South Salmara, Goalpara, Kamrup, Kamrup Metropolitan, Morigaon, Nagaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Majuli, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Karbi Anglong and Cachar districts.

The number of people affected by floods on Friday was 35.76 lakh and district affected was 28 but the flood situation improved in Hojai and West Karbi Anglong districts.

The authorities have distributed rice, dal, salt and mustard oil along with other relief materials such as tarpaulin, baby food, candle, match box, etc.

Dhubri was the worst hit with over 4.69 lakh people affected, followed by Goalpara with 4.49 lakh persons, Morigaon and Barpeta with more than 3.5 lakh people.

SDRF, district administrations and local people have rescued 511 people during the last 24 hours.

At least 2,678 villages are under water, the bulletin said, adding that 1,16,404 hectares of crop areas have been damaged by the deluge across the state.

The ASDMA said authorities have set up 649 relief camps and distribution centres across 21 districts, where 47,465 displaced people are taking shelter currently.

The authorities have distributed rice, dal, salt and mustard oil along with other relief materials such as tarpaulin, baby food, candle, match box, mosquito net, biscuit, soap, drinking water, cattle feed, mask and wheat bran.

The Goalpara Deputy Commissioner Varnali Deka visited the flood affected areas under Kharmuza Gaon Panchayat, Ramharirchar, Nakaliyapara char, Katlamari char, Barvita, Sonahar and various relief camps in the district on Saturday and inspected all the arrangements in the camps. PTI

Cong infighting to blame for ...

From Page 1

Meanwhile, veteran Rajasthan BJP leader and former Assembly Speaker Kailash Chandra Meghwal expressed his displeasure at alleged attempts to topple the Congress Government when the State faces many challenges.

"Rajasthan politics has been derailed. It is unfortunate that attempts are being made to destabilise the Government when the State faces the danger of Covid-19 pandemic and also unemployment among its poor. This is not appropriate. This is due to internal feud within the Congress," he told PTI.

Meghwal, an MLA considered close to former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, said it was "condemnable" that people had resorted to "immoral tactics, ugly politics and horse-trading" to destabilise the Government.

Only a stable Government can deal with the challenges like coronavirus and unemployment, he said.

He also said that leaders have no right to topple a Government, be it of any political party.

The Congress has accused the BJP of "conspiring" to topple the State Government, and the State police have registered a case.

Meghwal, however, asserted that the crisis was an outcome of the internal feud within the Congress and that the BJP had nothing to do with it.

The BJP believes in value-based politics, he said, adding that the Congress' allegation against his party was untrue and was an attempt to deflect attention from its failures.

"The BJP can never be involved in horse-trading," he claimed.

He also lashed out at Pilot for his claim of an "understanding" between Raje and Gehlot, saying the Congress rebel's charge was a reflection of his "petty politics" and also hailed her role in the State politics.

Asked if the BJP should join hands with Pilot or not, he said, "The BJP should decide its actions based on moral values."

ISIS' Sadia spills beans, planned to attack Delhi...

From Page 1

Nabeel S Khatri runs a gym in Pune while Sadiya Sheikh is a 2nd-year student of Mass Communications and Journalism at Baramati.

This case was initially registered by Delhi Police Special Cell on March 8 this year after the arrest of a Kashmiri couple — Jahanzaib Sami Wani and his wife Hina Bashir Beigh from Jamia Nagar, Okhla Vihar, Delhi.

"The couple was having affiliations with ISKP, which is a banned terrorist organisation and is a part of ISIS, and was found to be involved in subversive and anti-national activities. They were also found to be in touch with Abdullah Basith, who is already lodged in Tihar jail in another NIA case

(ISIS Abu Dabhi module)," the spokesperson said.

The investigation has revealed that accused Sadiya Sheikh was continuously in touch with Jahanzaib Sami, Hina Bashir Beigh and Abdullah Basith on various secure messaging applications and deliberating on ways to propagate the ideology of ISIS and further its activities in India. They were trying to build up a cadre of ISIS in India by recruiting gullible youth for terrorist activities, the agency further said.

It has also come to light that along with Jahanzaib Sami and Abdullah Basith, accused Nabeel Khatri was also actively involved in the planning to carry out violent terrorist attacks in India by arranging

logistic support such as procurement of weapons, fake SIM cards and assembling of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to further the activities of ISIS in India. He was continuously in contact with Jahanzaib on various secure messaging platforms, the official said.

It has also been revealed that Sadiya Sheikh was in contact with ISIS recruiters through social media since 2015. She was planning to execute a terrorist attack in Jammu & Kashmir and was detained by J&K Police in 2018.

The two arrested accused will be produced before NIA Special Court, New Delhi. Further investigation in the case is continuing, agency added.

Chhattisgarh to hold job camps for returning migrants



Raipur: The Chhattisgarh Government will organise employment camps in all 28 districts for migrants who have returned to the state amid the coronavirus outbreak, an official said on Saturday.

These 'rozgar camps' will be held based on the data of vacancies collected by the Industry and Labour departments in the state, a public relations department official said.

"Information on vacancies of skilled and unskilled manpower in industries, firms and institutions is being collected following which these camps will be held. The deputy CEO of Chhattisgarh State Skill Development Authority and State Project Livelihood College Society has issued detailed guidelines," he added.

The camps will be organised with all social distancing norms in place, including presence of not more than 20 persons at one time, and masks, sanitisers, thermal scanners etc will be in place, he said. PTI

Nepal protests road to Kailash...

From Page 1

In a related development, Nepal's Irrigation Minister Barshaman Pun has directed the officials concerned to prepare for talks with India over the floods and inundation in Nepal's Tarai region. The minister has directed the officials to call a meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Committee on Inundation and Flood Management (JICFM) to solve the inundation problem in the

border areas.

Nepal Home Minister Ram Bahadur Thapa has also blamed India for constructing structures along the border. As a result of this, Nepal has been going through a disaster right through the monsoon for a very long time. He stated, "The unilateral building of roads and different buildings has doubled the issue of blockading the waters of rivers through dams.

Because of this, there may be steady inundation within the southern area of Nepal.

Nepal has earlier sent a diplomatic note to India, expressing displeasure over "some objectionable content" about Nepal and Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli by the Indian media. The Embassy of Nepal in New Delhi submitted a note verbale to India's Ministry of External Affairs early this week.

Measures in place to detect fake news, hate speech, objectionable content: Facebook to HC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Online social media platform Facebook has claimed in the Delhi High Court that it has put in place measures like community standards, third party fact checkers, reporting tools and artificial intelligence to detect and prevent the spread of inappropriate or objectionable content like hate speech and fake news.

Facebook, however, has submitted before the high court that it cannot remove any allegedly illegal group, like the boys locker room, from its platform as removal of such accounts or blocking access to them came under the purview of the discretionary powers of the government according to the Information Technology (IT) Act.

It has contended that any "blanket" direction to social media platforms to remove such allegedly illegal groups would amount to interfering with the discretionary powers of the Government.

BJP seeks CBI probe into phone tapping...

From Page 1

A Jaipur court on Saturday sent one accused, Sanjay Jain to four-day remand of SOG team of Rajasthan Police.

The other people named by the Congress in both the FIRs are Union Minister Gajendra Shekhawat and two Congress MLAs who have been suspended from the party a day earlier.

Sources said that MLAs camping at Gurugram resorts can now be moved to Bengaluru city where the dissidents Madhya Pradesh MLAs of Congress led by Jyotiraditya Scindia were kept until the Kamal Nath Government was toppled in March this year. Meanwhile, "the BJP demanded CBI probe into the alleged phone tapping by the Congress leaders and sought to know whether the Congress Government in Rajasthan resorted to 'unconstitutional' methods to tap phones of politicians.

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra hit back at the Congress a day after it cited some audio clips to accuse some saffron party leaders, including Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, of conspiring to topple the Ashok Gehlot Government in the State and indulging in horse-trading.

Patra said senior Congress leaders, including Chief Minister Gehlot, have been claiming that these audio clips are authentic even though the FIR registered by police does not say so.

Ashok Gehlot. Was phone tapping done? Assuming that you've tapped phones, was the SOP followed? Did the Congress Government in Rajasthan use unconstitutional ways to save themselves when they found themselves cornered?" Patra asked at a press conference.

People of Rajasthan want to know whether their privacy has been compromised, he said, asking if phones of people related to politics in the State are being tapped?

Patra demanded an immediate reaction from the State Government and called for a CBI investigation into this "saga of illegalities and concocted lies".

The Congress on Friday demanded the arrest of Union Minister Shekhawat and rebel Congress MLA Bhanwarlal Sharma after two audio clips surfaced pertaining to an alleged conspiracy to topple the Gehlot Government.

Shekhawat has denied the charge, saying his voice is not in these clips. He was ready to face any probe.

Leader of Opposition in Rajasthan Assembly Gulab Chand Kataria, said that the Home Secretary as well as the Chief Secretary of the State have so far denied having given permission to tap the phones of Opposition's politicians. "Isn't it a violation of our civil rights to tap phone without authorisation? We don't demand a floor test, but if Ashok Gehlot thinks he has a majority, he should prove it in Assembly," said Kataria at a Press conference.

Congress responded to the above claims by saying that the saffron party has finally admitted to its role in the "murder of democracy". "The BJP has now admitted to its role in the murder of democracy in Rajasthan. Their only grievance was that when we were murdering, why were we getting recorded and if we were getting recorded was it legal," party spokesperson Pawan Khera said.

Khera, speaking to media after Sambit Patra's allegations on phone tapping, said it was an admission of crime by the saffron party instead. Patra sought to know whether the phone conversation recorded was done through phone-tapping.

"While murdering democracy, the criminal is concerned about whether he was recorded and if yes, then recorded legally," he quipped, while also raising questions on Sachin Pilot's actions.

Manipur top cop...

From Page 1

"He will be sent to Delhi, once his condition improves," Babu added.

Doctors have operated on him, hospital sources said. Kumar, a 1992-batch IPS officer of the Manipur cadre, shot himself with his service revolver in his office in Manipur Rifles Compound around 1 pm, said a senior police officer.

He shot himself in his chin and the bullet pierced through his skull, he said. It is being probed why he took the step, he added.

Kumar was sent back to his home cadre earlier this year after serving in the Intelligence Bureau as its joint director in New Delhi, the officer added.

He was in charge of the armed police and was given the responsibility of law and order on July 5.

Three arrested for selling bogus Covid injections in Gujarat

Ahmedabad: A racket which sold spurious tocilizumab injections which are used in the treatment of COVID-19 was busted following raids in Surat and Ahmedabad in Gujarat, officials said on Saturday.

Three men have been arrested in the case so far, said a state Food and Drug Control Association (FDCA) release.

Over the last few days, FDCA officials seized filling, sealing and coding machines, spurious drugs and packaging materials worth Rs 8 lakh following a raid at the house of main accused Sohel Ismail Tai in Surat, said the release.

Devang Shah, an Ahmedabad-based doctor, filed a complaint when he realized that tocilizumab injections purchased by a relative of a COVID-19 patient were spurious. PTI

Rajnath visits post near LoC...

From Page 1

Pakistan army is also resorting to 'unprovoked' firing and heavy shelling in the area to target the civilian population towards the Indian side. An infiltration bid was foiled by the alert troops on Thursday while eliminating one of the infiltrators along the LoC in Kupwara sector.

Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and Army Chief Gen MM Naravane, along with other senior officers of the Northern command accompanied him to the forward area tour, aimed at boosting the morale of the troops standing guard along the LoC.

Senior Army officers at the forward post separately briefed Rajnath about the prevailing security situation and significance of the multi-layered counter infiltration grid.

After the meeting, Rajnath posted a tweet which read, "Visited a forward post near LoC in Kupwara district of Jammu-Kashmir today and interacted with the soldiers deployed there. We are extremely proud of these brave and courageous soldiers who are defending our country in every situation."

Rajnath also tweeted several photographs and a video interacting with Indian Army soldiers.

The Defence Minister's day started with a brief trip to the holy cave shrine of Amarnath. He spent about an hour at the cave shrine and offered special prayers along with the top brass of the Indian Army.

"Feeling extremely blessed after praying at Shri Amarnathji holy cave in Jammu & Kashmir," Rajnath

tweeted later along with a video which showed him praying with several Army officials.

Though Rajnath visited the cave shrine, speculation is rife over the formal date of start of yatra this year. Shri Amarnath Shrine Board authorities are yet to announce the schedule of registration. On the other hand, tour operators are a worried lot.

A tour operator, who regularly conduct pilgrim tours to the cave shrine during the yatra period told The Pioneer, "The ice stalagmite inside the cave shrine is melting due to relatively warm weather conditions compared to previous years" He said, if Shri Amarnath Shrine Board authorities would further delay the announcement of yatra the pilgrims will find it difficult to undertake the yatra in the absence of the ice stalagmite inside the cave shrine.

Meanwhile, on his arrival from Leh on Friday evening, the Defence Minister had formally attended a high-level security review meeting with the senior officers. The Defence Minister had also asked the officials of the armed forces at a high-level meeting to maintain a strict vigil along the LoC with Pakistan. He asked the armed forces to give a fitting reply to any "misadventure" by Pakistan.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my client Sh. Laxman Singh S/o. Late Mohan Lal R/o. WZ-48, Khyala Village, New Delhi-110018 have disowned & debarred his son Hemant Chandel and his wife Meena (Meenu Chandel) and their daughter Koshike from his all assets/properties, movable or immovable, existing or which may be acquired by him in future and also sever all his relations from him due to disregard toward my clients. Anybody who deals with him will do so at her/ their own risk and responsibility.
KUNAL KUKREJA - ADVOCATE
Chamber No. 391, Eastern Wings Civil Side, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

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LIST OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS (PHASE-2) - APP. NO.
Type-A-5326,5328,5385,5555,5886,5217,6458,6475,6343,5376,6127,7319,6479,6365,7343,7150,6872,5402,6968,6088,6787,5796,7532,6064,6220,5620,6347,5760,7429,6922,5754,6218,5693,7471,6085,6366,5574,5965,6340,7227,6251,7485,8062,6455,7219,5216,6626,6205,6914,6776,7179,7458,6392,6388,8030,5487,5325,5477,5856,5387,8041,7087,5245,6582,5752,7149,5535,5816,5405,6073,6369,5485,6258,5937,7192,6924,6887,5707,6812,6630,6753,7303,7304,7119,6097,6279,7142,6548,5513,6605,7444,6954,6041,6188,6336,5429,6177,6982,7006,5998,6860,5920,5748,6355,5483,7097,7454,5597,6934,7198,5787,6690,6393,8000,6476,5497,6324,7113,6016,7183,5360,5561,5899,5214,5465,6448,6418,7213,5934,7297,6403,6232,5207,7116,6394,5964,5826,5546,5562,7190,7460,5325,8035,6456,8028,6256,5532,6265,5305,8048,6484,6212,6992,6543,5537,5794,6980,7205,5477,5539,6139,5092,5549,6440,5813,5337,7298,5477,6183,8072,5396,6298,7134,5717,5552,7173,6593,6140,6818,7357,6264,7157,5948,6335,6408,8005,5770,6496,4911,4941,4939,4907,4947,4950,4933,4935,4917,4908,4938,4942,4949,4928,4904,4943,4932,4920,4903,4929,4940,4905,4916,4948,4922,4937,4919,4934,4945,4931,4921,4936,4944, Type-D-4923,4925,4924,4903,4927, Type-E-4915,4912,4909,4910,4924,4918,4906, Type-F-4977,4970,4991,4984,4995,4979,4989,7408,4975,4971,7405,7403,4996,7401,4976, Type-G-7404,4974,4980,4997,4988,4981,7402,7409,4973,4978,4994,4985,7406,4986,4972

LIST OF WAITING APPLICANTS (PHASE-2) - APP. NO.
Type-A-5315,6070,5452,7342,5234,6231,7200,5309,6300,6291,6990,6292,5229,6881,5994,5641,7287,6500,6578,8013,7144,6100,5762,5257,5814,7034,6429,6212,6132,6214,5263,5802,6391,8043,5302,5266,6540,5521,5709,5944,5260,6383,8023,6399,6745,5266,6641,5323,6167,5751,5916,7193,5458,5362,6986,5335,5963,5993,5566,5559,6372,5087,8020,6123,5427,6523,7321,7466,5496,6235,5899,5621,6913,6885,5158, Type-B-6923,7170,5608,5949,5548,6846,5873,5279,7237,6677,7292,7272,7262,5933,5582,5529,6829,6977,6847,5628,6890,7286,6537,5667,6803,5240,7010,6130,5655,6735,5204,5832,6307,5479,6609,6273,6198,6672,5884,6695,5507,5091,5912,5278,5876,6616,7511,6384,6594,6431,5658,7210,5722,5837,7101,7184,6981,6387,6763,7246,6925,5928,5822,5818,6659,6020,7271,5739,6244,6328,5254,7359,5727,7086,8141

Important Note: All successful applicants are requested to contact the company immediately for rectification of deficiency in Application (if any) as per Haryana Afl. Policy as amended from time to time.

Gitanjali Gems, Kingfisher among top wilful defaulters



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gitanjali Gems, Kingfisher Airlines, Ruchi Soya, Rotomac, Winsome Diamonds, KS Oils, Surya Pharmaceutical, ABG Shipyard and Sterling Oil Resources are among the top 33 wilful defaulters owing more than ₹32,737 crore to public sector banks. The top defaulters have outstanding of ₹500 crore and above.

The names of these firms figure in the list of 2426 defaulters having dues of more than ₹1,47,350 crore collectively. The list has been made public by the largest bank staffers' union, the All India Bank Employee's Association (AIBEA), on Saturday.

AIBEA general secretary Venkatachalam in a statement said that the purpose of this release of wilful defaulters in public domain is in the interest of the country even as he demanded that the owners of these defaulting companies should not be allowed to contest elections and hold public offices.

The AIBEA demanded that the Banks must publish the names of all defaulters and stringent measures must be



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"Today public sector banks have grown in a very big way proliferating with their branches in every nook and corner. Today the total deposits of all commercial banks are more than ₹138 lakh crores. Thus, savings of the common man is safe in the Banks," said AIBEA, demanding strengthening of public sector banks and provide adequate capital in all banks.

As per the list released by AIBEA, as on September 30, 2019, the public sector banks are facing 2,426 cases with wilful defaulters of ₹1,47,350 crore.

The list is of those having default from Rs.five crore facing cases in courts and fall under the category of 'wilful defaulters'.

The widely known NPA (Non-Performing Assets) category is not part of this list. Many large Corporates' dues come under NPA, which is not made in public domain by banks.

In the AIBEA released wilful defaulters list highest is from State Bank of India (SBI) with ₹43,887 crores, followed by Punjab National Bank and Bank of Baroda with ₹22,370 crores and ₹14,661 crore dues. Out of the total 2426 cases, these three bank are having 1,365 cases of wilful defaulters.

PM Modi allowed Chinese occupation of Indian land: RaGa

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday took on Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing him of passively allowing Chinese occupation of Indian land. He equated the Government of India to former United Kingdom PM Neville Chamberlain who let Nazi dictator Adolph Hitler have his way in the run-up to World War II. Chamberlain is perceived by many to be a weak political leader.

Rahul continued his relentless criticism of the Centre over the violence in Ladakh last month and the subsequent India-China border face-off and said India will pay a "huge price because of the Government's cowardly actions".

Rahul, who has repeatedly accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "surrendering" to Chinese aggression along the border, said: "China has taken our land and the Government of India is behaving like Chamberlain. This will further embolden China".

The Congress leader also attached a short video of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh speaking to soldiers in Ladakh on Friday. In the clip, Singh says that while there is no guarantee talks can resolve



tensions, "not an inch of our land can be taken by any power in the world".

The Prime Minister made similar statements during his visit last month.

However, the Congress has remained unconvinced by the government's statements and handling of this matter, pointing repeatedly to a comment by the Prime Minister at June's all-party meeting.

Rahul Gandhi's "Chamberlain" reference was to the late former British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who followed a policy of appeasement towards Hitler and Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

The policy, seen by many since as an ill-advised move, allowed Hitler to expand his territory under agreements that saw Britain concede Sudetenland, the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia.

Meant to buy Britain time to recover from World War I, the policy broke down after Hitler violated the deal to occupy the rest of Czechoslovakia. Six months on, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began.

Counter-affidavit filed in SC in Vikas Dubey encounter case

New Delhi: In a development to the Vikas Dubey encounter case, a counter-affidavit was on Saturday filed in the Supreme Court by one of the petitioners. This counter-affidavit was in reply to the Uttar Pradesh Government's affidavit which was filed yesterday.

The petitioner, Anoop Prakash Awasthi, in his counter-affidavit, stated that there is an illegality in the constitution of the Judicial Inquiry Commission for the matter. Further, the petitioner also alleged institutional bias in the appointment of SIT.

Yesterday, the Uttar Pradesh Police had informed the Supreme Court that gangster Vikas Dubey did not surrender after the Ujjain police verified his identity and took him into custody. Later, this information was shared with the UP police.

Clarifying on the change of vehicles in the incident, the UP police said Dubey was taken in the STF vehicle from Ujjain to Guna (253 kms). "From Guna, he was handed over to the investigating officer Ramakant Pachuri who took him in his SUV... accused was sitting between constable Pradeep Kumara and Pachuri in the middle seat when the accident took place."

Why was he not handcuffed? The UP police replied, "There were 15 policemen and 3 vehicles to escort the accused directly to the court at Kanpur. He had to be produced at Kanpur within 24 hours before the court which was expiring at 10 am on July 10.



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○ The police also informed the apex court that there was no decision at any stage to bring back Dubey on a chartered plane, as a team of STF had left from Lucknow by road to join the existing raiding teams at Guna.

apex court, answering more than dozen questions associated with the alleged encounter of Dubey.

How did police accurately fire four bullets? The police said, "This claim is incorrect. Actually six bullets were fired by police. Only three hit the accused. It was a close and face to face exchange of fire in self-defence by police."

Why was he not handcuffed? The UP police replied, "There were 15 policemen and 3 vehicles to escort the accused

directly to the court at Kanpur. He had to be produced at Kanpur within 24 hours before the court which was expiring at 10 am on July 10.

The police also informed the apex court that there was no decision at any stage to bring back Dubey on a chartered plane, as a team of STF had left from Lucknow by road to join the existing raiding teams at Guna, and one STF team was already stationed at Gwalior for intelligence collection and arrest.

Covid guidelines for gated residential complexes issued

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hand hygiene (sanitiser dispenser) at entry points and in work areas, thermal screening of visitors/staff and allowing only asymptomatic individuals to enter the premises are some of the directives issued by the Union Health Ministry for the gated residential complexes across the country on Saturday.

Not only this, vendors, household help, car cleaners, delivery personnel, etc. will also undergo such screening daily. Physical distancing of at least six feet to be followed as far as feasible at all locations at all times in all common areas, including parks, corridors, lift lobbies, gyms and clubs, says the guidelines.

Also, the RWAs/residential societies desirous of setting up Covid Care Facility can plan for the same as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry. This shall only be made operational if the required guidelines and standards are met and shall be continued as per the direction issued by the local health authorities.

The advisory notes that all persons above 65 years of age, persons with comorbidities, pregnant women and children below the age of 10 should be encouraged to stay only at



home and keep contact with visitors/guests to a minimum.

If the gated complex is declared as a containment zone, the resident welfare associations (RWAs) will cooperate with the local health authorities in carrying out various activities as stipulated in the containment plan, noted the Ministry.

Measures that need to be observed at all time include physical distancing of at least six feet to be followed as far as feasible, use of face covers/masks to be made mandatory and frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when

hands are not visibly dirty. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitisers (for at least 20 seconds) can be made wherever feasible.

"Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest to state and district helpline. Spitting shall be strictly prohibited," said the advisory.

The Ministry also added that simple preventive measures need to be followed, encourage early reporting and inform the community about myths and stigma often encountered by patients, healthcare or other front line workers.

The RWAs have been advised to encourage residents to self-report symptoms and facilitate their testing, isolation and quarantine of contacts, provide counselling, guidance and support to COVID-19-affected individuals and families. Special attention is required in such households which have no family member to take care of the dependants.

If a decision is taken by the public health authority for home quarantine of contacts/ home isolation of patient, the RWA shall facilitate those under home quarantine/home isolation to remain within their homes, as per the advisory.

Bar defectors from holding public office for 5 yrs: Sibal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Elected representatives should be barred from holding public office for five years and from contesting the next election if they defect, senior advocate and Congress leader Kapil Sibal said on Saturday.

Sibal, who was addressing a webinar, said that the "endemic" of defection is due to human greed and hunger for power.

His remarks come at a time when the ruling Congress in Rajasthan is facing a rebellion by Sachin Pilot and his loyalist MLAs. Just months earlier party legislators led by Jyotiraditya Scindia had defected to the BJP in Madhya Pradesh leading to the collapse of the Congress government there.

"No law can prevent it (defection). The only solution is that if anyone defects they shall not hold public office for five years and cannot contest in the next election. These are the two elements that need to change," Sibal said in response to a question on the political crisis in Rajasthan.

Speaking on the Collegium system of appointments, Sibal said even the judges are human beings and are swayed by personal likes and dislikes.

"See, even if you give the power to the government, they will misuse it," he said.

When a person becomes a judge in the Supreme Court, he should give away his personal likes and dislikes. "But over the years, this is not happening," he said.

The Congress leader also spoke about issues relating to matters of faith and said personally he felt that the apex court should not have dealt with the Sabarimala temple case. "I don't think the court should even enter the area because it has an enormous impact on society. The change in society comes with education, transformation and social movement. You can lay down any law but unless there is a change in societal mindset, there will be no change," he said.



Soldiers cover the coffin of their colleague who died of Covid-19 at a crematorium in Srinagar on Saturday

AP

First heavy monsoon rainfall in Delhi, parts of N India from today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

From Sunday, Delhi and its adjoining States Punjab and Haryana are likely to experience continuous rainfall typical of the rainy season as the monsoon trough is likely to shift to its normal position, weather forecasting agencies said.

Since the beginning of July, the northern plains have received only patchy rains as the axis of the monsoon trough had been oscillating north and south frequently (towards and away from the Himalayan foothills), Skymet Weather said.

The trough will move north and stabilize for the next 3-4 days, it said, adding a significant increase in rainfall in Delhi, Haryana and Punjab can be expected from July 19-21. For the same period, the IMD has issued a red warning for heavy rainfall in West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh.

The prediction in increase in intensity of rainfall is also aided by a convergence of moist southerly, south-westerly winds from Bay of Bengal in eastern India and from the Arabian Sea over northwest India at lower tropospheric levels.

Though the expected downpour is likely to offer

some relief to people in north India from the sultry weather, it almost certainly will "accentuate" the existing flood situation in Assam and other north-eastern states and may trigger landslides, the IMD said.

The floods in Assam have submerged vast tracts of human habitation and farmland in 26 districts, affecting 27.64 lakh people. Three more people died on Saturday due to the flooding, raising the death toll in the state to 79. Another 26 have died in landslides.

Dhubri remains the worst-hit district in Assam with over 4.69 lakh people suffering.

According to Assam State Disaster Management Authority, 2,678 villages are under water and about 1.16 lakh hectares of crop areas have been damaged. Authorities have set up 649 relief camps and distribution centres in 21 districts, where more than 47,000 displaced people are taking shelter.

In Bihar, which has recorded 41 per cent more precipitation than normal between July 1 and 17, the intensity of rainfall is likely to increase from Sunday and all districts are expected to receive rainfall for another week. In Uttar Pradesh too, forecasts have said that rain and thundershowers are likely at most places from July 19-21.

On Saturday, the maximum temperature in Delhi was 36.4 degrees Celsius, three notches above the normal. Humidity levels shot up to 89 per cent. And in Punjab and Haryana, it stayed around normal levels.

"The monsoon trough has started shifting north. Light-to-moderate rainfall is expected in Delhi over the next two days," Kuldeep Srivastava of the India Meteorology Department, said. He, however, said "good" rain is unlikely in the capital for a week.

According to IMD, Delhi has recorded 47.9 mm rainfall so far in July, which is 56 per cent less than the normal of 109.4 mm.

Light-to-moderate rainfall occurred in parts of Rajasthan, where the monsoon activity has remained subdued like Delhi, bringing relief to people from sultry weather.

The Shimla Meteorological Centre in Himachal Pradesh has issued a weather warning for very heavy rainfall for July 19 and July 20, an official said. The "orange" warning is for weather conditions that have the capacity to impact significantly.

Meanwhile, the offshore trough extending from Goa to Kerala has weakened, resulting in reduced rainfall in Mumbai.

Assam Govt warned of rising Covid cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ring the alarm bells, the Union Health Ministry has warned the Assam Government that the cases in the State might cross 64,000 marks by the end of the next month and hence it should be well equipped with oxygen, oxygen-supported beds, ICUs etc on a priority basis.

On behalf of the Ministry, OSD Rajesh Bhushan wrote a letter to Dispur on the would-be situation of the corona pandemic in the State.

The letter said that the number of COVID-19 positive cases in Guwahati alone by August would be over 32,000.

The estimation of the would-be corona cases in the State sent by the Ministry is based on the study of cases up



to July 9 when the State had a COVID-19 tally of 10,140.

The warning letter says "As Covid pandemic continues to evolve a periodic assessment of present and future preparedness is imperative... It is requested that step may be taken on priority to augment the bed capacity wherever necessary and availability of

sufficient oxygen-supported beds, oxygen supply and ICU beds must be ensured by August 15".

According to the estimation given by the Union Ministry, the total number of Covid-19 cases in the State will be 64,389 by August with around 32,933 cases in Kamrup (Metro) district

alone.

The estimation given for some of the other districts of the State are - 2,931 in Hojai, 2,883 in Nagaon, 2,398 in Dhubri, 1,873 in Golaghat, 1,495 in Barpeta, 1,310 in Morigaon, 1,214 in Darrang, 814 in Dibrugarh, 941 in Jorhat etc. The lowest, as per the estimation, is 21 in Majuli.

Covid peak in India by mid-Sept if Govt acts, public behaves, says expert

PTI ■ BANGALURU

Covid-19 cases may peak in India as early as mid-September provided strong public health measures are in place and people behave in a responsible manner to contain the virus, President of Public Health Foundation of India, Prof. K Srinath Reddy, said on

Saturday.

Speaking to PTI, he expressed concern over the microbe spreading with renewed vigour, as confirmed infections and deaths crossed one million and 25,000 respectively in India earlier this week.

"Ideally we could have and should have prevented it

reaching this level, but even now we should try our best and contain it as quickly as possible", the public health expert said.

"Different places (States) would peak at different times", Reddy said on the rising COVID-19 cases.

He, however, added that India may see COVID-19

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, said up to the second phase of lockdown, control measures were very strict as India tried to contain the spread

cases peaking as early as in two months if there are strong public health measures and people take all precautions like wearing face masks and maintaining physical distance.

"If everybody does what needs to be done", he said when asked if he is confident that the cases would peak within two months. "It depends on public and government action".

Reddy, who formerly headed the Department of Cardiology at the

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, said up to the second phase of lockdown, control measures were very strict as India tried to contain the spread.

But subsequently after May 3, when relaxation started — resumption of economic activities were important — very strong levels of public health activities like household survey for any cases with symptoms, quick testing and isolation and vigorous contact tracing, among others, should have been maintained, he said.

3 ultras shot in Shopian

PNS ■ JAMMU

In a second back to back operation in the last 24 hours, the joint teams of security forces on Saturday gunned down three more 'unidentified' terrorists in the Amshipora area of Shopian.

Since July 1, 17 terrorists have been eliminated in different encounters.

According to a police spokesman, the operation in the area was launched in the wee hours of Saturday. The terrorists, according to police, were hiding behind a temporary structure in an orchard from where they opened fire on the security forces.

During the gunfight, all three terrorists hiding in the area were neutralised by the security forces.

Till the time of filing the report the identity of the slain ultras could not be ascertained by the police.

4,807 new cases, 88 die in TN on Saturday

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

88 persons succumbed to Covid-19 in Tamil Nadu during the last 24 hours while a record number of 4,807 new persons were diagnosed with coronavirus infection on Saturday, said a media release by the State Government.

As on Saturday, there were 49,452 active Covid-19 cases in the State. The 111 laboratories across the State tested 47,179 persons and the total number of persons tested till date crossed the 1.8 million mark.

Tamil Nadu has 1.65 lakh coronavirus patients as on Saturday. Out of the 88 who died on Saturday, 82 has co-morbid issues. Till date the State has recorded 2,403 deaths due to Covid-19.

The day also 3,409 persons walking out of the hospital fully cured. Till date the State has seen 1.13 lakh patients getting cured of the pandemic.



Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami said that Tamil Nadu has the highest recovery rate in the country. He said 67 per cent of the patients have been recovered fully from Covid-19. Speaking to reporters at Erode, the chief minister said 'right action and intense testing' helped the State in bringing down the death rate and the State would see the pandemic cases coming down soon.

While Chennai continued to show a fall in the number of cases on Saturday (1,219), districts like Kancheepuram (97), Chengalpatt (323), Thiruvallur (370) continued to show increased number of patients.

Sixteen districts out of the 37 districts in the State has more than hundred Covid-19 patients each. Tamil Nadu's first Plasma Bank would become operational on Monday, said Dr C Vijay Baskar, health minister. He said that plasma therapy succeeded in saving the lives of many Covid-19 patients.

J&K reports 441 new cases

Jammu: With 441 new cases, the total number of coronavirus cases in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday crossed 13,000 mark while the death toll reached 236 as five more patients died in Kashmir valley.

To contain the spread of coronavirus in the worst hit Srinagar district, a total number of 130 containment zones have been established. Till late Saturday evening, a total number of 1,982 active positive cases of coronavirus were admitted in different hospitals.

In Jammu division, the district Magistrate Samba, Rohit Khajuria Saturday declared complete lockdown across Vijaypur tehsil between July 19-24 while all the road travellers from outside Jammu division have been directed to undergo mandatory screening for Covid-19. One of the famous tourist resort of Patnitop was also declared red zone by the Deputy Commissioner, Ramban.

According to the media bulletin, out of 13,198 cases, 5,797 are active positive while 7,165 patients have recovered. PNS

Before dinner, 3 family members die in Pakistan shelling in Poonch

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Late Friday evening when Pakistan army initiated 'unprovoked' ceasefire violation along the Line of Control in Gulpur sector of Poonch, 58-year-old Mohd Rafiq, resident of village Sial in Khari Karmara area, was waiting for his wife, Rafia Bi, to serve dinner to him.

He was sitting on a chair outside his kitchen and his wife was preparing chapatis. One of his three sons, Mohd Irfan, was also sitting by his side.

After a brief spell of small arms firing from the Pakistani side soon after Indian Army started retaliating the firing, a mortar shell landed right in the middle of their courtyard, close to Mohd Rafiq's chair. All three family members, hit by splinters, died on the spot.

10 years ago, Mohd Rafiq had lost his first wife during

intense shelling from across the line of control and had remarried to take care of his three sons.

This time, he himself ran out of luck and died along with his second wife and one son, leaving behind two others.

His cousin Mohd Sadiq told reporters in Poonch, "all three family members were killed before eating dinner".

He said, "my sister-in law (bhabi) was cooking chapatis (rotis) and my brother was sitting on a chair outside his kitchen when a shell landed in the middle of their courtyard around 9.30 p.m". They received serious injuries due to impact of the blast and died on the spot. He blamed the authorities for not providing bunkers to poor families in the forward villages.

The last rites of all three family members were per-

formed in their native village on Saturday.

Ignoring guidelines and social distancing norms, hundreds of villagers and close relatives attended the funeral procession and paid tributes to their loved ones.

Sharing his anger, a local villager Mohd Raseed, blamed Pakistan for resorting to 'unprovoked' firing in the area at regular intervals. He said, "It's a war like situation for those people who lose their loved ones in such incidents of firing".

Another local resident Mohd Abdul said, "Pakistan army is deliberately targeting civilian areas to trigger unrest in the area". He said, "we have been requesting district authorities to construct bunkers in the forward areas at the earliest so that precious human lives can be saved".

Gold smuggling: Accused names Vijayan's ex-Secy

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Gold Smuggling through Diplomatic Channel that was busted by the Customs officials in Thiruvananthapuram Airport is turning out to be a major blot on the Chief Minister's Office and the incumbent Pinarayi Vijayan.

Sarith, the first accused in the case is reported to have told the sleuths of the National Investigating Agency (NIA) probing the case that M Sivsankar, the then principal secretary to Chief Minister Vijayan was fully aware of the gold smuggling making use of the diplomatic route.

Sources in NIA disclosed that Sarith conceded about his close ties with Sivsankar. Records of the telephonic conversations between Sivsankar and Sarith substantiates the contention of the latter. Sivsankar was suspended earlier this week based on an inquiry report submitted by the

two-member panel headed by Chief Secretary Viswas Mehta for violation of Government of India Service Rules.

Based on the disclosures made by Sarith, the NIA is likely to summon Sivsankar (57), an officer who was conferred IAS, for further questioning. On Saturday, Swapna Suresh and Sandeep Nair, the other two accused in the case were brought to Thiruvananthapuram by the NIA team as part of collecting evidence. The NIA sleuths took the two accused to the apartments where Swapna Suresh was staying in the capital city. They also visited the business premises of Sandeep at a city suburb.

The Customs officials were on their way to Muvattupuzha in Ernakulam district to probe the link between the three accused and businessmen based in the town.

Meanwhile Jayaghosh, the gunman of the UAE attaché who fled the capital city and

India to his country of origin, is believed to have told the Kerala Police that he tried to commit suicide because of threats and warnings issued by certain people. "He has been warned by them that they would finish him off if he reveals anything about the gold smuggling to the investigators," said a policeman who is associated with rescuing Jayaghosh who was found with his wrist slit on Friday.

Janam TV, a news channel, which was pursuing the gold smuggling and the terrorist activities has been warned by the Islamic State unit in Kerala. In an Instagram message the extremist organization has warned that it would kill all employees of the channel and destroy the offices for "anti-Islamic news being aired by the channel".

G K Suresh Babu, chief editor, told The Pioneer that State Police Chief had called him up and assured of all help. Security has been beefed up around the channel's office and studios.

IIT Alumni Council announces world's largest Mega Incubator to fight virus

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a significant global initiative, the IIT Alumni Council on Saturday announced world's first and largest Engineered Biomolecule Mega Incubator (EBMI) —involving 2.5 million square feet area—to align startups, other incubators and accelerators in India's offensive against Covid-19.

The ambitious project involves setting up of Biosafety Level-3 (BSL3) laboratory in the National Center for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology at Kalina Campus of University of Mumbai, a captive 100,000 sq. ft pilot plant facility for biomolecule manufacturing in the National Capital Region (NCR), a mega incubator to support MegaLab and MegaTx (to be part funded by MegaFund), ₹500 crore direct investment envisaged in Phase 1 and ₹10,000 crore-plus ecosystem investment.

As part of the EBMI project, NCR will be developed as a global hub for Biologics manufacturing.

The proposed EBMI will

have direct access to over 30,000 PhDs through Top Institutes of Excellence Network (TieNet) and a virtual presence in every smartphone. Engineered biomolecules is expected to play a key role in molecular diagnostics, genetic testing as well as biotherapeutics, besides a host of applications in sectors varying from water treatment and agriculture to advanced genetics.

Announcing the EBMI initiative, IIT Alumni Council President Ravi Sharma said that his organisation was playing a lead role in strengthening the entire Covid ecosystem - from diagnostic testing to bio-therapeutic treatment.

"Given that over 70% of a Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) or Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) test kit in value terms are biomolecules, we understand the need and urgency of focusing on this domain. Most advanced bio-therapeutic drugs from insulin to interferon to plasma antibodies are biomolecules. We believe that we can influence a very substantial cost and price

"The ultimate goal of the IIT Alumni Council is to make sure that every person in India is able to afford genetic tests like Covid-19 and biotherapeutic treatment. This is the only way to make India healthy and safe in the face of feared antibiotic resistance and future pandemics" IIT Alumni Council chief said

reduction in bio-therapeutics," Sharma said.

"The ultimate goal of the IIT Alumni Council is to make sure that every person in India is able to afford genetic tests like Covid-19 and biotherapeutic treatment. This is the only way to make India healthy and safe in the face of feared antibiotic resistance and future pandemics" IIT Alumni Council chief said.

The IIT Alumni Council is an autonomous and independent global body of alumni of all the twenty-three IITs and partnering TieNet. TieNet founder members include Mumbai University and ICT

Mumbai.

"The MegaIncubator will be global and aspires to reach out to any technocrat startup promoter anywhere in the world that is pursuing deep technology in the Biomolecule domain. Using a mobile app, it would be possible to onboard an incubatee virtually at the speed of thought," Mr Hemant Gupta, an IIT alumnus MD of Zone Startups India - an institutional partner of EBMI, said.

"The MegaIncubator is architected smartly, stitching together existing cutting edge infrastructure to create an end-to-end physical support system for aspiring Biomolecule startups, thereby accelerating the time to market manifold," Gupta said.

"A dedicated global team has been working 24/7 on the EBMI since March end. We would like to thank Hyde Consulting, Grant Thornton and the tens of volunteers who have helped to take EBMI from thought to Project in less than 100 days. EBMI has signed MoUs with several partner organisations in May 2020 including Mumbai University.

Detailed blueprints have been drawn up and the laboratories are in various phases of execution," Dr Samir Kulkarni, Director of Innovation and National Centre for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, University of Mumbai, said.

"We have also received over twenty incubatee proposals to deliver products such as viral lysis solution, viral transport medium, Lyophilized room temperature stable, RT-PCR kits, plasma derived immunoglobulins (IVIG), antibody libraries to develop and manufacture recombinant therapeutic antibodies etc. We are also looking at genetic cloning of nature derived peptides and have studied major global training centers for biologicals development and manufacturing," Dr Kulkarni said.

According to Dr Kulkarni, it is the EBMI team that worked round the clock to help deliver initiatives like MegaLab and MegaTx. EBMI team has also played a key role in the elimination of Chinese systems and software from both MegaLab and MegaTx".

593 test positive in Kerala on Saturday, says CM

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

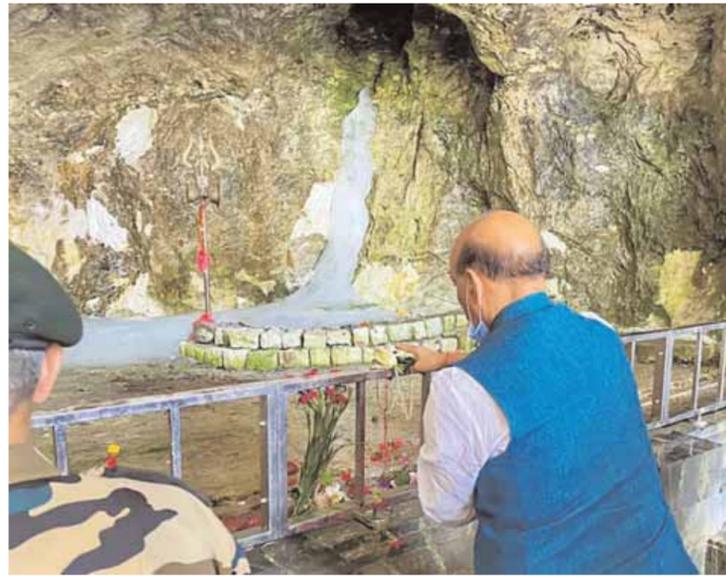
Kerala heaved a sigh of relief when Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan announced that 593 persons were diagnosed with Covid-19 on Saturday.

It was a relief for the State which saw nearly 800 persons testing positive for the pandemic for the last two successive days as the numbers came down, though not sharply. Two persons succumbed to Covid-19 during the last 24 hours, said the Chief Minister.

Vijayan said that there were 11,659 active Covid-19 cases in Kerala. The number of persons infected with coronavirus through contact stood at 364. The day also saw 1,053 persons getting hospitalized because of the pandemic. The scenic coastal line of

Thiruvananthapuram has been shut down for the next ten days because of community transmission. The Government has declared stringent conditions all over the Thiruvananthapuram coast line, one of the enchanting attractions in the capital city. It has been designated as a No Go area, said the Chief Minister.

Vijayan said community transmission has become a reality in Thiruvananthapuram. He reminded the people that the entire State has been under the grip of Covid-19 for the last six months and this has caused a sense of complacency all over Kerala. "I am repeatedly reminding you about this because of the seriousness of the situation. We have changed the way of Breaking The Chain to "Caution As Precious As Life," said Vijayan.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visits the holy cave at Amarnath in Anantnag district on Saturday

Ram Janambhoomi Trust invites PM to lay foundation stone of temple on Aug 3 or 5

Ayodhya: The Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lay the foundation stone of a grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya either on August 3 or 5, both auspicious dates, a spokesperson said on Saturday.

The Prime Minister had announced the formation of the Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust on February 5.

Mahant Kamal Nayan Das, the spokesperson of Trust's president Nriytha Gopal Das said, "We have suggested two auspicious dates - August 3 and 5 - for the Prime Minister's visit based on calculations of movements of stars and planets."

After a protracted legal tussle, the Supreme Court had

on November 9 last year paved the way for the construction of a Ram Temple by a Trust at the disputed site in Ayodhya, and directed the Centre to allot an alternative 5-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a new mosque at a "prominent" place in the holy town in Uttar Pradesh.

The decision about the tentative date for laying the foundation stone of the temple was taken at a meeting of the Trust members held in Ayodhya on Saturday. Senior advocate K Parasaran, Vasudevanand Saraswati and Swami Vishwa Prasanjeet attended the meeting via video links.

General Secretary of the Trust Champat Rai said soon after the monsoon, the Ram temple trust will contact 10

core families across the country for financial help and it will take three to three-and-half years after the finalisation of the temple's design to complete its construction.

At the meeting, the issue of the height of the Ram Mandir was discussed. The temple's height would be 161 feet and have five domes, said Kameshwar Chaupal, a member of the Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust.

The meeting of the Trust was also attended by Nripendra Mishra, the former principal secretary to Prime Minister Modi and the chairman of the construction committee of Ram Mandir, and Avaneesh Awasthi, the principal secretary to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Aadiyath. Agencies

Maha cases cross 3L mark

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

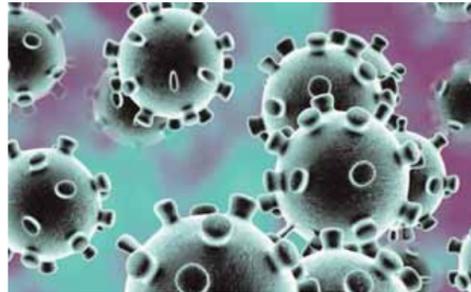
The total number of Covid-19 infections breached 3 lakh mark in Maharashtra on Saturday, as the infected cases in the state crossed 8,000 mark for the third consecutive day to touch 8,348, while the deaths dropped from 258 to 144 during the last 24 hours.

In another milestone, the total number of infected cases crossed 1 lakh in Mumbai where as many as 1,199 positive cases were reported on Saturday, to touch the final tally of 1,00,350.

After recording 8641 and 8,308 Covid-19 infections on Thursday and Friday respectively, Maharashtra witnessed 8,348 infected cases, taking the total number of positive cases in the State to a staggering 3,00,937.

With 144 fresh fatalities, the total number of deaths in various parts of the state mounted to 11,596 on Saturday evening.

Of the 144 total deaths, Mumbai accounted for 65 deaths, which took the total number of deaths in the



metropolis from 5,585 to 5,650.

In addition to 65 deaths in Mumbai, there were 32 deaths in Pune, 12 in Thane, 8 in Palghar, 5 each in Solapur and Ratnagiri, 4 each in Nashik and Aurangabad, 2 each in Amravati and Buldhana, 1 each in Raigad, Dhule, Jalgaon, Latur and Osmanabad.

With 73,289 infected cases and 1,976 deaths, Thane continued to be the second worst hit district in Maharashtra. Pune, which has emerged as the third worst affected district in terms of spread of the pandemic, has recorded 51,575 infections and 1,314 deaths

pitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year touched 1,65,663. The recovery rate in the state stood at 55.05 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 3.85 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the State at 1,23,377.

Out of 15,22,884 samples sent to laboratories, 3,00,937 have tested positive (19.76 per cent) for Covid-19 until Saturday.

Currently, 7,40,884 people are in home quarantine while 45,552 people are in institutional quarantine.

203 more cops infected in State

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI

As many as 203 more armed police personnel have tested positive for Covid-19 in various parts of Maharashtra.

Official sources said that 87 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel and 72 State Reserve Police Force

(SRPF) troopers were among the 203 infected personnel.

The others who have been diagnosed positive for Coronavirus include 42 police personnel and two from Border Security Force (BSF). "All the infected security personnel have been sent to quarantine," a senior state police official said.

W Rly refunds ₹397.13 crore to passengers for cancelled tickets

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Western Railway has refunded ₹397.13 crore as ticket money to passengers from March 1, 2020 to July 17, following cancellation of various trains.

"Of the ₹397.13 crore the Western Railway's Mumbai division refunded as much as ₹189.70 crore. "Till now, 61.01 lakh passengers have cancelled their tickets across the Western Railway. They have received their refund amount accordingly," a WR spokesperson said.

Following the cancellation of trains, the Western Railway has suffered a total loss of earnings amounting to ₹1770.18 crore. The loss includes ₹260.69 crore suffered by way of non-operation of trains on suburban sections and ₹1509.49 crore on non-suburban sections. "Despite the huge losses faced by the railways, the passengers are



being given a full refund," the spokesperson said.

Following the pandemic and consequent lockdown, all passenger trains were cancelled from March 22 2020, Shramik special trains were introduced to carry the migrant labourers and their families to their hometowns.

Later, for the convenience of passengers, Indian Railways decided to restore passenger services in a phased manner with 15 pairs of Rajdhani type special trains from May 12, and 100 pairs of special trains from June 1.

Tickets booked through IRCTC website for the regular trains were cancelled online and amount credited accord-

ingly. Whereas, for passengers who had booked their tickets through PRS counters, selected nominated stations were restarted for cancellations with effect from May 27.

"Passengers can avail the refund within 180 days from the date of journey. The passengers are being given full refund without deduction of any cancellation charges," the spokesperson said.

"Also this 180 days leeway is being given so as passengers do not rush for refund against the cancelled trains and to avoid overcrowding by following social distancing norms and health protocols considering the present scenario," the spokesperson added.

Gujarat records 960 fresh cases

IANS ■ GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat's Covid-19 tally rose to 47,476 on Saturday after it reported a record single-day spike of 960 cases, while the death toll jumped to 2,127 with 19 more deaths, health officials said.

As many as 1,061 patients were discharged in the state on Saturday, taking the total number of recoveries to 34,005.

Gujarat has witnessed nearly 15,000 coronavirus positive cases within eighteen days of July, almost each day with a new record.

With an average of almost 824 cases daily, the state has registered 14,833 positive cases in eighteen days of the month.

Surat, the new Covid hotspot has also been witnessing each day with a higher count than the previous day. Registering nearly 28 per cent of Saturday's positive cases, Surat recorded 268 cases, while, Ahmedabad saw 201 cases coming up.

Won't order Americans to wear masks: Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump has said he would not order Americans to wear masks to contain the spread of the coronavirus, saying people should have a "certain freedom."

His comments came after Dr Anthony Fauci, the top US infectious diseases expert, appealed to state and local leaders to be "as forceful as possible" in getting people to wear masks in public places.

In a 'Fox News Sunday' interview, Trump said, "I don't agree with the statement that if everybody wear a mask, everything disappears."

Commenting on the initial comments from top health officials, Trump said: "Hey, Dr Fauci said don't wear a mask. Our Surgeon General - terrific guy - said don't wear a mask. Everybody who is saying don't wear a mask - all of sudden everybody's got to wear a mask, and as you know masks cause problems, too."

Trump, who has been seen wearing a face mask only once, said, "I'm a believer in masks. I think masks are good."

But Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said social distancing, an important



factor in blunting the spread of the coronavirus, can be difficult with more people going out.

"When you're living your life and trying to open up the country, you are going to come into contact with people. And for that reason, we know that masks are really important, and we should be using them everywhere," he said during a US Chamber of Commerce virtual event.

Americans are actually slowing down the re-opening of the country by not wearing a mask, CNN quoted Fauci as saying during a US Chamber of Commerce event.

"If we could get more people to understand that, hopefully we'll get more people who'd be willing to wear

masks," he said.

He said he would "urge the leaders - the local political and other leaders - in states and cities and towns to be as forceful as possible in getting your citizenry to wear masks."

The country needs to concentrate on the problems at hand and not worry about a second wave, he said.

"When you're having up to 70,000 new infections... That's something you need to focus on right now, as opposed to looking at what's going to happen in September or October," he said.

There were 77,255 new cases reported on Thursday, crossing a previous record set two days ago, according to Johns Hopkins University. **PTI**

N Korea claims it is developing virus vaccine

Seoul: North Korea has said that it was developing a vaccine for the novel coronavirus on its own, the country's science research council claimed on Saturday.

According to a report posted on Mirae, the website run by the North's State Commission of Science and Technology, its scientists are currently conducting clinical trials to develop a vaccine for COVID-19, reports Yonhap News Agency reported.

The report said the vaccine development is led by a medical biology institute under the North's Academy of Medical Science using angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2).

North Korea claimed it has confirmed the immunogenicity and safety of its candidate vaccine through animal tests and that clinical trials have started from this month.

The country, which is yet to report a single COVID-19 case, added that scientists are in discussions on conducting the third phase of clinical study.

North Korea said the bio-engineering branch of the State Academy of Sciences is also conducting research for the development of the novel coronavirus vaccine. **IANS**

US virus cases soar by over 70,000 for 2nd day

Washington: The US has reported an increase of over 70,000 COVID-19 cases in 24 hours for a second consecutive day, after shattering the record for the highest number of single-day infections, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

Cases rose by more than 70,000 on Friday after going up by over 77,000 on Thursday, a record increase since the pandemic hit the country, Xinhua news agency reported citing the University as saying.

As of Saturday morning, the US accounted for the world's highest number of infections and fatalities at



3,641,417 and 139,175, respectively, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed in

its latest update.

In the last 24 hours, 975 new deaths were recorded, which was the highest spike

since June 10.

New York state remains the hardest-hit with 405,551 cases.

Other national COVID-19 hotspots include California, Florida and Texas, reporting 364,835, 327,234 and 308,611 cases, respectively, the CSSE data revealed.

States with over 100,000 cases also include New Jersey, Illinois, Arizona, Georgia, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, it added.

Experts have warned that cases could soon top 100,000 a day if the country fails to take steps necessary to stem the spread of the virus.

China rushes medical team to Xinjiang after sudden spike in Covid-19 cases

Beijing: China rushed a team of medical specialists to Urumqi, the provincial capital of Xinjiang, after it reported 40 new coronavirus cases, including 23 asymptomatic infections, prompting the local administration to declare a "wartime mode", official media reports here said on Saturday.

This is the second outbreak in Xinjiang, the Muslim Uyghur majority province which has been in the limelight in recent months over allegations of the internment of thou-

sands of Uyghurs in special camps. China defends the camps as education camps.

Urumqi reported 17 confirmed COVID-19 patients, and 23 asymptomatic cases in the last four days, the state-run Global Times reported.

The current outbreak is related to a group gathering which is developing rapidly, and local health authorities have advised people not to panic as all the confirmed cases have mild to moderate symptoms, who are also under centralised

medical observation, the report said.

The local government in Urumqi, has declared a "wartime mode" as all local residential communities have been put under "sealed-off management" in its fight against the resurgence of COVID-19, it said.

China's National Health Commission (NHC) dispatched a medical expert team on Saturday to Xinjiang to investigate the epidemic amid a spike of domestic COVID-19 cases. **PTI**

Floods kill 14 in China as water peaks at Three Gorges Dam

Beijing: At least 14 people have died in the latest round of seasonal rains and flooding in southern China, as soldiers and workers built makeshift barriers with sandbags and rocks on Saturday to keep the Yangtze River and its tributaries at bay.

Three floodgates of the Three Gorges Dam that spans the Yangtze were opened as the water level behind the massive dam rose more than 15 meters (50 feet) above flood level, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. **AP**

Saudi to restrict entry to holy sites from today

Riyadh: Starting from Sunday, Saudi authorities will impose a ban on entering holy sites without a permit as the Kingdom is bracing for a limited Haj season in an effort to stem the spread of COVID-19, a local media report said on Saturday.

Security control centres in the holy city of Mecca will begin as of Sunday morning to stop entry into the holy sites of Mina, Muzdalifah and Arafat without a permit, Gulf News quoted the Al Riyadh newspaper as saying in the report.

Violations are punishable by a fine of 10,000 Saudi riyals that will be doubled in case of repetition.

The measure is part of strict regulations to prevent the spread of the coronavirus during the Haj set to begin later in July, said the newspaper report.



The Kingdom had announced that 70 of this year's pilgrims will be expat residents while the remaining 30 per cent will be Saudis.

The maximum number of participating pilgrims has been set at 10,000.

The Saudi Ministry of the Hajj and Umrah has said that the health criteria will mainly determine the selection of those permitted to attend this year's Haj.

More than 2 million Muslims usually perform the Haj every year. **IANS**



Fire fighters brigade work to extinguish the blaze at the Gothic St. Peter and St. Paul Cathedral, in Nantes, western France on Saturday **AP**

FRENCH FIREFIGHTERS BATTLE BLAZE IN CATHEDRAL IN NANTES

Nantes: A fire broke out Saturday in the Gothic cathedral of the western French city of Nantes, shattering stained glass windows and sending black smoke spewing from between its towers as firefighters

fight the blaze.

Residents and tourists watched aghast, and emergency workers cordoned off the area around the St Peter and St Paul Cathedral, in the historical centre of this city on the

Loire River. A City Hall official said the fire broke out Saturday morning inside the cathedral, and the cause is unclear. The official is not authorized to be publicly named. No injuries have been reported. **AP**

Iran sends downed Ukrainian plane's black box to France

Tehran: Iran has sent the black box of the Ukrainian passenger jet that its armed forces mistakenly shot down in January to France for reading, an Iranian semi-official news agency said Saturday.

Iran accidentally shot down the Boeing 737-800, killing all 176 people aboard, after mistaking it for an incoming missile.

Iranian armed forces had been bracing for a counterattack after launching missiles at US bases in Iraq in response to the killing of its top commander, Gen. Qasim Soleimani, in a US strike earlier in January.

ILNA's report quotes Mohsen Baharvand, an aide to Iran's foreign minister, as saying the downed jet's black box was transported to Paris on Friday, accompanied by Iranian civil aviation and judicial officials. **AP**

Pak aviation authority suspends 15 more pilots having fake licences

Islamabad: Pakistan's aviation authority has suspended 15 more pilots for possessing dubious licenses, taking the number of those taken off duty for flying with fake credentials in the country to 93, according to a media report on Saturday.

They were suspended by the Aviation Division on Friday.

These are among the 262 pilots, who were grounded and put under investigation by the aviation ministry last month, for possessing suspicious licences, according to the Dawn newspaper.

The licences of 28 other pilots have already been cancelled.

Abdul Sattar Khokhar, Spokesman for the Aviation Division, said a total of 262 pilots were identified as pos-

sessing fake licences by the Board of Inquiry and grounded immediately after identification on the instructions of the government.

He said out of these 262 pilots, the federal Cabinet had approved cancellation of the licences of 28.

These 28 pilots will not be able to undertake any flying duty and their licences have been cancelled after proper legal procedures under which the pilots were given an opportunity of hearing.

The matter was twice deliberated by the Cabinet before the decision.

The process of verification of licences of 93 pilots has been initiated, while the investigation of the remaining 141 cases is expected to be completed within one week. **PTI**

Meeting ends with no breakthrough to end Oli-Prachanda infighting

Kathmandu: Nepal's ruling communist party's top decision-making body on Saturday failed to achieve a breakthrough to end the tussle for power between Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and former premier Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' despite four hours of marathon discussions.

No conclusion was reached during the meeting of the Nepal Communist Party's (NCP) nine-member Central Secretariat though the party leaders discussed the agenda to be presented during Sunday's crucial Standing Committee meeting, according to senior party leader Ganesh Shah.

During their discussions, senior leaders agreed to resolve the issues through consensus, party spokesperson Narayankaji

Shrestha told media persons after the 9-member Central Secretariat meeting.

The NCP called a secretariat meeting after the two top leaders agreed to call a conclave of the highest body of the party ahead of the 45-member Standing Committee meeting on Sunday in a bid to strike a new power-sharing deal by sorting out their differences.

The Standing Committee meeting of the party is scheduled to take place at 3 pm on Sunday.

The Standing Committee meeting was postponed until Sunday to give more time to Oli and the rival faction led by Prachanda, the executive chairman of the NCP to have more talks to end the intra-party infighting. During previous meetings, Oli has refused to

resign or give up his position as chairman of the NCP as demanded by the faction led by Prachanda. Sunday's Standing Committee meeting is expected to fix the date for the CWC meeting, which will ultimately decide the future of Prime Minister Oli, Shah, a Standing Committee member, said earlier.

Oli and Prachanda have held at least eight meetings in recent weeks to sort out their differences. But, as the Prime Minister did not accept the condition of a one-man-one-post, the talks failed, party sources said.

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

Indonesia floods: 67 missing, 14K displaced

Jakarta: Sixty-seven people have been reported missing, while more than 14,000 others were displaced due to flood floods in Indonesia's Sulawesi province, authorities said on Saturday, adding that search and rescue operations were underway.

So far, rescue teams have retrieved a total of 36 bodies, reports Xinhua news agency.

The rescuers focused their efforts in the villages of Sabbang, Baebunta, Pontaden, Meli, and Masamba city, the hardest-hit areas in Luwu Utara district, said a provincial official.

"The mud has submerged the villages by up to two metres. Most of the bodies were recovered from the mud. Logs were also found on roads and many other spots, slowing the rescuers' efforts," he told Xinhua. Heavy machinery equip-

ment has also been deployed in the area.

Head of the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency Doni Monardo added that 51 people were also injured.

As many as 14,388 residents have been taking shelter in safer grounds, he said in a statement on Saturday.

"As we are still in the situation of COVID-19 pandemic, the health protocols have to be imposed in Luwu Utara," he said when visiting the disaster-hit areas in the district.

Compensation would be provided to those whose houses are destroyed by the flooding.

The flash floods also hit a road, nine bridges, 13 religious buildings, nine school buildings, eight office buildings, two public facilities and a market place, according to the agency. **IANS**

Thousands in Bangkok rally against Thai Government

Bangkok: Several thousand anti-government protesters rallied in Thailand's capital on Saturday to call for a new constitution, new elections and an end to repressive laws.

Chanting and waving placards, the demonstrators, comprising mainly younger Thais, converged on Bangkok's iconic Democracy Monument in the old part of the city, a popular venue for dissent.

The gathering, organised by a group calling itself Liberation Youth, was the biggest of its kind since the government called a state of emergency in March to deal with the coronavirus.

Protests against the government of former army chief Prayuth Chan-ocha had been drawing increasingly large

crowds at the time, but tapered off quickly when several coronavirus clusters were confirmed and the emergency law was invoked.

Lockdown measures and social distancing have since helped the government contain the spread of the virus, but it has retained emergency powers, which critics say it wields as a political weapon.

The earlier protests were fuelled by a February court ruling dissolving a popular opposition political party whose democracy-promoting policies had attracted substantial support among younger Thais. The supporters

of the Future Forward party believed the group was targeted for its popularity and for being critical of the government and the military.

The political atmosphere heated up again in June, when a prominent self-exiled Thai political activist was snatched off the street by unknown men in neighbouring Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh. He has not been heard from since. Several other Thai dissidents in Laos, another neighbouring country, were also mysteriously kidnapped in recent years, with the bodies of three later found floating in the Mekong River. **AP**

John Lewis, lion of civil rights and Congress, dies at 80

Atlanta: John Lewis, a lion of the civil rights movement whose bloody beating by Alabama state troopers in 1965 helped galvanize opposition to racial segregation, and who went on to a long and celebrated career in Congress, died. He was 80.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi confirmed Lewis' passing late Friday night, calling him "one of the greatest heroes of American history."

"All of us were humbled to call Congressman Lewis a colleague, and are heartbroken by his passing," Pelosi said.

"May his memory be an inspiration that moves us all to, in the face of injustice, make good trouble, necessary trouble."



rights leader who put his life on the line to fight racism, promote equal rights, and bring our nation into greater alignment with its founding principles.

"I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now," he said - inspired tributes from both sides of the aisle, and an unstated accord that the likely passing of this Atlanta

Democrat would represent the end of an era.

The announcement of his death came just hours after the passing of the Rev. C.T. Vivian, another civil rights leader who died early Friday at 95.

Lewis was the youngest and last survivor of the Big Six civil rights activists, a group led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. That had the greatest impact on the movement. He was best known for leading some 600 protesters in the Bloody Sunday march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma.

At age 25 - walking at the head of the march with his hands tucked in the pockets of his tan overcoat - Lewis was knocked to the ground and beaten by police.

His skull was fractured, and nationally televised images of the brutality forced the country's attention on racial oppres-

sion in the South. Within days, King led more marches in the state, and President Lyndon Johnson soon was pressing Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act.

The bill became law later that year, removing barriers that had barred Blacks from voting.

"He loved this country so much that he risked his life and its blood so that it might live up to its promise," President Barack Obama said after Lewis' death.

"Early on, he embraced the principles of nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience as the means to bring about real change in this country," Lewis joined King and four other civil rights leaders in organizing the 1963 March on Washington. He spoke to the vast crowd just before King delivered his epochal "I Have a Dream" speech.

A 23-year-old firebrand, Lewis toned down his intended remarks at the insistence of others, dropping a reference to a "scorched earth" march through the South and scaling back criticisms of President John Kennedy.

It was a potent speech nonetheless, in which he vowed: "By the forces of our demands, our determination and our numbers, we shall splinter the segregated South into a thousand pieces and put them together in an image of God and democracy."

It was almost immediately, and forever, overshadowed by the words of King, the man who had inspired him to activism.

Lewis was born on Feb. 21, 1940, outside the town of Troy, in Pike County, Alabama. He grew up on his family's farm and attended segregated public schools.

As a boy, he wanted to be a minister, and practiced his oratory on the family chickens.

Denied a library card because of the color of his skin, he became an avid reader, and could cite obscure historical dates and details even in his later years. He was a teenager when he first heard King preaching on the radio.

They met when Lewis was seeking support to become the first Black student at Alabama's segregated Troy State University.

He ultimately attended the American Baptist Theological Seminary and Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. He began organizing sit-in demonstrations at whites-only lunch counters and volunteering as a Freedom Rider, enduring beatings and arrests while traveling around the South to challenge segregation. **AP**

M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN COMPANY LTD.
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)
NISHITHA PARISAR, BIJALEE NAGAR, GOVINDPURA,
BHPAL-23, Ph. 0755-2602033-36, Fax : 2589821, 2586636
Ref:- MD/MK/04/Abgd.NIT/701 Date :- 17.07.2020

TENDER NOTICE

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids from manufacturers through e-tendering :

| Tender Specification Number | Particulars | Approx. Value (Lakhs) | Tender Fee including GST (in Rs.) | Date of opening of tender |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| MD/MK/04/680 | 11 KV Vacuum Circuit Breaker (VCB) alongwith Spare parts | 269.05 | 2360.00 | 06.08.2020 03:30 PM |

Other details are available on Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & www.mptenders.gov.in
M.P. Madhya/97968/2020 **CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)**

राजस्थान राज्य पथ परिवहन निगम
स्थायित्व मुख्य प्रबंधक, सी.बी.एस.आगरा, जयपुर

केटीन/स्टॉल/वाहन ठहराव स्थल देने बाबत
केन्द्रीय बस स्टैंड, सिन्धी कैंप, जयपुर एवं उसके अधिनस्थ बस स्टैंडों पर विभिन्न स्टॉल/केटीनों, सुलभ कॉम्पलेक्स एवं अजमेर-जयपुर मार्ग, दूदू पर वाहन ठहराव स्थल (जलपान हेतु) के लिये लाईसेन्सधारी नियुक्त किये जाने हैं। प्रस्ताव देने की अन्तिम तिथि 24.07.2020 को दोपहर 02.00 बजे तक है। इस सम्बन्ध में विस्तृत जानकारी निगम वेबसाईट www.rsrtc.rajasthan.gov.in पर एवं राज्य लोक उपापन पोर्टल (SPPP) पर (UBN is RTC2021SLOB00089) भी देखी जा सकती है।
राज.संवा/सी/2341/2020-21 Advt. No. 42/2020-21 मुख्य प्रबंधक

Voda Idea pays another ₹1,000 crore to Govt

AGR DUES

New Delhi: Telecom operator Vodafone Idea on Saturday said it has paid an additional ₹1,000 crore to the Government towards the statutory dues, taking its total payment to an aggregate ₹7,854 crore.

The fresh payment comes at a time when the Supreme Court is slated to hear the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) matter on July 20.

The company had earlier deposited ₹6,854 crore in three tranches, Vodafone Idea said in a regulatory filing.

...The company has yesterday (July 17, 2020) paid a further sum of ₹1,000 crore to the DoT (Department of Telecom) towards the AGR dues. The company had earlier deposited ₹6,854 crore in 3 tranches," the filing said.

With this, the company has paid an aggregate amount of ₹7,854 crore towards the AGR dues, it added.

In the last hearing on the AGR matter on June 18, the

Supreme Court had said that private telecom operators, including Vodafone Idea and Bharti Airtel, must come out with a "reasonable payment plan", make some payment to "show their bonafide" and file their books of accounts for the last 10 years.

The statutory dues arose after the Supreme Court, in October last year, upheld the government's position on including revenue from non-core businesses in calculating the annual AGR of telecom companies, a share of which is paid as licence and spectrum fee to the exchequer.

Telecom firms have to pay AGR related dues along with interest and penalty — estimated to be around ₹1.6 lakh crore. The telcos have been keen on an extended timeline to pay up their statutory dues, in a staggered manner. **PTI**

Vodafone Idea was facing a whopping ₹58,000 crore demand in overall statutory dues, after the apex court last year ordered the non-telecom revenues to be included in calculating statutory liabilities.

Vodafone Idea had recently reported a staggering ₹73,878 crore of net loss in fiscal ended March 2020, after it provisioned for Supreme Court mandated statutory dues.

The country's third largest telecom operator had then said the liability has "cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern".

The DoT estimates had pegged the company's AGR dues at ₹58,254 crore for period up to FY 2016-17, but the company put the dues at ₹46,000 crore "after adjustment of certain computational errors and payments made in the past not considered in the DoT demand", the company had stated earlier during its fourth quarter results announcement. **PTI**

Tax dept to launch e-campaign on voluntary compliance

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department will start an e-campaign from July 20 on voluntary compliance for the convenience of taxpayers.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said that data analysis has identified certain taxpayers with high value transactions who have not filed returns for AY2019-20 (relevant to FY2018-19).

In addition to non-filers, another set of return filers has also been identified wherein high-value transactions do not appear to be in line with their Income Tax Returns.

The CBDT in a statement said that the last date for filing as well as revising the Income Tax Return for Assessment Year 2019-20 (relevant to FY 2018-19) is July 31, 2020.

The 11-day campaign ending on July 31, 2020, focuses on the assessee/taxpayers who are either non-filers or have discrepancies/deficiency in their returns for the Fiscal year

2018-19.

The CBDT in a statement said the objective of the e-campaign is to facilitate taxpayers to online validate their tax/financial transaction information available with the I-T department and promote voluntary compliance, especially for the assessee for the FY2018-19 so that they do not need to get into notice and scrutiny process.

"Under this e-campaign the Income Tax Department will send email/SMS to identified taxpayers to verify their financial transactions related information received by the I-T department from various sources such as Statement of Financial Transactions (SFT), Tax Deduction at Source (TDS), Tax Collection at Source (TCS), Foreign Remittances (Form 15CC) etc," it said.

The Department, also, has collected information related to GST, exports, imports and transactions in securities, derivatives, commodities, mutual funds, etc.

HDFC Bank Q1 profit up 20% to ₹6,659cr on healthy interest income

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

HDFC Bank on Saturday reported nearly 20 per cent rise in standalone net profit at ₹6,658.62 crore for June quarter, 2020-21 on the April-June period of 2019-20.

Income of the bank rose to ₹34,453.28 crore in June quarter from ₹32,361.84 crore in the year-ago same period, HDFC Bank said in a regulatory filing.

"Net interest income (interest earned less interest expended) for the quarter ended June 30, 2020 grew by 17.8 per cent to ₹15,665.4 crore from Rs 13,294.3 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2019, driven by growth in advances of 20.9 per cent, and a growth in deposits of 24.6 per cent," the Mumbai-based lender said.

The net interest margin for the quarter was at 4.3 per cent. "The continued slowdown

in economic activity has led to a decrease in retail loan origination, sale of third party products, use of credit and debit cards by customers, efficiency in collection efforts and waivers of certain fees. As a result, fees/other income were lower by approximately ₹2,000 crore," the bank said further.

On the asset quality front, there was improvement as gross non-performing assets (NPAs) fell to 1.36 per cent of the gross advances as on June 30, 2020 from 1.40 per cent by the end of June 2019.

In value terms, gross NPAs or bad loans were at ₹13,773.46 crore as against ₹11,768.95 crore.

Likewise, net NPAs fell to 0.33 per cent (₹3,279.96 crore) from 0.43 per cent (₹3,567.18 crore), the bank said in the filing.

However, the bank's provisions for bad loans and contingencies for April-June 2020-21 were raised to ₹3,891.52 crore as against ₹2,613.66 crore in the year-ago same period.

The bank said the enhanced provisions for the quarter consisted of specific loan loss provisions of ₹2,739.8 crore and general and other provisions of ₹1,151.7 crore. Compared to this, the specific loan loss provisions were ₹2,248 crore and general and other provisions were at ₹365.7 crore for the year-ago same quarter.

"Total provisions for the current quarter included contingent provisions of approximately ₹1,000 crore," HDFC Bank said.

Among others, the total deposits of the bank as of June 30, 2020 grew by 24.6 per cent to ₹11.89 lakh crore.

CASA (current account savings account) deposits grew by 26 per cent with savings account deposits at ₹3.27 lakh crore and current account deposits at ₹1.50 lakh crore.

The bank's continued focus on deposits helped in the maintenance of a healthy liquidity coverage ratio at 140 per cent, well above the regulatory requirement, it added.

New Form 26AS to have details of high-value financial transactions: CBDT

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department on Saturday said the new Form 26AS would have additional details of taxpayers' high-value financial transactions undertaken during a financial year and would facilitate voluntary compliance and ease of e-filing of I-T returns.

Form 26AS is an annual consolidated tax statement that can be accessed from the income-tax website by taxpayers using their Permanent Account Number (PAN).

The earlier Form 26AS used to give information regarding tax deducted at source and tax collected at source relating to a PAN, besides certain additional information including details of other taxes paid, refunds and TDS details.

But now, the new form will have Statement of Financial Transactions (SFTs) in various categories to help taxpayers recall all their major financial transactions so that they have a ready reckoner while filing the ITR, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

In May, CBDT had notified the revised Form 26AS,

containing details of tax collected or deducted at source which will now include information pertaining to property and share transactions.

With this, Form 26AS has been revamped to an "Annual Information Statement" which apart from the TDS/ TCS details, shall now contain comprehensive information relating to specified financial transactions, payment of taxes, demand/ refund and pending/completed proceedings undertaken by a taxpayer in a particular financial year that has to be mentioned in the income tax returns.

In a statement, CBDT said the Department used to receive information like cash deposit/withdrawal from saving bank accounts, sale/purchase of immovable property, credit card payments, purchase of shares, debentures, foreign currency, mutual funds, cash payment for goods and services, etc. From specified persons' like banks, mutual funds, institutions issuing bonds and registrars since Financial Year 2016 onwards.

Now, all such information under different SFTs will be shown in the new Form 26AS, it added. **PTI**

Diesel now more than rupee expensive than petrol in Delhi

New Delhi: Diesel has further extended its gain over petrol prices in the national capital with oil marketing companies raising its price by 17 paise a litre on Saturday while keeping retail gasoline prices unchanged.

Unexpected rise in diesel prices for the past couple of weeks despite slower demand has made the transport fuel take

the numero uno position in Delhi while substantially reducing the gap with petrol in other metros. Last month, diesel prices overtook that of petrol in the national capital, in an unprecedented development.

Diesel was priced at ₹81.52 per litre on Saturday in the capital, higher than the previous level of ₹81.35 a litre. Petrol prices, however, remain

unchanged at ₹80.43 a litre, the same level as June 29 when it's pump price rose marginally by 5 paise over previous days price.

Along with the Capital, diesel prices marginally increased in other metro cities as well but there the price of transportation fuel is still between ₹6-8 per litre lower than petrol. **IANs**

Support industry before curbing imports: Toy makers to Centre

IANs ■ MUMBAI

Amidst the growing chorus of 'Vocal for Local' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', toy industry players have thrown light at the grim reality of Indian manufacturing in the segment.

The All India Toys Federation (AITF) in a statement said that the sector requires substantial Government support to ramp up production to cater to the domestic demand in case the Government thinks of import substitution in the sector.

"While we fully endorse and support Indian goods, we are not ready to handle India's toy demand. India right now manufactures only 15 per cent of its total demand. It imports the rest from other countries," said Rehan Dhorajiwala, the spokesperson of the All India Toys Federation (AITF).

"If we don't augment our production capabilities and build a toy arsenal right now, we may face anarchy, where children would have nothing except board games," he said. AITF is the apex body of toy manufacturers, traders and sellers in India.

Dhorajiwala said that amid the current crisis domestic producers cannot provide an alternative to imports.

Govt sets up single-window clearance mechanism to expedite aviation sector proposals

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Civil Aviation Ministry has set up a single-window clearance mechanism to expedite various investment proposals in the domestic aviation industry.

"MoCA (Ministry of Civil Aviation) has an Investment Clearance Cell (ICC) for prompt assistance and clearance," the Ministry said in a tweet on Saturday.

The setting up of the ICC was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in 2020-2021 Union Budget in February this year, as per MoCA. According to a Ministry order of July 16, the link of which has been attached with the tweet, the cell was also set up following an order from the Department of Promotion of Industry and Trade (DPIT) on July 1 in this regard.

The 10-member ICC will be headed by Amber Dubey, joint secretary in the Aviation Ministry, according to the MoCA order.

The ICC has been mandated to serve as a single-window system for attracting investment and its terms of reference include accelerating investments, bringing projects to the Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGoS) which require special incentive, policy interventions, expeditious clearances and systematic references, among others, the MoCA order said.

The ICC will also identify

projects and report to EGoS and maintain active contacts with investors and work with the States, duly adopting ways of on-boarding the States to make them a part of the institutional set-up, it said.

Besides, the ICC will also identify policy and regulatory issues that come in the way of investments and engage with potential investors to bring the proposal for consideration of EGoS, the order stated.

Of the rest nine members on board, five are from the aviation ministry, one each from Airports Authority of India and its cargo and logistics business subsidiary AIACLS, one from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and one to be co-opted by the chairman as per the requirements, it added.

The Indian aviation sector is hit severely by the coronavirus pandemic and economic downturn.

Ratings agency Ica expects India's GDP to contract by 9.5 per cent this fiscal on account of the localised lockdowns put in place by various state governments and rising cases of coronavirus infection.

India's Covid-19 cases surged to 10,38,716, while the death toll from the disease rose to 26,273 on Saturday, according to Government data.

Despite Covid, India's food exports up 27% since Mar

New Delhi: Despite economic turbulence due to Covid-19, India's overall food exports since March have increased 27 per cent.

According to the Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), the average growth of 27 per cent during the lockdown and the unlock period came on the back of high demand for food-based items.

"The food sector has shown 27 per cent growth. The major markets that have responded well are the US and Canada," TPCI Chairman Mohit Singla said at the Indo-Canadian virtual "buyer-seller meet (BSM) on food & beverages."

He said exports in June against year-ago month had declined by only 4 per cent.

"We exported almost Rs 166,000 crore merchandise. It shows the Indian market has bounced back and the international market is responding well to Indian exports," he said. Recently, official data showed India emerged as a net exporter in June. The country recorded \$0.79 billion trade surplus in June against \$15.28 billion deficit during the same period of 2019.

On the Indo-Canadian food trade, Singla said, "Canada can be an important market for the Indian F&B industry as it has a large population (approx 2.4 million) of Indian diaspora. Outreach to the mainstream market is the biggest challenge for the Indian F&B industry."

Govt issues notice to Twitter after recent hack targeting global high-profile users

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's cybersecurity nodal agency CERT-In has issued a notice to Twitter asking the micro-blogging platform for full details of the recent global hack targeting high-profile users, as it sought complete information on number of Indian users affected as well as impact on data, a source said.

The source privy to the development told PTI that CERT-In has also asked Twitter for information on number of users from India who have visited the malicious tweets and

links, and whether the affected users have been informed by the platform about unauthorised access to their Twitter accounts.

The Government has also demanded information of vulnerability exploited by attackers and modus operandi of the attack and sought details of remedial actions taken by Twitter to mitigate the impact of the hacking incident.

Twitter was not immediately available for comments.

Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) swung into action

after reports that hackers gained access to Twitter's systems to hack accounts of many global corporate leaders, politicians, celebrities and businesses.

Cyber attackers had hacked into the Twitter accounts of global high profile users - including former US President Barack Obama, Democratic presidential front-runner Joe Biden as well as many corporate leaders including Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and Tesla CEO Elon Musk - on Wednesday in a purported Bitcoin scam.

RAJASTHAN STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER (SIP)
JHOTWARA ROAD, JAIPUR

E-Tendering Notice

E-tender invited for the purchase of Ethanol Based hand Sanitizer.

For further details you can visit online website <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> or from e-procurement cell R1SL, Yojana Bhawan, Tilk Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur- 302005 and contact on Toll Free number No. 1800-3070-2232 (Help Desk be contacted directly in the following mobile nos. 91-7878007972 and 91-7878007973 10.00 AM to 06.00 PM on all working days.) and e-mail-eproc@rajasthan.gov.in UBN No. RTC2021GLOB00088 **General Manager (S/P)**

POWER DEPARTMENT
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(Details are available on www.tsecl.nic.in)

Applications are invited for the post of Director (Finance) in the Tripura State Electricity Corporation Limited (a Government of Tripura State Undertaking) at its headquarters at Agartala.

Director (Finance) (01) / Age: Below 62 (sixty two) years as on last date for applying / Qualification: CA or ICWA or MBA with specialization in Finance from a recognized institute. / Experience: At least 20 years experience in experience with adequate corporate exposure in budgeting, management, accounting, fund planning and mobilization, taxation, tariff fixation, procurement and works finance, commercial transactions including power purchase agreements, regulatory matters and internal audit and overall knowledge of latest developments in Indian Power Sector/ Pay Scale/Remuneration: In case of retired candidates, Rs. 1,90,000/- (Rupees one lakh ninety thousand) only per month on consolidated basis without linkage of pension drawn from previous service, if any, ii) In case of direct recruitment. Pay will be fixed at level-20 in the Pay Matrix as per TSCS(RP) Rules, 2018 plus other admissible allowance, iii) in case of in-service candidate on deputation, pay will be fixed in next higher scale of parent organization with 3(three) advance increment in revised pay or Level-20 of TSCS(RP) Rules, 2018 as per his option.

Last date of receipt of application is 14th August, 2020.

TA would be paid for attending the interview as per entitlement of equivalent level of State Government Officer.

For further information please contact tele-fax No. (0381) 241-8097.

Sd/-
(S.R.Das)
Joint Secretary to the Government of Tripura

IC/A/D-283/2020-21 **Email: srdas0007@gmail.com**

MEYER APPAREL LIMITED
CIN:L18101HR1993PLC032010
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TEL: 91-9953696916, EMAIL: info@meyerapparel.com, WEBSITE: www.meyerapparel.com
EXTRACT OF STANALONE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 2020
Rs. In Lakh

| Sl. No. | Particulars | Quarter Ended | | Year Ended | |
|---------|--|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | | March 31, 2020 Audited | December 31, 2019 Un-audited | March 31, 2020 Audited | March 31, 2019 Audited |
| 1 | Total income from operations | 48.28 | 133.86 | 369.17 | 543.34 |
| 2 | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items) | (270.02) | (148.30) | (125.83) | (604.55) |
| 3 | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items) | (414.39) | (148.30) | (125.82) | (748.92) |
| 4 | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items) | (414.39) | (148.30) | (125.82) | (748.92) |
| 5 | Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after Tax) and other Comprehensive income (after Tax)] | (580.48) | (141.08) | (125.79) | (902.83) |
| 6 | Paid up Equity share capital (Face Value of Rs. 3/- each) | 2,426.67 | 2,426.67 | 2,426.67 | 2,426.67 |
| 7 | Other Equity | - | - | (4,986.95) | (4,084.12) |
| 8 | Earnings Per Share (of Re. 3/- each) | | | | |
| | Basic | (0.515) | (0.184) | (0.156) | (0.930) |
| | Diluted | (0.515) | (0.184) | (0.156) | (0.930) |

NOTES: 1. These financial results have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rules issued thereunder and other accounting principles generally accepted in India. The above financial results of the Company for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2020 have been reviewed by the Audit committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 18th July, 2020.

2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of audited quarterly and yearly financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The Full format of the Quarterly and yearly Financial Result is available on the Stock Exchange's website: www.bseindia.com and also on the Company's website, namely: www.meyerapparel.com.

For and on behalf of the Board
Sd/-
(Gajender Kumar Sharma)
Whole Time Director
DIN: 08073521

Place: Gurugram
Date: 16th July, 2020

MotherPod launches 'Sainik for Doctors' mobility service

New Delhi: With an aim to safely ferry doctors and other health workers to their hospitals and back home in vehicles piloted by ex-servicemen, MotherPod Innovations Private Limited launched the 'Sainik for Doctors' initiative at the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute on Saturday.

The safe, secure and sanitised mobility service will be extended in Mumbai, Delhi and Hyderabad, said Capt. Sanjay Kumar Singh, Head of Partnerships, MotherPod. "Ex-Defence personnel are ideal for this challenge, since they are disciplined and trained to follow the highest standards of safety protocols," he added.

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(OFFICE OF CE/RE & APDRP(D), SHED NO:F2, SHAKTI VIHAR, PATIALA)
Regd. Office PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in
Mobile No. 96461-22227, Fax No. 0175-2224168
Email Id: ase.std@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-Tenders are invited for initial site survey, planning and subsequent execution of project for restructuring of overhanging existing HT/LT lines for Rainik Bazar, Jalandhar under Smart City Project on Turnkey Basis against Tender Enquiry No. 57/CE/RE & APDRP/2020-21 Dated: 17-07-2020

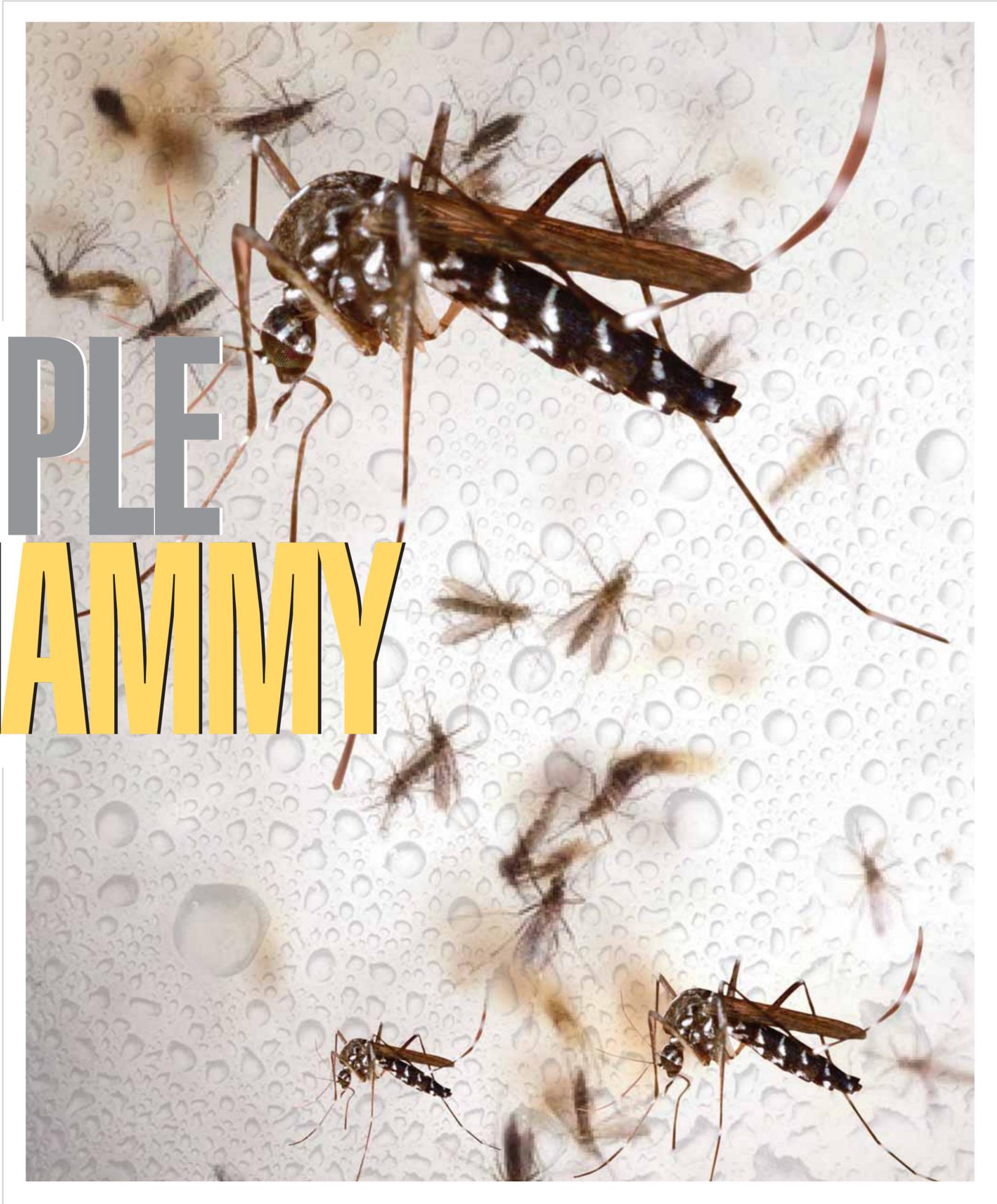
| Downloading of specification / Tender document from e-tendering website | Start Date | 21-07-2020 |
|---|--|------------|
| Closing Date | 18-08-2020 up to 2400 Hrs. | |
| Date & time up to which tenders shall be received | 19-08-2020 up to 11:00 AM | |
| Date & time of opening of tenders | 19-08-2020 at 11:30 AM | |
| Cost of Specification | Can be downloaded free of cost from online tendering portal: http://eproc.punjab.gov.in/ | |

- Detailed NIT and specification may be downloaded from e-tendering website <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in/>
- The prospective bidders may contact customer care of above cited website in case of any difficulty.
- Corrigendum if any will not be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on e-tendering website <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in/>

Di. CE/RE & APDRP (D),
C 231/2020 For CE/RE & APDRP,
PSPCL, Patiala.

RO 51298 Dt. 19-07-2020

Dengue, Malaria are all set to join COVID-19 to rain more trouble this monsoon. MUSBA HASHMI looks at what can be done to curb this fearsome threesome



TRIPLE WHAMMY

Prolonged fever, chills, nausea and diarrhea, the symptoms which once were considered normal are now sufficient to give someone a miny heartattack. Come fever, and one is horrified by the thoughts of having suffering from the dangerous flu — COVID-19. The mere thought of catching the infection is enough to make you feel sick.

However, these symptoms are common in the Monsoon season, when other killer diseases, though not as lethal as the Coronavirus, still capable of claiming many lives like dengue, malaria, jaundice and typhoid are a part and parcel of the heavy showers.

Given that the healthcare facilities are already struggling with the pandemic, these diseases are going to add further pressure on the hospital staff. While some of the big players in the healthcare sector are well-equipped to battle this double fight, the pressure will be the most on the Government hospitals.

More so, because people these days have turned a blind eye towards these diseases.

“With the onset of monsoon, dengue and malaria cases are going to rise in the months of August, September and October. On the sidelines of coronavirus pandemic, dengue and malaria are going to be the most difficult diseases to treat. All these diseases are going to put a lot of pressure on our healthcare ecosystem,” says Dr P Venkata Krishnan, Internal Medicine, Paras Hospital, Gurugram.

The healthcare system, he says, is going to crumble if too many cases of dengue and malaria are going to come.

“Other than these two, some other common diseases are chikungunya and leptospirosis, which also arises during this time. These diseases are caused by mosquito bite and contaminated water respectively. Even the cases of jaundice and hepatitis rise in the monsoon, they all can be equally dangerous like malaria, dengue and chikungunya. Management of these diseases needs holistic views and especially if the patient is COVID-19 and acquires one of these. Co-managing these infections is going to be very painful and is going to put a lot of pressure on the healthcare system to take care of these patients and give them best care possible,” Krishnan says.

He adds that in order to eliminate any risks involved mosquito bite prevention is important. “One needs to wear such clothes that cover the body in the maximum way and use mosquito repellent creams. Keep your environment clean, don't let the water stagnate in any place be it in the cooler, flower pot or any vessel. Moist places are the best breeding ground for mosquitoes. Not only the house, one needs to keep the society and nearby locations clean too,” he tells you.

Dr Manjeetha Nath Das, Internal Medicine, Columbia Asia hospital, tells you that the hospital hasn't reported any dengue or malaria case till date.

“There is no reported case of dengue or malaria in our hospital so far. However, these are common diseases in monsoon until October due to water accumulation. We must be careful because in case of any co-infection of dengue or malaria and COVID, managing the patient will become far more challenging now,” Das tells you. She says that in certain diseases where the symptoms are similar to COVID-19,

the hospital has a fever protocol to distinguish the disease. “Also the COVID and non-COVID areas are separate and staff are dedicated to one unit at a stretch — all members of the staff working in COVID ward are tested and quarantined for the stipulated period as per the protocol,” Das says.

Dr Suranjeet Chatterjee, Senior Consultant, Internal Medicine, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals tells you that dengue and malaria patients need to visit hospitals and there's no escaping from that.

“From day one, even when COVID-19 was at its peak in Delhi, we have maintained that non-COVID conditions should not be ignored. A lot of people are dying of non-COVID issues because of delayed or no treatment. In such a case, if a patient has dengue or malaria there is no way he can be treated at home. It is there but that doesn't mean one wouldn't seek medical help. So my first advice for a person who is sick is to consult a doctor and seek professional help. Because most of the times, people do teleconsultations and things are superficial in there. A physical examination is a must when it comes to such health issues. We would have saved a lot of non-COVID patients if they would have come to us on time,” he tells you.

Though last year Delhi saw less number of Dengue cases because a lot was done to curb the disease that is at times just as killer as COVID-19, if not more. However, keeping in mind the current scenario people have to be more careful because all the attention these days is towards fighting the pandemic.

Dr Chatterjee denies the fact that the rising cases of dengue and malaria could pose a challenge on the health infrastructure of the country, especially for the big hospitals.

“All big hospitals are built in a way to tackle the surge in patients. However, what needs to be done is that a patient should first consult his local physician and when he advises the patient to get hospitalised then the patient should turn to the big hospitals. Having said that, all big hospitals have their COVID and non-COVID wards. At Apollo, we have 300 beds for Corona patients, out of which some are vacant. The credit goes to the people who have understood the disease and those with mild symptoms are treating themselves at home. But yes, if you talk about 20 days back, we had 70 patients waiting for beds. Also, the 400 non-COVID wards are all empty these days, the reason being people not wanting to visit any healthcare facility because they have a fear of catching infection. As compared to last year, during this time we had all 700 beds full of patients with several diseases. You take any big hospital for that matter, they have quite a few beds vacant for patients. But this doesn't mean, all the patients should rush to hospitals, that would be an unnecessary stress for the hospital staff, their local physician stays relevant in this case,” he tells you.

People learning about Corona, he says, is a good thing but he fears that people would become complacent about the disease.

He agrees that there might be risks involved with people suffering from dengue and malaria visiting the hospitals, given the Corona situation. “But this doesn't mean that dengue is any less of a disease. We have seen three years back how people died of it. Therefore, it is important to get proper treatment. As far as Corona risks are concerned, we have seen that the fatality rate is very low, hence it is advisable that, if needed, people should visit the hospital,” Chatterjee says.

MANY BIG HOSPITALS HAVE QUITE A FEW BEDS VACANT FOR PATIENTS. THEREFORE, HOSPITALS ARE READY TO HANDLE DENGUE AND MALARIA PATIENTS AS WELL. BUT THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT ALL THE PATIENTS SHOULD RUSH TO HOSPITALS, THAT WOULD BE AN UNNECESSARY STRESS FOR THE HOSPITAL STAFF — DR SURANJEET CHATTERJEE

Apart from dengue and malaria, there are gastroenteritis viruses too which cause similar havoc and can be a matter of confusion. “Diarrhea, vomiting and in some cases mild fever are some of the symptoms of the gastroenteritis virus, which is prevalent during the Monsoon. This could create a bit of confusion because these symptoms overlap with Coronavirus. Unfortunately, the patients have to be tested for COVID-19 as well,” he tells you.

To curb these diseases, he says, one needs to keep an eye on the kind of water he drinks. “Gastroenteritis diseases occur mainly because of drinking contaminated water, therefore, it is important to keep a check on the kind of water you are drinking, especially in the monsoons — July to September. Go for packaged bottled water. Stopping for a chilled glass of water at the roadside vendor is a big no. Staying hydrated is of utmost importance,” he tells you.

Dr KK Aggarwal, President CMAAO, President HCFI, and Editor in chief — Medtalks.Cmaao — Confederation of Medical Associations of Asia and Oceania/HCFI- Heart Care Foundation of India, however, denies the fact that there can be a surge in dengue or malaria cases, given the pandemic situation. “There is an unwritten law: *Ek mayaan mein do talwarein nahin rehti*. It is very unlikely that we can see a dengue or malaria outbreak. Two epidemics can't happen together. Therefore, I don't anticipate any rise in malaria or dengue cases,” he explains.

Moreover, about 30 per cent population of Delhi has already been affected by COVID-19, the antibodies in these people won't allow any new infection to enter the body for the next three months.

“We don't expect these patients to suffer from dengue or malaria. For those who haven't suffered from Corona, can only get

one disease — dengue, malaria or Coronavirus itself. Therefore, there will be added pressure either on the Government or the hospitals. If malaria or dengue outbreak is there, then Coronavirus will disappear,” he says.

The reason behind this, he says, is the innate immunity that is developed by a disease and is like plasma therapy. “This is a natural plasma therapy. If someone gets dengue, the antibodies will then act as a shield against Coronavirus too, for about three months,” Aggarwal tells you.

He tells you that there is no possibility of a dengue or malaria patient catching Coronavirus during his hospital visit. “Dengue or malaria is a mosquito-borne disease. There is no relation of immunity in such a case. It's all about mosquito bites. Therefore, it is out of question that a dengue or malaria patient can catch infection from a hospital. Even if he gets in contact with the virus, like I said before, his antibodies will prevent him catching infection,” he tells you.

He goes on to explain that an area can only see either a dengue outbreak or a malaria one. “It is like mosquitoes too have their designated areas. The one which causes dengue breeds in a different area than the one which is responsible for spreading malaria. Such is the case with viruses. But yes, those parts of India, which are now don't have as many cases of Coronavirus or are free from it, might see a dengue or malaria outbreak,” he tells you.

But this doesn't mean that one can live in oblivion and become complacent about the two diseases. Precautions are a must. “We have been telling people since eternity about the preventive measures. To be on the safer side, all the safety measures should be followed with utmost care. Surroundings should be kept clean and hygienic at all times,” he tells you.

NO OF WINS ONLY MATTER FOR STOKES

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Ben Stokes said he is now more than just a purely instinctive cricketer after the all-rounder's latest superb century left England strongly-placed in the second Test against the West Indies.

Stokes top-scored with 176 in England's first innings 469-9 declared, before the West Indies reached 32-1 at the close of Friday's second day at Old Trafford.

This was the second-highest of Stokes's 10 Test hundreds, behind his blistering 258 against South Africa at Cape Town in 2016.

But, more significantly, it was also his fourth Test century since the start of 2019, during which time the left-hander has averaged over 52 — the sign of a world-class batsman.

As was the case with his stunning 135 not out during a remarkable one-wicket win in the third Ashes Test against Australia at Headingley last year, Stokes had the discipline to play himself in against accurate bowling before picking the right moment to up the tempo.

He found a fine ally on Friday in Dom Sibley, the opener's 120 his first Test century in England.

But with Sibley batting



The pitch area is seen covered after rain delayed start of the third day play at Old Trafford on Saturday AP

Archer fined, gets official warning

MANCHESTER: The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has officially warned speedster Jofra Archer and fined him an "undisclosed amount" for breaching the bio-security protocols ahead of the second Test.

Last Monday, Archer broke the bio-bubble and left for his home in Brighton, the unauthorised visit leading to him being dropped from the ongoing second Test at the Old Trafford.

"Following a disciplinary hearing held on Friday evening, 17 July, England cricketer Jofra Archer has been fined an undisclosed amount and received an official written warning after admitting to breaching the team's bio-secure protocols on Monday 13 July when he made an unauthorised visit to his home in Hove," ECB said in a statement.

It means he will be available for selection in the final Test of the series, which the West Indies lead 1-0 after their win in Southampton.



sedately — his hundred took the best part of eight hours — there was a danger of England getting bogged down in a match they need to win to level the three-Test series at 1-1. Stokes, however, ensured that did not happen.

Having gone to a hundred in, by his standards, a restrained 255 balls, Stokes needed a mere 46 more for the third fifty of his innings as he punished a new ball being deployed by a tiring West Indies pace attack.

It was a sublime mixture of both skill and match awareness, the latest Stokes has displayed since being acquitted of an affray charge in 2018 after an

incident outside a nightclub that saw him miss an Ashes tour and threatened to end his England career completely.

Stokes, who last week deputised as captain for Joe Root after England's regular skipper missed a four-wicket loss to the West Indies following the birth of his second child, was once more proving himself to be a leader even if he was now back among the ranks.

'UNDERSTAND MY GAME'

"Numbers, figures...I don't really care," said Stokes, who shared a fourth-wicket stand of 260 with Sibley that rescued England from a top-order collapse. "The main number for me is how many wins," he said.

"I was more buzzing that I faced 300 balls than I was when I got to my hundred, that's something I never thought I'd be capable of doing."

The 29-year-old Stokes, now in his 65th Test, added: "Being

an instinctive player is great but there's time in the past where I've let how I'm playing at the time affect me, thinking I can play some big shots and I'd be alright.

"I feel at an age and an experience level where I really understand my game pretty much all the time and I try not to get carried away."

Meanwhile, Stokes also demonstrated a degree of empathy for the plight of Jofra Archer.

Archer is currently self-isolating in his hotel room at Old Trafford but Stokes said: "We really need to be there to support Jofra right now."

"The worst thing we could do right now as a team is just leave him and see him in five or six days time."

He added: "It's all good being there for people when things are going well and smoothly but what really comes through is how you operate with someone when they need you the most."

Kapil's advice helped me explore options before taking India A job: Dravid

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Batting great Rahul Dravid says legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev's advice helped him to explore options after his retirement before eventually taking up the coaching job of India A and Under-19 sides.

Dravid said he was also "a little fortunate" that at the back end of his career, he was already in a captain-cum-coach role of IPL side Rajasthan Royals.

"After I finished (playing), there were quite a few options and I was not sure what to do. It was Kapil Dev who gave me this advice actually when I was coming to the end of my career," Dravid told India women's team coach WV Raman on his Youtube channel *Inside Out*.



"I bumped into him somewhere and he said 'Rahul, don't commit to doing anything straightaway, go out and spend a few years just exploring and doing different things and see what you really like.' I thought it was good advice."

The former captain said initially he liked doing commentary, but later found "a little disconnect" from the game. "...The thing that gave me the most satisfaction was really being involved in the game and being connected with the boys. I really liked the coaching side of things and I got sort

of involved in that when the opportunity came up to do some coaching with India A and Under-19," Dravid said.

"I thought it was a good place to start and took it up and I've really enjoyed it since. I just feel a lot more satisfying to be involved in the coaching side of things," said the legendary batsman, who piled up 13288 runs from 164 Tests between 1996 and 2012.

"Especially the developmental side of coaching, whether India A, Under-19 or the NCA. It's really given me the opportunity to work with a lot of the players without having to worry about the immediate results which I think is a really nice space for me to work in." He backed the BCCI's decision to restrict U-19 players to one World Cup only.

We can make history in Tokyo: Savita

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian women's hockey goalkeeper Savita says the Indian team was inexperienced at the 2016 Rio Olympics but has since then transformed into a competitive side in the last four years and it stands a good chance of making history in next year's Tokyo Games.

The Indian women's created history when they qualified for Rio Olympics after a gap of 36 years. But that joy was shortlived as they crashed out in the group stages.

"I feel our team was raw at that time and we made a few mistakes. Now, we have a much stronger side and I am sure we will be able to put the nightmare in Rio behind us. The experience at the Olympic Games will certainly hold us in good stead for the next one in Tokyo," Savita said in a *Hockey India* release.

"I think we have a great chance to make history at the Tokyo Olympics. We have a good mix of experience and youngsters in our side and all our bases are covered. We have competed against top teams in the recent past and we have a strong belief in our abilities. If we play to our potential, we will surely win a medal for India at the Olympics next year."

The 30-year-old custodian from Haryana, who was part of the Rio squad, believes the team is much improved now, evident from its recent performances against top sides.

"We have certainly changed the way we operate on and off the field since the 2016 Olympics. We have recorded great victories in the last four years which includes Asia Cup 2017 and FIH Women's Series Finals Hiroshima 2019," said Savita.

"It was absolutely amazing to book a berth at the Tokyo Olympics through the FIH Olympic Qualifiers 2019 in front of our home crowd," she added.

Akmal lauds Rohit's power-hitting



LAHORE: Pakistan cricketer Kamran Akmal lavished praise on India's white-ball vice-captain Rohit Sharma and stated that his power-hitting is second to none in world cricket.

While speaking to Sawera Pasha on her *You Tube* channel, Kamran was asked by a fan about his views regarding Rohit and he said: "Amazing... unbelievable batsman. It is so much fun to watch him bat. His batting...his temperament...his commitment level is

unbelievable. He is the only batsman who has scored two double centuries (three). He scored five centuries at the World Cup (2019 in England & Wales).

"The best thing about his batting is his power-hitting. I urge all the youngsters to watch and learn from the likes of Rohit, Babar Azam and Virat Kohli," he added.

Another fan put up a question about MS Dhoni and Akmal referred to him as India's best ever.

"India's best ever wicket-keeper batsman, who has achieved so much for the country...unbelievable. The way he has performed consistently, to keep an average above 50 in ODIs and play so many match-winning innings," Akmal said. "Much credit should be given to Dhoni... 50-over World Cup, T20 World Cup, IPL, Champions Trophy — I think he has won all as captain. He is an unbelievable performer." IANS

9 Bangla cricketers to start individual training from today

DHAKA: Nine Bangladesh players, including former captain Mushfiqur Rahim, will resume individual training across four venues from Sunday.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has prepared four venues — Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka, Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong, Sylhet Int'l Cricket Stadium in Sylhet and Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna for the first phase of practice session by following all the necessary safety protocols, according to a BCB statement.

"Players will take part in running and gym sessions at the academy, batting at Indoor centre. Other three venues will be available for Running and GYM only," the statement read.

Mushfiqur, Imrul Kayes, Mohammad Mithun, Shafiqul Islam will train in Dhaka while Syed Khaled Ahmed and Nasum Ahmed will practice in Sylhet.

Mehedi Hasan and Nurul Hasan will avail training facilities in Khulna while Nayeem Hasan will be the only one practicing in Chattogram. PTI

ABD's Eagles clinch Gold in 3TC Cup

IANS ■ CENTURION

AB de Villiers once again showed why he is regarded as one of the most destructive batsmen ever to play the game as his quickfire innings helped his team Eagles win the 3TC Solidarity Cup Gold medal in Centurion on Saturday.

After Reeza Hendricks won the toss and elected to bat first, Kingfishers started brightly with their skipper and Janneman Malan putting on a 30-run partnership in the first three overs.

Malan's 31 off 16 ensured Kingfishers ended their first part of the innings at 56/2 in 6 overs.

AB de Villiers' Eagles were the next to bat with Kingfishers coming out to bowl. Aiden Markram and Rassie van der Dussen opened the innings and they got the team off to a cautious start.

AB de Villiers came out

to bat at three after Glenton Stuurman's dismissal. But it was Markram who did the maximum damage for Eagles.

Markram smashed 43 off 21 deliveries while ABD could muster only 7 off 11 deliveries. Eagles finished their first part of the innings with 66/1 in 6 overs.

For Kites, Jon-Jon Smuts and Ryan Rickleton opened the innings against Eagles. Rickleton was dismissed LBW by Andile Phehlukwayo, however, Smuts kept going on the other end and helped Kites finish at 58/1 in six overs.

In the second half, Eagles were supposed to bat first, followed by Kites and then Kingfishers. The team with most number of runs (combined first and second) would win Gold followed by



Silver and finally Bronze medal.

De Villiers simply went berserk in the second half as he smashed a half-century off just 21 deliveries. He was finally dismissed by Kites' Anrich Nortje for 61 (24 balls) but the damage was already done as ABD's heroics ensured Eagles finished with 160/4 in their 12 overs over two halves.

Kites came out to bat, resuming their innings at 58/1. Bavuma and Smuts departed in quick succession as Kingfishers left them reeling at 76/3.

Dwaine Pretorius then smashed Tabraiz Shamsi for three sixes and two fours as Kites

needed 44 off last two overs to be in Gold position.

But they could only manage 138/3 despite Pretorius slamming the fastest half-century of the match (17 balls).

Kingfishers came out to bat the last and they needed to score 139 for the Silver medal and 161 to win the Gold. Du Plessis and Coetzee resumed the innings for them in the second half against the Eagles.

Du Plessis tore apart Ngidi in the eighth over as he smashed three sixes and a four to put his team on the right track in the chase.

Fortuin, however, ended du Plessis' stay in the middle as he castled him for 28 (13 balls). Phehlukwayo then got rid of Klassen in the next over, and celebrated by showing the *Black Lives Matter* engraved on his inner T-shirt.

Ngidi bowled an economical last two over as Kingfishers ended their 12 overs at 113/5. This meant they had to settle for Bronze. Kites won Silver while Eagles took home the Gold.

Hamilton takes Hungary pole

AFP ■ BUDAPEST

Lewis Hamilton broke the circuit lap record and drew level with Michael Schumacher for another feat on Saturday as he claimed a record-increasing 90th pole position for Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix.

The six-time world champion clocked a stunning time of one minute and 13.447 seconds on his second run in final qualifying to finish just ahead of team-mate Valtteri Bottas as Mercedes reeled off their 65th front-row lockout.

It was Hamilton's second successive pole of the Covid-19 delayed season and a Schumacher-equaling seventh pole at the Hungaroring, where he seeks his eighth victory to draw

level with another Schumacher achievement for wins on the same track.

Schumacher won eight times at the French Grand Prix.

"I have to pinch myself," said Hamilton. "It doesn't register. It's quite humbling because I work with an incredible bunch of people who do an amazing job here and back home."

"And Valtteri doesn't make it easy for me. It takes perfection to do laps like that so this is one of the things I enjoy most."

Bottas said he expected it to be close. "We seem to be on another level, pretty far ahead of the

others. My laps were ok, but I couldn't go faster really."

Behind the two "black arrows", the controversial "pink Mercedes" of Racing Point were third and fourth with Lance Stroll and Sergio Perez ahead of a much-improved showing by four-time champion Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc for Ferrari.

"I am very happy at the moment," said Stroll. "Was strong all the way through qualifying, the whole weekend, really."

Max Verstappen was a disappointed seventh for Red Bull, Lando Norris eighth ahead of his McLaren team-mate

Carlos Sainz with Pierre Gasly, in his 50th Grand Prix, 10th for Alpha Tauri.



PLAYERS TAKE A KNEE BEFORE START Eagles players took a knee to support the *Black Lives Matter* movement before the start of the 3T Cricket Solidarity Cup match at the SuperSport Park in Centurion on Saturday.



South Africa's star batsman Faf du Plessis has auctioned one of his bats (a new IXU) and a pink ODI jersey which has his name and number (18) inscribed on the back to raise funds for feeding underprivileged children struggling to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic. Du Plessis posted the message on his Instagram page with pictures of both the items. "I've donated one of my almost new IXU bats and my Pink ODI shirt from the 2016 Pink ODI against England that will be auctioned on All in Africa's website"

Leeds back in big time after 16-year absence

AFP ■ LEEDS

Leeds United were promoted to the Premier League on Friday after West Bromwich Albion's 2-1 defeat at Huddersfield ensured the Championship leaders will end their 16-year exile from the top-flight.

Marcelo Bielsa's side were able to celebrate promotion without kicking a ball as second-placed Albion's failure to take three points guaranteed Leeds will finish in the top two. And on Saturday after Brentford lost 1-0 to Stoke they officially become Championship winners.

"We are back. Leeds United are Premier League," the club said on their Twitter account moments after the final whistle.

A tense 1-0 win over Barnsley at Elland Road, secured by Michael Sollbauer's own goal, had moved Leeds to the brink of promotion on Thursday.

Now they can look forward to renewing old rivalries with Manchester United and Chelsea next season.

"It's unbelievable and it's still not sunk in," Leeds captain Liam Cooper said.

"Our club, our fans and our players have sacrificed so much. We've been in the doldrums for 16 years.

"To lead this team to promotion back to where we know we've always belonged is unbelievable. We deserve it. We've been the best team all season."

Bielsa has earned iconic status in west Yorkshire after the Leeds boss finally put his club back on the football map.

Midfielder Kalvin Phillips saluted Bielsa's contribution, saying: "When the manager first came in I never thought I would be in this position two years down the line.

"He's the best in the world. There's no manager I would rather be under than Marcelo Bielsa.



Leeds United fans celebrate outside Elland Road stadium after the club secure Premier League promotion on Friday following West Brom defeat. PL/Twitter

"The Premier League is the best in the world and after 16 years we're back in there."

Despite warnings from Leeds owner Andrea Radrizzani to stay at home amid the coronavirus pandemic, Leeds fans gathered outside Elland Road to celebrate, but their emotion was understandable.

Leeds are one of England's biggest clubs, with their legion of fanatical fans following them around the country and regularly attracting home crowds of over 30,000 despite years of underachievement.

RICH HISTORY

Their long-awaited return to the top tier completes a turbulent journey that saw them become a laughing stock when they languished in third-tier obscurity.

Leeds have been away from the Premier League for so long that Twitter and Instagram didn't exist the last time they played in the top-flight.

So it was fitting that Leeds goalkeeper Kiko Casilla took to Twitter to celebrate, writing: "We are BACK! We are in the Premier League! Yessssssssss!"

"Many days dreaming of this Day. We deserve it. Proud of this TEAM, proud of our supporters."

Liverpool midfielder James Milner, who started his career at Leeds, tweeted: "Congratulations LUF. Back where you belong."

Bielsa has turned the tide at a tortured club infamously labelled the *Damned United* by novelist David Peace and forever remembered as *Dirty Leeds* in the minds of fans who saw their no-holds-barred style in the Don Revie era.

The 64-year-old Argentine led Leeds within touching distance of promotion in his first season, but they crumbled in the final weeks and were beaten in the play-off semi-finals by Derby.

Notorious for working his players so hard in training that they often burn out by the end of the season, Bielsa has benefitted from the coronavirus hiatus allowing his players to come back refreshed for the final furlong of the promotion race. Champions of England in

1969 and 1974 under Revie, then in 1992 when Howard Wilkinson called the shots, Leeds have a rich history.

But since being relegated from the top tier, Leeds have stumbled from financial disaster off the pitch to despair on it.

Describing the club's ascent to the heady heights of the Champions League in the early 2000s, former chairman Peter Ridsdale claimed he had "lived the dream".

Their subsequent fall was a never-ending nightmare that hit its lowest ebb in 2007 when Leeds went into administration and were relegated to the third tier for the first time.

No wonder the much-travelled Bielsa, nicknamed *El Loco* for his intense personality, is so beloved after just two years in charge.

Pep's idol and a Leeds legend: The incredible career of Bielsa

LEEDS: For a man nicknamed *El Loco* (mad man) and with little silverware in his long managerial career, Marcelo Bielsa is an unlikely hero to a younger generation of coaches including Pep Guardiola and Mauricio Pochettino.

However, hordes of Leeds fans will now treat him with similar reverence after he guided one of English football's sleeping giants back to the Premier League after a 16-year wait.

The Leeds bust that followed a boom time of big spending and a Champions League semi-final at the turn of the century lasted far longer than many people anticipated.

Leeds last played in the English top-flight in May 2004. A further relegation and three years in the third tier followed before a decade stuck in the mud of the gruelling 46-game a season Championship.

There was plenty of heartbreak along the way but perhaps none more so than in Bielsa's eventful first season at Elland Road.

After being caught sending a spy to Derby's training last year, Bielsa revealed the exhaustive scouting he does of every opponent he has ever faced amid accusations of underhand tactics.

"I think he is the best-prepared manager I've ever seen in my life," said Guardiola, who went to visit Bielsa in Argentina before setting out as a coach at Barcelona.

A Fifa fair play award also came *El Loco's* way last season for allowing Aston Villa to equalise after Leeds had scored with a Villa player down injured. However, that was the only trophy Leeds won as, in keeping with Bielsa's sides of the past, they faltered down the home straight, with many pointing to the physical demands he puts on his players.

Bielsa made his name winning three league titles in Argentina with Newell's Old Boys and Velez Sarsfield, where the season was divided into two leagues of 19 games.

"If I had been 38-game seasons I don't know if the players physically and mentally could stand another 19 games," Ricardo Lunari, another former Bielsa player to later become a coach, told *Sky Sports*.

Bielsa's stints in Bilbao with Athletic Club, where he reached the Europa League and Copa del Rey finals in 2011-12, and

Marseille, where he led Ligue 1 at the halfway stage in 2014-15, were also admired but ended up empty-handed as their energy ran out.

Last season, Derby and their manager Frank Lampard had the last laugh, beating Leeds 4-3 on aggregate in the play-off semis, prolonging their agonising wait to return to the Premier League.

Many expected Bielsa to walk. But in his second season he has managed to leave a legacy similar to that he left at Newell's — where the club's stadium now bears his name — and with the Chilean national team, whom he led to a first World Cup in 12 years.

Coronavirus may have played Leeds' title party, but it may also have played its part in getting them over the line.

The three-month break meant there was no burnout down the stretch this time as Leeds have lost just one of their seven matches since the restart.

'HE'S A GENIUS'

Born into a bourgeois family in Argentina, there are few airs and graces with Bielsa — despite a reported £3 million-a-year salary (\$3.75 million). He lives in a one-bedroom flat in the market town of Wetherby so he can walk to the club's Thorpe Arch training base and is regularly photographed with locals in coffee shops and supermarkets.

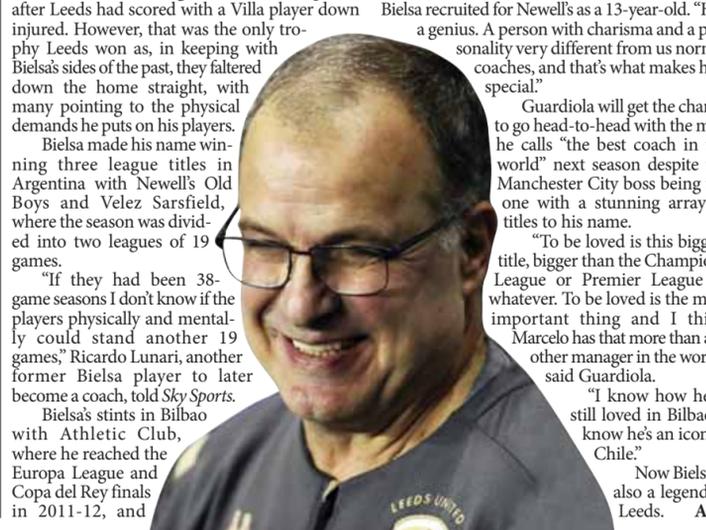
"For me, he's a person I will always admire," said former Tottenham boss Pochettino, whom Bielsa recruited for Newell's as a 13-year-old. "He's a genius. A person with charisma and a personality very different from our normal coaches, and that's what makes him special."

Guardiola will get the chance to go head-to-head with the man he calls "the best coach in the world" next season despite the Manchester City boss being the one with a stunning array of titles to his name.

"To be loved is this biggest title, bigger than the Champions League or Premier League or whatever. To be loved is the most important thing and I think Marcelo has that more than any other manager in the world," said Guardiola.

"I know how he is still loved in Bilbao. I know he's an icon in Chile."

Now Bielsa is also a legend in Leeds. AFP



Chelsea wary of Man Utd's front 3

Manchester: Chelsea's defence will have to be on their toes when they are up against Manchester United's in-form attacking trio which is the most potent in the country in Sunday's FA Cup semi-final, manager Frank Lampard said on Friday.

United forwards Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial have scored 22 goals each in all competitions this season while 18-year-old Mason Greenwood has also had a breakthrough season with 16 goals so far.

Lampard also said the mid-season addition of midfielder Bruno Fernandes has vastly improved United's attack as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side look to extend their unbeaten run in all competitions to 20 games.

"We know they are playing well, they've got a very potent front three, the most potent in the country on pure numbers," Lampard told reporters in a virtual news conference.

"Fernandes has made a huge difference after coming in in January. You see the strength he's brought to the team and their individual qualities. We have to be confident and deal with these threats."

Solskjaer had previously said that Chelsea had an unfair advantage having played last played on Tuesday, giving the London side more time to recover, while United played on Thursday but Lampard disagreed with that assessment.

"No, I don't think we do (have an unfair advantage)," Lampard said. "We have played Saturday, Tuesday. They played Monday, Thursday."

"We both played two games this week, it's a busy period, you play and recover."

Man Utd vs Chelsea
Live from 10:30pm IST
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK



Hammers close to PL survival

AFP ■ LONDON



David Moyes urged West Ham to finish the job after they effectively sealed their Premier League survival with a first half goal-blitz in Friday's 3-1 win over relegation rivals Watford.

Moyes' side ran riot before the break at the London Stadium thanks to goals from Michail Antonio, Tomas Soucek and Declan Rice.

Troy Deeney got one back for Watford after the interval, but the visitors couldn't muster an unlikely escape act.

West Ham climbed to 15th place and sit six points clear of the relegation zone with just

two games left.

Holding a vastly superior goal difference to third bottom Bournemouth and second bottom Aston Villa, the Hammers should be safe from the drop.

After their second successive win, West Ham need one more point to guarantee their survival.

If other results make them do it themselves, Moyes is confident his players will be up to the task against Manchester United and Aston Villa.

"We are in a good position. Teams still have that chance and we have to do the job," Moyes said.

"Even scoring the goals has helped, I wanted us to keep

our goal difference as good as it could be.

"We have 37 points with a couple of games to go. If we get 40 points we'll have done it off our own back."

Fourth bottom Watford are just three points above the relegation zone and face a nerve-racking finish to the season.

Nigel Pearson's men, beaten for the first time in three matches, will face Manchester City and Arsenal in their final two games.

Bournemouth, whose goal difference is only two worse than Watford's, would go above the Hornets if they beat Southampton by a three-goal margin on Sunday.

Pessina strike stalls Atalanta in Verona

AFP ■ VERONA

Matteo Pessina grabbed the equaliser for Hellas Verona to hold his high-flying parent club Atalanta 1-1 in Serie A on Saturday.

Atalanta move level on points with second-placed Inter Milan, but are six points adrift of Serie A leaders Juventus.

On-loan Pessina headed in just before the hour mark in Verona minutes after Colombian striker Duvan Zapata had put the visitors ahead.

Atalanta are equal on 71 points with Inter Milan, who travel to fifth-placed Roma on Sunday, with eight-time reigning champions Juventus, hosting fourth-placed Lazio, who are eight points adrift of top spot, on Monday.

Atalanta have scored in a club

record 22 games in a row, but Zapata's second-half goal was not enough to bring home the three points.

Gasperini's side are the only team to remain unbeaten on the



road this season, but their hopes of a first Scudetto in the team's 112-year history are all but over with four games left to play.

"Talking about the Scudetto is too much. We lack a point to get to the Champions League," said Gasperini.

"Ours was a good match against a team that is doing well and wanted to recoup after a controversial defeat against Roma."

Verona, in ninth, are coached by ex-Croatia midfielder Ivan Juric, who played under Gasperini in Genoa and was his assistant at Inter Milan and then Palermo.

Atalanta threatened early with Mario Pasalic, scorer of a hat-trick against Brescia this week, forcing a save from Marco Silvestri after quarter of an hour.

Zapata came close before the break, before getting his chance five minutes into the second half pouncing on a Koray Gunter defending blunder to blast past Silvestri.

Zapata pulled Atalanta ahead after the break with his 18th goal in all competitions this season.

But four minutes later midfielder Pessina drew Verona level, sending in a rebound for his seventh league goal this season, after Gollini denied Amir Rrahmani.



PSG fans cheer the players during a friendly match between Paris Saint-Germain and Waasland-Beveren in Paris on Friday. AP

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Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India Invites applications for the post of Chief Statistician of India

Position and responsibility: The Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is a senior level appointment in the rank of Secretary to the Government of India. CSI besides discharging the functions of the Secretary to Government of India in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation will be the head of the National Statistical Organisation and Secretary of the National Statistical Commission.

Qualifications: The applicants shall be Indian Nationals with proven statistical and managerial experience in a large statistical organization. He or she should not be more than 55 years of age as on the last date for application to the position.

Conditions of service: CSI will have a tenure of three years extendable by a further period of two years, i.e. a total of five years or till he / she attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier and will be eligible for reappointment. CSI will be entitled to the salary and allowances and other facilities like Government accommodation as admissible to a Secretary to the Government of India.

Selection procedure: A Search Committee constituted by the Government of India will recommend a panel of names for filling the vacancy from amongst the applicants. Besides the applicants, the Search Committee may also recommend names of other persons considered suitable for the position. The competent authority also reserves the right to suitably relax the eligibility criteria given above, if considered necessary.

Candidates should send their applications along with their Curriculum Vitae including details of professional experiences and publications to Dy. Director General, NSC Secretariat, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Room No. 305, 3rd Floor, C-Wing, Pushpa Bhawan, Saket, New Delhi-110062 either by post or by E-mail at nscc-secretariat@nic.in so as to reach her by 17:30 hours on or before 17th August 2020. Those who are serving in Government or Public Sector undertakings or Autonomous bodies should send their applications through their employer along with character and integrity certificates.

For more details on the terms and conditions of service, please log on to www.mospi.gov.in
Dated the 17 July 2020

DAVP 39101/11/0001/2021 Deputy Director General National Statistical Commission Secretariat F.No.1/NSC/2020(PLI)

New ethics code to end multiple roles for individuals in Pak cricket

PTI ■ KARACHI

Head coach Misbah-ul-haq and former skipper Wasim Akram may have to give up one of their multiple roles in Pakistan cricket with the PCB expanding the scope of its ethics code, which addresses the issue of conflict of interest.

The 27-page code was approved at the last meeting of the PCB's Board of Governors and aims to cover every individual working with the Board and the Pakistan Super League (PSL).

"Pakistan Cricket Board Chairman Ehsan Mani wanted

a new ethics code as in recent years there have been numerous complaints and issues of multiple roles by its officials, employees or members leading to a conflict of interest situation in their respective roles," said the source.

Misbah is presently head coach and chief selector but the PCB apparently has reservations over his signing on as head coach of the Islamabad United franchise in the PSL.

The ethics code will now cover business activities or interests of PCB officials, employees or members working in any capacity in the



Board or PSL either directly or through even family members. Akram is a member of the Board's cricket committee and

also works with the Karachi Kings franchise. He is also said to have shares in a company which has been given digital rights by the board.

Former women's team captain, Bismah Maroof will also come under the radar as she is a member of the cricket committee besides heading the PCB women's wing and being the chief selector of women's cricket.

Besides these three big names they are others employed by the board as coaches who have paid positions with PSL franchises. "All such people who are

doing dual jobs/roles and there is an element of conflict of interest in their roles will have to now give up one or two of their roles," the official said.

In the past the PCB has faced criticism for giving a free hand to individuals whose dual role has led to questions of conflict of interest. Former head coach, Mickey Arthur was also the head coach for Karachi Kings.

Former PCB Chairman Najam Sethi used to host a political talk show on the Geo News channel which had bid a number of times for rights from the PCB.



'A lot of my films were shelved'

■ What is your role in Sony Liv's Undekhi?

I play Varun Ghosh, a DSP. He loses his service and he has to prove something in life. He is just like the people we see in our daily lives. He is a multidimensional character and has many layers.

■ What made you say yes?

There are many aspects. First, when I was called for the look test by Kabir Sinha, that time I didn't know much about the script. Once everything was sorted, I asked for the script and it was so engaging that I finished reading it in one go. It is very rarely that I get to read such impressive, beautiful and powerful scripts. I am thankful to Siddharth Sen Gupta and Varun Badola, who wrote such amazing script and of course Applause Entertainment for producing such content.

This was the main reason of saying yes to the project. Second, this story is based on real-life events, this again was something that was gripping. Third,

it is a show that keeps you on the edge of the seat. One cannot predict the twists and turns in the episodes. This is the beauty of the show. Fourth, my character of course left no reason to turn down the project.

■ You debuted with Monsoon Wedding. How did that happen?

That's a long story. To cut it short, after completing my course at National School of Drama (NSD) in 1997, I worked with the NSD Repertory Company as a senior actor till 200. After this, I was planning to shift to Mumbai. But due to certain reasons, I went back to Kolkata. After few years, when I went back to Delhi, people told me that there is a role for me in Monsoon Wedding and the team is searching for me. I got in touch with the team, auditioned and was selected to play Lottery. Then I shifted to Mumbai and today I am here. That's how it happened.

■ How did acting happen to you?

This is again a long story actually. As a typical Bengali child, I was into everything. I have learnt playing *tabla*, done painting, tried my hands at singing, gymnastics and what not. I have done almost everything. I am the jack of all trades but master of none. When I grew up, I indulged in theatre. In 1988, after my Board exams I joined a theatre group full time. That was when I realised that I was in demand, because I knew a lot of things apart from acting. I went on getting the Best Actor's Award

I AM THE JACK OF ALL TRADES BUT MASTER OF NONE. WHEN I GREW UP, I INDULGED IN THEATRE. IN 1988, AFTER MY BOARD EXAMS, I JOINED A THEATRE GROUP FULL TIME. THAT WAS WHEN I REALISED THAT I WAS IN DEMAND, BECAUSE I KNEW A LOT OF THINGS APART FROM ACTING

for my performance in Indian People's Theatre Association Golden Jubilee Ceremony. Eventually, when you get to know that you are good at something, so why not pursue it. It gave me confidence to dig deep into the craft and I enrolled myself in NSD. I went a long way. It was not like *ki main bag utha kar nikal gaya aur Mumbai ja kar bola ki mujhey actor banana hai. Main bohot lambe raastey se seekhta hua aaya aur aage badha.*

■ How hard or easy was it to be a part of the industry?

I have never seen it that way. I am an actor and bound to act. Eventually, I will work. I never thought how hard it is to be in the industry. When you are into a profession, you can't think of these things. All you need to do is to work. If you are good, then you will get work. *Mujhey apney kaam se hi kaam mila hai.* I am quite happy with what I have. It's fun.

■ Was there a moment when quitting was an option?

Never. Why quit? I won't quit anything. I know what I want to do. I am here only. (smiles)

■ Your worst and best memory in the industry.

There are many a lot of good and worst memories. I don't want to specify things. However, there are a lot of

my films that got shelved. They never saw the light of the day. There are a lot of films that I thought will release like *Jungle Mein Mor Naacha Kisne Dekha* was one of them, which never got released in India.

It has happened with me many times. Moreover, I have gone for shooting for a project for about 18 days but when it got released I was not there even in a single scene. I won't name any film or person because I don't like controversies. Sometimes, I was promised a role in a film and was told that if you are not there in it, the film will not be made, but then the film got released and I was not there. I have seen all of this. Having said that, there are a lot of best moment as well. Being in the industry in one of them. Also, in my first commercial project, *Aetbaar*, I got to work with Amitabh Bachchan. When I came to Mumbai, I always said that *'ki main Amitabh ji ka bangla dekhne nahin unke saath kaam karne ke liye Mumbai aaya tha because I am an actor'*. That was a very happy moment for me.

■ Upcoming projects.

There were a lot of upcoming projects that are now postponed due to COVID-19. *Insha Allah*, once everything get back to normal, everything will be lined up again.

Talktime

DIBYENDU BHATTACHARYA

Having marked his presence in Hindi cinema with his captivating role of a DSP in SonyLiv's well received series Undekhi, Bhattacharya speaks with Musba Hashmi about his lure for the role, among other things like his place in the industry

Are you tired of not being able to get small things done? Do you want to send a dish to a friend or family but don't have the time? Fret not. SHALINI SAKSENA tells you how app-based start-ups are here to lend a helping hand

AT YOUR SERVICE



We have heard of same day delivery of important documents via couriers. But what if you wanted a handyman for home repairs but didn't know how to go about it or wanted a home chef or a home baker or wanted fumigation or pest control service or get your shoe laundered or needed help in getting a bank draft made? Well, a Mumbai-based start-up — Ease Your Life (EYL) — does all this and more. In fact, they even had a caterpillar delivered which was someone's pet from Andheri to Grant Road in Mumbai, changed curtains in a client's home, changed a flat tyre and provided a service to a client who didn't want to go walk across the street to get a printout. A brainchild of Shashwat Bhatt and Jaymin Trivedi, EYL provides services across Mumbai, Gurugram, Delhi and Noida. The latest city added to their portfolio — during the lockdown — is Gwalior. While their company provides all kinds of service, it is broadly categorised under a few headings like pick-up and drop that can be food items, parcels and or even documents. However, there are parameters to the weight and size of the package. Trivedi recalls how their journey began four years back. "Our first task was over four years back, where we paid a phone bill for a customer who was

busy. Since then there has been no looking back," he tells you.

It is not just bills that EYL helps you with. You name it and they do it. "While there are many service providers who may step in to help the customer in terms of courier service or providing a handyman or delivering grocery and food but there is no other service provider that does all this and much more. Take an example. If you want a cake picked up from a vendor and have it delivered to a friend who lives 20 km away, we can do that. If you want help with pest control, we can do that. If you want a document delivered, we will do that. If you don't know how to get a bank draft made. Worry not. Our man will meet you at the bank and sort out your problem," Bhatt says.

Trivedi tells you that the idea to the duo came when they realised that people kept putting off some work because they just didn't have the time or they wished someone would come in to do the more menial work. But they needed to build a business module for this so that people could get time to do what they loved doing. Since the day we began our service we have realised that there are so many people who want others to do the more mundane work for them because they want to spend time with family or friends," Trivedi tells you. Bhatt tells you that their USP lies

If you want a cake picked up from a vendor and have it delivered to a friend who lives 20 km away, we can do that. If you want help with pest control, we are here. If you don't know how to get a bank draft made, worry not. Our man will meet you at the bank and sort out your problem

— Shashwat Bhatt, Founder, EYL

in the fact that the customer doesn't have to go to five different apps to book services for different needs. "All they have to do is come to our app and book the service they want. We want

people to know that they don't have to go to multiple apps, we want people to look at us as a super app. Even though there are some competitors, we are here to provide a service in a holistic manner. If you want a painter you call us, if you want a cleaner you call us, if you want a package delivered you call us," Bhatt says. All one has to do is download the app and request in a service. Charges depend on the distance travelled by the service provider with a base price of ₹40.

Rakesh Sharma, Sales and Marketing manager at Task Mitra, another Mumbai-based app company, tells you that they deliver groceries, medicine, letters or even pick up spare keys because a client was locked out. As of now, they serve Mumbai but plans are afoot to expand and even go international — Singapore and Australia," Sharma says.

Given the present pandemic and the scare of catching the virus, the service provided is totally cash-free. "The customer doesn't have to pay task mitra any cash; everything is done online since he is empowered with the necessary modes by which he can make the payment to the merchant. When a customer wants something to be procured, they put down the necessary information so that it can be understood by the delivery profes-

sionals who are well-versed in a wide range of tasks and how things work," Sharma explains.

Since the time they began their operations around four years back, they have grown from strength to strength and today they provide service 24x7 and have over 500-1000 delivery professionals, who work full-time or part-time, placed at almost every corner of Mumbai. This makes it possible for them to provide delivery in the shortest possible time.

"Our delivery charges range between ₹250-₹650. The pricing is complex and depends on the work done and the distance traveled. People who know us and the convenience that comes with being with us, for them we provide a range of services like invitation deliveries, delivery of documents that need multiple signatures, help the elderly to get their medicines and deliver food from a restaurant that is more than 20 km away," Sharma says.

He tells you that over the years, more and more people are demanding a customised service since they don't have the time to do it themselves. Also, there are people who want things to be done immediately and looking for a service provider who can do the same and are willing to pay a price for it," Sharma says.

'I'm Riya Dev Verma, not Riya Sen'

RIYA SEN, who began her career as a child artist and got recognition as a model when she performed in Falguni Pathak's music video Yaad Piya Ki Aane Lagi at 16, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about her latest project — Pati Patni Aur Woh for MX Player

◆ What has been keeping you busy?

Fortunately, just before the lockdown was announced I had come up with my app — Riya Sen official app. I have been busy six days a week I go live and interview ordinary people, my fans and my friends. They interview me as well. There are rapid fire rounds too. I do live cooking, so people can see me.

◆ What made you say to the mini-series — Pati Patni Aur Woh?

When I got the offer, I asked for synopsis and when I read it, I saw no reason to not do it. I have a lovely role in it, the whole story is cute and there was nothing to think about it — it is a pleasant romantic comedy when you watch it. The dialogues are funny. Anybody with a sense of humour would understand that. One can never say no to good humour. Even before I got my script, I had made up my mind to do it.

◆ How much fun did you have doing this show?

I had such a good time, the one month we were in Mathura while shooting. Anant (Vidhaat), Vinny (Arora) we drove our directors nuts because we would chat all the time and pour our hearts out. Vinny and I are such chatter boxes and so is Anant. We were talking all the time. Before the take and after the take, we would talk and they would want us to take a break from all the chatter. By the end of it, it was New Year's and I didn't want to come back and my family said, the series is over and you come back home. I had made a home for myself there by placing little things.

◆ How much does it help if you have this instant rapport with co-stars?

It helps a lot. When I went to the workshop, Anant and all were quiet but Vinny was nice and friendly. From day one we met in Mathura we became best friends. Vinny plays the ghost so one has to totally ignore her during the shoot. It is not easy since the person is such a chatterbox. It was tough but a lot of fun.

◆ You come from a family of actors. Was it tough to make space for yourself?

I was already Riya Sen from the start. When I came to Mumbai, I told a journalist I am Riya Dev Verma but I was labelled Riya Sen since I was Moon Moon Sen's daughter. For me to hear Riya Sen I was shocked. When I am shooting or go out and people ask if I am Riya Sen, I tell them no.

◆ You began your career in the industry as a child artist. How has the learning curve been?

My journey has been great fun. I have made the full advantage of what my life has been. Yes, I started young, doing ads, music videos and Tamil and Hindi movies. While doing movies, I took a break and then came back to do web series. But when I took the break, I spaced myself and traveled the world. As an actress I have had many perks and ups and down but never let that do bring me down. There are a lot more things in being a human than just one factor. When I was partying, it was a taboo and looked down upon, but today everyone parties. I have enjoyed my journey and my parents are very nice and international in their way of thinking. They let me be myself and gave me the confidence about who I am.

◆ How did you end up doing Tamil and Bengali films?

I wish I knew. I didn't even know how I ended up in this industry. I was five when I did my first Hindi film. I was in Class VIII going into Class IX when I got an offer from P Bharathiraja (directors Tamil films). I never planned anything. It started off as a hobby before it became a profession. There was nobody to guide me and tell me what genre to take up or roles to do, I just went with the flow and did what I do. I never had a business plan nor do I have one today.

◆ After doing films, why work for web series?

I knew that the OTT platform would boom in the country seven years back. I started saying no to offers to bad roles in Hindi movies and took a break. A lot of actors were getting impatient for lack of good work but I went back to Kolkata and did some amazing work. I realised that OTT platforms would take off and would be a perfect fit for it. I get a lot of good offers that are challenging.

◆ A lot of actors are doing work for the OTT platforms. What is the reason?

It is not just because the work is different but also because they are not getting their due and work due to groupism and lobbying that exists in the industry. A lot of actors are taking this route because it offers them an opportunity.

◆ Do you have any regrets?

Maybe that I started young and made mistakes back then. But then I feel that if I had not made mistakes then, I would be making them now and right now is not the time to mess up things.

A tall of *lassi* is a must have when one travels to Punjab. A trip to this State is incomplete if one has not had the *mithhi lassi*. But did you know that this drink for all seasons is not just restricted to Punjab and in fact, can be found in different variants not just in India but in countries like Turkey where is a called Kefir and made from cultured fermented milk, in Mongolia where it is known as Kumis and made from fermented mare's milk and Amasi from South Africa. Radha Bhatia, chairperson of Bird Group travel conglomerate, tells you that the idea of a coffee table book — *Lassis Of India: Smoothies With A Twist* — on the good old *lassi* came up while having a conversation with her granddaughter who while was enthused with the idea of a smoothie was not so enamoured with the *lassi*. That got her thinking and led her on a journey that lasted three years. "It took me three year to get all the research work and finally get

Manthan in a glass

SHALINI SAKSENA tells you how the commonplace lassi is not so common, given that it transcends borders

down to writing the book. Not because the research itself was challenging but because I only had time on Saturdays to sit down to trace the history of this versatile drink that one can have any time of the year and with any meal or make a meal out of it. During my travels, I came across many recipes. I also met people who would talk about their culture and how a particular food was popular. Back home, a lot of my friends helped me in my research," Bhatia says. She tells you that there is a difference between lassi and smoothie. A smoothie, one is told, primarily has fruits and veggies unlike the *lassi*. "A lassi that is churned in a mixie jar is



Mitthi Punjabi lassi



Talicha More (Tamil Nadu)

very different from the taste of the *lassi* that is made in a *handi* and *madhani*. I want people to experience the real taste and hence are in the process of sell-

ing the *handi* and the *madhani* online. There is a whole process of using the *madhani* as an exercise for the hands as well when you use the wooden mad-

hani one has to use the mounds on the hands for the circular motion. This is a great exercise," She says.

People around Bhatia were not very convinced when they came to know that she was in the process of writing a book on *lassis*. "They wanted to know why I had chosen this particular drink and not something else. "Why not something more exotic," they had wanted to know. Also, I had wanted a person of repute who knew the food industry to write the Forward. It was a Saturday. I called up Vir Sanghvi and told him about my book. At first, he was not enthusiastic but when I gave him the details, he was totally onboard," Bhatia says whose favourite *lassi* is from Kashmir that has almonds, saffron, cashews, pistachios, walnuts, honey, sugar, *gulkand*, rose water, rose petals, cardamoms and of course *dahi*. All the ingredients are whisked. Poured in a glass, garnished with rose petals and cardamoms and

served chilled.

Another favourite of hers Talicha More — tempered buttermilk from Tamil Nadu that has mustard seeds, dry red chilli, *hing*, curry leaves, salt and buttermilk. All the ingredients are fried in mustard oil and then buttermilk is added, simmered for a few minutes and seasoned with salt. This can be had with rice or just enjoyed as a drink. The book that has over 74 lassi recipes — some traditional and others a modern-day variation like the spinach *lassi* or aloe vera *lassi* or date *lassi* or even *creme brulee lassi* — give you a little history of the drink, the region from where it is and the tradition surrounding it.





Everyone's like, 'overnight sensation'. It's not overnight. It's years of hard work — Margot Robbie



FROM THE INSIDE

Power of selfless service

Selfless service is not only a job or task to be done; it is an act of healing, of opening hearts and of radiating love

2



4

The call of Lord Shiva

The present pandemic has come to remind us about some basic tenets of life, which people seem to have forgotten

As more women foray into non-traditional investment avenues, finances need to be broken down and tackled according to a certain pattern. This just makes it much easier to decipher what's good for you and how you should be going ahead investing, writes HENA MEHTA

WOMEN AND FINANCE

AGING THE GAME



Today's woman is unafraid and unabashed to seek out for what she feels she deserves. Whether it is a career choice, business idea or education option, women are finding themselves more and more at the top of their game. But what is lacking, however, is the need for women to take charge of their finances too.

While women earn and save, most women do not foray into non traditional investment avenues. Could this be lack of knowledge or lack of trust? Or both?

But even finances need to be broken down and tackled according to a certain pattern. This just makes it much easier to decipher what's good for you and how you should be going ahead investing.

The first part of this process is to educate yourself. You need to know how strategically you can save up and how this strategy can grow your money better. A Standard & Poor Survey conducted in 2015 showed that over 80% of women in India are financially illiterate. This could be due to various factors, but general lack of knowledge is one amongst them. Less than 1% of Indian women invest in the equities market. Based on our primary research at Basis covering 500 urban women ages 24-45, 70% of women have financial savings to invest, however, 60% of the total cohort is still searching for better investment avenues.

Despite the growing awareness of financial independence among women, only 33% take their own investment decisions, compared with 64% men.

Women tend to save in more traditional avenues like gold and fixed deposits, but the growing need to invest smartly with increasing inflation rates is moving women towards wanting to invest in new avenues.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Taking charge of your finances cannot be an overnight exercise. There is always a learning curve involved. Become financially literate so that you are capable of handling your finances. Read regularly to understand various investment avenues — follow a few financial blogs, perhaps even take a financial management course. A good place to start is the learning modules on the Basis app.

EXPENSE MANAGEMENT

You know how much you make but do you know how much you are saving? Get involved in your expense management — discuss these with your spouse or parent. Take a hard look at your expenses. You may find unnecessary and avoidable costs, which you might realise by paying closer attention. Once you know how much you have every month

to invest, you can allocate investments accordingly.

ACCESS, ASSESS AND ANALYSE

To know where you have to reach the first step is to understand where you currently stand.

Access: From net banking IDs to Demat IDs and passwords, list down all the places your money is currently invested. It can be across banks, across Demat accounts, and even across Asset Management Companies (AMCs). Vault all your IDs and passwords securely, tools for this very purpose are also available now.

Assess: If your parents or spouse have this organised, it's a plus. But if not, then get down to assessing your portfolio. Call in for bank statements for account balances and deposit balances.

Analyse: Analyse your current portfolio. Categorise your investments and ask yourself these questions — do you have diversified investments? Or do you have several overlapping investments in similar instruments?

GOAL SETTING

Identify your financial goals. If you are married, discuss common goals with your spouse — buying a car, a house, funding for children's education, and retirement, to name a few. But also make sure to incorporate your personal goals — travel, further education, or maybe even planning for a sabbatical or other personal aspirations. Map these with your existing investments.

INVEST FOR YOUR GOALS

Goal mapping is the crucial step to chalk out a financial roadmap, which may involve rebalancing your portfolio. Do not hesitate to consult a financial planner if you find yourself getting overwhelmed. Once you have a financial roadmap in place, set up your investments, including any standing instructions to your bank or mutual fund house.

REVISIT

Investments, especially long-term ones, are something we should keep track of with a knowledge-based approach rather than sentiment-driven actions, but you must not lose sight of your finances. Be current with your knowledge of the market scenario to take advantage of any lucrative investment opportunities. Any change in income, significant expenses, or goals should also be incorporated in your financial roadmap.

Earning money is one part, but managing your earned money is what can make you truly financially empowered and independent. So, ladies, roll up your sleeves and gear up to take charge of your finances!



WOMEN TEND TO SAVE IN MORE TRADITIONAL AVENUES LIKE GOLD AND FIXED DEPOSITS, BUT THE GROWING NEED TO INVEST SMARTLY WITH INCREASING INFLATION RATES IS MOVING WOMEN TOWARDS WANTING TO INVEST IN NEW AVENUES



POLICIES THAT AFFECT YOU

Once you know about how to go about savings, you need to know about the laws that affect you. This means staying on top of policies and regulation around taxation and investing.

Tax Regime: One way your money could be affected was through the government's proposal to introduce a new optional tax regime without exemptions and deductions. This will adversely affect the savings in India. In the 2020-21 Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman provided an option to personal income tax payers to remain in either the existing tax scheme with exemptions and deductions or opt for a new simplified tax regime with lower tax rates but without exemptions and deductions.

What this means is that, you could either choose to save and invest as you had been doing before, or move to a flat structure that doesn't entail your ₹15 lakh deduction under 80C, but in turn, you get to pay a lower tax bracket.

Under the new tax proposal, people with an annual income of up to ₹2.5 lakh will not have to pay any tax. For income brackets between ₹2.5 lakh to ₹5 lakh, the tax rate is 5 per cent.

Further, those with an income of ₹5 lakh to ₹7.5 lakh will have to pay a reduced tax rate of 10 per cent; between ₹7.5 lakh and ₹10 lakh 15 per cent; between ₹10 lakh and ₹12.5 lakh 20 per cent; between ₹12.5 lakh and ₹15 lakh 25 per cent; and above ₹15 lakh 30 per cent.

GOVERNMENT SOPS

We all know that the current situation has been difficult for all of us. With this, also came a few financial changes and the government. SoPs that affect your money. Knowing about the latest government facilities available, can help you plan and execute your savings better.

The Income tax filing deadline: The income tax filing deadline which was earlier July 31st, 2020 had been postponed to November 30th, 2020.

FDs and PPF: PPF rates have been cut from 7.9% to 7.1%. FD rates have fallen to 5.5% too. The interest gained on these is likely to be negligible with rates expected to fall further. This is most likely to affect senior citizens who depend on these schemes. We recommend taking another look at your portfolio and investing in mutual funds.

EMI Moratorium: All term loans — home loans, personal loans, education loans etc, including credit card payees, can avail a three month deferment starting March 2020. For those under financial duress, this can help relieve some pressure. However, if you

can afford to continue paying them, please do so to avoid the interest piling up cumulatively. Remember that the moratorium does not apply to the interest on your loans.

EPF Contribution: According to the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Package, the EPF contribution requirement has been reduced to 10% of your basic and dearness allowance as opposed to 12% — for three months starting May. It simply means an increase in your in-hand salary. Do note that this increase is now taxable. If you want to continue contributing your 12%, you could do so but your employer will be contributing as per the new directive.

TCS & TDS Reduction: There has been a 25% reduction in both TDS and TCS applicable till March 31st March 2021. For a lot of non salaried individuals, this move helps increase spending power substantially. If you want to avail this service, you will be asked to furnish your Aadhar and PAN card details when you raise an invoice.

SELECT GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Several financial institutions have introduced schemes to power the woman entrepreneur. I've highlighted a couple of them here:

Stree Shakti Package For Women Entrepreneurs: This scheme, run by SBI, is for women who own the majority of a small business (>50%), and whose business is registered with the Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP). The scheme allows a concession of 0.05 per cent on the interest on loans that are greater than ₹2 lakh.

Mahila Udyam Nidhi Scheme: If you're a woman looking to set up a small venture, this scheme offered by Punjab National Bank and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) can give you a loan of ₹10 lakh for 10 years, with a 5 year moratorium. Interest rates depend on market rates.

IN CONCLUSION

Historically, men have been the owners of wealth, and by extension, the financial decision-makers. However, gender roles are becoming outdated, including roles related to money.

As women, we live longer than men, face the gender pay gap at work and have higher healthcare costs — and hence need to prudently plan and understand our finances. The good news is that the desire to become financially independent is strong.

The real question is whether this financially independent woman has the resources to manage her money wisely. Let's roll up our sleeves, unite and take charge of our financial destinies.

The writer is CEO and founder, Basis



FORGIVENESS IS A FUNNY THING. IT WARMS THE HEART AND COOLS THE STING
— WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD



HIDDEN SOULS
PRAMOD PATHAK

Open the eye and shut the I



Human beings are strange creatures. Strange because they are driven by a formless entity called ego. It was this ego that was the undoing of many a mighty kings in the past. The legend goes that when Lord Ram reached Ayodhya after killing Ravana, many residents asked in dismay how could Ram slay mighty Ravana. Ram's cryptic reply was that he did not kill Ravana. It was the 'I' that killed Ravana. It is because of this ego that human beings have acquired a unique trait that can be expressed in many forms of behavior. From rationalisation to ideological excuses to justifications there are many ways in which these ego defense mechanisms unfold. It is the ego that gives the human beings the illusion of invulnerable status leading to primacy of self-aggrandisement. The author historian Barbara Tuchman has tried to bring out this basic aspect of human character in the classic literary work *The March of Folly* written over three decades ago. Human beings have hardly learnt a lesson from their follies all the way from Troy to Vietnam and perhaps even in the present Corona pandemic. This is the one weakness that leads to most problems of humanity. It explains why human beings jostle with one another to take out their cabin baggage from the overhead bin, even as the plane is about to crash. Where do they want to carry their cabin baggage is intriguing. Let go is the mantra that every one chants but letting go is the difficulty that most fail to overcome. Contexts keep on changing but human character remains fairly stable. Why humans acquire a myopic vision is a question of attitude hard to view but how this attitude influences behavior is a common sight. Unless human beings open their eyes and shut that capital I, no great learning is possible. Coming to the question of the Corona pandemic, several assertions and assumptions are doing the rounds these days suggesting that human character is going to change this time. Let us wait and see for one more time. Chances, however, seem bleak. Pandemics have been attacking humanity since ages. The Biblical mention of plague or the plague of Athens were early references. Many more have appeared periodically killing millions. The earlier schools of opinion attributed these catastrophic incidents to God's curse for humanity going astray. A correction for moral pollution. Even today there may be a few similar views. But who cares. It is naive to believe that humans are going to buy the proposition and mend ways. If we closely observe how things have been shaping up from the initial phases of the pandemic to the present times we should have no pretensions. Many see the pandemic as an opportunity. Opportunity to flaunt their egos. To play the Messiah, the grand saviour even as misery comes to the share of many. The poor, the meek and the vulnerable were reeling under the crisis but the affluent and the powerful found better things to do. Many thought it was time to change the world, failing to realise it already has. And not because of them. But that is human nature. Difficult to say if it is a curse for sinning or an opportunity for winning. Nevertheless, commerce continues to drive and thrive. Human nature doesn't change that easily. Even God knows this. But He continues trying. After all, it is His creation.

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SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH GIVING

Spiritual development means inculcating higher values of life. This means watching our thoughts, words and deeds so that we think, speak and act ethically. Leading a spiritual life is a combination of meditating to find God within while leading an ethical life without. It is said that an ethical life is a stepping-stone to spirituality. Ethical living entails developing qualities among which include: non-violence, humility, love for all, and selfless service.

When we lead a life of serving with a kind and patient attitude, we not only inspire those with whom we work, but those who are not leading a spiritual life will notice our patient and kind qualities. Others who are curious or strongly interested in spirituality will notice something about us. They will see that we are calm and collected. They will notice that we face life's challenges with non-violence, love and humility. They will also observe that we give freely of ourselves selflessly.

These qualities will attract others who wish also to lead such a life. Thus, it is important that we be examples and model spiritual values in our everyday lives.

Selfless service strengthens our spiritual development. Our words and actions arise from our thoughts. If we have thoughts in which we want to help others, then that will cause our words and actions to reflect that. If we are going to talk of the need for selfless service, we must be practicing it ourselves. Let us serve selflessly and be an example, rather than tell everyone else how to serve or criticise how he or she serves. Let us inculcate the truest type of selfless service in our lives.

Meditation can also help us because as we sit in silence and go within, we see the same Light of God that is in us in all other people. We realise that we are all part of one family of God. We realise all souls are part of one team — God's team. We are all connected. Thus, if any one of us is in trouble, we are all in trouble. If any one of us is hurting, we are all hurting. If any one of us is losing, we are all losing. Rather than losing, we all should be winning. If we have the gifts to be a winner, then by helping others become winners, all of us win, and we become the true winners.

We also realise that no matter how different our backgrounds are, we are all one family of God. This attitude of loving and accepting people who are different from us is one of the fundamental keys to selfless service.

The writer is a spiritual leader

POWER OF SELFLESS SERVICE

Selfless service is not only a job or task to be done; it is an act of healing, of opening hearts and of radiating love, writes SANT RAJINDER SINGH



One of the greatest things a human being can do is to serve others. The truest form of selfless service is when we give without wanting anything in return. That is the spirit in which we should give. This means that we do not broadcast to others what we do to receive adulation, praise, power, or name and fame. Rather, we serve from our heart and soul in the spirit of helping others because it is the right thing to do as children of the all-giving Creator. This attitude has the power to heal.

Selfless service is not only a job or task to be done; it is an act of healing, of opening hearts and of radiating love. It is an immeasurable gift that spreads love and healing wherever we go. The heart of the giver is soothed, healed and filled with love. The giving also heals the hearts of the recipients, opening their eyes to the humanity of others.

We never lose when we give. Many times in life, we may have experienced an opportunity to give something to someone in need, making a

sacrifice, only to find that it was either returned to us or circumstances changed, and we did not need to give it away. Yet, we were rewarded with the feeling of satisfaction of having sacrificed for others. We feel God's blessings showering down upon us. We thank God that we choose to give rather than to be selfish.

If we are selfish, we often find ourselves filled with remorse and regret. We always feel sorry that we did not give. However, one never regrets or feels sorry for giving. There is no greater joy that can fill our heart than giving. All those who have ever given selflessly would have experienced that one never loses when one gives. They find more and more blessings raining down upon them unasked for, and their heart is filled with godly love.

GIVE FROM THE SOUL

How many times do we only do acts of goodness when we want to impress others? Do we find that in our offices we speak humbly and kindly to our boss, but sorely abuse our co-workers or subordinates?

SELFLESS SERVICE STRENGTHENS OUR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT. OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS ARISE FROM OUR THOUGHTS. IF WE HAVE THOUGHTS IN WHICH WE WANT TO HELP OTHERS, THEN THAT WILL CAUSE OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS TO REFLECT THAT

How many of us give only when we are on display for others to see how generous we are, yet in the loneliness of a street we walk cold-heartedly past a beggar?

Let us give from our soul. Our mind gives for selfish reasons. It wants praise from others. It wants respect from others. It wants to make a grand show of how kind and loving it is, when, in reality, it is self-serving. Soul gives for the sake of giving. Soul gives out of a sincere desire to help others and wants nothing in return. It does not even wish to be known for what it has done. When the soul gives, it is the God within us giving. Just as God does not want anything in return for all its wondrous gifts of creation bestowed on all forms of life, so does the soul give selflessly.

When we want to be in tune with God, then let us give from the soul, selflessly, lovingly, without any show, and without any thought of return. We only want to serve and relieve the suffering of others. That is giving from the soul and has the power to heal others.

Krishna's concept of sacrifice

Krishna's teachings in Bhagavad Gita stand testimony to the fact as to how he views certain age-old ideals of the Indian society, writes Dr ASHA GOSWAMI

In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna refers to many ideologies and concepts which were prevailing in his days and practiced by the people at large. These also formed part and parcel of their social structure. Krishna's Gita stands as a testimony of the fact as to how far he views those age-old ideals of the Indian society.

To save people from the ill effects of age old notions like sacrifice [Yajna], Krishna through his teachings not only re-set those rituals in new forms but also assigned new meanings and format to those ideals and notions. Sacrifice or Yajna is such an ancient ideology and rituals of the vedic age which was being persistently taken by the people in the same traditional sense of the Vedas and since then being treated as a rite or ritual in which oblations [ahutis] of material things like grains, butter etc, are poured in the sacred fire. To bring this notion of sacrifice to the level of his era, he firstly treated the term sacrifice in different perspective.

For instance, first of all by treating it as synonymous with some valuable social act, he treated each persons life itself as a strata of Yajna or sacrifice on earth. Next, he reworked the same ideal on new levels which were relevant to the social strata of his times. For, in Gita, Krishna teaches that "Know you life itself as a sacred Yajna or sacrifice your activities in life which bring about social upliftment and harmony in the society also serve as a sort of sacrifice and Yajna on your part". Such a type of implication of Yajna in Gita be compared with the meaning of its English equivalent term sacrifice which means a sacred act. Even the vedic statement "Purusho vai Yajnah" seems to be in agreement with Krishna's aforesaid view on Yajna, when he says "that man himself is a Yajna, and maintains that every activity in man's life is a libation (oblation) or ahuti offered to the eternal world circle or sacrifice of the God in the form of world



process. It is found that in the 17th Chapter of Gita while referring to the threefold day to day's sacred acts of man such as "daan, tapa and Yajna", Krishna seems to teach the mankind the true perspective of the term Yajna when he states that performance of every act in life in the sense of true worship to god is sacrifice. In other words, his view on sacrifice be expressed that "all acts done in the spirit of worship to god are infact the sacrifice offered to the god."

Krishna's other perspective on Yajna be understood as he says "act of sharing with others whatever one has in excess" on the part of a man is also a Yajna, which is also named as Daana" in the Gita. The same according to Krishna, also constitutes the essence of social service by way of serving the society. In this manner such a kind of Yajna be termed as one of the daily routine-activities. Krishna's other perspective on the notion of sacrifice be traced from his statement in the Gita when he asserts that every activity of mankind if performed as worship to God, itself amounts to a Yajna or sacrifice, provided such acts also turn out to be beneficial for the society and not be harmful

to anyone. Such acts are further applauded by Krishna acclaiming that the same acts never bind the doer with the effects/results. While, on the other hand the acts other than which are done with the spirit of sacrifice or worship, but are obligatory to the doer bind him to their results.

Hence, it may be ascertained that while weaving new ideologies around the age old notions as the vedic notion Yajna, Shri Krishna through Gita however retains the traditional meanings of the term. For instance when Krishna very clearly maintains "That the Yajna is Kamadhenu or wish yielding Act in the world, and further explaining this parable of Yajna as the wish-yielding cow Kamadhenu, he says that" Yajna or sacrifice as ritualistic act yields rain, which yields food and through food all the creatures in this world retain their lives or Pranas". In such manner, Krishna rediscovers for the coming generations, the new essentials of the age-old ideologies as well as the old religious practices in India by rendering new dimensions to them.

The writer is a noted Indologist and authority on Krishnaitic Studies

Quit living in denial

God is omnipresent and omniscient. It is time that we woke up to the reality of God being very much in the picture, says AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Are we not living in denial of the rightful owner of the creation? I am not going into the controversy of what one is, that is faithful, atheist, agnostic, ignorant, etc. Whatever one maybe, it is time that we woke up to the reality of God being very much in the picture. How can we not do that when we are aware of Him being omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient? These are not some loose adjectives like we use for someone we love very much. I am also not referring to some landlord, who has rented his property to us, because that landlord's ownership is limited by time, either by change of ownership in his lifetime or his death. This ownership of God of the creation is permanent.

And He has entrusted the mankind to exploit it in a proper way for the benefit of all its inhabitants, which include animals, birds, etc. And what have we done? We are indiscriminately cutting forests. Why? We need more land to grow grains. Don't we have enough to feed the humanity? We do but we prefer to eat meat! All excuses about nutritional advantages of eating meat are highly exaggerated.

Cutting/burning forests has harmed the ecosystem in a very serious way. Wild animals, who live there, have been displaced. We did not stop there, we began eating them as if the meats available to us were not enough. So what happened? Dangerous viruses, who live in these animals, came into human beings. God could have prevented their spread like He did with SARS-COV, but humans just considered themselves lucky; they did not learn any lessons. God had enough by now. Therefore, He allowed the spread of Coronavirus, and the whole world is struggling now. Who can we blame for it? This insatiable desire for luxurious living, which does



not respect any limits is an affront to the Master of the universe. We have definitely harmed our cause vis-à-vis God. Just imagine a tenant, who does not take care of the rented property, rather causes damage to it. How will the owner of the property feel? I am sure he will be quite mad. God is not like us human beings given to extreme emotions, but our large scale mistreating animals, birds etc., who are souls just like us, has definitely displeased the Lord. These lower species have also right over the land, which is given to us.

It is not wise to venture an opinion where God is involved, but whatever I can see there is a solution on the personal level not world-wise just now. This solution entails many changes in the way we live, think, etc. These changes are on three levels. The first is about our behaviour. As human beings, we are expected to behave well generally and we know what that means. We must be more relaxed too; being super-active is not human-like behaviour. This has enormous health benefits, as we have experienced recently. We should turn

vegetarian as much as possible. There should be better civic sense. Not only should we protect ourselves but ensure that we don't pass on our infections to others. Better social distancing will ensure that. Obviously, we must practice better hygiene to avoid infections; all necessary precautions must be taken.

The next two levels relate to personal immunity and getting protection from God. Personal immunity will come from improvement in general health both physical and mental, the later with help from God. And protection from God is ensured when we take His shelter. All these are not too difficult to practice, if we set our minds on them. Not only will we be able to face the immediate threat but we will be better prepared for future challenges as well, which will definitely come. Finally, I am not going to second-guess God, that is, what He is likely to do next, but I have a lot of hope of securing myself, my family and those around me, if I follow what has been suggested.

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A weak ASEAN can't save South China Sea

Beijing's belligerence is on the rise all around, whether it is unleashing a new terror regime in the name of "national security" in Hong Kong, the attempts to encroach on Indian land along the border or the bid to usurp the sea lines of communication in the South China Sea. However, the Xi Jinping regime listens to stiff challenges to its hegemony, as seen in the steady disengagement at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India after New Delhi stuck to its guns to secure its sovereign right on its land. Nevertheless, the brutality of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in Gulwan, in contravention of the bilateral agreement, has weakened the India-China ties revived in 1988.

The South China Sea has witnessed the latest round of aggression from mainland China. Its plan to encircle the island chain with a new network of security has hogged the limelight.

What does all this signify? Xi's authoritarian streak is reassertion of his power and authority. The SCS is a contested territory. Recent developments indicate that China is planning to develop an Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) around the Spratly, Paracel and Pratas islands in the SCS. An ADIZ is a zone of airspace over land or sea in which the identification, location and control of aircraft are performed by a country in the interest of its national interest. Records in the past indicate that China had unilaterally declared an ADZ over the contested East China Sea in 2003 when Hu Jintao was in power. Hu, who preached the doctrine of "Peaceful Rise" of his country, had even walked on the same path as pursued by his predecessors.

When Xi took over from him in 2012, he wanted China to materialise "China Dream" with national rejuvenation, Belt and Road Initiative, and expanding China's debt trap all around the world. Indeed, he has clearly delineated China's imperial designs by displaying the country's total disregard for a rule-based international system. The SCS, which covers critical sea lines of communication, is today gradually moving under China's red regime. This international territorial dispute involves mainly six



In this photo provided by US Navy, an F/A-18E Super Hornet lands on the flight deck of the USS Ronald Reagan as USS Nimitz steams alongside in the South China Sea on July 6, 2020

AP

claimants: Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. But Beijing says it has full claim over all the islands chain.

Why the international community is seriously disturbed at present with the prevailing situation in the SCS? The main problem is that of China's hidden designs to turn the whole set of islands into a part of its sovereign territory. In the recent months, Beijing has intensified its activities in the region. In the beginning of April, a Vietnamese fishing boat was rammed and sunk by a Chinese coast guard ship in and around the Paracel Islands. Interestingly this incident took place only after Hanoi sent a diplomatic note to the UN protesting China's historic "Nine Dash Line" claim over the SCS at the end of March. In fact, Vietnam has been the most vocal critic of China in regard to its activities and claims over the SCS. It has been in the news that Hanoi might consider pursuing an interna-

tional legal course against Beijing the way it was done by Manila in 2016. That year the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the International Court of Justice at the Hague in the Netherlands had ruled that China had no historic claim over the waters of the SCS. As per the ruling of the tribunal, China's claim to rights of the water bodies of the SCS is contrary to the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It must be mentioned here that only the UNCLOS can determine which countries can claim economic exploitation rights, based entirely on geographic features. Therefore, the international tribunal rejected China's maritime claims in the light of its "Nine Dash Line" over these areas. And the court said that China's claim has no basis in international law.

But in complete disregard for the international laws, China rejected this ruling, by calling it "ill-founded". And Beijing advocated that the tri-

bunal had no right to decide on the matter. Thus China, despite being a member of the ICJ, even refused to accept the SCS Arbitration Award issued by the Court at the Hague.

China's actions in the SCS are contributed to weakening of the international laws in the sea. It's for the first time in the 1990s, a Code of Conduct (COC) in the SCS was raised by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). But only in 2002, at a gathering of the Foreign Ministers from the ASEAN and China in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, a COC in the SCS was mandated by a declaration amid heightened tensions in the area. Therefore, the COC is based on a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the SCS signed by China and 10 ASEAN nations in the same year. This area has one of the world's most crucial shipping lanes which are supposed to be rich in both marine and mineral resources. Therefore, the area attracts strong contestation

from the nations in and around it. But the problem in evolving such a code is mainly due to differences between the ASEAN and Beijing. It has been argued that the COC can never be an instrument to settle territorial disputes. Its framework is more symbolic than substantive.

Moreover, as the Covid-19 disrupts the normal life, the ASEAN nations are looking for more time to finally shape the COC. In fact, in 2019, a three-year timeline was drawn at the 22nd ASEAN and China summit held in Manila in 2019. This time frame was proposed by China only. But then how does this COC can reduce the current tensions between China and the rest of the claimant nations. Precisely, the COC is a legally binding document that will be able to manage how countries act within the SCS despite disputing territorial claims. Even earlier, China was softening its stand on certain provisions of the COC. These included pro-

visions on the Western military presence and continued oil and gas exploration activities in the entire zone. But today working on a deadline to implement the COC seems difficult even by 2022 because of China's belligerence and the current pandemic.

What has taken place on July 13 has again brought to light the entire debate of the SCS to the forefront. The US on this day officially dismissed China's claims to offshore resources across the SCS as completely unlawful. US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo issued a statement clarifying America's position on maritime claims on the SCS saying that China has no legal ground to impose its will on the region. Besides, Washington has currently aligned its position on the ruling declared by the International Court in 2016. Pompeo said, "The world will not allow Beijing to treat the SCS as its maritime empire. America stands with our Southeast Asian allies and part-

ners in protecting their sovereign rights to offshore resources, consistent with their rights and obligations under international law." Beijing must understand how an America-led coalition can act against its arrogance in the SCS.

The core issue at the centre is the international pressure on China that has been inconsistent so far. It's not only America and Japan's interest, the rest of the powerful nations such as India, Australia, Singapore, etc, in the Asia-Pacific must chalk out joint strategies to counter any Chinese expansionist moves across the international sea lines of communication. Taking full advantage of the periods of neglect from the international community, China has quietly built up its structures in the SCS.

The best possible way is to remind and pressurise China to obey international laws in the sea. And for the US, and the rest of the nations concerned, it is clear that China has taken the entire SCS in its control. Hence, countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan need to assert their maritime rights time and again in all the contested zones.

If China is to rise peacefully, it is bound to respect international law. Crafting an Asian order with a Chinese leadership has thus all its pitfalls. Its opaque, authoritarian and aggressive posture will disturb peace and tranquility in the Asian continent. Trusting China will be a serious mistake. Its constant incursions, including salami-slice strategy, have become a serious threat for neighbouring nations like India. Despite having robust diplomatic understanding and agreed code of conduct to maintain stability on the LAC, the recent Chinese brutality towards Indian security forces in the Galwan Valley once again offers the international community to build up a democratic will to force this nation to respect territorial integrity of other nations.

Henceforth, in the light of China's muscle flexing, a US-led coalition must work relentlessly to maintain freedom of navigation and peace in the troubled waters of the SCS.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)

It is clear that China has not taken the entire SCS in its control. Hence, countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan need to assert their maritime rights time and again in all the contested zones



MAKHAN SAINIK

PERSPECTIVE

Futility of chasing global rankings of universities

Aspiring for a high position in the global rankings can do more harm than good as several parameters are just a facade. For example, one of the criteria is the number of foreign faculty members, without actually assessing their calibre. Also, the ranking parameters and their values are not determined by the national planner but are outsourced to an international agency that is seeking profits

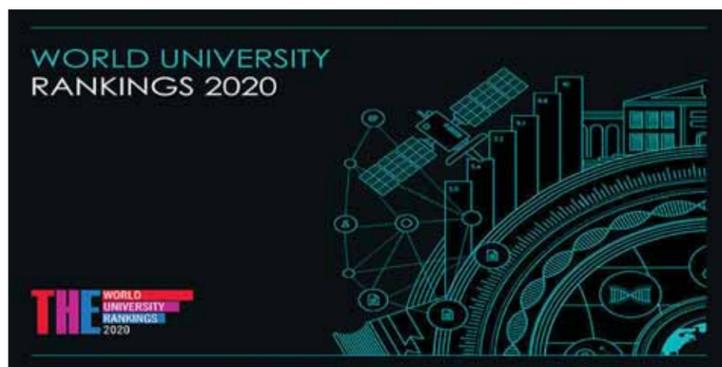
Global rankings of universities/academic institutes are a relatively new phenomenon. Government authorities and academia have been concerned regarding the fact that no academic institute in India is ranked high. Accordingly, the Government of India in general and the HRD Ministry in particular are making efforts to provide additional funds and autonomy to select Indian academic institutes in the hope that these will enable them to rise in the global rankings. While this is not an undesirable goal, there is need for caution. Chasing global rankings can do more harm than good as the parameters used to determine the position of academic institutes in the global rankings can induce perverse incentives.

For instance, an important parameter used by the global rankings is the number of foreign faculty an academic institute has on its rolls. This criterion makes several assumptions which may be false. It assumes that if an academic institute is able to attract faculty from abroad then the academic institute must be good and must be making academic appointments on merit. It also errs in assuming that all foreign faculty members are at least of a certain minimum calibre. In fact, the parameter used for the global rankings takes into account only the number of foreign faculty with complete disregard for their calibre. So a

university can score well on this parameter by simply hiring a large number of foreign faculty members of low caliber. In fact, a university may be academically so weak that it cannot attract any foreign faculty of high caliber. But to score well on this parameter, the university may hire whatever foreign faculty is available and ignore better faculty available nationally. This is not merely a theoretical possibility, it is actually happening at some Indian universities that are aiming for a high global rank.

Another important parameter is research publications. A high global ranking requires faculty members of an academic institute to publish at least 150 papers a year in Scopus journals. However, the Scopus journals include a wide variety of journals, ranging from very low to very high quality. To meet this criterion, the vice-chancellor of a university is alleged to have advised his faculty members to aim at publishing in the low-quality Scopus journals as it is easy to publish in them whereas publishing in the high-quality Scopus journals is difficult and may take longer. Thus, the criterion, however well intended, may actually induce incentives to produce low-quality research papers in large numbers which do not really raise the academic stature of a university.

A simple example, that is not concerning academic insti-



tutes however, may help understand the issue better. It is said that there was a Government-owned glass factory near Moscow that had the capacity to produce 80 per cent of the glass sheets needed in the economy. In the heydays of central planning, performance of this factory was measured in terms of tons of glass sheets produced by the factory. To score well on this parameter, the factory produced only thick glass sheets and no thin glass sheets as the latter took longer to produce and contributed less to the tonnage. This led to shortages of thin glass sheets in the economy. To address the problem the central planner changed the criterion. The performance of the factory, from then on, was to be measured by the square feet of glass sheets produced. But the factory then

stopped producing thick glass sheets and instead started to produce only thin glass sheets as they contributed more to the square feet and used less molten glass. Soon there were shortages of thick glass sheets; more square feet but fewer tonnes of glass sheets were produced. Thus, instead of making efforts to meet needs of the economy for various types of glass sheets, gaming the parameters became the main goal of the factory.

Besides, some parameters used for global rankings even if not gamed could be simply misleading. One such parameter is the student-faculty ratio. A low student-faculty ratio is assumed to indicate a healthy teaching environment. This assumption too can be false as the ratio is determined simply by the total number of students

divided by the total number of faculty members with complete disregard for the quality of either the students or the faculty. Thus, a university may score well on this criterion even if most of its faculty has little or no teaching experience but is large in numbers. Moreover, the student-faculty ratio in a university can be low even if it is very high for its undergraduate programmes and, by default, very low for its graduate programmes, because the university is unable to attract many students for its graduate programmes. As we know, averages can hide extremes.

In sum, asking academic institutes to chase global rankings is not very different from central planning. A model that has repeatedly failed worldwide. In fact, it is worse than central planning because the

ranking parameters and their values are not determined by the national planner but are outsourced to an international agency that is seeking profits. In any case, all but a couple of parameters used for global rankings can be gamed and have similar flaws as those discussed above. Seven leading IITs have rightly questioned the parameters used for the global rankings.

The global rankings also do not take into account the quality of governance in academic institutes and thereby miss the wood for trees. Most reputed academic institutes are least hierarchical and believe in transparent and participatory decision-making processes. In contrast, the vice-chancellor of a university may concentrate all decision-making powers in his/her hands such that no faculty member would dare to question decisions taken by him unilaterally. Such universities may encourage blatant cronyism. This is especially true in the case of some private universities in India which practise easy hiring and firing policies. Yet, both because the quality of governance is not taken into account and flawed parameters are used for the global rankings, such badly governed universities can also aspire for a high global rank.

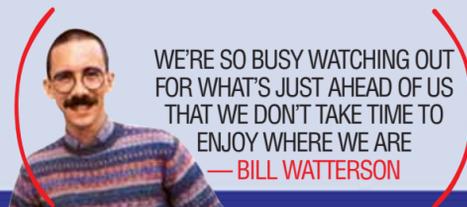
In sum, asking Indian academic institutes generally to chase global rankings as a pri-

mary target is not the right way to incentivise them to raise their global profile, because that, as noted above, may lead to perverse incentives. Due to lack of appropriate incentives and good governance, the role of many Indian universities has diminished to conducting examinations and awarding degrees. This certainly needs to change. But in order to bring meaningful change, instead of chasing global rankings, the emphasis should be on cultivating a culture and tradition of innovation and high-quality research and teaching, as some internationally reputed Indian and foreign academic institutes actually do without bothering about their global rankings. Indeed, many academic institutes became internationally reputed much before global rankings of universities were invented and practised. Even now most of the top-ranking universities actually do not participate in the process of global rankings, but they are still assigned ranks to give credibility to the global rankings and make them appear universal. It is only the less reputed universities that are willing to pay heavy fees for participating in the process of global rankings, as they see it as an easy and quick path to fame that can be monetised.

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PARKASH CHANDER

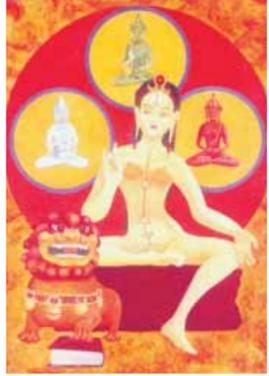


YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19
 This week there are strong chances of you catching seasonal ailments. If you feel that something is amiss with your body, follow through your concern. Stay away from fast colours. Light pastel colours are good for you. Meditate when you get the time and stay as close to natural. Your exceptional sense of cooperation and bonding with people at workplace will be your valuable asset. You will progress by leaps and bounds, provided you talk to your boss about your findings. This week you may be dealing with some conflict at home. If you're looking for love, you may need to behave with a great deal of humility with your partner. You are filled with great mental and physical energy this week. Allow your partner to have his or her space.
Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Tuesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22
 There is a need to bring positive changes to your lifestyle for good health. Make sure you are not doing too many things at a time. Anger, aggression and hyper actions could affect your health. You could bring remarkable changes in personal life by correcting yourself in certain matters. Check your diet, exercise and working hours. On the work front, you are practical in your approach and very hard working. Determination and courage will be applied to all your endeavours. Results may be slow in coming but you will hold your own. You may need a boost to attain your goals. Engage with your partner through art, music and entertainment. Your final decision matters a lot to someone. Express your confirmation or rejection. Present a gift to someone you love.
Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Wednesday



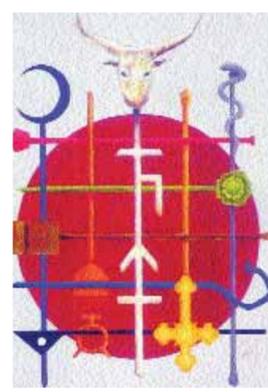
SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21
 You are feeling stuck or restricted in your life. You need to get in touch with why you are feeling this way, and work to release yourself from these restrictions. Your health could be affected if you are not open and expressive. Learn to express yourself, share your sorrow and happiness to maintain equilibrium. More than physical, mental peace is required at this time. On the work front, things are not as good as you might have expected this week. If you are willing to put yourself in limelight, you might feel cheated. Some other person will take the credit of your hard work. Beware of insecure and overly suspicious people. On the relationship front, this is a fairly good week which has happiness, laughter and sharing time with loved ones.
Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20
 Keeping your stress level manageable is a must to stay in good health. Deal with any problems that come up physically. Ensure proper rest and avoid alcohol or intoxication. If you need healing, ask for it on both the literal and the spiritual planes. Professionally, if you work emotionally, things may not turn out well for you this week. You need to take some firm decisions on certain matters. Financial matters should be dealt with extra precautions. Those looking for a job, a female in your life will lend you support and come to your aid. Your energy and confidence will increase dramatically. This week some impulsive decisions could make your relations complicated. Be careful as you may be swept off your feet.
Lucky number 28
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Saturday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22
 This week health may be affected, so sleep well and take adequate rest. Be open to spiritual healing, but if you are struggling with a serious illness, know that a cure is not always equated with healing. You may require some therapy or surgery. Professionally, you will be able to make a mark this week. You will be confident of your choices and decisions. A fortunate outcome is indicated whatever you do or start at this time. Your skills and potentials will be duly recognised. Relations will be supportive and you will have new feelings and new hopes. You are not serious in life and commitments are a pain for you. Don't let your desire for an easy-going life make you overlook the real and deep love that may come your way.
Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Mustard
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19
 You have been thinking about bringing a major change in your life. Something is stirring within you. There is a feeling of dissatisfaction in life. Improve your life by bringing more spirituality and fantasy into the picture. Moderation is the key to good health. Professionally, ensure that your day-to-day affairs are in order. If not, there is a need for good time management and financial management. Check your expenditure/investments. It may sound tedious having to focus your attention on these mundane issues but these are fundamentals which pave the way for success in career. Increasing domestic requirements could affect the quality of your work. Look at life more joyfully. You will spend time on entertainment and celebrating life.
Lucky number 30
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Saturday



GEMINI May 21-June 20
 Those of you who have not been feeling well recently, will feel a surge of good health. Consider alternate therapy, you may benefit greatly from it. This is an excellent time for you to undertake some form of spiritual study, that you may have thought about in the past. On the professional front, you need to keep your eyes open for opportunities. The energy of the week is not favourable. You may feel stressed over minor details or the job you do and the recognition you get for it. Prioritise your work and give great attention to your responsibilities to benefit from the situation. Relationship area requires your attention. You need to turn your world around and view your situation from a different perspective.
Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Maroon
Lucky day Wednesday



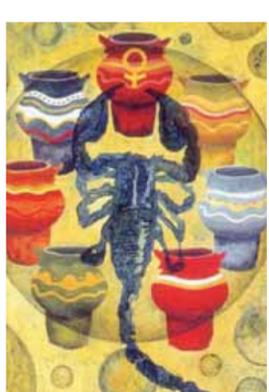
LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22
 This week the health is good. You have the confidence and present yourself as strong, vibrant and persevering. Things will get better with the warmth and care of your loved ones. Don't push yourself too hard. Withdraw for a moment and take a break to restore your energy. The week has in store some negative energy on the work front. Your job and professional responsibilities may be at standstill at this time. You may face suspension or lay off which is disheartening to you since the company you are working with has changed its strategy. Instead of feeling stuck or restricted in life, think of other ways to earn a livelihood. There is a need for balance in other important areas of life such as family, friends and relatives. If you are already in a relationship, it's about to get a new meaning.
Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18
 This week energy and stamina will be outstanding. You have confidence in yourself and present yourself as strong. Everything seems to get better than what it was earlier. New opportunity on the job front will arrive this week. This is the time to have a broader vision and an open mind. Discussing your career with a professional will be helpful for you at this time. Update your knowledge and current happenings in the technology and other fields. On the personal front, you may get occupied in something new and even more exciting and inspiring. You can look forward to the rapid completion of a relationship. There is no stopping you right now as you are full of energy and enthusiasm to move quickly.
Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Thursday



CANCER June 21-July 22
 A balanced lifestyle is the first step towards healthy living. What you eat, how much you eat and sleep matters a lot. Take time out for entertainment and physical activities for rejuvenation and to gain energy. Money can't always buy what we want from our life. Positive attitude plays an important role too. On the career front, this week is favourable. You will want to reach out to people. Interactions and understanding will play a major role in keeping you on the move. You may feel the need to be liberated from certain restrictions and spread your wings and experience freedom that your heart desires. For some of you, traditions and family are important at this time. Those married will seek the advice of their seniors.
Lucky number 25
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Sunday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21
 You tend to lose your temper fast and land in heated arguments. Your doctor may order tests to address your health concerns. Deepen your spiritual awareness and practice. Try something new — even reading that you do for yourself can sometimes offer new clarity. Active meditations will be useful. Your job or professional responsibilities will move at a breakneck speed. Some obstacles are seen that could hamper your growth. The position you were aspiring for may not fall in your kitty. Work could be a challenge for you. The power of your words is stronger than action. This could make your relations complicated. Stay grounded and enjoy the energy of the day. Work with your heart than mind, and be flexible in your approach with the loved ones.
Lucky number 19
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20
 Health needs attention. Get clinically examined. Take second or third opinion in case there is confusion in diagnosis. Take rest to bring stability back into your life. Take a quick decision, if you have to undergo treatment. On the career front, you are highly action-oriented and are feeling incredibly inspired and enthusiastic about pursuing a new idea or a project that you have in mind. Use your creative energy and passion to take the first steps and get this project underway. Under your leadership, the people will feel inspired. On the personal front, create a safe and trusting environment, instead of getting emotional on small issues. Allow some space to others. Being tolerant of their needs will help you win favours for yourself.
Lucky number 20
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Friday

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The call of Lord Shiva

Society is subject to continued churning, which impels change in our thought process, priorities, and societal dynamics. The pace of change may sometimes be normal, which passes off without much of flutter. At times it becomes rapid, which for many unprepared, becomes difficult to digest. For the usual human tendency is to resist change, carrying the fear of its uncertain future ramifications. Yet, with time we learn to manage. But there comes some such historical moments when we are taken for a ride by some unprecedented situations. That forces us for an immediate rethink. We are passing through one such moment when the whole world has suddenly come to a grounding halt, which calls for an immediate rethink — what went wrong in our approach to life that has proved so heavy?
 The present pandemic has come to remind us about some basic tenets of life, which people engaged in the rigour of life seem to have forgotten. It is, as if they would have moved beyond their limits. First, the world is a unified organism, where no individual has a reality independent of the whole. Second, all field players of the world are

set into an interdependent framework, where the efforts of all put together, meets our existential needs and carries forward the life cycle. In such a framework, irresponsible conduct of a few can prove heavy for the whole mankind. See, how coronavirus that erupted in Wuhan state of China, has overtaken the whole world. It is difficult to ascertain whether it was because of particular eating habits of the people there or the negligence of the scientists, or whether it was a planned conspiracy. Time may uncover the truth. But there is no denying the fact that unbecoming conduct of a few has resulted in such a catastrophe. Most other nations did not take the impending threat in all its seriousness in time. We, thus, have a shared destiny, and therefore, while attending to our aspirational urges, we need to remain conscious about our collective obligations as well.
 See how beautifully the above concept is portrayed in the imagery of Lord Shiva and his marriage party. I believe, our learned masters were great artists, is how they could explain such vital truths of life through easily understandable imageries. And to ensure that the con-



cept remains live in our mind, they dedicated the whole month of *Shravana* to Lord Shiva in our annular calendar. If people reflect on the concept in prayer mode at regular periodic interval the inlaid message may get absorbed in the inner realms of mind. Following which, it may spontaneously find reflection in our day to day conduct. It's a different matter that over a period of time, it has acquired a ritualistic dimension — people carrying water drawn from Ganga, marching long distance on foot and offer it *Shivalinga* in a temple.
 Now look at the educative import of the imagery. Lord Shiva seated on a bull has multitude of existences forming His marriage party — Godly bodies (marked with cosmic functionalities vital to smooth run of the life cycle), evils (the low born guided by their animalistic instincts), human beings, animals, birds, plants, and even invisible creatures such as ghosts and goblins. Lord Shiva, in an unattached way remains in accord with all of them, as He doesn't discriminate. Not that He is not aware of their individualistic and collective limitations. His half eyes closed and half open means that knowingly He ignores their limitations. For, He is aware that if they are

subject to some limitation, they are simultaneously armed with such virtues as would be necessary for sustenance of the collective existence, so framed as but for one, the very existence would be at stake. He purposely does that so as to make full use of their virtues in order to ensure smooth run of the life cycle as a whole, as signified by bull's nature. Remember, the bull, while pulling a bullock cart, keeps moving unprovoked at an even pace. The presence of ghosts and goblins need a special reference. They symbolise our formless presence in between two successive lives, indicating continuum in life cycle.
 To sum up, the world is framed on the concept of Unity in Diversity. With a sense of unity consciousness live in mind, we may accord due honour to all, which may ensure living in peace and harmony. It is the absence of the sense of unity consciousness that holds the key to growing level of our impatience and intolerance.
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